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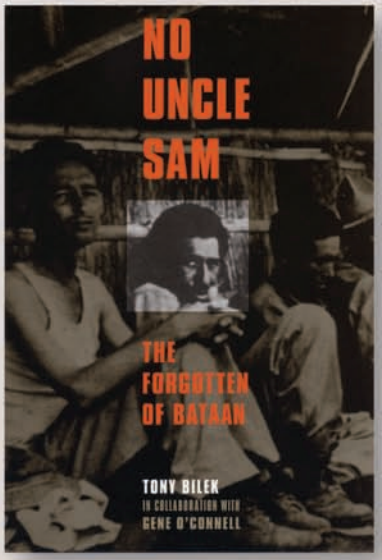

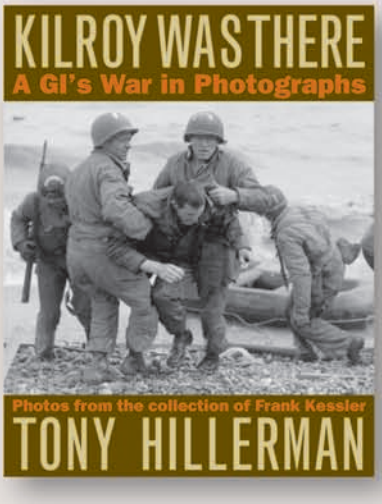

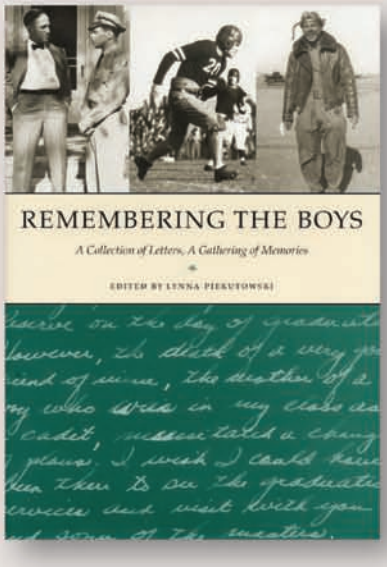

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Tony Bilek

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Lynna Piekutowski

This is a touching collection of eloquent letters between alumni of a small private academy in Northeast Ohio serving in WWII and its headmaster. Their stories of boredom, hardships, and the dangers of military life are told by the young men serving on the frontlines, poignantly capturing that extraordinary time . . . and place.

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Cover: A German soldier guards a Junkers Ju-87 Stuka dive-bomber. Three bombs lie on the grass in front of the plane. © CORBIS

Columns

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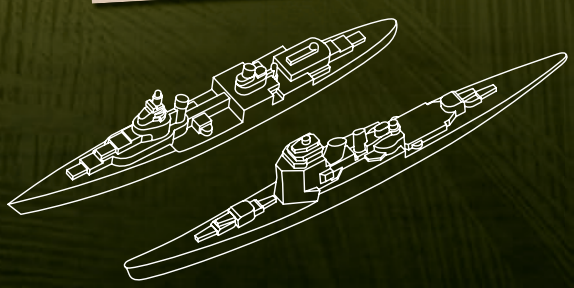

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Editorial

Sergeant Martin Troy's remains are recovered 63 years after his death.

THOUSANDS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL KILLED IN ACTION DURING WORLD War II rest in unmarked graves, high on mountaintops, beneath the ocean amid the wreckage of sunken ships, in remote jungles and arid deserts. For 63 years, the remains of Staff Sergeant Martin F. Troy lay unknown and unrecognized near the village of Nemesvita, Hungary, about 110 miles from the nation's capital city of Budapest.

Troy, of Norwalk, Connecticut, was an airman who lost his life on June 30, 1944, while on a mission aboard a Consolidated B-24 Liberator bomber nicknamed *Miss Fortune*. Returning to its base in Italy after a raid over Germany, *Miss Fortune* was caught in bad weather and then attacked by enemy twin-engine Messerschmitt Me-110 fighters. Troy was the only member of the 10-man crew who remained missing after the crash into marshy land, which left a crater some 18 yards long by six yards wide and covered with up to three feet of water.

Ironically, the crash site was well known to local inhabitants and had been salvaged for scrap metal through the years. Survivors had given accounts of the incident and related that Troy had probably died in a fire aboard the bomber before it hit the ground. One fellow crewman had been severely burned in an effort to rescue him. Still, Troy's remains went unrecovered. In 1945, according to the Associated Press, the American Graves Registration Unit had determined that the remains could not be repatriated due to the inaccessibility of the crash site and the uncooperative nature of the communist post-war government of Hungary. The airman's official status was listed as "killed in action, body not recovered."

In July of last year, a recovery team from the U.S. Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), based in Hawaii, made the trek to Hungary as a renewed effort to locate Troy's remains was fueled by what a JPAC spokesman termed "congressional interest." While all the surviving members of *Miss Fortune*'s crew are now deceased, they had apparently lobbied for the successful expedition. Human bones were found scattered around the site of the crash, and DNA testing is expected to confirm that they belong to Sergeant Troy. Once the identity is confirmed, an attempt will be made to locate family members, and at long last the airman will receive a proper burial.

Charles Whiting

JPAC is responsible for the recovery and identification of American service personnel killed in action, and its task is daunting. Presently, a mere five teams such as the one dispatched to Hungary are available to locate and recover the remains of an estimated 80,000 Americans who are still missing from World War II. Lt. Gen. Jozset Hollo, the director of a military museum in Hungary, has informed JPAC that information is available on at least 30 more Americans who perished in Hungary during the war.

In this issue, *WWII History* marks the passing of friend and colleague Charles Whiting. Born in 1926, Charles joined the British Army at the age of 16 and served during World War II with the 52nd (Lowland) Divisional Reconnaissance Regiment following the D-Day invasion. He went on to become one of the most prolific authors of historical fiction and nonfiction in the world, writing with a verve and excitement that conveyed his true passion for the craft. Charles was a frequent contributor to *WWII History* and leaves a legacy of more than 200 books and a multitude of articles written during a career that spanned more than half a century.

Michael E. Haskew

WWII HISTORY

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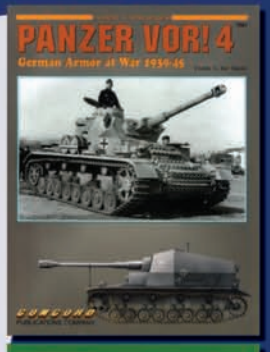

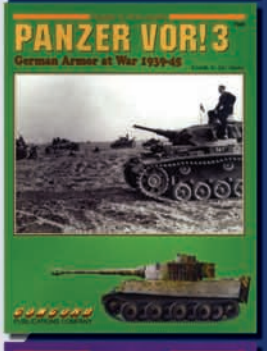

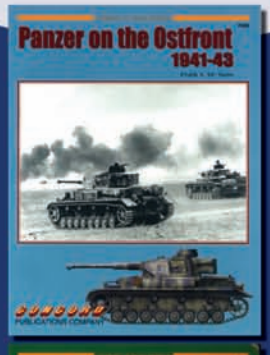

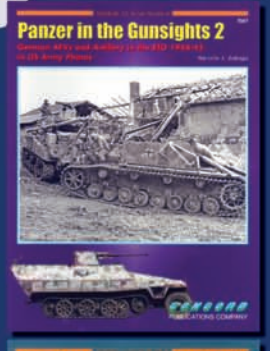

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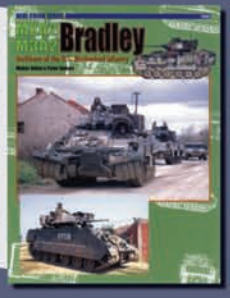

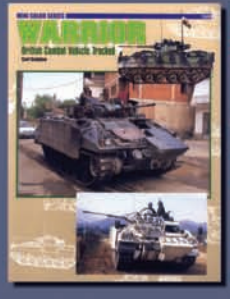

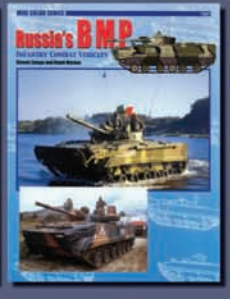

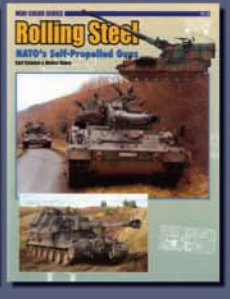

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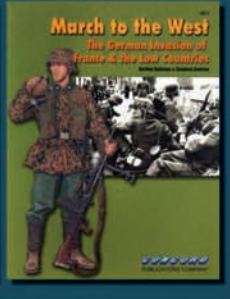

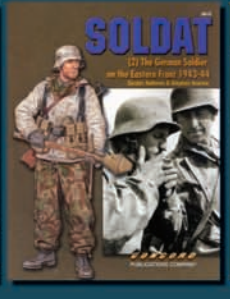

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Dispatches

Red Air Force Pe-2

Dear Editor:

I read with interest George Tipton Wilson's article "Red Air Force Heroines" in the September issue of *WWII History*. One fact Wilson gets wrong, however, is the nature of the Pe-2 bomber. The plane did not have a "twin fuselage configuration." Rather, it had twin tails—twin fins and rudders, to be exact. I wasn't aware that the Pe-2 was one of the most difficult Red Air Force planes to fly, but I did read in Volume 2 of *World War II Airplanes* by Enzo Angelucci and Paolo Matricardi (Rand McNally, 1977) that the Pe-2 had "18 servomechanisms for the main controls as well as a hydraulic system...." and that it killed its designer, Vladimir Petlyakov, in a crash in 1942.

One final correction. The name of the city near which the women of the 122nd Composite Group trained is spelled Engels (named after Karl Marx's collaborator in the development of Communism, Friedrich Engels), not Engles.

Steve Parshall,
Evanston, Illinois

Greece for the Greeks

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to Jon Latimer's "Renewed Confrontation in Greece" in the November 2007 issue. Latimer's research proves to be up to par in terms of the units within the country, but his description of events raises questions. Latimer's views appear to be shaped by the British perspective of events in Greece. British forces generally operated with royalist partisans in the country, while American Office of Strategic Services' operational groups worked with the most effective resistance groups available, in this case the Hellenikos Laikos Apeleftertikos Stratos (ELAS).

It cannot be disputed that British doctrine was dictated by political ideology, going as far as to relocate troops and supplies to suppress the ELAS and prop up the puppet regime in Greece even while World War II was raging in Europe in late 1944 and 1945. British ambitions in Greece were no secret and when the men and women who had fought the Germans with distinction for over four years were told they would have no say in the Greek government, what did the British expect? For Latimer to accuse the ELAS of not opposing the German occupation force is not only false, but absurd. Latimer only need ask the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG) or the Special Operations Executive (SOE) operating in Greece during World War II to find the answer to the fighting record of the ELAS.

It is easy to forget Greece was the owner of the first Allied victory in World War II when the Italian invasion of Greece was beaten back in 1940. Perhaps Great Britain should have been more concerned with bringing an end to World War II and less with denying the Greek people the right to choose their own leadership.

Joseph Bradley
Eldred WWII Museum
www.eldredwwiimuseum.net

The American Field Service

Dear Editor:

As a regular reader of your fine magazine I especially enjoyed John Brown's excellent article in the September 2007 issue entitled "The Beginning of the End in North Africa." However, I must take exception to the paragraph on page 62 where he mentions Eighth Army medics being "assisted by a band of American Red Cross volunteers, leaving British medical officers and soldiers with, as one medical officer said, 'fond memories of a gallant and eccentric breed.'"

Those "gallant and eccentric" ambulance drivers were not American Red Cross volunteers (a common misconception) but members of the American Field Service (AFS) which from 1939 through 1945 provided 2,196 drivers to French, British, and British Commonwealth armies. Included were the Eighth Army in North Africa and Italy, the 21st Army Group in Holland and Germany, and the 14th Army in India-Burma. They served in many countries: France, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, India, and Burma with troops from France, Great Britain, Greece, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Poland, Italy, India, and Nepal. Thirty-six gave their lives, 68 were wounded in action, 13 were prisoners of war, and 237 were decorated for bravery.

Following the conclusion of the war, and having witnessed firsthand the horrors and devastation, including assisting in the evacuation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, the drivers were determined to keep the organization alive by playing a part in maintaining world peace by promoting tolerance and understanding among the young people of the world. The result was the AFS Exchange Program, now called AFS Intercultural Program which, since its formation 60 years ago, has managed the exchange of over 350,000 (currently at the rate of 11,000 per year) high school-level students from more than 50 countries. It's a program the drivers are justly proud of.

Richard C. Sinclair
567 Ambulance Car Company,
Italy, Holland, and Germany
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Victoria Cross Winners

Sirs:

In the article "Beginning of the End in North Africa" in the September 2007 issue, the author states on page 55 that Captain Upham was the only one of the three winners of the VC and bar to survive. The first double-VC, Lt. Col. Arthur Martin-Leake, died on June 22, 1953. He won his first VC in the Boer War (February 8, 1902) and the second in World War I (November 8, 1914). Captain Noel Chavasse won his first on August 9, 1916, and died winning his second VC on August 2, 1917. Thus, two of the winners survived and only one died in action.

John Davidson
Ottawa, Ontario

Hess's Landing Site: Scotland

Gentlemen:

While I enjoyed the profile on Rudolf Hess in your September issue, I must point out that anyone with a rudimentary knowledge of the story knows that Hess did not fly to England but landed just south of Glasgow, which of course, is in Scotland. That error would be geographic; if, however, the author was, as I suspect, treating England as synonymous with Britain, then the error is geographic, historic, and political. The landing site is significant as it has been suggested that Hess was trying to meet with the Duke of Hamilton through whom he hoped to contact Winston Churchill.

Bill Minors
Port Perry, Ontario

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By Hervie Haufler

Fleming, Ian Fleming

The adventures of a British Intelligence officer during World War II fueled the creation of the mythical spy James Bond.

SOME ACCOUNTS OF IAN FLEMING'S LIFE MAKE IT SEEM THAT ONLY AT THE age of 44, as an antidote to the shock of finally agreeing to get married, did he suddenly commit himself to the unplanned task of creating his James Bond novels. In actuality, he had declared his interest in writing thriller-type books as early as the age of 20, when he confided to his friend Ivar Bryce that this was his lifetime goal. Even that early he had begun collecting incidents and experiences that he could later weave into his 13-book saga of James Bond.

Most particularly, Fleming relied on his richly varied participation in World War II as source material for Bond's exploits. Rather than tie his hero to history, though, he made Bond current by involving him in the Allies' Cold War struggle against the Soviet Union.

British commandos march through the ruins of the French town of Caen. An objective of the Allied D-Day landings that was supposed to have been captured on June 6, stiff German resistance prevented the city from being liberated until a month later. (National Archives)

Ian grew up in the shadow of his talented older brother, Peter. Both were mere boys when their father was killed in World War I. As the oldest of four brothers, Peter felt the need to become the male head of the family. His sense of responsibility drove him to excel as a student at Eton and Oxford. Soon he began turning out best-selling books on his travels to far places. Also, he married the beautiful actress Celia Johnson. He made himself a very hard act to follow.

In response, Ian appeared not even to try. He became a rebel against standard paths of achievement. His mother, Eve, considered him her problem child. Attending Eton, he made his mark in sports rather than academics. Concerned by his mediocre grades and his misadventures, Eve had him placed in Eton's Army Class. Then, because of an escapade with a local girl, he left without graduating, and, at Eve's insistence, signed up for military officer training at Sandhurst. There, too, he rebelled against the routines and left, under a cloud because of another amorous infraction, without a commission. It was the same when Eve tried to get him into the Foreign Office. He did study for the essential entrance exam and did reasonably well but did not rank high enough to win a job as a diplomat.

It was only when he got out from under his mother's watchful eye and away from the intimidating example of his brother that Ian came into his own. This happened when Eve, giving up on any other course, sent him to Kitzbühel, Switzerland, to study under an English couple there. Ernan Forbes-Dennis and his wife, who wrote novels under her maiden name of Phyllis Bottome, were running an idealistic school that sought to straighten out troubled adolescents. They realized Ian's potential and took a special interest in him. As a result, he found himself discovering a great facility for languages as well as a love of reading. In Kitzbühel, under the Forbes-Dennis duo, he acquired the equivalent of a university education.

Young Ian also entered into his first serious romance, with a beautiful Swiss girl. When that attachment ended, incurring hard feelings on both sides, Ian declared that he was "going to be quite bloody-minded about women from now on" and would take what he wanted "without any scruples at all." Aside from his enduring love for Ann O'Neill Rothermere, his new attitude led to innumerable affairs over

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many years. He endowed Bond with that same low opinion of women as anything other than temporary bedmates.

Now confident of his own abilities, Fleming secured a job as a reporter for the Reuters news agency. He did well enough that, after a year, he was sent to Moscow to cover the trial of six British engineers arrested on trumped-up charges by the Soviet secret services. The stories he wrote helped raise an uproar of anger in Britain that induced the Soviet leaders to back down and release the engineers. His reporting also brought offers from other journals.

But the terms of his father's will left Ian unable to live in the style he enjoyed, and journalism was unlikely to provide the income necessary to sustain that lifestyle. With the war clouds gathering, he turned down the writing prospects and took a position in banking. Although the financial life soon bored him, it was a fortuitous move because the banking background helped him win his World War II assignment.

In early 1939, Rear Admiral John Godfrey had received the opportunity to top his distinguished Royal Navy career by becoming the head of the Naval Intelligence Division (NID) of the Admiralty. Needing a strong personal assistant, he sought the advice of his NID predecessor, Sir Reginald "Blinker" Hall. Hall had relied on a personal assistant with a banking background. So advised, Godfrey selected Ian out of a list of promising comers with financial experience.

Commander Ian Fleming of the Royal Naval Reserve poses for the camera in Room 39 of the British Admiralty in London. Fleming based the fictional character James Bond on his own experiences during World War II. (Library of Congress)

When, at the age of 31, Fleming joined the NID, he was described as a "striking young man," with charm, vitality, a sense of adventure, enthusiasm, and "a certain confidence and authority." He came aboard NID as a lieutenant but, with Godfrey's approval, quickly advanced to the rank of commander. For the first time, Ian really loved his work, devoured it, and did such unimaginable things as arriving at his desk at 6 AM every day.

From his desk at NID's headquarters in Room 39 of the Admiralty, Fleming gained an insider's view of the war's events. He was soon taking full advantage of it. In June 1940, on the eve of the French surrender to the Germans, he became the point man in trying to persuade French Admiral Jean François Darlan not to allow the French fleet to fall into German hands. Fleming traveled to France with a radio operator in a vain effort to catch up with Darlan.

Instead, Fleming received NID orders to help British officials and other refugees to escape through Bordeaux, virtually their last opportunity to get out of France ahead of the advancing Germans. He was also able to prevent the Germans from capturing a store of airplane engines and spare parts. He succeeded in getting the large crates aboard a ship that took them to Britain.

Fleming then turned his attention to the

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masses of refugees seeking a way out of France. Out in the estuary were seven merchant ships at anchor. He borrowed a motorboat, traveled among the ships, and told their captains, "If you don't take these people on board and transport them to England, I can promise you that if the Germans don't sink you the Royal Navy will." The captains complied. One of the refugees so rescued was King Zog of Albania. Realizing there was nothing more he could do about Darlan and the French warships, Ian joined the exodus.

Back home, Fleming tackled a serious problem posed by the British codebreakers at Bletchley Park. Alan Turing and his colleagues had conquered the Enigma code machines used by the German Army and the Luftwaffe, but the Navy's adaptation of the Enigma was defying them. They badly needed to capture one of the German naval Enigma machines. Fleming came up with a daring idea. To pick up Luftwaffe pilots downed in the English Channel, the Germans relied on an Enigma-equipped rescue boat. Fleming proposed using a captured German bomber, manned by an English flight crew in German uniforms, to join a flight of German bombers returning from a raid. Over the Channel, their bomber would begin to emit fake smoke. The crew would send out an SOS, ditch the plane, and float in a rubber dinghy until the rescue boat arrived. "Once aboard," his plan stated, "shoot German crew, dump overboard, bring back boat to English port."

The plan would require a "word-perfect German speaker." Fleming saw himself assuming that role, but Godfrey turned him down. Fleming knew too many secrets to be allowed the possibility of German capture. Even though the arrangements had been made, the project was abandoned, much to the disappointment of all involved, when the right situation never turned up.

When the United States entered the war, Godfrey and his team were dismayed to realize the fractured state of American intelligence. Each service, plus the U.S. State Department and the FBI, had its own intelligence organization, with each zealously guarding its own turf. What was needed, the British saw, was an overall integrated organization such as the one that Godfrey directed. They even knew whom they wanted to be the head of the new organization, lawyer William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan, whose background included intelligence work for his client, the banker J.P. Morgan. In May, Godfrey and Fleming traveled to the United States to see what could be done.

Their first stop was in New York City to consult with William S. Stephenson, head of British Passport Control, which was, in actuality, Britain's intelligence center in the United States. Stephenson, they found, already had the program for creating Donovan's operation well advanced. What was needed was a final push to persuade President Franklin D. Roosevelt to endorse it. Godfrey succeeded in inducing Eleanor Roosevelt to invite him to a White House dinner with the president. Roosevelt listened to Godfrey's request and, shortly afterward, established what became the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) under Donovan, whom he made a major general. The OSS proved to be the forerunner of the modern Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Fleming's part in this triumph was to work with Donovan in drafting the charter for this new department of the U.S. government. As a token of his appreciation, Donovan gave him a revolver inscribed with the legend "For Special Services." It remained one of Ian's most prized possessions.

Adding to the incredible range of activities in which Ian was involved during wartime was the key role he played in establishing the propaganda and deception radio broadcasts aimed at the Germans. One type of these broadcasts was labeled white, the other black. White referred to the BBC's German Services programming designed to attract and mislead German listeners. The black propaganda operation consisted of clandestine media whose purpose was to confound and confuse the enemy. Ian and the NID supplied much of the damaging information aired by these stations and, speaking in his word-perfect German, he made frequent appearances on the broadcasts. In addition, he helped organize two counterfeit stations specializing in misinformation calculated to break the morale of U-boat crews.

In May 1940, observing the British disaster in Crete when the Germans invaded and captured the island, Ian's attention was drawn to the unusual operation led by Nazi SS commando leader Major Otto Skorzeny. Skorzeny's unit had landed with the first wave of German invaders, but instead of joining in the combat it had made a dash to the British headquarters. Skorzeny's soldiers seized all the secret materials they could get their hands on, from codebooks to military maps. This was the sort of intelligence commando tactic, Fleming decided, that the NID should copy. Very quickly he organized the NID's own equivalent. It was known officially as the No. 30 Assault Unit, or 30AU, but for Fleming they were his marauding "Red Indians." He recruited and trained what was, in effect, his own small, private army.

Fleming opposed the Allied raid on Dieppe,

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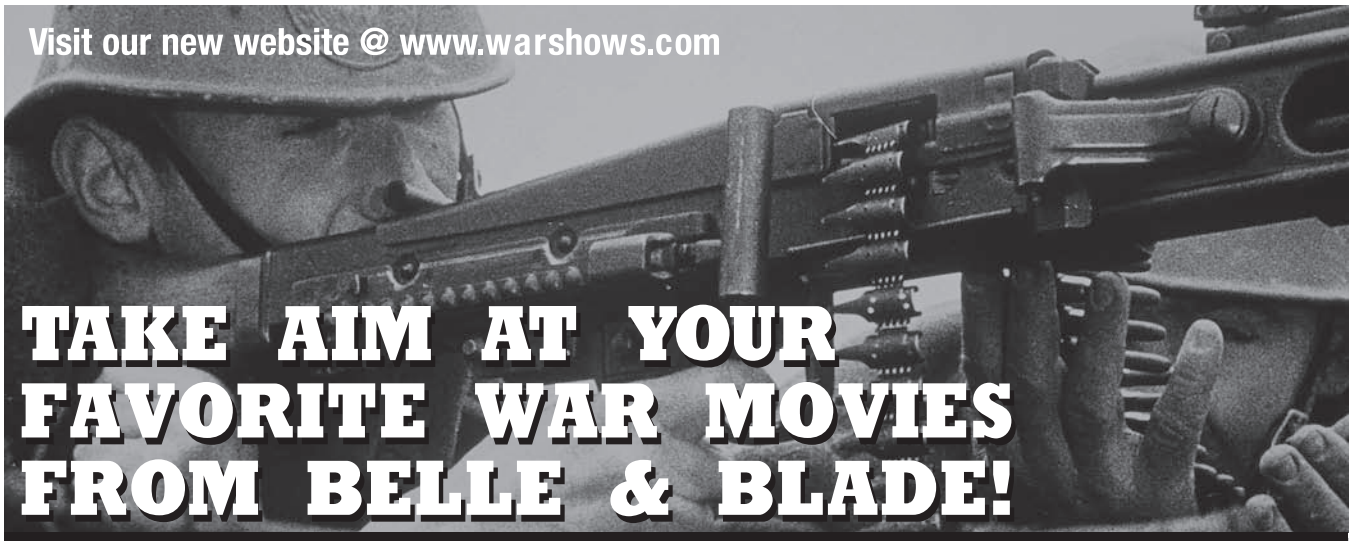

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but when it went ahead anyway he organized a contingent of his Red Indians to carry out a ransacking of German headquarters. The attempt failed when the overall landing proved to be a bloody disaster, and his unit never even got ashore. It was a different story when the Allies invaded North Africa in 1942. His unit of special agents landed near Algiers, surprised the Italian headquarters, and came away with a bountiful harvest that included the current Italian and German ciphers. As the fighting in North Africa continued, Fleming enlarged his army, added a group of protecting Royal Marines, and had them search out other intelligence documents as the enemy retreated. Their prize capture was a map of the minefields and defenses of the coast of Sicily, an invaluable aid to the Allies' subsequent invasion of that island.

When D-Day, the invasion of Normandy, came, 30AU was trained and ready—this time not just to capture a few maps and codebooks. The unit's initial task was to plunder a large German radio station before the Nazis could destroy it. When that was accomplished, Ian had a long list of further objectives, particularly the seizure of German secret weapons. Following his instructions as the Allies drove the Germans in retreat, 30AU tracked down the latest German acoustic homing torpedo, an experimental one-man submarine, their latest pattern of magnetic mines, fast submarines propelled by hydrogen peroxide, and additional finds of advanced radar equipment.

The unit's final coup came as the war in Europe was ending. In Room 39, Ian had been picking up reports about truckloads of German documents converging on a castle in Württemberg. Accompanying his team there, he found that an old German admiral had collected the entire German naval archives dating back to 1870. The admiral was preparing to burn the entire collection rather than let the advancing Red Army seize it. Fleming and the admiral got on well together, with the result that not only the archives but the admiral himself were conveyed to England, where the admiral spent months editing the documents.

In his intelligence capacity, Fleming became a regular participant in the international conferences scheduled by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt. In May 1942, he was in Washington, D.C., for the Trident Conference, which, among other agreements, fixed the date for the Normandy invasion. In August, he attended the follow-up planning session, the Quadrant Conference in Quebec. In November, he was in Cairo helping to plan for the summit meeting of Churchill and

Ian Fleming, the creator of James Bond, works at his typewriter while in Jamaica for the filming of *Dr. No.*, the first of the novels to be translated into film. A very sucessful franchise of Bond films was born 40 years ago. (©Bradley Smith/CORBIS)

Roosevelt with Soviet Premier Josef Stalin in Teheran. A serious bout of bronchitis kept him in Cairo instead of journeying to the conference.

Recalling his experiences with Fleming during their wartime relationship, Admiral Godfrey said, "Ian should have been DNI and I his naval adviser."

Late in 1944, Fleming went to Washington for a meeting with the U.S. Navy's intelligence department and then on to a conference in Kingston, Jamaica, dealing with the German U-boat menace in the Caribbean. Before leaving Washington, he renewed his friendship with his old Etonian colleague Ivar Bryce, who was now married to a rich American woman. Ian persuaded Bryce to accompany him to the Jamaica conference. It turned out to be a grueling experience, with a heavy workload made heavier by incessant rain. Bryce owned a home on the Jamaican coast, and by the time the pair arrived there, he was sure Fleming had had a miserable time in Jamaica. Yet, during the flight back to Washington, Ian surprised his friend by announcing that he wanted to buy land in Jamaica and build a house there. Fleming's decision resulted in his ownership of a beach house he named "Goldeneye." He had participated in a wartime mission with that codename and spent quite a bit of time at the house for the remainder of his life.

Goldeneye allowed Fleming to avoid the worst of Britain's winters. The now wealthy Bryce also helped him escape British summers. Bryce's wife owned Black Hole Hollow Farm in the foothills of Vermont's Green Mountains near the New York border. Ian became a regu-

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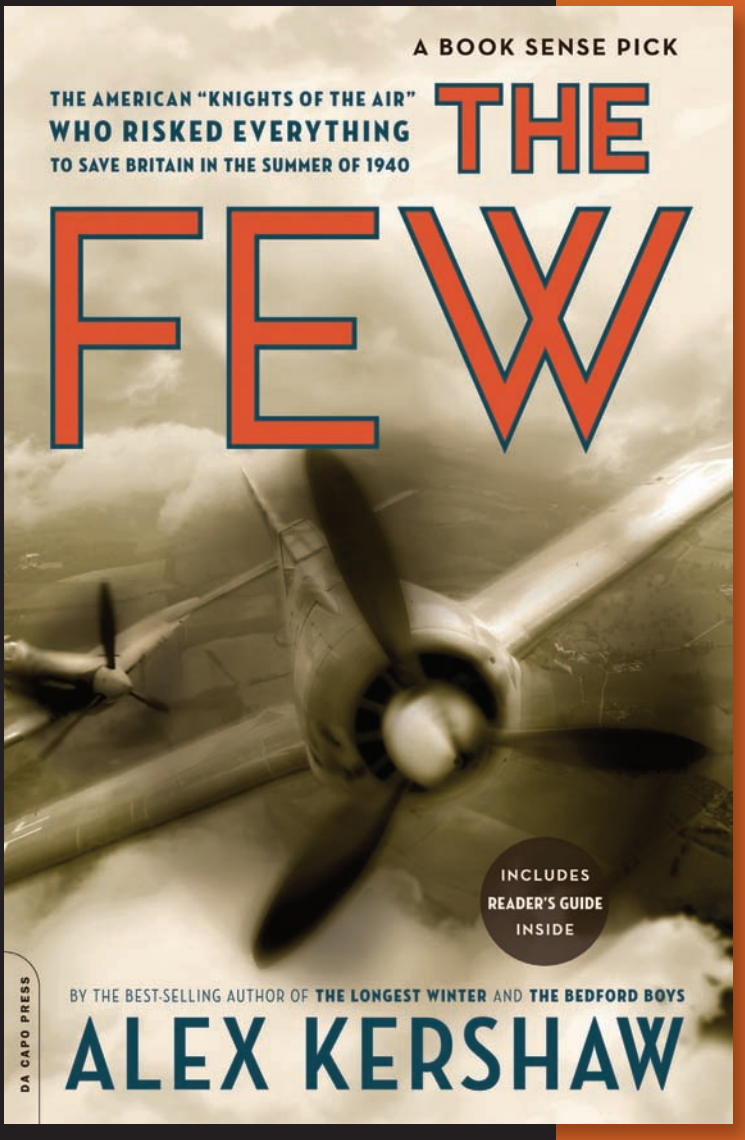

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*Colorado Springs Independent

During the filming of the movie *From Russia With Love,* James Bond creator Ian Fleming visits with Sean Connery, who played the super spy in a series of motion pictures based on Fleming's books. (The Granger Collection, New York)

lar summer visitor. The setting for part of his novel *Diamonds Are Forever* is in the nearby resort town of Saratoga, New York.

By the war's end, Fleming had accumulated a vast store of ideas, impressions, and incidents he was to use in his James Bond novels. As an example, on the trip he and Godfrey made to the United States in 1941, they stopped off en route in Estoril, Portugal. Ian was immediately attracted to the casino. He had not been able to indulge his gambling fervor recently because of Britain's wartime ban. He played against some Portuguese businessmen and lost. As he was leaving the tables, though, he said to Godfrey, "What if those had been German secret service agents, and suppose we had cleaned them out of their money; now that would have been exciting." That was exactly the plot for his first James Bond thriller, *Casino Royale,* requiring only that he change the Nazis into the novel's villain, an agent for the Soviet Union.

The writing of that first novel, however, was a long time in coming. It was only when he was 43 and nearing marriage with his longtime mistress, Ann Rothermere, whom he had gotten pregnant, that he began writing the book that had been rattling around in his head for years. It was also at her urging that the work began in earnest. At Goldeneye, he began the novel on January 15, 1952, and, working only from 9 AM to noon each day, finished it on March 18.

Although Fleming wrote with great speed, he was meticulous and tireless in his research for each book. He traveled to his chosen settings, sought the advice and assistance of experts, raised questions by the thousands, and filled notebooks with the information he would put to use during his next visit to Goldeneye, each of which usually lasted for two months. Early on, when asked whether he himself was the model for James Bond, he scornfully rejected the idea, pronouncing Bond "that cardboard booby." Gradually, though, he infused himself into Bond's personality, making his creation more well rounded and human, capable of knowing fear and of crying out when in pain. Of his novels, it must be said that he excelled in seeking out subject matter, such as high-stakes gambling, that was new and fascinating to masses of readers.

During his relatively short life, Ian Fleming experienced only the beginnings of what became a tremendous James Bond industry. Even so, he had seen some 40 million copies of his books sold and had viewed the first James Bond movies before heart troubles felled him in August 1964, at the age of 56. □

A veteran of World War II, Hervie Haufler is the author of two books on the war's intelligence history, Codebreakers' Victory *and* The Spies Who Never Were. *He is currently working on an account of the secret war against the Japanese.*

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He nicknamed the watch *Ritorno* for homecoming, and the rare heirloom is now valued at $42,000 according to *The Complete Guide to Watches*. But to our family, it is just a reminder that nothing is more beautiful than the smile of a healthy returning GI.

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By Paul B. Cora

Holding the Line on the High Seas

The destroyer escort ran the gauntlet against Axis forces around the world.

ALSO THROUGH THE FIRST HALF OF WORLD WAR II, ALLIED SHIPPING LOSSES to German U-boats climbed steadily from over 400,000 tons in the last four months of 1939 to more than two million tons each in 1940 and 1941, before reaching a staggering 6,266,215 tons in 1942 following the entry of the United States into the war. The success of the Kreigsmarine's submarine fleet against Britain in particular made the defeat of the U-boats a prime objective of Allied planners. Throughout the war vast resources were committed to achieve it.

The rising toll of the U-boats and the shortage of purpose-built convoy escort vessels in the British Royal Navy during the war's first year gave birth to the concept of the destroyer escort or "DE"—a U.S.-built warship type that was destined to become a mainstay of Allied convoy defense by the second half of World War II.

Smaller, slower, and less heavily armed than destroyers, DEs nevertheless had ample antisubmarine capabilities. The 1941 British Admiralty specification used in the design by the firm of Gibbs and Cox specified stowage for 112 depth charges, a state-of-the-art, forward-firing hedgehog antisubmarine projector, and dual-purpose main armament effective against both surface and air targets. Above all, the DEs were designed to be mass produced quickly and cheaply.

The first of some 563 DEs constructed during World War II were laid down using Lend-Lease funds at the U.S. naval shipyard, Mare Island, California. The first four went to Britain's Royal Navy, while the fifth was commissioned into the U.S. Navy as USS *Evarts* (DE-5). Ultimately, 97 Evarts-class DEs were built with a third of them serving in the Royal Navy where they were known as the "Captain"-class escort ships.

U.S. Navy destroyer escorts were named for deceased naval heroes, and many American sailors who gave their lives in the first years of the war would be so honored. Depending on their class and mission, DEs were manned by 180 to 220 officers and men.

Evarts-class DEs were 289 feet, 5 inches long, with a beam of 35 feet, and an overall displacement of 1,360 tons fully loaded. Their original armament consisted of three 3-inch 50-caliber (3"/50) dual-purpose guns, a quad 1.1-inch antiaircraft mount, and nine 20mm single mount antiaircraft guns. For antisubmarine work, two depth charge racks were located aft, eight K-gun depth charge throwers were located amidships port and starboard, and a hedgehog projector was mounted forward of the bridge between the No. 1 and No. 2 3"/50s. For main propulsion, Evarts-class DEs were equipped with four General Motors diesel-electric generators that supplied power for the propulsion motors—a system known as GMT or General Motors Tandem drive. So powered, the twin-screw Evarts-class ships were capable of 20 knots.

By 1943, improvements in basic design and armament were on

A U.S. Navy destroyer escort was originally conceived as something of a stopgap measure during World War II. Later, the design proved to be effective in all theaters. Here, a destroyer escort is shown under way during sea trials.
(United States Navy)

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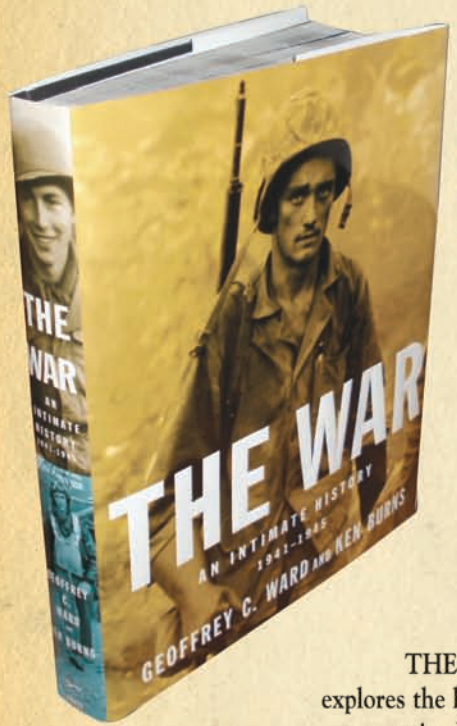

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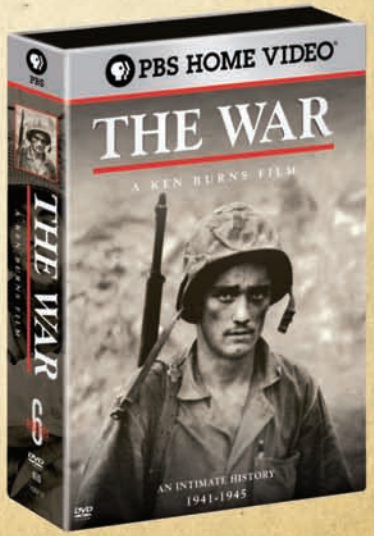

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ABOVE: Shown under way off Long Island in August 1944, the destroyer escort USS *Kendall E. Campbell* was a John C. Butler-class ship, the fastest class of the vessel built. These small, versatile warships were powered by geared steam turbines. The *Kendall E. Campbell* is painted in a measure 32 camouflage scheme, and its 5-inch gun mounts are enclosed. RIGHT: This photograph of the stern of the destroyer escort USS *Menges* shows the 21-inch torpedo battery that originally equipped such warships starting with the Buckley class. Also note the 20mm and 40mm antiaircraft mounts, the 3-inch deck gun, depth charge throwers, and racks. (Both: National Archives)

the way. For Buckley-class DEs, which soon followed in production, overall length was increased to 306 feet, and armament was beefed up to include a three-tube battery of 21-inch torpedoes placed amidships. Steam-driven, Buckley-class DEs were equipped with Foster-Wheeler boilers and General Electric geared turbo-generators, whose 12,000 shaft horsepower gave them a top speed of more than 23 knots. A second rudder improved steering and tightened their turning radius by 25 percent—a highly useful characteristic for hunting submarines. Fully loaded displacement on Buckley-class DEs increased to 1,720 tons from the smaller short-hulled Evarts class.

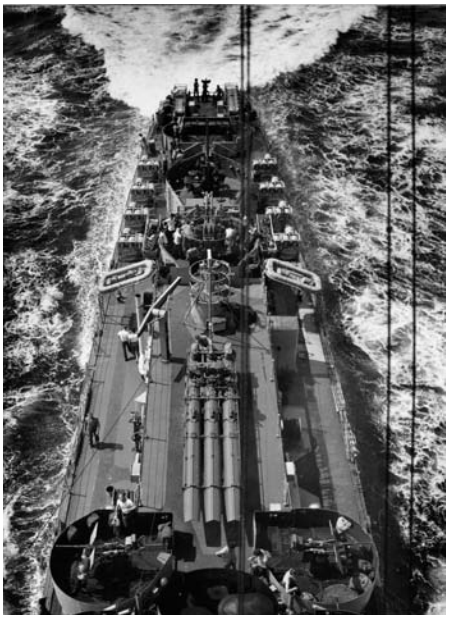
The four subsequent classes of DEs after the Buckley class retained the 306-foot overall length, though variations in main propulsion were dictated by shipyard capability and engine supplies. The 1,520-ton Cannon-class DEs were powered by General Motors diesel-electric drives identical to the main propulsion in the Evarts class, while those of the 1,490-ton Edsall class received Fairbanks-Morse diesel engines of the same type that powered the electric generators on many U.S. fleet-type submarines, directly coupled to the screws. Rudderow class ships displaced 1,811 tons fully loaded and, like the Buckleys, were steam-driven turbo-electric ships. Those of the 2,100-ton John C. Butler class received Westinghouse geared steam turbines and were capable of almost 30 knots. Unlike earlier designs, the Butlers and Rudderows received 5-inch 38-caliber (5"/38) enclosed gun mounts as main armament and destroyer-style enclosed bridges, as opposed to the tall open bridge of the original British design.

From the outset, DEs were fitted with electronic gear that made them effective at finding submarines, including sonar for hunting submerged U-boats and radar for picking them up on the surface. Some DEs also received high-frequency radio direction finding equipment (known as HFDF or "huffduff"), which allowed them to home in on radio signals sent by U-boats at sea.

Some 16 U.S. shipyards produced destroyer escorts during World War II. By 1944, DEs were operating in such quantity that they formed the backbone of antisubmarine defense in the Atlantic, where they not only protected convoys of merchant ships and troop transports, but also operated with escort aircraft carriers in highly effective hunter-killer groups that sought out and destroyed U-boats before they could strike.

Among the most successful of these was the Edsall-class USS *Pillsbury* (DE-133), which, as part of a hunter-killer group led by the escort carrier USS *Guadalcanal* (CVE 60), depth-charged *U-515* to the surface on April 8, 1944, then in company with her sister ship, USS *Flaherty* (DE-135), destroyed the sub in a gun battle. Some two months later, on June 4, 1944, the *Pillsbury* forced *U-505* to the surface off the Cape Verde Islands. Her crew then boarded and captured the sub, furnishing the Allies with an invaluable intelligence coup. Awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for bagging *U-505*, *Pillsbury*'s exploits were far from over. On April 24, 1945, while operating in the North Atlantic, she depth charged and sank *U-546*.

Four U.S. destroyer escorts were lost to U-boats, including the USS *Leopold* (DE-319), one of 30 DEs manned by the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II. The Buckley-class USS *Donnell* (DE-56) was torpedoed by a U-boat



off the British Isles while defending a convoy on May 3, 1944. Twenty-nine of *Donnell*'s crewmen were killed, but damage control measures saved her from sinking, although the damage proved too extensive for her to return to escort duty. In August 1944, however, the *Donnell* was towed across the English Channel and tied up at war-torn Cherbourg, where her still serviceable power plant was used to make electricity. The USS *Holder* (DE-401), was eventually scrapped after being seriously damaged in an April 1944 air attack off Algeria, and the USS *Rich* (DE-695) sank after hitting a mine off Normandy on June 8, 1944. Britain's Royal Navy lost eight of the 78 DEs it acquired from the United States.

In the Pacific, DEs served with distinction as antisubmarine vessels and also carried out other tasks, including shore bombardment, radar picket, and troop carrying after being converted to fast-attack transports (APD).

Among the most famous DEs of the Pacific War was the Buckley-class USS *England* (DE-635), which, in just 12 days during May 1944, hunted down and sank five Japanese submarines and assisted in the destruction of a sixth. For this unequaled feat, the ship received a Presidential Unit Citation, prompting the

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Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Ernest J. King, to remark, "There'll always be an England in the United States Navy." The following spring, however, *England*'s combat exploits came to an end when a Japanese kamikaze slammed into her side, killing 37 of her crew and forcing her to steam to the U.S. for repairs.

Some DEs in the Pacific were involved in actions for which they had never been designed, such as engaging major enemy surface ships. Off Samar on October 25, 1944, during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, four DEs were involved in the defense of a group of escort carriers that were caught by surprise and attacked by a powerful Japanese surface fleet under Admiral Takeo Kurita. When Kurita's force of four battleships and some 19 cruisers and destroyers engaged six lightly protected escort carriers, the DEs *John C. Butler* (DE-339), *Raymond* (DE-341), *Dennis* (DE-405), and *Samuel B. Roberts* (DE-413) joined the three fleet destroyers assigned to their task unit, code-named Taffy 3, and charged the Japanese armada in a desperate defense.

After firing their 21-inch torpedo batteries at the oncoming Japanese, the destroyers and DEs opened fire with their 5-inch guns and continued to lay smoke screens in the hope that the escort carriers might slip away. During the action, the *Samuel B. Roberts* was able to score hits with

The destroyer escort USS *Slater,* moored in Albany, New York, as a floating museum, previously served with the Greek Navy as a training vessel before being brought back to the United States for restoration in the 1990s. (Paul B. Cora)

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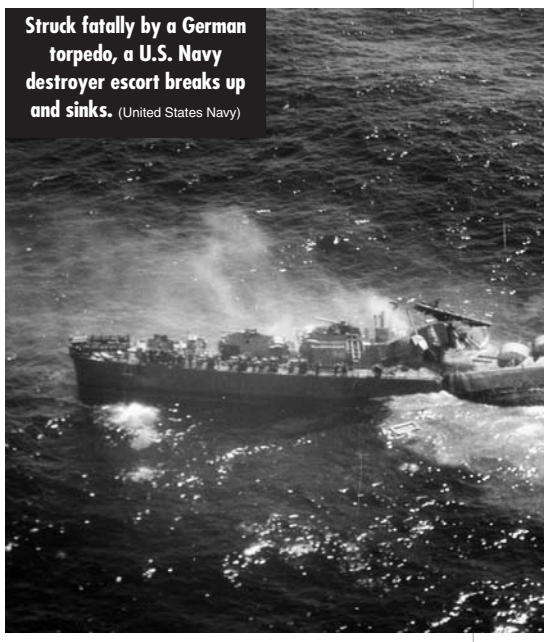
her torpedoes as well as her 5-inch guns on the Japanese heavy cruiser *Chokai*, though the gallant DE was hit a short time later by numerous 8-inch and 14-inch shells and sank with the loss of nearly 100 men. In addition to the *Samuel B. Roberts*, two U.S. destroyers and one other escort carrier were lost at Samar, but the suicidal defense by the "tin cans" and DEs did much to save the day as Kurita withdrew believing he faced a much larger force.

Despite the effective use of 21-inch torpedoes at Samar by the DEs of Taffy 3, it was evident that destroyer escorts needed more antiaircraft protection. By mid-1944, many DEs originally equipped with torpedoes received four single-mount 40mm antiaircraft guns amidships in place of their torpedo batteries. The fitting of single-mount "Army-type" 40mm guns was primarily a stopgap measure intended to deal with increased German air activity in the Mediterranean. By 1945, antiaircraft protection on DEs operating in the Pacific would be further increased in the face of Japanese kamikaze attacks.

Beginning in 1944, some 95 DEs of the Buckley and Rudderow classes underwent conversion to fast attack transport (APD), some during their construction. After removal of torpedo tubes and aft deck guns, these ships were outfitted with stowage space and davits for four LCVP landing craft, cargo cranes, and a beefed-up superstructure that provided living space for troops. So transformed, APDs were capable of putting ashore a battalion of soldiers or Marines in an amphibious assault. In place of their forward 3-inch/50-caliber deck guns, Buckley-class APD conversions received a single 5-inch/38-caliber gun, and all APDs kept their depth charges while receiving an additional 40mm antiaircraft mount.



Struck fatally by a German torpedo, a U.S. Navy destroyer escort breaks up and sinks. (United States Navy)

In the Pacific, six DEs were lost to enemy action. In addition to the *Samuel B. Roberts*, the USS *Eversole* (DE-404) and the USS *Shelton* (DE-407) were torpedoed by Japanese submarines, while the USS *Underhill* (DE-682) fell victim to a kaiten suicide craft off the Philippines. The USS *Bates* (APD 47) sank with the loss of 21 of her crew after being struck by a kamikaze off Okinawa on May 25, 1944. The USS *Oberrender* (DE-344) was so badly damaged by Japanese suicide planes off Okinawa that she was scrapped.

After World War II, some DEs continued to serve in the U.S. Navy, frequently as training ships for the Naval Reserve. During the 1950s, some 36 DEs underwent conversion to radar pickets (DER) and were used, aside from fleet duties, as part of the Cold War's DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line intended to protect the United States from surprise nuclear attack. Still other DEs went to foreign navies, in which some steamed on into the 1990s.

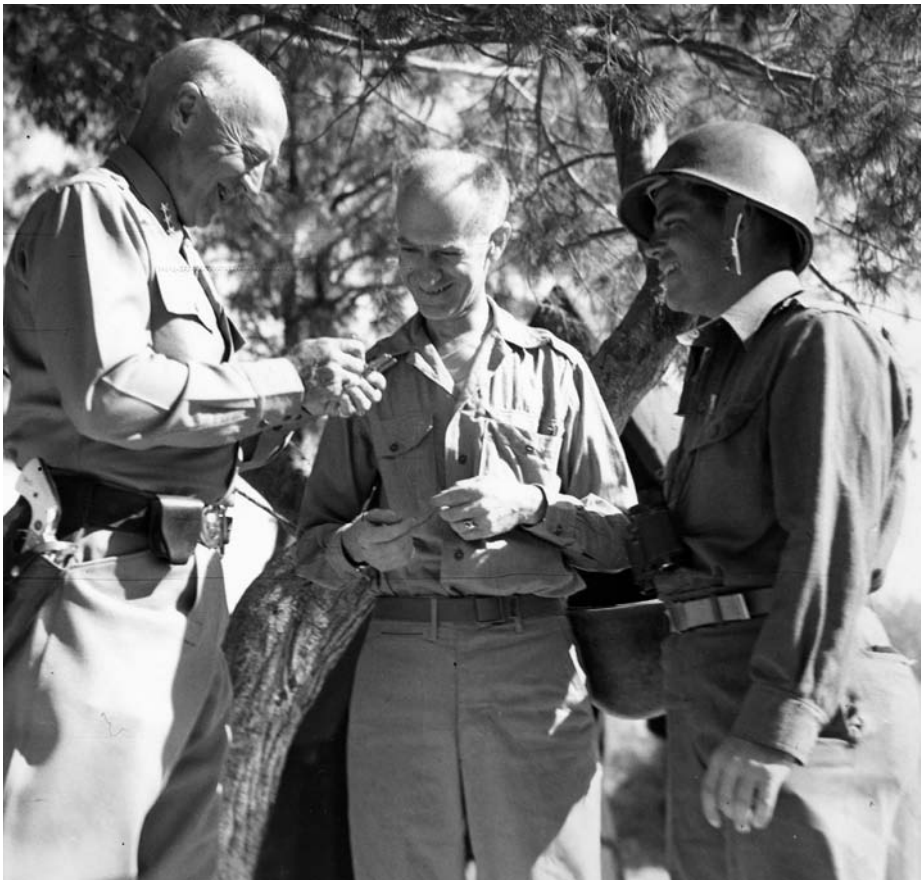
Though 563 DEs were built at U.S. shipyards during World War II—in itself an amazing industrial achievement—they have virtually disappeared today. A happy exception is the Can-

non-class USS *Slater* (DE-766) operated as a floating museum and memorial on the Hudson River in Albany, New York. Lovingly restored by a dedicated group of professionals and volunteers, the *Slater* is the best example of a World War II DE to be found anywhere today. Step aboard DE-766 at Albany and step back in time to 1945—from the silverware and china laid out in the officer's wardroom, to the virtually complete armament suite that includes depth charges and hedgehog projectors, 3-inch/50-caliber deck guns, and 20mm and 40mm antiaircraft mounts that seem ready to swing into action. Exploring this 309-foot warship, the visitor sees the *Slater* through the eyes of a World War II crewman. From the fully outfitted bridge and pilot house to the damage control lockers and living spaces, she appears ready to join a convoy under way.

The approach to the problem of the U-boat menace in World War II, largely embodied in the mass production of destroyer escorts, was a tribute to the capabilities of American industry and to Allied resolve. The place of DEs in the naval history of World War II, however, goes far beyond the Battle of the Atlantic, for these were extremely versatile ships. DEs and their crews took on a myriad of tasks in every theater of the war and succeeded far beyond what the designers of the little ships had ever imagined. □

Paul B. Cora is the curator of the Baltimore Maritime Museum, where he oversees the preservation of two World War II historic naval ships. An avid student of World War II aviation, his published works include YELLOWJACKETS! The 361st Fighter Group in World War II.

By Glen Jeansonne, Frank C. Haney, and David Luhrssen



A Life Shaped by Dyslexia

The positive and negative aspects of dyslexia made George S. Patton, Jr., both a great military commander and a controversial personality.

GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON, JR., WAS ONE OF THE MOST FLAMBOYANT AND controversial figures of World War II. His career was also one of the most thoroughly documented of any of the war's great commanders. Historians have had a treasury of material at their disposal as Patton was a prolific writer, kept personal diaries, and saved virtually every scrap of paper he ever handled. Additionally, his family and heirs have gone to great lengths to preserve the artifacts of his existence. Even with such voluminous, detailed, and often extremely personal material available on Patton, it was not until the 1980s that historians began to form a clear picture of the hidden elements that made up the man.

Historians will inevitably examine the past through the lens of their own time; likewise, historical figures present themselves to their contemporaries according to the knowledge and prejudices of their epoch. Patton, who was always concerned about shaping his public image according to his own lights, did not care to call attention to his dyslexia; nor did those who wrote about his swashbuckling exploits as a tank commander in the aftermath of World War II care to investigate the subject, despite such red flags as the frequent symptomatic idiosyncrasies in his spelling and punctuation. Given the state of medical science in the 1940s and the postwar era, Patton could not have been aware that he may have also suffered from an affliction known today as attention deficit disorder (ADD), which afflicts many dyslexics; nor could historians have identified the condition until recently. Even the importance of Patton's early family life, which led him to valorize war and model himself as the heir of his heroic Confederate ancestors, was neglected until recently.

Martin Blumenson brought the general's dyslexia to attention in his 1985 biography *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*. Historian Carlo D'Este enlarged upon Blumenson's pathfinding work in his 1995 study *Patton: A Genius for War,* painting more clearly a picture of an oddly functioning Patton family that had shaped Patton's entire life and ultimately enabled him to overcome, or a least deal with, his dyslexia and embark on a storied military career.

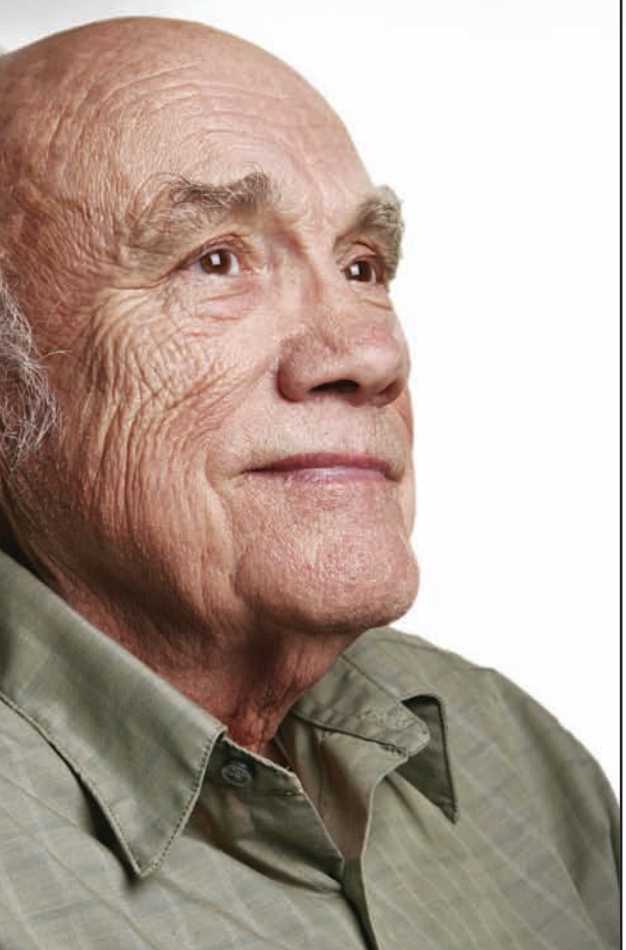
In trying to understand Patton's career, we cannot afford to discount those aspects of his life that had long been hidden behind his martial bluster. Patton's dyslexia and perhaps ADD, his immediate forebears, his unusual upbringing, and his early socialization developed the young Patton into what D'Este called "a genius for war."

The fact that Patton had dyslexia is supported by his family and documented by both Blumenson and D'Este. That Patton also had ADD will probably remain a matter of conjecture and speculation, although in his public life he exhibited many of the disorder's behavioral symptoms: his flexibility and willingness to shift strategy, such as the quick deal he cut in Casablanca permitting the formerly Vichy forces to continue governing Morocco under Allied auspices in November 1942; his tirelessness when in pursuit of a tangible goal, as when he took command of the moribund II Corps in Tunisia in February 1943 and rapidly transformed it into

ABOVE: General Patton signs an autograph for war correspondent Ernie Pyle. LEFT: One of the major influences on young George's life was his Aunt Nannie, his mother's sister. She made sure he knew the Bible well.

(Both: National Archives)

Legacy



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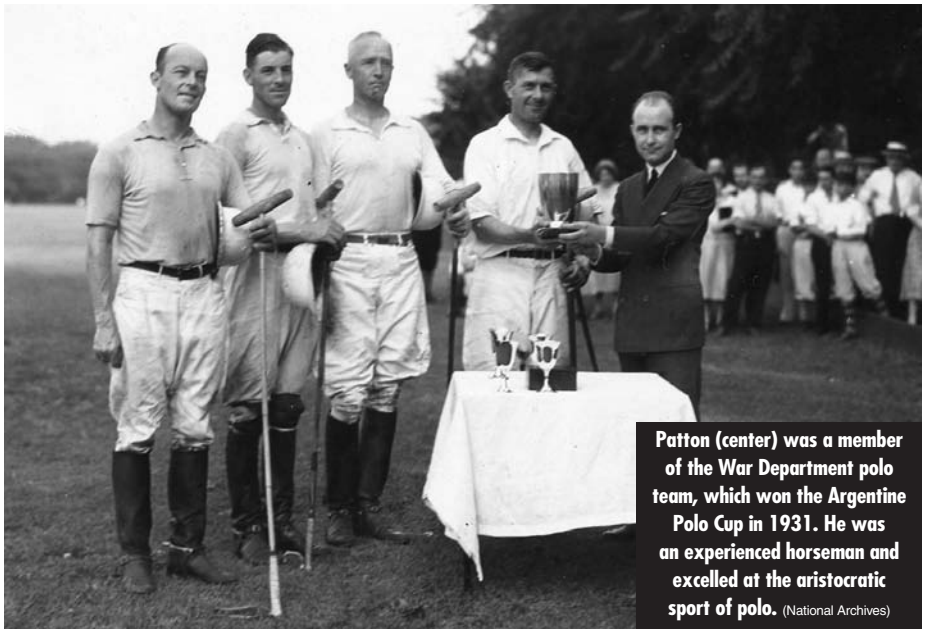

Patton (center) was a member of the War Department polo team, which won the Argentine Polo Cup in 1931. He was an experienced horseman and excelled at the aristocratic sport of polo. (National Archives)

a formidable fighting force; his boredom with mundane tasks, expressed in a 1916 letter during the garrisoning of the Mexican town of Dublan when he wrote his father, "We are all rapidly going crazy from lack of occupation and there is no help in sight"; and his startling ability to visualize and make ideas concrete.

Other ADD symptoms include poor impulse control, extreme mood swings in response to events, and short excessive tempers, all of which Patton displayed as a commanding officer, sometimes notoriously, as with his infamous slapping incidents during World War II in which he was accused of abusing enlisted men. The frustrations experienced by a person dealing with either dyslexia or ADD can be overwhelming and can often lead to serious self-doubt, feelings of inadequacy, bouts of uncontrollable anger, and emotional hypersensitivity.

Dyslexia, which is often characterized by difficulty reading and by the transposition of letters or numbers, is considered to be a learning disorder. Having dyslexia, however, does not mean that a person lacks intelligence. Quite the contrary, many dyslexics are extremely intelligent and struggle mightily with the symptoms of the disorder. The dyslexic often has a different or unique mind-set, is often gifted and productive, but learns and perceives in a way different from others.

Both dyslexia and ADD have a genetic component. They are hereditary and run in families. In this light, perhaps George Patton's genealogy is more important that even he imagined.

Patton was born on November 11, 1885, in San Gabriel, California, near Los Angeles, to doting parents from a financially comfortable background. His father spent several terms as district attorney of Los Angeles and ran unsuccessful campaigns for other public offices, including one as a Democratic candidate for Congress. In 1885, the year of George's birth, he gave up the practice of law to take over the affairs of his deceased father-in-law's business empire in an attempt to save it from the mismanagement of another relative. By 1899, the business was in foreclosure and new owner retianed the elder Patton as manager for many years. Despite all difficulties, no effort was spared by Patton's father in providing a "proper" and, indeed, aristocratic upbringing for his children.

During George's youth, the Patton family lived both in Los Angeles and at Lake Vineyard, the estate of his late grandfather, Benjamin "Don Benito" Wilson, an early American pioneer in California before the territory became part of the United States.

Blumenson credits Don Benito with some of the genetic makeup of the future general, including looks, driv, and tenacity. D'Este's work reveals Don Benito as an extremely eccentric and physically rugged individualist. His exploits included lassoing and killing grizzly bears, surviving the poison-tipped arrow of an American Indian, and delivering the heads of rebellious Indians in a wicker basket to California's governor. Patton would replicate that feat when he presented General Pershing with the bodies of three of Pancho Villa's men during the Punitive Expedition of 1916. Like his ancestor, George Patton enjoyed and displayed a zest for combat, which contrasted sharply with his more low-key superior in World War II, General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Don Benito was a man of frightful temper

who did not suffer fools and finally gave up carrying a gun lest he do something rash. There is more than just a suggestion that George S. Patton, Jr., owed a great deal genetically to Don Benito.

His environment shaped the young Patton as much as his heredity. The atmosphere of his childhood included the continual repetition of family lore that glorified participation in lost causes such as the Confederacy and the struggle for Scottish independence among his more distant forebears and emphasized the Pattons' ties to the Southern planter aristocracy. There was also an ongoing exposure to the great military leaders of history and literature, of whom George learned while being read to by his family from Walter Scott, Rudyard Kipling, Homer, and other authors. In addition, a parade of famous martial figures visited his home as guests of his parents.

The building blocks of the general's personality were laid out in Lake Vineyard, a place of open spaces, horses, and outdoor action.An expert horseman at an early age, George established himself as an accident-prone risk taker in his riding and childhood war games. He remained a magnet for accidents through his military career, from a tent fire that singed his face during the 1916 Mexican Expedition to auto accidents in the waning months of World War II. Patton's military proclivity became evident at an early age. His father carved him a wooden sword, and the boy played continually with his sister and an abundance of cousins and friends who visited the Vineyard estate. Patton once said, "I must be the happiest boy in the world."

One of the more eccentric fixtures in the Patton household was George's Aunt Nannie. When Ruth Wilson married the boy's father, George Patton II, her sister, Annie, was devastated. Annie had fallen deeply in love with George II. Her sanity not quite intact and her love unrequited, Aunt Nannie, as she was known, nevertheless attached herself to the newly married couple and never left them. D'Este tells us that she shared everything in their marriage except the bed.

While his parents doted on George, Aunt Nannie was obsessed with him. She became a surrogate mother who shamelessly spoiled him. Nannie was the uncontested, often tyrannical ruler of the Patton household, often trying the Pattons' patience with her refusal to allow George to be punished.

While George's father amused him by reading the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Aunt Nannie, having decided that George was "delicate," began reading aloud to him classics such as *Plutarch's Lives* and *The March of Xenophon*

and stories about Alexander the Great and Napoleon. D'Este asserts that it was Nannie who deeply influenced his early education. George was a willing participant who listened attentively and absorbed deeply. The most influential work Nannie presented to George was the Bible, which she read him three or four hours a day. Jesus emerged from her exegesis as the quintessential example of human courage.

Nannie was never certain if her efforts were having any effect on her nephew and even came sadly to the conclusion that he was dim-witted. Until he started school at the age of 11, he was unable to read or write. Surprisingly, he could quote from memory not only lengthy Bible passages, but also entire volumes of poetry and long passages of history. Nannie's unrelenting Bible readings caused the book to become the foundation on which George's life was built. God dominated Patton's speeches and his writings throughout his life and especially during the peaks and valleys of his career.

Where Aunt Nannie left off, Papa took over with vivid, lavish, and probably exaggerated tales of Confederate heroes of the Civil War. The dead colonels, George and Waller "Taz" Tazewell Patton, came back to life as Papa told and retold the stories of their heroic lives given willingly, tragically, in the cause of the South. The Pattons might now live in California, but emotionally they never left the Virginia plantations. It was Papa who taught George of his family heritage through the lives of Patton military men from the Revolution through the Civil War.

As assiduously as Aunt Nannie thumped the Bible and force-fed the classics, so with military history and family lore did Papa stoke George's all-consuming fires. Papa was vicariously living his own truncated military career through his son. Sometimes he produced actual heroes for his son to emulate. Colonel John Singleton Mosby, the Confederate guerrilla who by the 1890s was a lawyer for the Southern Pacific Railroad, was a frequent visitor to the Patton home. He regaled the young boy with tales of the Civil War and the bravery of the Confederate Pattons.

Also among the living touchstones was George's own beloved step-grandfather, Colonel George Hugh Smith, whose quiet counsel and tales of the Civil War instilled a profound sense of destiny in the boy. Blumenson and D'Este have noted that Smith may have been the greatest influence on Patton's decision to become a soldier and continue the family's martial legacy.

Papa was also willing to get down and play soldier with George. On occasion, the boy would wield his wooden sword against Papa, who would match his own father's sword

against his son's. Papa also made sure that George learned to ride a horse sitting in the saddle from which Colonel George S. Patton had fallen fatally wounded during the Civil War. All told, the relationship between father and son was such that minor transgressions were willingly admitted and just as readily forgiven by the indulgent parent.

George's childhood prepared him to become a secure adult who knew what he owed the world and what he wanted from it. His place was securely at the top of respectable society, and although flawed and tormented, he never doubted his status. Blumenson writes that Patton's position brought him a sense of superiority, a tinge of snobbery and racism. Patton was determined to realize his exalted, noble heritage. All his life, he honed his mannerisms—the profanity, arrogance, aristocratic bearing, the scowl, and the ruthlessness. And Blumenson says, "… the process killed his sensitivity and warmth and turned a sweet-tempered child into a seemingly hard-eyed and choleric adult."

George's early education was not unusual in his time, when children of privilege often were tutored at home until a relatively advanced age. Early on, however, his parents discovered their child had a learning disability that hampered his ability to read. Today that disability is recognized as dyslexia, a malady first identified in 1896, one year before the 11-year-old George entered the Classical School for Boys in Pasadena, unable to read or write. Dyslexia did not become widely recognized in the United States until the 1920s, well into Patton's career as a military officer.

Dyslexia is not simply a matter of reversing letters or numbers but is a complicated disorder whose symptoms include hyperactivity, obsessiveness, mood swings, difficulty in concentrating, impulsiveness, and compulsiveness. Because of their effort to overcome difficulty in reading and writing, dyslexics can be driven by a compulsion to succeed. Yet, they often harbor feelings of inferiority. Virtually every common symptom of dyslexia can be found in the adult Patton. "I am either very lazy or very stupid or both for it is beastly hard for me to learn," he told his future wife, Beatrice Banning Ayer, while still a cadet at West Point. This was despite his prodigious intellectual powers and ability to recall enormous bodies of text and information.

The Classical School for Boys, where Patton spent six years getting his first formal education, catered to children of the Southern California gentry. Patton was a diligent student who nevertheless struggled and faltered with algebra, geometry, and arithmetic because of his

dyslexia. Drawing from his family-tutored knowledge, his marks in ancient and modern history were consistently high.

His family was hardly surprised when George announced in 1902 that he would become an Army officer. Given so many years of indoctrination in the family heritage, his father surely would have been shocked if George had chosen any other profession. The family encouraged George to seek admission to West Point rather than Virginia Military Institute, the alma mater for three generations of Pattons. VMI remained an alternative, however, as entry into West Point was hardly guaranteed. Given the Patton presence at VMI since its founding, admission there was a certainty despite George's mediocre school record.

Patton attended VMI while waiting for acceptance to West Point. (National Archives)

Although his father attempted to pull every political string within reach, George was unable to secure a spot at West Point, and in September 1903 he started classes at VMI. This would give Papa another year to line up the political assistance he would need to crack the West Point barrier.

The trip to VMI was by train, and the strange and obsessed Aunt Nannie was part of the entourage, along with his parents. She set up housekeeping near VMI for the entire school year. The ritual of Aunt Nannie following her "son" from place to place was to become one of the more bizarre aspects of Patton's family life.

VMI and George Patton suited each other well, partly because his father had prepared him impeccably, but also because George applied himself with a vengeance. His military work rose above that of his classmates, and his academic marks were good, even if he was struggling. Knowing that his dream of West Point could slip away, he redoubled his efforts, and his grades steadily improved. He was aided by the dyslexic's need to strive hard to overcome all impediments.

Meanwhile, Papa worked tirelessly to win George's appointment to West Point, and on March 4, 1904, he received a telegram informing him of success. Upon tendering his resignation from VMI, Patton learned that he would have been appointed first corporal at VMI had he returned. This signal honor was conferred on the outstanding plebe. By the time he entered West Point, Patton had taken a passable performance at the Classical School and forged it into an impressive one at VMI. The first real and significant challenge of Patton's life had been conquered by dint of hard work and perseverance.

As at VMI, Aunt Nannie remained for the duration in close proximity to West Point and her beloved George. George believed that most of his fellow cadets at the academy were socially inferior to his classmates at VMI. He never lost his aversion to those of alleged inferior social status, a snobbish trait his grandson Robert ascribes to Patton's father, who "considered himself to be of better stock, therefore of better character than most other men." Patton himself wrote to his father that most "were nice fellows but very few indeed are born gentlemen.... The only ones of that type are Southerners."

Patton's caste consciousness was exceeded only by his bouts of mood swings, self-doubt, and self-aggrandizement. In numerous letters and conversations with his father, George alternately berated and then praised himself for one deed or another. All the while, Papa gave patient, judicious, and loving counsel to his son and provided support, advice, and reassurance whenever asked. Never judgmental, always analytical, he was the lens that allowed George to see his problems clearly. The only other people who could fulfill this need were Beatrice Ayer, the future Mrs. Patton, and the doting Aunt Nannie, whose odd presence George did not seem to mind at all. She provided a more immediate springboard for his emotions, doubts, and rages than the letters of Papa or Bea.

D'Este concluded that Patton was torn between an ability to see future greatness for himself and the possible effects of his dyslexia, which served unceasingly to implant the notion that he was both ordinary and stupid.

Patton's classmates perceived him as pompous and overambitious. His penchant for self-promotion, honed razor sharp at West Point, lasted intact for a lifetime. His goal was glory, and any means to that end was fair. He aspired to become the first general from his class, an admirable goal but a tactless gaff when announced. His first command at West Point, as first corporal, was short lived. He was busted back to sixth corporal when he made himself foolish by putting more men on report than any other corporal. He could not understand why his over-the-top military style would be punished and vowed that he would never allow any slack under his command. Yet, in doing so he moderated his behavior so that the same fate would not befall him again. Throughout his career, he cultivated

friendships and unabashedly called in markers, using his social status and whatever tools he could muster to promote himself.

There were setbacks. Failing math, a typical hurdle for dyslexics, Patton was forced to repeat his plebe year, something he desperately wanted to avoid. This served two purposes: first to reinforce his feelings of inadequacy, and second to drive him to new heights of perseverance. It was at about this time that Patton began keeping a diary. He and his family had a habit of saving virtually every scrap of paper, every souvenir, and every trophy he ever acquired. The diary carried this a step further. When combined with volumes of his letters, pamphlets, poetry, and other communications, it has left historians with detailed indicators of the man. Even this was not without design on Patton's part. The first diary carried a note from Patton that it would be important to a biographer some day. Prescience or arrogance? Perhaps both.

In his final year, Patton was named to West Point's second highest rank, corporal adjutant. He was now in his element. In the class of 1909, Patton would graduate 46th out of 103 cadets. Upon graduation, he would marry Beatrice, the daughter of a Boston Brahmin and textile magnate, thereby validating his own aristocratic upbringing and instantly making him the wealthiest officer in the U.S. Army. Patton had survived into adulthood and, if he had not overcome his dyslexia, he had at least learned to thrive in his dyslexic world.

George Patton's unique upbringing was the correct formula for bringing out the best in a dyslexic person. It provided the only way for him to become a historic figure of his stature. It would have been far more likely, given the extent of his disability, that Patton would become anonymous and marginal. Each person in George's life played a vital role in his development, and the absence of any one of them could have left him unfavorably equipped for any meaningful career in a society that misunderstood his condition. Each of them, no matter how eccentric, outrageous, perfect, or flawed, provided a learning environment tailored for the combination of brilliance and disability that was George Patton. □

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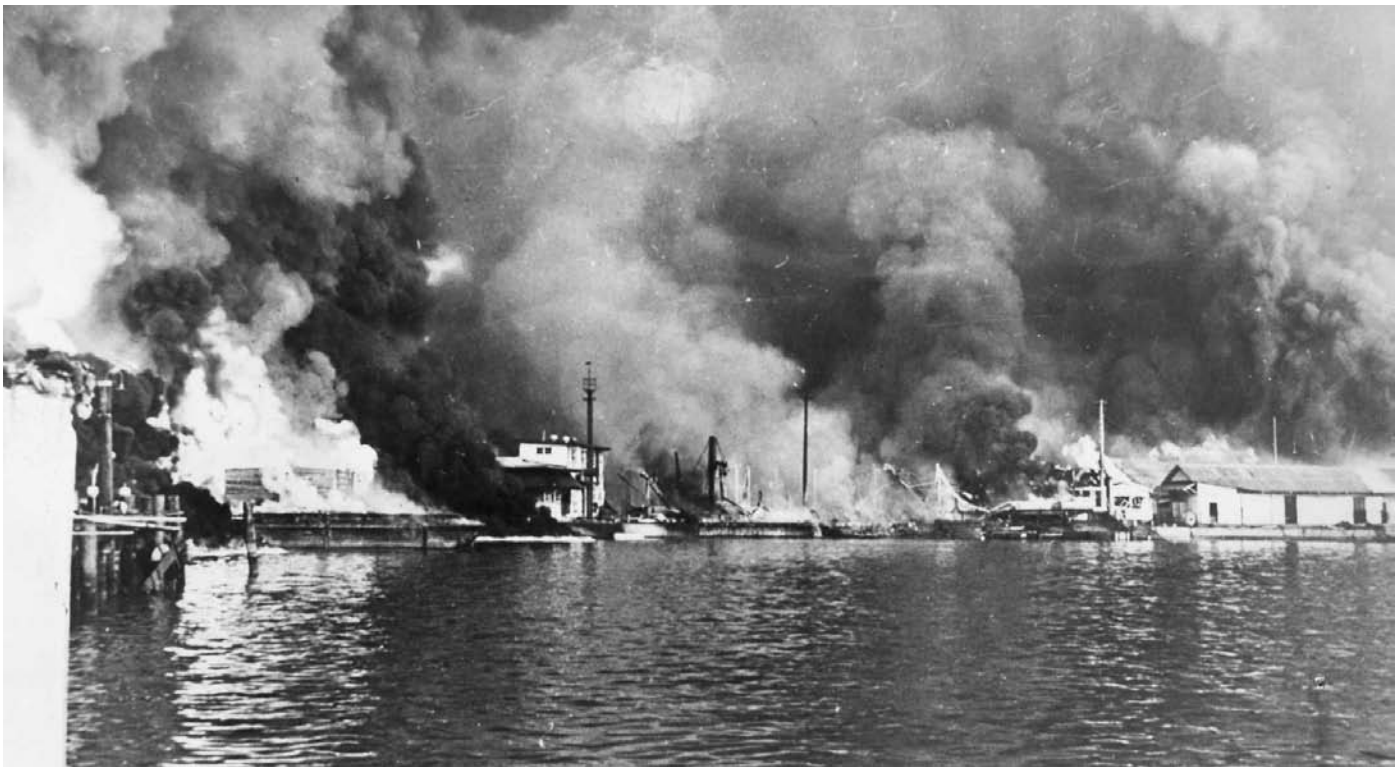
By Ron Gilliam



Southeast Asian Tripwire

Did President Franklin D. Roosevelt send three small vessels into harm's way to pave the way for America's entry into World War II?

AS HE READ THE DECRYPT OF THE RADIOGRAM FROM ADMIRAL HAROLD Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, several things bothered Admiral Thomas C. Hart, the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet based at Manila, Philippines, besides the tortured syntax and curious terminology. The message read:

"PRESIDENT DIRECTS THAT THE FOLLOWING BE DONE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND WITHIN TWO DAYS IF POSSIBLE AFTER RECEIPT THIS DESPATCH. CHARTER THREE SMALL VESSELS TO FORM A QUOTE DEFENSIVE INFORMATION PATROL UNQUOTE. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY AS UNITED STATES MEN-OF-WAR ARE COMMAND BY A NAVAL OFFICER AND TO MOUNT A SMALL GUN AND ONE MACHINE GUN WOULD SUFFICE. FILIPINO CREWS MAY BE EMPLOYED WITH MINIMUM NAVAL RATINGS TO ACCOMPLISH PURPOSE WHICH IS TO OBSERVE AND REPORT BY RADIO JAPANESE MOVEMENTS IN THE WEST CHINA SEA AND GULF OF SIAM. ONE VESSEL TO BE STATIONED BETWEEN HAINAN AND HUE ONE VESSEL OFF THE INDO-CHINA COAST BETWEEN CAMRANH BAY AND CAPE ST. JACQUES AND ONE VESSEL OFF POINTE DE CAMAU. USE OF ISABEL AUTHORIZED BY PRESIDENT AS ONE OF THREE VESSELS BUT NOT OTHER NAVAL VESSELS. REPORT MEASURES TAKEN TO CARRY OUT PRESIDENTS VIEWS. AT SAME TIME INFORM ME AS TO WHAT RECONNAISSANCE MEASURES ARE BEING REGULARLY PERFORMED AT SEA BY BOTH ARMY AND NAVY WHETHER BY AIR SURFACE VESSELS OR SUBMARINES AND YOUR OPINION AS TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE LATTER MEASURES. TOP SECRET

Under attack five days after Pearl Harbor, shore installations and U.S. Navy barges at Cavite in the Philippines burn furiously following a Japanese air raid.
(National Archives)

For a start, Hart thought that sending out a "defensive information patrol" would "consume effort we could ill spare from more valuable objectives." Intelligence on the Japanese invasion force massing on Hainan Island and in Vichy-controlled French Indochina (Vietnam) was already available from several sources, having in fact been the principal reason for Washington's war-warning message to all U.S. Pacific commands on November 27. A key source was his own Navy Patrol Wing 10. On November 25, tipped off by a rumor from Hong Kong, Hart had surreptitiously initiated aerial surveillance of Camranh Bay, on the central Vietnam coast, using a couple of Consolidated PBY Catalina flying boats and had personally written and dispatched the first report the same day. Then, on November 30, Admiral Stark, with presidential approval, ordered him to do what he had already been doing on his own authority for five days.

The December 1, 1941, order's excruciatingly specific detail, extraordinary as it was inappro-

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Silver Prices are Soaring

Silver Trend Chart: Prices based on monthly averages. ©AMS, 2007.

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LEFT: A fast-firing 3-pounder gun of Spanish American War vintage was located and fixed to the deck of the schooner *Lanikai.*
BELOW: Lieutenant Kemp Tolley (right) was ordered from his post aboard the gunboat *Oahu* to the Philippines to take command of the *Lanikai.*

(Both: Naval Historical Foundation)

priate to a fleet commander, also perplexed Hart. Why did the president specify surface reconnaissance? Hart had flatly stated in his November 25 report that the situation most clearly required air observation because high land makes examination from ships both difficult and slow. Also, picket ships would run greater risk than aircraft. As it was, one of his Catalinas had barely escaped from closing Japanese fighters by dodging into cloud.

Why did the president specifically forbid using naval vessels, except the *Isabel*? The Asiatic Fleet—mainly a "show the flag" force of three cruisers, 13 four-stack, World War I-vintage destroyers, and no fighter aircraft—counted 27 submarines, which were fully capable of surface reconnaissance, clandestine at that. *Isabel*, Hart's relief or holiday flagship, was a trim 900-ton private yacht converted during World War I for convoy escort. Hart had noted that with her white hull, buff deckhouse, twin stacks, and inconspicuous armament of two 3-inch deck guns and two 3-inch antiaircraft guns, *Isabel* might pass at a distance for a small Chinese merchantman. He wondered whether Roosevelt had also noticed while viewing the copy of *Jane's Fighting Ships* he had always kept handy since his time as assistant secretary of the Navy during World War I.

By mid-1941, it was no secret that, though opposed to colonialism, Roosevelt was convinced that if Japan cut Britain's imperial lifeline to the Far East, democracy would be lost in Europe and the Japanese militarist government would control all of Asia. At the Argentia Conference off Newfoundland in early August 1941, Roosevelt had assured British Prime Minister Winston Churchill that Britain could count on American armed support in the event of a Japanese attack on the British and Dutch colonies in the Far East. Although Admiral Hart was not privy to that agreement, he must have guessed the existence of something like it, since after Japanese forces occupied southern French Indochina in mid-1941, he

and his staff had been participating in mutual defense coordination conferences at British Far East Fleet headquarters in Singapore.

In late November, the president's war council had held a series of meetings to discuss the problems posed by the burgeoning Japanese threat. One problem was that in order to provide armed support to the British Roosevelt would have to have a declaration of war from Congress, which reflected an isolationist and pacifist public opinion of less than 20 percent in favor of America's entering a war.

At the November 25 war council meeting, which had resulted in the Thanksgiving Day war-warning message, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson raised the question of how to maneuver the Japanese into firing the first shot. The council had no solution then, but at the November 28 meeting, called to discuss the president's sending of a personal message to Emperor Hirohito, someone had brought up the Panay Incident, the accidental sinking by the Japanese of a U.S. Navy gunboat on the Yangtze River in China in December 1937. Although no record remains from the meeting of December 1, which resulted in the "three small vessels" message, historians have conjectured that it must have addressed the problem of how to get the United States into the war if the Japanese attacked only Singapore, Thailand, or the Netherlands East Indies, and not the Philippines or other U.S. territory in the Far East, as well as specifically how to devise an incident in which Japan would commit the first overt act by sinking one or more

American warships.

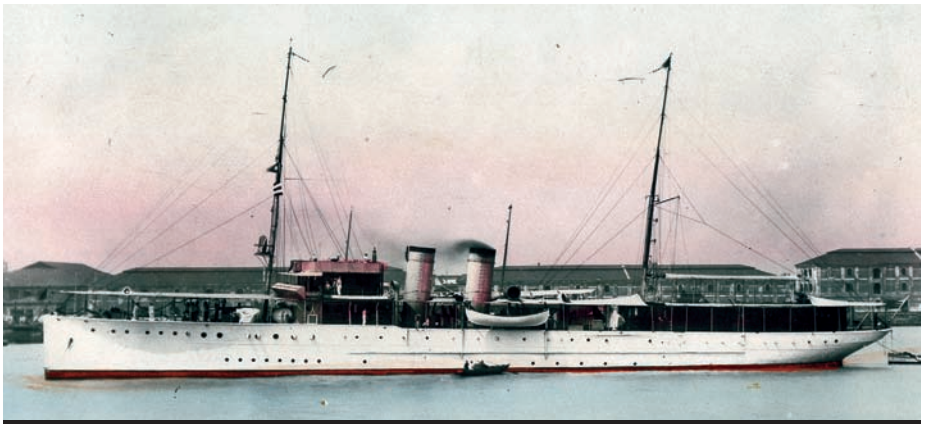
At first, the requirement for Filipino crews annoyed Admiral Hart. He would have to get them from the Insular Force, a naval auxiliary, and ignore their legal restriction to Philippine waters. According to contemporary news accounts, relations were currently touchy with the Commonwealth of the Philippines, which the United States was grooming for the coming of independence in 1946. President Manuel Quezon had exasperated the Roosevelt administration by openly considering requesting early independence and hinting at a subsequent offer of Philippine neutrality to appease Japan. The Panay Incident four years earlier was still fresh in Hart's mind. Could the requirement for Filipino crews be to guarantee the loss of Filipino sailors in an "*Isabel* Incident" and serve to rally Filipino popular opinion behind the United States?

Whatever its real intention, Hart knew the presidential directive was a definite and unequivocal order, so worded as to bear the highest priority, and had to be carried out. He told fleet operations officer Commander Harry Slocum to have *Isabel*'s captain report to him first thing the next morning and to find two small vessels for charter.

Isabel's skipper was Lieutenant John Walker Payne, Jr. Owing to the ship's generally poor condition—age and long tropical service had reduced her 26-knot top speed to about 15—her captaincy had been down-rated to lieutenant. The last lieutenant commander selected to captain the *Isabel* had, after inspecting the vessel, retired to his cabin and shot himself.

Admiral Hart knew and liked Payne and personally briefed him on the presidential directive, requiring Payne to memorize his verbal orders and recite them back. No one was to know the actual mission of the *Isabel* except the admiral and Lieutenant Payne until the vessel was at sea. Then the executive officer was to be taken into confidence. They were to proceed to Camranh Bay, approach the coast only under cover of darkness with dimmed running lights to give the appearance of a fishing craft, and report in code all movements of Japanese ships within a few hours of sighting. For a cover story, a fake operational dispatch was transmitted, ostensibly ordering *Isabel* to search from Manila west to the vicinity of the Indochina coast for a lost Navy PBY plane.

Payne fueled and provisioned at Cavite Navy Yard, and, since his crew was all American, took on five Insular Force Filipinos. Hart had ordered him to fight the ship as necessary and to destroy it rather than let it fall into enemy hands. Accordingly, he ordered all removable topside weights



ABOVE: The converted yacht *Isabel* set sail from the harbor at Manila on December 3, 1941, and was harassed by Japanese aircraft during a clandestine voyage. The *Isabel* was not expected to return to Manila by those who ordered her sortie. RIGHT: The two-masted auxiliary schooner *Lanikai* was chartered and pressed into service by the U.S. Navy on December 5, 1941. The vessel was probably the Navy's last sailing man-of-war commissioned. (Both Naval Historical Foundation)

cleared, including motorboats and gangways, and took on board an additional pulling whaleboat and life rafts. All confidential material except one cipher was turned in. Once at sea, Payne related Hart's orders to his executive officer, Ensign Marion Hugo Buaas, a 1938 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy who had recently come over from the cruiser USS *Houston*. Payne told Buaas that the admiral suspected that the president, anxious to get into the war against the Axis, thought the voyage of the *Isabel* into Japanese-controlled waters off Indochina would accomplish this goal.

Isabel left Manila on December 3, 1941 (Manila time). That same day, one of Hart's Catalinas counted 50 Japanese ships, including transports, cruisers, and destroyers, riding at anchor in Camranh Bay, *Isabel*'s destination. At 7 AM on December 5, a Japanese naval reconnaissance plane appeared. It circled at an altitude of 1,000 feet, range 2,000 yards, and took pictures. The Americans also took photos of the Japanese aircraft, which shadowed them all day. At 7 PM, the coast of central Vietnam was sighted 22 miles distant. Then, just 10 minutes later a CINCAF (Commander in Chief Asiatic Fleet) message ordered them to return to Manila immediately.

Hart had mentioned his intention to recall *Isabel* for another mission in his December 4 reply to Admiral Stark's question about regularly performed reconnaissance measures, claiming "she is too short-radius to accomplish much and since we have few fast ships her loss would be serious."

That claim, given her executive officer's assessment of her condition and speed, raises the question of whether Admiral Hart had sent her out in a prompt response to the presidential directive while hoping to have time to substitute a chartered civilian vessel before any action. In the same radiogram, Hart stated, "Though it is improbable that [I] can start any chartered vessels within two days, [I] am searching for vessels for charter that are suitable but cannot yet estimate time required to obtain and equip with radio."

That same morning, Slocum was inspecting an 83-foot, 67-ton, two-masted auxiliary schooner. Called the *Lanikai,* she had been built in San Francisco in the early 1900s for Hawaiian inter-island service, used by the Navy in World War I, and featured in a Dorothy Lamour movie in the 1930s. The *Lanikai* was chartered for a dollar a year, with four or five Filipino crewmen in the bargain. Two days later, another schooner half the size of the *Lanikai,* the *Molly Moore,* was chartered. Her commissioning, however, was overshadowed by the December 7 attack on Pearl Harbor.

Later on the morning of December 5, the last two gunboats of the Yangtze Patrol, having slipped out of Shanghai the night of November 29 in a run for the relative safety of the Philippines, steamed into Manila Bay. Aboard the gunboat *Oahu,* three-year patrol veteran Lieutenant Kemp Tolley received the message, "LT. TOLLEY DETACHED, PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO COMMAND USS LANIKAI..." with instructions to report to fleet headquarters as soon as possible.

Thrilled by the prospect of his first command 12 years after graduating from the Naval Academy, Tolley was puzzled that no one had heard of the *Lanikai.* At CINCAF headquarters Commander Slocum explained that the ship had just joined the Navy and that Tolley was to arm her with a cannon of some kind and one machine gun, provision her for a two-week cruise, get a crew aboard, and be ready to sail in 24 hours.

Tolley exclaimed that Navy yard procedures would take weeks, perhaps months. "The rules do not apply in this case," Slocum retorted. "Cavite has been directed to give you the highest priority, on your verbal request, without paperwork of any kind. Of this you can be absolutely assured; the President himself has personally ordered it."

At Cavite Tolley was told, "Sign this receipt

for one schooner and tell me what you want!" Phone calls mobilized yard resources. A 3-pounder quick-firing boat gun of Spanish-American War vintage had already been located and determined to be the biggest gun that could be fired safely from the schooner's deckhouse. Two .30-caliber Lewis guns left over from World War I completed the armament, apart from Thompson submachine guns and hand grenades. The Insular Force had assigned half a dozen Filipinos to the crew. They spoke no English and were unsure of what was happening. "They amiably accepted the bags of white uniforms," Tolley noted, "then immediately dug out the little round white sailor hats and proudly put them on."

At 9 AM on December 5, *Lanikai* became a United States Navy man-of-war, probably the last one under sail. Chief Gunner's Mate Merle L. Picking, the only other American aboard besides Tolley, hoisted the commission pennant while the Navy yard band played the national anthem and several hundred yard workers looked on. Then Lieutenant Tolley formally accepted the ship from the captain of the yard, the band played "God Bless America," and the loading of stores and equipment resumed.

American crewmen arrived by ones and twos. Chief Boatswain's Mate Charlie Kinsey stood on the dock, walked forward, squinted at the ship's nameplate, then called down in a

Continued on page 93

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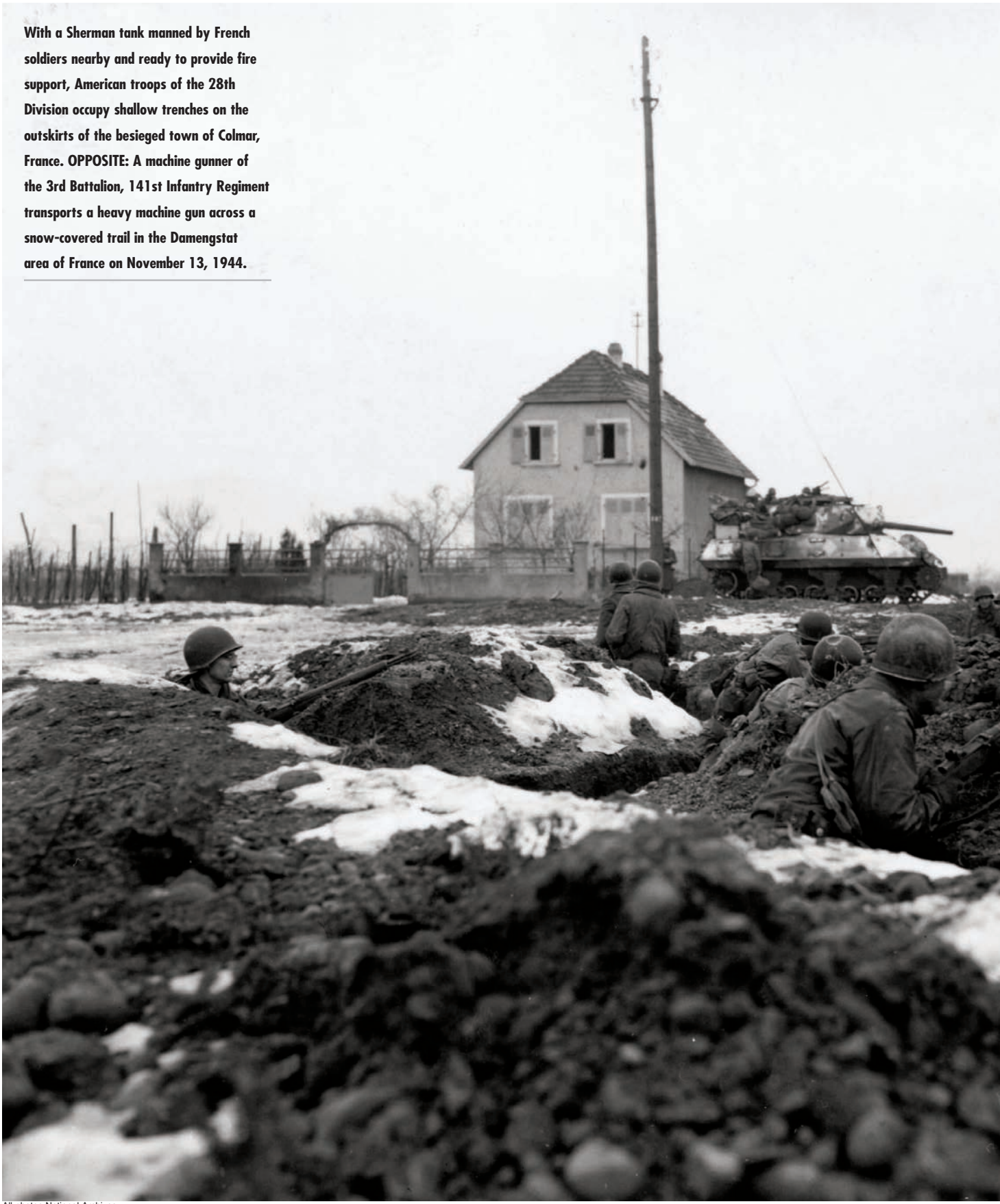


With a Sherman tank manned by French soldiers nearby and ready to provide fire support, American troops of the 28th Division occupy shallow trenches on the outskirts of the besieged town of Colmar, France. OPPOSITE: A machine gunner of the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment transports a heavy machine gun across a snow-covered trail in the Damengstat area of France on November 13, 1944.

All photos National Archives

BY DAN CHAMPAGNE

Bloody Fight for Hill 351

A HEROIC OFFICER LED HIS BATTALION IN CLEARING GERMAN DEFENDERS FROM COMMANDING HEIGHTS NEAR COLMAR AND RECEIVED THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

ABOVE: Carrying their weapons and heavy equipment, American soldiers trudge up a steep incline toward frontline positions. Although it has been overshadowed by the fighting in the Bulge, the combat in Southern France was nevertheless ferocious.

On a cold, dark December morning in 1944, B Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Regiment began the slow ascent up Hill 351. Coming under heavy machine-gun and artillery fire from a well-entrenched enemy, these soldiers of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division were forced to dig in.

First Lieutenant George W. Mohr, commander of B Company, remembered the struggle: "We were pinned down by snipers and heavy machine gun fire; if you dared to lift your head up, you were dead." Mindful that the hill had to be taken at all costs, Lt. Col. Keith L. Ware, the battalion commander, decided to take matters into his own hands. Shouting words of encouragement as he strode up and down the firing line, Ware steadied his weary men, invigorating them to fight on despite continuing artillery fire. His bold leadership and icy courage were pivotal in clearing the enemy and securing the hill.

The story of the hill's capture had begun a week earlier, on December 17, 1944. The 3rd Infantry Division, which consisted of the 7th, 15th, and 30th Regiments, started its move south from Strasbourg, France, to relieve the 36th Infantry Division in the Colmar region. The 3rd Division's first objective was to secure the towns of Bennwihr and Sigolsheim. These were the last two significant towns between the American lines and the key city of Colmar. Both towns were located at the extreme western edge of the Alsace Plain and just east of the last high slopes of the formidable Vosges Mountains. Securing the towns would prove to be a difficult challenge because the Germans had heavily fortified the entire area, including the high ground surrounding the settlements. One of the obstacles to the Allied advance was a German bastion called Hill 351, a steep mound that would bear witness to some of the most courageous fighting of the Colmar campaign.

The 1st Battalion, 15th Regiment drew the unenviable assignment of capturing the town of Sigolsheim, a key German stronghold that had to be taken at all costs. Sigolsheim was an anchor of the enemy line on the northern perimeter of the Colmar bridgehead. Even though the town had been battered by artillery fire, the Germans had burrowed deeply into the rubble and continued their fanatical resistance.

At 7:30 AM on December 23, the 1st Battalion attacked Sigolsheim in the east, from the direction of Kientzheim, and met stiff resistance. Machine-gun and small-arms fire were encountered just before entering the town. A Company fought its way into Sigolsheim but took heavy fire from buildings and foxholes. A German counterattack from Hill 351 to the north stymied the Americans, who realized that holding the town would be a difficult proposition.

The Americans determined that the enemy defenses were not only in the towns, but also on the northern and eastern slopes of Hill 351. Thus, the position was deemed untenable, and the 1st Battalion was forced to withdraw. William Weinberg, a sergeant in B Company, remembered the terrific fighting: "The 1st Battalion suffered terrible losses at Sigolsheim. We were repulsed from the town a couple of times, the ground was muddy, and our tanks got bogged down; it was a terrible mess. We had to pull back to Riquewihr where we dug in for the night."

It was now apparent that before any position in Sigolsheim could be held, the enemy had to be cleared from Hill 351. Positioned between the towns of Bennwihr and Sigolsheim, the hill was a bare, irregular mass of rock that sloped gradually to the northwest toward the town of Riquewihr. Rising above the Alsace Plain, Hill 351 dominated the countryside and the cluster of towns on its flanks. The hill provided the Germans with excellent observation for control and accuracy of mortar and artillery fire. Captain Vernon L. Rankin, commander of D Company, remembered, "They used the hill to direct murderous fire on anything that moved for miles around the plain."

Lieutenant Mohr summed up the predicament: "To have taken Sigolsheim without first taking Hill 351 would have been suicidal."

The hill was the key that unlocked the entire enemy defensive system. Lt. Col. Hallett D. Edson, commander of the 15th Regiment, recognized the daunting task that lay before the men of the 1st Battalion. "This miniature Cassino was defended by 200 crack SS troops under orders to hold their positions to the last," he explained. "These men were stalwart, fanatical, and determined. With six machine guns covering the slopes and abundant artillery and mortar fire, they constituted an extremely formidable force."

"He then armed himself with an automatic rifle and led a handful of men and a tank in a daring assault on six enemy machine gun positions at the top of the hill. It was the most incredible thing I ever saw."

Intent on eliminating the harassing interfer-

ence from Hill 351, A and C Companies attacked up the northwestern slope of the hill on the morning of December 24. A Company, commanded by Captain Elmo F. Tefanelli, reached the top twice but was badly disorganized by concentrated mortar and artillery fire. The Germans counterattacked, forcing the Americans to withdraw to the base of the hill. C Company, under the command of Captain Samuel H. Roberts, took up the fight and succeeded in reaching the northeast slope of the hill by noon. Both companies were compelled to dig in and consolidate their limited gains.

The men of the 1st Battalion fought in the snow for possession of the rocky hill throughout Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, suffering heavy casualties. As Christmas night came to an end, Hill 351 still remained in German hands. However, the "Can Do" Regiment was not about to concede the hill to the enemy so easily. Early that Christmas morning, Lt. Col. Ware had ordered B Company into position for an attack on Hill 351, to commence at 5 AM the following day.

Mohr recalled that memorable Christmas Day: "On the morning of December 25, Ware ordered B Company out of Sigolsheim to attack Hill 351. He wanted us to attack the hill from the direction of Riquewihr so we could join up with Company C on the northeast slope. I told him that it was too dangerous to withdraw from Sigolsheim during daylight hours, so we moved into position near Riquewihr after dark."

On the morning of December 26, B Company began an agonizingly slow advance up the hill and began taking heavy artillery and mortar fire almost immediately. Soon the attackers were engaged in a terrific firefight with a well-entrenched enemy. Throughout the morning, Mohr and his weary men inched slowly up the hill. Shortly before noon, B Company approached the crest of the Hill 351 but encountered fierce and accurate artillery and mortar fire once again.

Mohr recalled, "We had already made several unsuccessful attempts to advance up Hill 351. We were going one foot at a time. Each time we moved, a rain of accurately directed artillery and mortar fire fell on the men. As we pressed forward, we encountered fire from half a dozen machine guns, which had excellent fields of fire; they dominated our approach to the crest. All of a sudden, one of my officers got a wound in the chest. I knew then that we were in for one hell of a battle. The fighting was so bad that Company B was eventually forced to dig in."

Donald Eckman, a private in B Company, added, "We started up the hill and came upon a machine gun nest. We were tired and had suffered heavy casualties. I tried to get around and behind the grape vineyards. All of a sudden, I got hit twice in the leg with a pistol. Needless to say, the battle was over for me."

Aware that his understrength company desperately needed reinforcements, Mohr sent Pfc. Dominick Trepasso and Sergeant William Weinberg back to battalion headquarters to get help. "When we got there, I showed Lt. Col. Ware our position on the map," said Weinberg. "I told him there were not many survivors left, and the ones who were alive were centered

ABOVE: From the vantage point of an American roadblock, this view looks down a deserted road and into the French town of Sigolsheim. When this photo was taken on January 2, 1945, the vineyard in the distance was a no-man's-land between the German and American lines. INSET: The shoulder patch of the 3rd Infantry Division prominently visible on his uniform, First Lieutenant Eli Whiteley receives the Medal of Honor for his heroism on Hill 351. President Harry S. Truman presents the medal on August 23, 1945.

ABOVE: Near St. Helene, France, a heavy machine gun section of the 1st Battalion, 30th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division moves forward along a stream under the watchful eye of a covering rifleman. TOP: U.S. infantrymen of the Ninth Army accept the surrender of a German soldier on November 18, 1944. This enemy combatant was one of 20 to give up that day.

around Company B on the northeast slope. Ware immediately put together a task force of about 25 men. I led them up a road and through a vineyard back to Company B."

For the better part of two hours, Lt. Col. Ware reconnoitered the enemy positions. With the aid of his field glasses, Lieutenant Mohr watched the events unfold. "Lieutenant Colonel Ware moved up the hill, exploring the enemy positions, feeling out possible approaches to the heart of the German stronghold," Mohr marveled. "He deliberately drew fire on himself to locate enemy automatic weapons."

At approximately 2 PM, Ware decided that a vigorous display of leadership was required. "After Lieutenant Colonel Ware returned to the battalion, he went from foxhole to foxhole trying to inspire us to attack. He then armed himself with an automatic rifle and led a handful of men and a tank in a daring assault on six enemy machine gun positions at the top of the hill. It was the most incredible thing I ever saw," Weinberg later recalled.

Captain Rankin, who accompanied Ware in his daring action, agreed. "Seeing that the men, who had suffered heavy casualties in previous unsuccessful attacks were reluctant to move, Lieutenant Colonel Ware shouted, 'One platoon follow me!' and, seizing a BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) from a soldier, took off toward the crest. Nine enlisted men, a tank, and myself [sic] followed him."

As soon as Ware and his men headed up the hill, enemy machine-gun fire converged on them from hidden positions. With bullets ricocheting off the rocks beside him, Ware boldly moved forward ahead of his men. Advancing calmly under fire, he approached to within 20 yards of the first enemy machine gun and shot two German riflemen. He then indicated its position to his tank by firing tracer rounds into the emplacement, enabling the tank to promptly knock the gun out of action. Turning his attention to a second machine gun, Ware advanced 50 more yards through furious fire and killed two of its supporting riflemen. Again, his tank silenced the gun. Having expended the rounds for the BAR, Ware took up an M1 rifle, killed another German soldier, and fired upon a third machine gun nearly 50 yards away. Once his tank destroyed the position, he charged toward a fourth machine gun and fearlessly engaged it, forcing German soldiers in supporting trenches nearby to surrender.

During this action, Ware's small assault group was fully engaged in attacking enemy positions. Five of the 11 men became casualties. Ware was wounded in the hand but refused medical attention. For his actions on Hill 351, Ware later received the Medal of Honor.

Captain Merlin C. Stoker, a member of the group that went with Ware, said, "It is my opinion that Colonel Ware's display of icy courage was an act, not only of heroism, but of necessity. It was essential that the deadlock in the Sigolsheim sector be broken and that the discouraged troops be given an injection of the offensive spirit."

Captain Rankin, who had also directed mortar on the hill during the assault, added, "Colonel Ware personally killed five Germans and captured about 20 others. Tank fire, which the colonel directed, accounted for four of the

"We called Hill 351 'Christmas Hill,' and the Germans called it 'Bloody Hill.' Both names were fitting."

Lined up along a road to await transportation to long-term captivity, German prisoners of war appear fatigued and defeated on December 5, 1944. Eleven days later, the Battle of the Bulge erupted to the north.

six machine guns that comprised the hard core of the German position."

Although the German defensive positions were significantly compromised, they still controlled the hill. When Ware got back to battalion headquarters, he called Lieutenant Mohr and ordered him to organize his company in preparation for the final assault.

"It was just about that time that I got hit in the hip," Mohr vividly recalled. "I immediately asked a private to come up and cut open my canteen so I could put ice on the wound. It was so cold that day that my drinking water was frozen. Then the scariest thing happened," Mohr said. "Suddenly, a shell came into our foxhole and hit the private right in the chest. I looked down on my leg and there were parts of his brains sitting there. We lost a lot of good men that day; it was one hell of a fight."

Meanwhile, the 2nd Battalion coordinated its fires with the attack of the 1st Battalion in the final clearing of Hill 351. Their position shattered, dozens of Germans were frantically running from the crest of the hill. Mortar fire from D Company spread over the forward slope, inflicting heavy casualties on the panic stricken enemy. Private Richard Byham, who followed Ware up the hill, commented, "I was ordered to the top to take prisoners if possible… Thirty-seven of the enemy surrendered … I was told later that many of the Germans occupying the trenches at the top escaped to Sigolsheim below the hill."

Hill 351, the towns of Bennwihr and Sigolsheim, and a large number of prisoners constituted the holiday gift that Brig. Gen. Robert N. Young, acting 3rd Division commander, received from the 15th Regiment. However, the price of the victory was high. Weinberg remembered, "We called Hill 351 'Christmas Hill,' and the Germans called it 'Bloody Hill.' Both names were fitting."

Mohr summed up the sacrifice: "B Company had the largest casualties that day. We lost all our officers and over forty percent of the company."

The Official History of the U.S. Army in World War II describes the action at Hill 351 as one of several "unheralded skirmishes." To the men of the 15th Regiment, the fight was a life and death struggle. They had fought valiantly to dislodge a well-entrenched force of 200 battle-hardened German troops. In the end, the regiment seized a position that the enemy had been ordered to hold to the death. First Lieutenant Eli Whiteley of L Company received the second 1st Battalion Medal of Honor for heroism on December 26, 1944.

Lieutenant Colonel Keith L. Ware eventually was promoted to the rank of major general. He was killed in action 25 years later, while commanding the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam. □

Dan Champagne has taught U.S. history and American government in the public school system for 10 years. He is the author of the book Dogface Soldiers: The Story of B Company, 15th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, *published in 2003. He resides in Williamsburg, Virginia.*

Lifting the Japanese Military

Japanese military successes in 1941 and 1942 shocked the West. Behind those successes lay a logistics effort not often appreciated, that of shipping. The Japanese wrote off any immediate requirement to support normal trade when war began. So the nation dispatched ships normally engaged in that effort to support invasion forces. This healthy pool of ships moved large numbers of men, equipment, and supplies over a short period. They did this within normal man per square foot ratios. Shipboard crowding was no more drastic than usual.

The first four months of war saw the best Army lift capacity the Japanese would ever know. Once the Army secured its objectives, Tokyo withdrew many ships to carry the raw materials from those conquered lands back to Japan. After the initial deployments, lift capacity declined, with fewer and fewer ships moving more and more men.

The Japanese moved 14 Army divisions/divisions minus (flags) by sea during the first 13 months of the war. More impressive is the number of lifts, that is, the number of times a division moved by sea after an interruption such as disembarking, campaigning, and then embarking for the next objective. For instance, the well-traveled 2nd Division sailed in three separate lifts. The division's Japan-Formosa-Camranh Bay-Java travel was one lift, using the same ships throughout. Java-Rabaul required different ships and thus was a second maru lift, while the dash to Guadalcanal was a third. The 4th Division went from Shanghai to Luzon, campaigned there, and then returned to Japan, therefore two division lifts. Japan executed at least 28 full lifts of divisions or divisions (minus) with elements, such as a regiment or more temporarily detached, by the end of 1942.

BY JOHN W. WHITMAN

JAPANESE SEALIFT CAPABILITIES WERE GREATLY DEPLETED DURING THE COURSE OF WORLD WAR II IN THE PACIFIC.

Part of a convoy en route to resupply and reinforce the airfield and garrison at Ormoc on the Philippine island of Leyte, this Japanese freighter is under attack by B-25 Mitchell medium bombers of the U.S. Far East Air Force. Men are seen scrambling for cover as machine gun bullets rip through decking and bombs fall close by. During this action in April 1945, the Americans sank at least three transports and six escort vessels, while damaging several others.

(All photos National Archives unless credited otherwise)

The freighter *Daisan Maru* is shown during its launching at the Mitsubishi shipyard. The vessel was one of the largest in the Japanese merchant fleet, which was decimated during the Pacific War.

Independent brigades, independent regiments, and similar equivalents such as independent garrison units also deployed. Tank regiments (actually battalions in Western eyes) and divisional infantry regiments moving independently of the division needed transport and cargo space. The Japanese managed about 71 regimental equivalent lifts. The different sizes of these regimental units meant that the equivalent of 10 more divisions needed sealift.

When one adds nondivisional field artillery, engineers, signal, and antiaircraft units, another 50 major units needed 80 lifts, the equivalent of eight divisions. The 20th Engineer Regiment, for instance, fought at Hong Kong, then sailed to Malaya. It campaigned there, then sailed for Rangoon; thus, one regiment (actually a big battalion), two lifts. The 23rd Independent Engineer Regiment sailed from Korea to Malaya, then Malaya to Manchuria; therefore, one regiment, two lifts.

Army air divisions and Navy air flotillas island-hopped from their December 8, 1941, bases toward the fighting. Fifth Air Division supported the fighting in the Philippines from Formosa, then flew to airfields on Luzon, and later flew even farther south. Ships moved ground support units, munitions, and fuel. Aircraft flew into Rabaul when the Sixth Air Division activated in late November 1942, but everything else came by sea. There were also air divisional antiaircraft, intelligence, signal, maintenance, engineering, administration, and transportation elements, all of which moved by sea.

Naval air flotillas were equally active. In three cases, these aircraft initially drew support from prewar bases: the 21st Air Flotilla on Formosa, the new 25th that activated on Truk, and the new 26th that activated in Japan. Once they moved, supplies had to follow them by sea. Emplacement logistics of air divisions and air flotillas required a rough total of five divisional equivalent lifts in 1941-1942.

There were also minor forces such as special naval landing forces (SNLF), each roughly the size of a large battalion or a small regiment of infantry, sometimes armed with seacoast artillery, antitank, and antiaircraft guns. An SNLF unit could travel on one or more marus or on warships. Kure 1st SNLF moved from Peleliu to Legaspi in the Philippines aboard the 7,024-ton cargo ship *Matsumoto Maru*. The Kure 6th traveled aboard two heavy cruisers while moving from Japan to Rabaul.

The biggest SNLF needed sealift at approximately 25 percent (manpower) of an Army regimental slice (regiment plus normal divisional field artillery, engineers, transport medical, etc.; three regimental slices equated to a division). A heavy SNLF, with field artillery and antiaircraft, equaled a regimental slice of sealift for its equipment. However, an Army regimental slice of vehicles and tanks overwhelmed an SNLF's modest transportation. So, an SNLF slice was, overall, roughly 20 percent of an Army regimental slice, or about one 15th of a division when sealift was required. By the end of 1942, 18 SNLFs and their equipment had moved or landed 54 times. An estimate of troop lift required to move the SNLFs is about three divisions worth.

Naval construction units were similar in manpower to SNLFs and operated as semi-military engineers. They did have some mechanized equipment, but they were mostly pick and shovel guys. Cadre consisted of naval officers and Japanese civilian engineers. These heavy battalions built airfields, fortifications, barracks, and other structures. They sailed the Pacific aboard standard marus. Their transport might equate to one or two division lifts through 1942.

Naval base forces are difficult to quantify. Base forces garrisoned captured islands, ports, and airfields and defended them with artillery, seacoast guns, and antiaircraft guns. Light naval forces like minesweepers and subchasers protected local waters. The Navy at one time or another operated at least 53 naval base forces and special base forces. Base forces and special base forces varied widely in men and weapons and ranged from battalion strength to that of a division.

On December 8, 1941, these base forces were especially strong in light naval vessels. Sixth Base Force in the Marshalls had one minesweeper division, one gunboat division, four subchaser divisions, assorted marus, and significant coast and antiaircraft artillery. A few light detachments from base forces invaded small islands early in the war. For instance, 5th Defense Force, a regiment size unit subordinate to 5th Base Force in

The military succeeded in moving its men and equipment in 1941 and most of 1942. Those successes gave planners a false sense of security concerning the nation's ability to deploy and sustain its forces.

the Marianas, organized an SNLF of 400 men. That group along with Army elements invaded Guam on December 10.

As the war turned against Japan, base forces became extremely heavy in coast artillery and antiaircraft guns. In very rough terms, all the base forces the Japanese ever operated during World War II equated to 11 or more Army divisions, at least in raw manpower and numbers of artillery. Base forces had communications and medical support similar to Army divisions, were weaker in ground transportation, and had much heavier artillery and construction engineering support. Transporting and sustaining all these units required shipping.

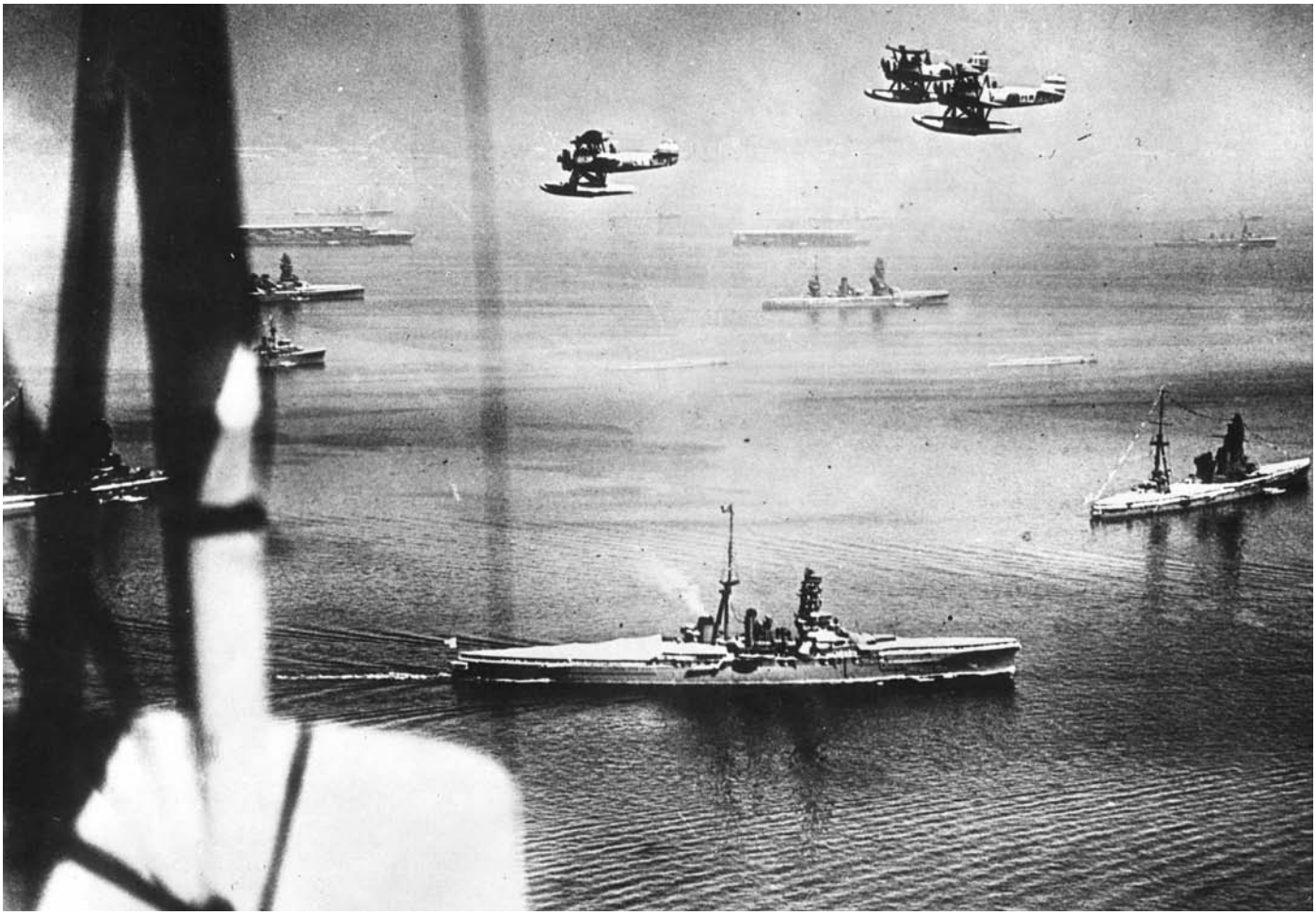
Getting the 2,500 or so men of the 7th Naval Base Force and its logistics from Japan to Lae, New Guinea, by June 1942 probably equaled a quarter of a division lift. Getting the large 8th Base Force to Rabaul, New Britain, over time required shipping for 21,570 men and their stores and equipment. Naval guard forces, formations varying in strength between battalions and regiments, brought in coast defense and antiaircraft artillery. All of the Rabaul shipping probably required a two-division lift effort.

It most likely required a division's worth of shipping to transport the 13,000 men and equipment of 1st Base Force from Formosa and elsewhere to Buin on the island of Bougainville. The 14th Base Force of 4,500 men on New Ireland no doubt required a lift of about a third of that of the 1st Base Force. Similar lifts to establish port facilities, air bases, and defenses at Singapore, Rangoon, Manila, Davao, Cebu, Tawi Tawi, and Batavia, to name just the larger ports, required lots of ships.

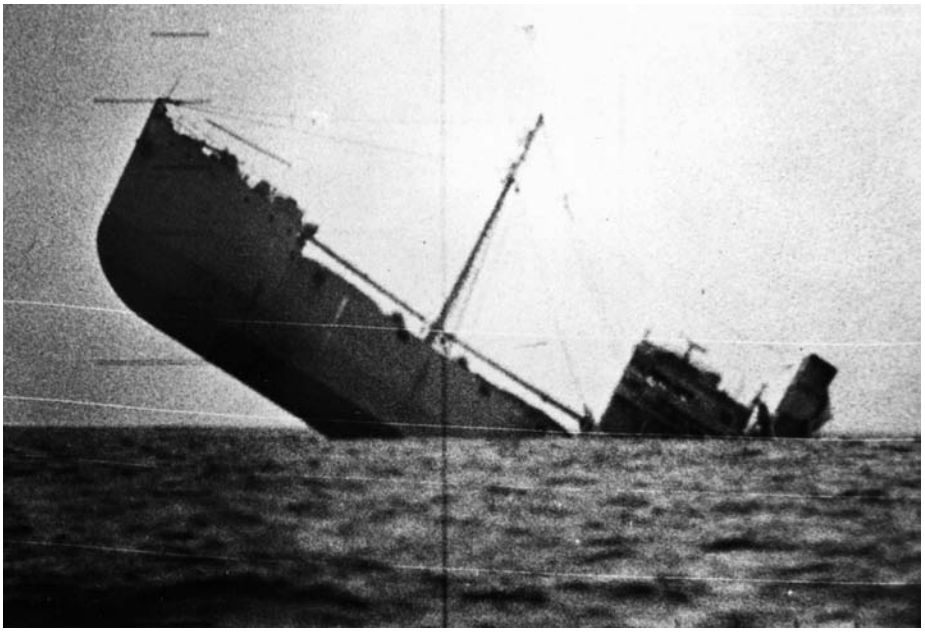
The Japanese naval base forces probably required the equivalent of 12 divisional lifts in 1941-1942. The Navy transported all these forces over 13 months, not in one large lift. Regardless, it required shipping to get them there, and it would require shipping to sustain them.

The saving grace for the Japanese was that most distances early in the war were relatively short. Japan had completed numerous long hauls to assembly areas before the war began. The invasion of the Philippines staged from Formosa and the Palaus. Malaya staged out of Hainan Island and French Indochina. Rabaul to Guadalcanal in August 1942 was a short but extremely dangerous distance. Some of the Solomons moves utilized barges or warships and were not, therefore, a drain on merchantmen. The distance from Malaya to Sumatra was so short that native craft could carry some of the men. On the other hand, hauling the 1st, 6th, 7th, and 8th Tank Regiments from Burma, Malaya, Luzon, and Java, respectively, back to Manchuria necessitated long-haul trips requiring hold and deck space for men, vehicles, munitions, and spare parts.

December 1941 saw the largest number of men (unit flags) move by sea, six Army divisions and 11 brigades and regiments, some of which moved several times. These ships then cycled back for lifts in January and February 1942. January included three division moves, and five more divisions were transported in



A formation of float planes flies above warships of the Imperial Japanese Navy during peacetime maneuvers. American submarines were successful in their attacks on warships as well as merchant vessels.



A photo taken through the periscope of an American submarine shows a Japanese merchant ship in its death throes. This sinking was the 1,142nd such loss for the Japanese of the war since the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

February. In March, two moved, and in April, one. Only one division was transported by sea between May and August. That division, the 4th, actually returned to Japan.

So, other than moving 11 separate brigades, regiments, or independent garrison units forward and three back between May and August, the Army needed shipping only for routine sustenance. This was fortunate, for Japan's economy badly needed ships to move raw materials up to the Home Islands from occupied areas.

The Navy displayed a similar pattern: large lifts over the first four months to move special naval landing forces, naval construction units, base forces, and air flotillas, then a decline in deployment shipping. A different lift curve quickly appeared, that of an upward sustenance curve of merchant and naval assets to keep the deployed forces functioning. That curve climbed upward once these advanced elements encountered Allied counteroffensives.

Japan expanded in one great effort using ships normally dedicated to trade. In the process, the lift equivalent of more than 62 divisions was transported. The combat personnel and equipment were carried in a mix of combat-loaded marus, administratively loaded marus, and warships. The military succeeded in moving its men and equipment in 1941 and most of 1942. Those successes gave planners a false sense of security concerning the nation's ability to deploy and sustain its forces.

In 1943, the Japanese lost 335 Japanese warships and marus totaling 1.5 million tons from attacks by U.S. submarines alone. Another million tons were sunk owing to other causes. American submariners were learning their trade. As a result, the Japanese merchant marine lost 37 percent of its capacity to all causes. This number becomes even more ominous considering that the production of new shipping during the period is included in this figure.

In December 1941, the Japanese had sufficient shipping so that five gross registered tons of shipping moved one soldier. By late 1943, space had become so tight and so many ships had been returned to service the war economy that one gross ton moved each soldier. Dispatchers loaded ships well beyond safety limits. Overloaded ships suffered mechanically. By December 1943, the Japanese were jamming five times more troops and equipment into each transport than they had in 1941. Longshoremen stacked filled oil and gasoline drums on decks of cargo ships and among troops. Army divisions left behind more and more unit equipment when they moved.

Four infantry divisions moved in January, and two divisions sailed in March. The rest of 1943 averaged one division moving each month. Throughout the year, 12 divisions (flags) made 15 moves. Most of these were long-haul moves rather than tactical, and they required a serious commitment of ships and time. Six moves were as far as one could sail and still stay within the empire. Only two of the moves were short. Two Army air divisions moved in three short lifts; a light division equivalent of an SNLF moved in 14 battalion-size lifts; and the equivalent of 18 independent brigades, independent regiments, or divisional regiments sailed in 21 lifts.

Compared with their moves of 1941-1942, the Japanese had obviously placed a number of units where they wanted them in 1942 and did not need to move large numbers in 1943.

Several examples illustrate the major losses suffered by Japanese transport vessels.

Japan had serious difficulties deploying her manpower, and a few examples illustrate some of the worst events. *Tatusta Maru* was a sleek, 13-year-old, 21-knot passenger liner of 16,955 tons. When she departed Japan in February 1943 with reinforcements for Truk, a submarine torpedoed her. She took down all hands, 1,481 passengers and crew, in cold, gale-driven seas.

Heavy losses occurred even in port. On February 17, 1944, *Aikoku Maru* was anchored at Truk. Aboard were personnel of the 1st Amphibious Brigade. Four bombs and a torpedo ripped the ship in a great blast that killed 730 passengers and 12 crewmen. Nearby, bombs hit *Akagi Maru* and set off fuel tanks, ignited her magazine, and killed 1,300 men.

Some convoys were lucky. In early June, a convoy of five marus carried half the 43rd Division to Saipan without loss, but a second convoy with 7,000 men of the division lost five of its seven ships. The cargo ship *Katsukawa Maru* sank and dumped 2,800 infantrymen into the sea. The freighter *Tamahime Maru* and the transport *Takaoka Maru* were torpedoed and sunk. *Takaoka Maru* lost 144 men, while another 3,366 went into the water. The cargo ship *Harve Maru* also went down, and 1,120 soldiers were thrown into the sea. The cargo ship *Kashimasan Maru* was carrying ammunition and aviation gas. A submarine torpedoed her, and she took down 43 merchant crewmen. Despite getting wet, 80 percent of the men on the lost transport ships lived to reach Saipan, but all their equipment was gone. The 118th Infantry Regiment lost about 850 men and all its equipment, a blow that

Naval base forces, for instance, were substantially in place. Although these base forces needed resupply, and some received reinforcements, they did not need the more logistically difficult emplacement.

So troublesome had shipping shortages and losses become and so vulnerable were merchantmen that Japanese aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and auxiliaries started carrying naval logistics and Army soldiers and supplies. The Navy had not done this with any frequency until Guadalcanal. Using warships certainly reduced vulnerability because they were fast, agile, and carried robust antiaircraft defenses. Such use, however, put a strain on ships not built for this purpose. Nor was it economical in fuel oil. It was, however, successful.

As Japan's aerial situation deteriorated, and as slow marus became more vulnerable to aircraft and submarines, cruisers sailed on 86 logistics missions in 1943. There were no losses while carrying troops or equipment, although some cruisers did suffer damage. Destroyers also saw their commitment to logistics lifts increase. Fleet, light, and escort carriers teamed with battleships to make logistics runs.

Supply requirements for forward forces continued an uninterrupted rise. For every sailor and for every soldier dispatched to the Gilberts or Marshalls or to Java or Burma, the military needed shipping to carry forward that individual's munitions and food. The nearly 20,000 sailors in the Gilberts and Marshalls could not live off the land, so repeated supply trips were necessary. The stronger such a force became, the more supplies it consumed.

In the wake of a strike by carrier-based aircraft of the U.S. Third Fleet on July 26, 1945, port facilities on the northern coast of the Japanese Home Island of Honshu burn fiercely.

In 1944, the Army sent by sea more units than it had moved since the war began. Japan endeavored to move 28 divisions (some in more than one lift, therefore totaling 32 division lifts); nine air divisions or air flotillas (11 lifts); four division equivalents in expeditionary units, and about 41 independent mixed brigades, tank regiments, detached divisional regiments, and independent regiments (50 lifts). Minor nondivisional artillery and the nondivisional logistics tails for the combat elements also sailed. For instance, three naval construction units sailed for Guam and Tinian. A stunning 1.8 million troops were moved by sea in 1944, and 83,293 died, an equivalent of six to seven divisions.

As in 1943, Japan's Navy dipped into its combat vessels to provide fast lift assets. The Navy made available aircraft carrier, battleship, and cruiser space during routine deployments of ships from one port to another. In February, the super battleship *Musashi* loaded an Army battalion and an SNLF, munitions, fuel, food, and vehicles. The crew lashed bombs to the deck ahead of the forward turrets, secured oil and gasoline amidships, and tied down trucks aft. *Musashi* and three destroyers sailed for Palau. A typhoon washed most of the ammunition deck cargo overboard, but the ships reached Palau intact on February 29.

There is only a modest correlation between *Musashi*'s troop load and that of the Jolo Force, a detachment from the 56th Brigade that sailed in 1941. Yet, a comparison is interesting. The Jolo invasion force of 4,000 men sailed in nine marus grossing 52,467 tons. The Japanese had sufficient lift in 1941 and a tactical environment benign enough to move soldiers in conventional marus. By 1944, it had neither. So, approximately 2,000 men sailed aboard *Musashi*.

A departure from Japan in early March 1944 included troops and supplies loaded aboard a task group built around the aircraft carrier *Zuikaku*. The battleships *Kongo* and *Haruna* took aboard men, while the crew of the heavy

destroyed it as a combat-effective unit.

On June 29, 1944, the 7,386-ton *Toyama Maru* was hauling 4,000 men and thousands of drums of gasoline to Okinawa. A torpedo touched off the gasoline, and drums surged out of the sinking ship, exploding in the fires that already covered the sea and engulfing men floating in life jackets. The sinking took a gruesome toll: 3,627 men killed.

Convoys sailing to the Philippines were hard hit. On July 31, 1944, submarines attacked a convoy sailing at eight knots and carrying elements of the 26th Division. *Fuso Maru*, with 4,500 troops aboard, took 1,376 men down with her. *Manko Maru* lost 295 men. *Yoshino Maru*, carrying 5,012 soldiers, sank and 2,482 men died. Tanker *Koei Maru* had 1,050 men aboard when she sank. A battalion of the 2nd Tank Division heading for Manila went down. Final results were five ships lost totaling 39,063 tons, and a sixth wrecked beyond further use. Loss of life was heavy.

In August, Convoy HI-71 sailing to the Philippines lost the big attack transport *Tamatsu Maru*. She sank so fast that she dragged 4,541 soldiers and merchantmen to their deaths. The huge, 17,537-ton transport *Teia Maru*, once an armed French merchant cruiser, took 2,665 men to the bottom when she sank. Over 8,378 soldiers and sailors died in this single convoy. In November, a submarine sank the 11,000-ton transport *Akitsu Maru*. She went down in three minutes, and 2,150 men, mostly from the 23rd Division, died. Two days later, torpedoes hit the attack transport *Mayasan Maru* sailing in the same convoy as *Akitsu Maru*. A total of 4,500 men of the division were packed aboard. The ship sank in two and a half minutes, and 3,432 soldiers and crewmen died. Torpedoes sank the escort carrier *Shinyo*, killing 700 sailors.

Japan suffered numerous other convoy losses, all of which contributed to the more than 83,000 men lost at sea in 1944. □

ABOVE: U.S. Navy dive-bombers attack a Japanese cruiser at the Battle of Midway in this painting by Robert Benny. RIGHT: A 5,500-ton Japanese freighter is pictured just prior to being attacked by aircraft of the U.S. Third Fleet near Tsurga on July 30, 1945. FAR RIGHT: Moments after the left photo was taken, the same Japanese ship explodes following repeated hits by bombs from American carrier-based aircraft. (Above: Naval Historical Foundation)

cruiser *Mogami* wrestled aboard Army supplies. Later, the super battleship *Yamato* and heavy cruiser *Maya* loaded Army troops and equipment for a deployment to Manila in the Philippines. While the *Yamato* was involved in a redeployment for tactical purposes, the majority of these warships were tasked solely to move men and gear.

In late June, the largest logistics lift of the war to be transported in warships was assembled in Japan. It was a major fleet effort, which included no slow marus and only the fastest and best of Japan's Navy. Speed and maneuverability were prized above all. Two heavy cruisers paved the way when they left Japan on July 1 headed for Manila. Both ships carried Army troops. The battleship *Nagato* took aboard matériel and a regiment of the 28th Division. The battleship *Kongo* took on men and supplies. A full regiment trooped aboard *Yamato*, more than doubling the number of men the ship was meant to hold. The crew of *Musashi*, the fourth battleship in this fleet, guided men and equipment into makeshift quarters. Ten cruisers took aboard troops and equipment. Seven destroyers rounded out the force, which left the Home Islands on July 8, dropped men off at both Okinawa and Manila, then headed south with the remainder of the troops and equipment. Three more cruisers left Japan on July 14 with reinforcements and supplies for Okinawa.

Heavy, light, and training cruisers executed 62 lift missions in 1944. Cruisers moved air base supplies, torpedoes, ammunition, antiaircraft units, Army troops, and Navy ground and air personnel. Losses during logistics runs in 1944 were only four light cruisers, three of which had unloaded their soldiers and were exiting the area. The losses equate to a 7 percent rate in lift assets and only 2 percent in cargo, very good considering how fatal it had been proven to move men in slower ships.

Throughout the war, the Japanese response when their ground forces were outnumbered and facing attack was to send in more troops and virtually ignore logistics. A large troop convoy assembled in Shanghai, destination New Guinea. The 32nd Division sent 12,874 men aboard four marus. The bulk of the 35th Division marched 8,170 men onto another four marus. Fifteen good-size marus left Shanghai on April 17, eight of which carried the two divisions.

A brief comparison of tonnage is in order. In January 1943, the Navy had moved the 20th Division from Korea to New Guinea in nine marus and two light cruiser transports, a total of 81,254 gross and displacement tons. Then from September to October 1943, the Navy had lifted the 17th Division using seven large marus, one naval auxiliary, and four light cruiser sorties. Gross registered tonnage and cruiser displacement totaled 91,073 tons. Now, in April 1944, for Convoy Bamboo No. 1 out of Shanghai, the Navy was lifting the majority of two divisions with eight marus and no cruisers, grossing only 45,687 tons. Overcrowding in 1944 was four times worse than in 1943, and that crowding invited disaster.

One reason that eight marus could carry two divisions was the lightness of the divisions. Japanese divisions lacked large logistics tails. In this case, lightness extended even into combat elements. The 35th Division had only two infantry regiments at Shanghai, the 220th and 221st. The division headquarters and the 219th Infantry Regiment were then in Japan and not part of this convoy.

The Japanese considered this an important lift. They assigned a rear admiral and the 6th Escort Convoy, consisting of a minelayer, three destroyers, three frigate-type escorts, one minesweeper, two subchasers, and three gunboats. Despite those 13 escorts, a U.S. submarine hit the 5,425-ton *Yoshida Maru No. 1* and drowned an entire 32nd Division infantry regiment of 3,189 men.

The convoy put into Manila Bay on April 29,

dropped off six Manila-bound marus, and detached five escorts. The convoy departed Manila on May 1. The ships now headed for Halmahera Island instead of New Guinea because Tokyo feared air attacks if the ships sailed any farther to the southeast.

A second submarine hit three of the eight transports. The ships stayed afloat long enough for most of the men to get off. Up to that time, the old transport *Aden Maru* (5,860 tons) had been a lucky ship. She had participated in several landings, dodged a torpedo, and survived a hit by a dud bomb. She was carrying 2,410 men of the 35th Division, and 700 of them died when the maru went down. Aside from a battalion of personnel lost, two more battalions went into the water and became survivors rather than armed combat units. The *Taijima Maru* (6,995 tons) sank. Down went the brand-new cargo ship *Amatusan Maru* (6,886 tons) sailing on her maiden voyage. She carried down 14 howitzers, and 95 of the 3,420 35th Division soldiers aboard were lost. The 35th Division, with two infantry regiments and an artillery regiment in this convoy, lost a battalion or more of infantrymen, all but a single battery of artillery, and equipment for two infantry regiments.

Had the Japanese operated with the normal supply and combat support tails standard in Western armies, they could never have transported 28 divisions, four division equivalents, and 41 brigade equivalents. In Western parlance, the corps and army troops could never have been moved. Even Japan's combat divisions were light. The 62nd Division, activated in China in 1943 and shipped to Okinawa in 1944, did not have an organic artillery regiment and had miserably few engineers, signalmen, and trucks.

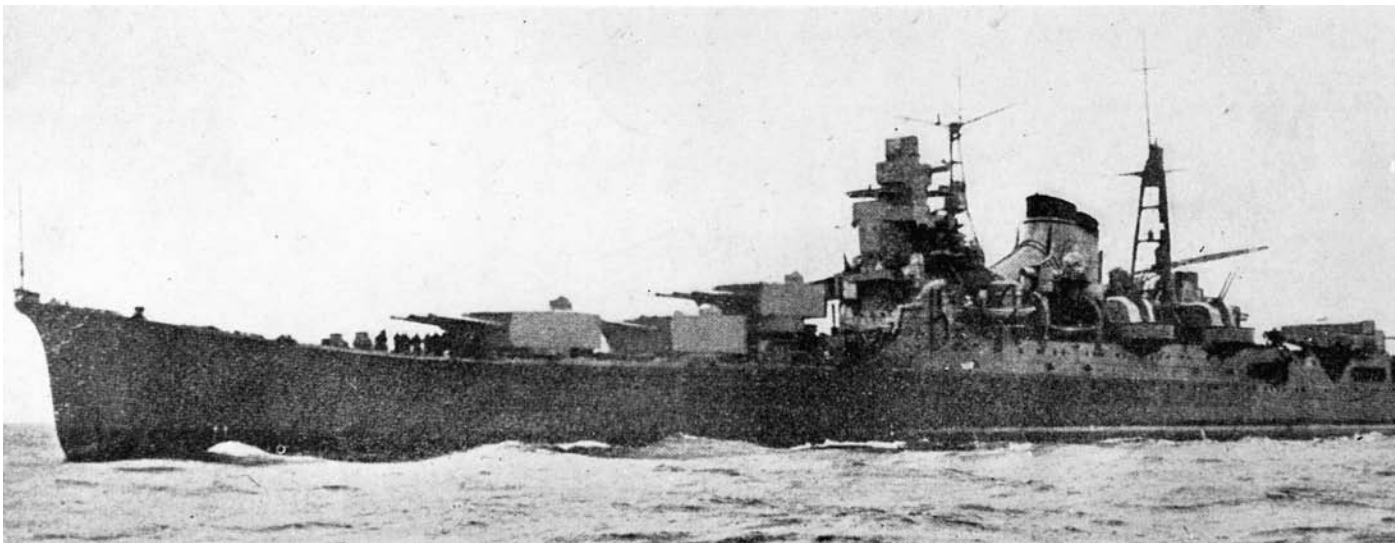
In the absence of modern technology, in particular adequate antisubmarine technology, the Japanese shoved men into the Philippines, Formosa, Okinawa, and the Marianas by brute force.

In 1941, the Army used 650,000 tons of shipping to move two combat-loaded reinforced divisions to the Philippines and 710,000 tons to move three combat-loaded reinforced divisions into Malaya. The Army estimated that it needed 1.5 million tons for the 12 divisions that were estimated to be required for the invasion of Australia in 1942. In February 1942, the Japanese had detailed 38 marus to move the reinforced 48th Division out of Luzon for an amphibious landing at Java. The March 1942 Christmas Island Seizure Force included two mid-size marus carrying just 850 men. The June 1942 Midway Transport Group boasted 100,000 tons of cargo ships, transports, and destroyer transports to carry just 2,450 Army and Navy infantry and two naval construction units. In 1944, 40,000 men would have stuffed themselves into Midway's 100,000 tons.

For 1944, the Army planned its movements on a merchant fleet reduced from the 1941 level of 6.1 million tons to a January 1944 total of roughly 3.8 million tons, a figure that would decline steadily during the year. It is true that administratively loaded units required much less tonnage than combat-loaded, invasion-ready troops. It is also true that 1944 deployments would extend over 12 months versus the single month of December 1941. That would allow the same ships to be used several times, or until they were sunk. But the distances were longer in 1944 than in 1941, and the enemy threat was vastly more dangerous.

Regardless, the Army succeeded. In the absence of modern technology, in particular adequate antisubmarine technology, the Japanese shoved men into the Philippines, Formosa, Okinawa, and the Marianas by brute force. Casualties did not matter, for raw manpower was the only coin left in the military's purse. And the military spent it with reckless abandon. The military moved its men, but personnel and equipment losses were heavy. □

John W. Whitman is the author of Bataan: Our Last Ditch.The Bataan Campaign, 1942, *the definitive history of the Bataan campaign. He is a retired infantry lieutenant colonel, airborne, Ranger, with a Combat Infantryman's Badge. He has a Master of Military Art and Science, holds a secondary Army specialty as an historian, and is an Advanced Research Project Associate of the U.S. Army Military history Institute. He has had over 70 articles and encyclopedia entries published or accepted for publication.*



The Japanese cruiser *Kumano* is shown underway in the Pacific. Its sister, *Mogami,* and its crew of 850 were put out of action off the coast of Java.

Fliegen Und Siegen

BY A. BURKE

A volume of rare photos from the glory days of the Luftwaffe provides a glimpse of life and combat in Hitler's air arm.

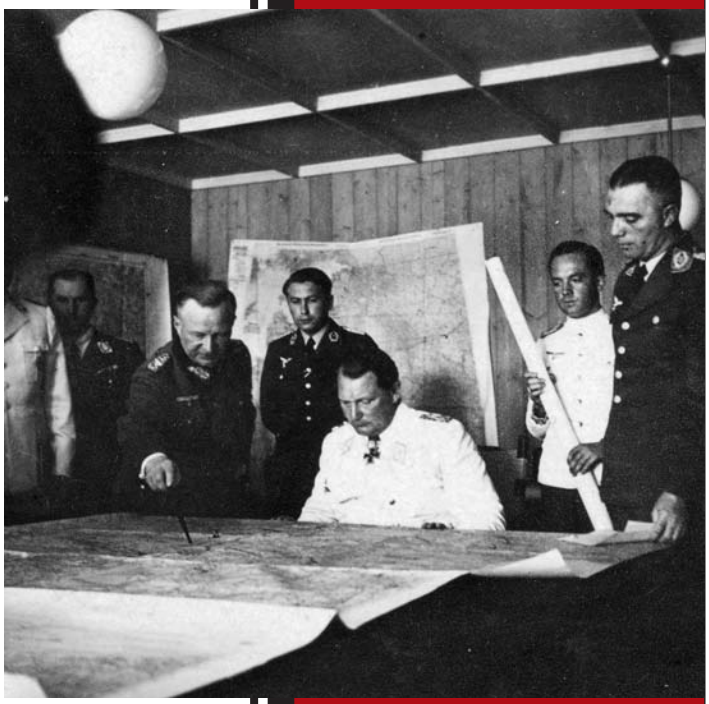
Sixty-five years ago, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring's Luftwaffe showcased its aerial triumphs in a 1942 commemorative book of photographs entitled *Fliegen und Siegen* ("Flying and Victory"). One hundred stereoscopic photographs provided a rare insider's view of the Luftwaffe during the early years of World War II.

Original pictures on genuine photographic paper captured Reichsmarschall Göring as he planned strategy with Nazi commanders beside the train that served as his mobile command post. Aerial shots recorded bombing runs in Greece, Crete, Yugoslavia, and France. Other photos depicted young German airmen flying missions in the Junkers Ju-52 transport aircraft and the Messerschmitt Me-109 fighter.

When viewed through the stereo glass lenses, photos jump to three-dimensional life. Viewers feel as if they are in the midst of the picture, able to reach out and touch bombs as they are loaded or adjust radio dials in the cockpit.

The *Fliegen und Siegen* books were meticulously crafted by Raumbild-Verlag Otto Schönstein K.-G., a Munich publisher specializing in stereoscopic photography. Raumbild also created commemorative volumes for the 1936 Olympics, which were held in Berlin, the 1937 World Exposition in Paris, and Hitler's state visit to Mussolini in Italy. The 1942 limited editions of *Fliegen und Siegen* were purportedly given as gifts to important civilians and favored military officers.

The front and back covers of *Fliegen und Siegen* are half-inch-thick, beveled, fabric-covered wood with inside storage compartments precisely



Clockwise starting from opposite page.

Inside the cabin of a Junkers Ju-52 transport plane being loaded with bombs.

Airmen prepare for a reconnaissance flight. Note the squadron emblem of the Earth with Saturn-like rings around it.

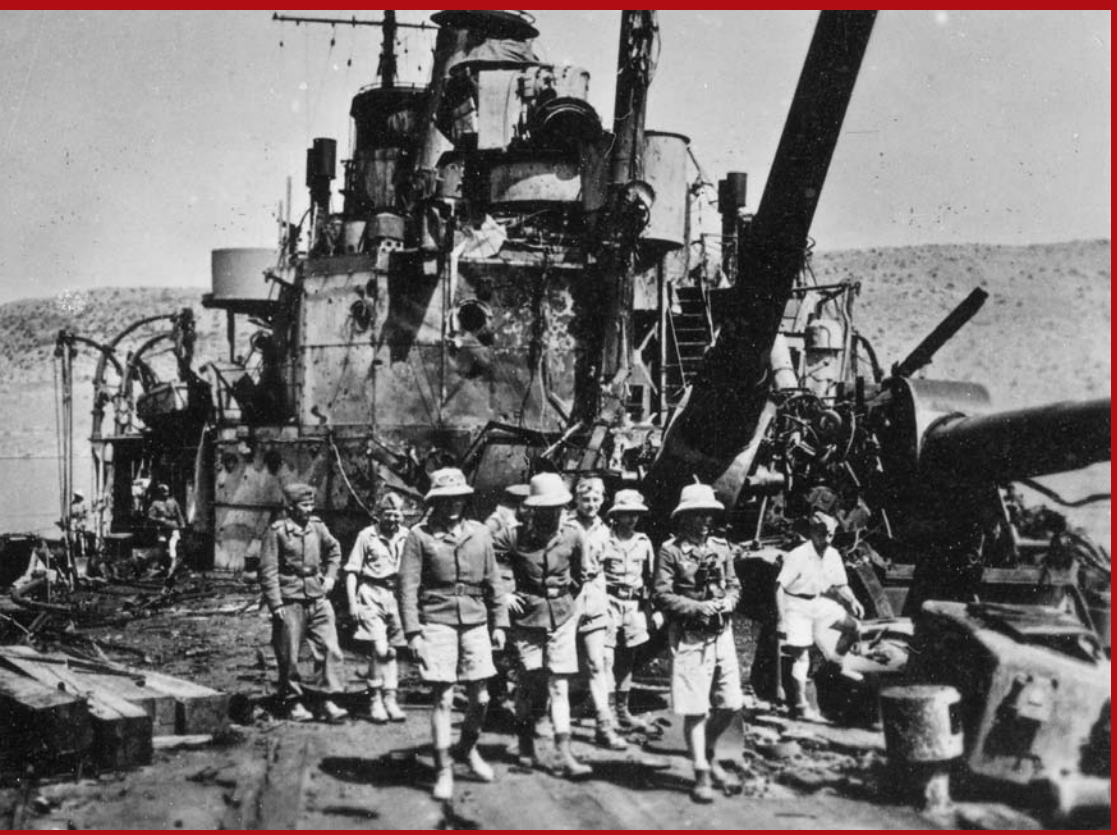
The Reichsmarschall studies the map table during a briefing by generals at his headquarters.

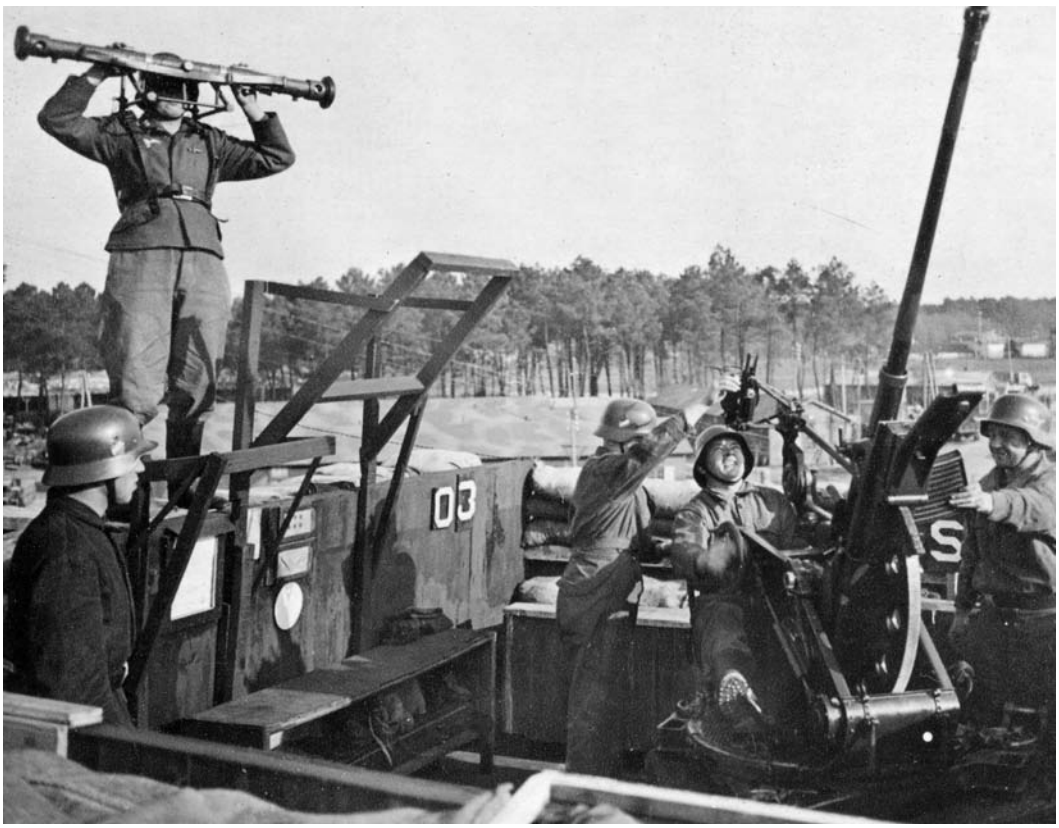
Couriers meet beside the train that served as Göring's mobile command headquarters.

A German reconnaissance plane shot this photo over Paris. In the foreground is the Madeline Church; in the background are Montmartre and Sacre Coeur.

A Junkers Ju-52 returns from Crete, bringing home wounded parachutists and Alpine patrol soldiers.

This tattered photo shows Alfreda Langnor's father, name unknown, who was a German officer killed during the war. According to Alfie, he had been given the rare edition of *Fliegen und Siegen* in recognition of his military accomplishments. On the back of the photo is the handwritten partial inscription: For my treasure, August 10, 194.... Unfortunately the last number of the date has been torn away.





TOP LEFT TO RIGHT:
This is the work of a Stuka Junkers Ju-87 that destroyed small ships and large transports on Suda Bay in Crete. It also destroyed the English cruiser *York*.

In Athens, German soldiers man anti-aircraft guns in front of the Acropolis to ward off British bombers.

Parachutists who captured the town of Chanea in Crete.

LEFT: A flak tower during an air raid. Note the soldier on the left with the rangefinder.

OPPOSITE: At an unnamed airfield, mechanics repair a plane engine on the spot.

cut to size to store the photos and stereo viewer. The book also includes several full-color plates, including a portrait of Göring with substantial artistic license taken to pare down the Reichsmarschall's corpulence.

The book offers considerable insight into the Luftwaffe mind-set during the war's triumphant early years. A mixture of boastful braggadocio and canny propaganda sets the tone in many photo captions. Yet, the faces of young airmen display great esprit de corps and dedication to the war effort. Without their German uniforms, the young men could easily be taken for patriotic American soldiers.

After 1942, no further editions of *Fliegen und Siegen* were created. The Luftwaffe's glory days had ended.

Richard Kohler came into possession of one of the few surviving books while he was a U.S. Army corporal stationed in Giessen, Germany, from 1951 to 1953. It had belonged to the father of his German girlfriend, Alfreda Langnor. Rick learned that Alfie's father had been an officer killed in action during the war. Before his death, though, he apparently earned favored status because he had been given a 1942 edition of *Fliegen und Siegen*. Alfie explained that only people of prestige and accomplishment had received such an honor. She gave the book to Rick. When the Army transferred him stateside, he had to leave Germany without a chance to say goodbye and was never able to reconnect with Alfie.

No one knows how many 1942 editions of *Fliegen und Siegen* survive intact. A few appear at auction, often with asking prices of more than $1,000. A handful of others are listed in collections of German university libraries.

But Richard Kohler, now 75 and living in Wesley Chapel, Florida, has no intention of selling his copy of *Fliegen und Siegen*. To him, the book not only represents the memento of a lost love, but also a little- known glimpse of history. □

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By the spring of 1943, the Nazi deaths camps in eastern Poland— Sobibor, Belzac, and Treblinka—were running out of victims. These camps were main centers of Operation Reinhard. Named for the late Reinhard Heydrich, Heinrich Himmler's former deputy and chief architect of the "final solution," the purpose of the camps was pure mass murder on an industrial scale. Operation Reinhard was, by the perverse standards of the "final solution," an overall success. The death camp at Treblinka alone murdered at least a half million people in little over a year. It can be conservatively estimated that a least a million Jewish men, women, and children and thousands of gypsies had been gassed, shot, or otherwise killed at the three camps by mid-1943.

Most victims of Operation Reinhard survived only a few hours after unloading from the fetid, overcrowed cattle cars in which they were shipped east. Occasionally, small numbers of Jews were selected for slave labor in the death

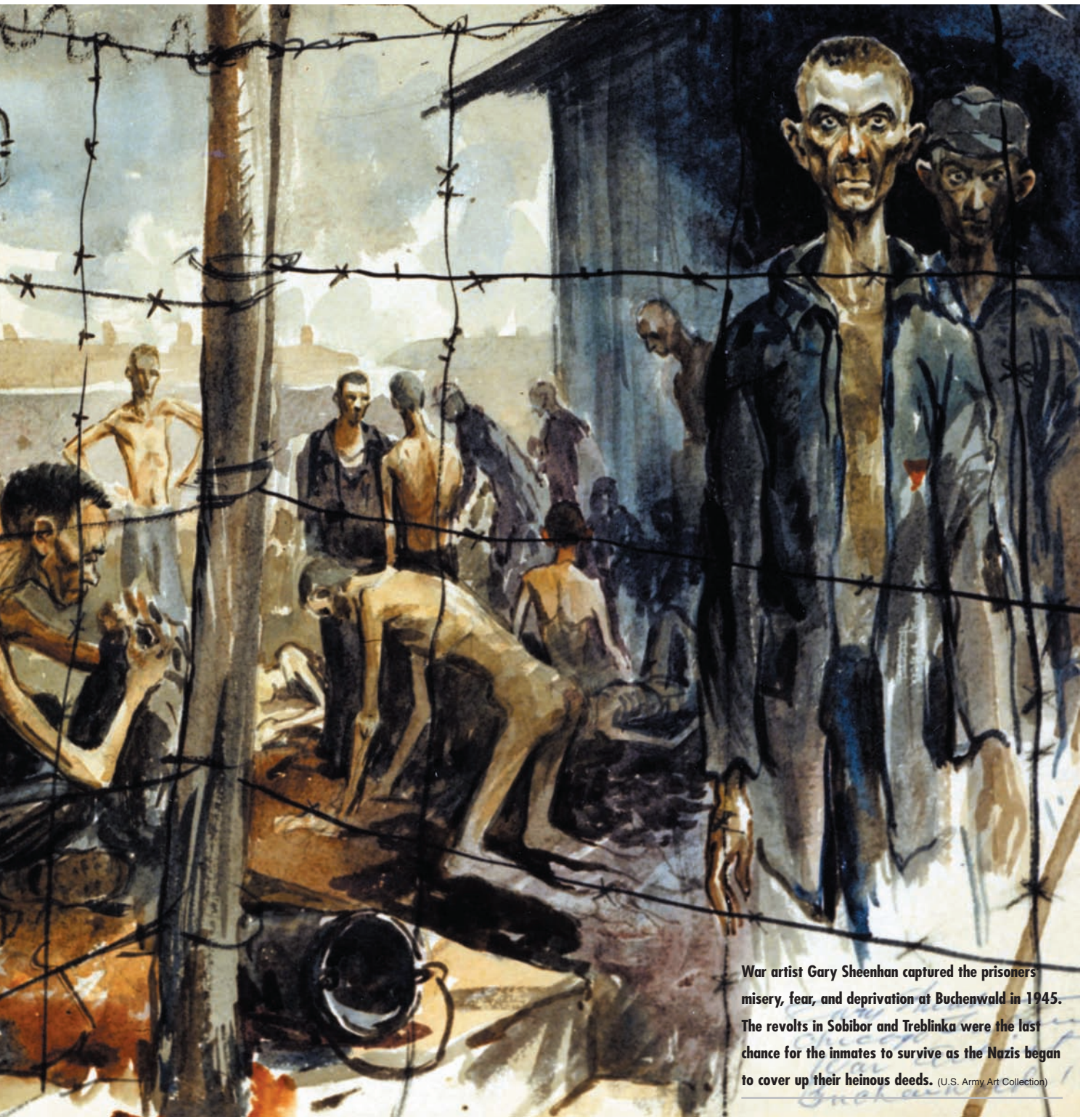
Revolts in the DEATH CAMPS

At Treblinka and Sobibor, prisoners doomed to death struck against their SS and Ukrainian oppressors.

BY JONATHAN F. KEILER

camps. None of the camps needed many workers, as their primary function was simply to kill. Approximately 600 to 800 prisoners were employed in each camp for its day-to-day operations and to support the Nazi SS garrisons and their Ukrainian auxiliaries.

The camps were located in the wilderness of eastern Poland, designated by the Nazis as the Generalgouvernement, a land where two millennia of Western culture and civilization ceased to exist, replaced by a nightmare regime of torture and murder. Each death camp was no more than a square mile in area and controlled by perhaps 30-40 SS officers and NCOs in command of about 100 SS-trained Ukrainians. The camps were surrounded by watchtowers, multiple barbed wire fences, ditches, and at Sobibor, a minefield. Life inside the camp for the Jewish prisoners was brutal and uncertain at best. For the so-called Sonderkommado, those men charged with clearing out the gas chambers and incinerating the corpses, existence was indescribably horrific. In return for their suffering, the prisoners were



War artist Gary Sheenhan captured the prisoners misery, fear, and deprivation at Buchenwald in 1945. The revolts in Sobibor and Treblinka were the last chance for the inmates to survive as the Nazis began to cover up their heinous deeds. (U.S. Army Art Collection)

allowed to live for as long as the SS deemed appropriate.

In the spring of 1943, the Jewish prisoners noticed a decline in the number of rail transports arriving at the gas chambers of Treblinka. The SS forced Jewish prisoners to exhume the overflowing mass graves at the site and burn and rebury the corpses. For the Sonderkommando and other prisoners at Treblinka, this meant that they were next.

It is likely that the Jewish revolt in the Warsaw Ghetto in April 1943 offered encouragement to a growing resistance movement within the camp. Survivors of the revolt were sent to Treblinka for execution. While accounts of the revolt at Treblinka differ, it is clear that it was planned and organized beginning in early 1943 by former officers of the Polish and Czechoslovakian Armies. Fear, despair, physical privation, and uncertainty delayed action until the summer.

The officers who first planned the revolt, Ilya Chorazycki, a doctor and former Polish Army captain, and Zialo Bloch, a Czech Army

ABOVE: SS Commander Goblocnik and other officers tour the site of the Sobibor concentration camp during its construction. RIGHT: Red Army prisoner of war Lieutenant Alexander Pechersky organized and led the uprising at the Sobibor concentration camp. (Above: Holocaust Research Project/Right: USHMM Archives)

lieutenant, knew the camp well and had reasonable access to its various parts. They were assisted by, among others, Adolf Friedman, a Polish Jew who reportedly had lived in Palestine and served in the French Foreign Legion.

Individual attempts at escape had proved mostly futile, and these leaders believed the prisoners' best chance for survival lay in an organized revolt aimed at overcoming at least a portion of the relatively small guard force. Having done this, the prisoners could destroy the camp, or portions of it, and make an escape. Chances of success were deemed reasonable by the reckoning that if even a small number of people could get out they could at least report the truth about the German "resettlement" program. The alternative, in any case, was death.

The acquisition of arms of some sort was critical to the evolving plan. Various means were attempted. The Jews unsuccessfully tried to bribe Ukrainian guards with valuables they secretly gathered from camp victims. In return for the loot, the Ukrainians supplied extra food, but not arms. They also did not inform the SS of the profitable bribery. Chorazycki died when the deputy camp commander caught him with bribe money in his pocket. Chorazycki briefly struggled with the SS man, freeing himself long enough to commit suicide by swallowing poison, thus denying the Germans a chance to interrogate him and uncover the plot.

An opportunity of sorts occurred when the SS delivered a door (or by some accounts only the lock) for repair to Jewish craftsmen working in the camp. It was not just any broken lock, but the one to the camp arsenal. Working in secret, the locksmiths managed to make a wax copy of the lock and from that to fashion a key. They then completed the repair without the SS being the wiser.

There were several other close calls besides Chorazycki's death. In late April, a group of boys acting under direction of the plotters used the weapons room key to remove a box of hand grenades. But when they returned, Friedman recognized that the grenades lacked detonators, which were stored separately. Luckily, the boys managed to return the box without the Germans learning of the theft. Then the Germans uncovered an escape plot organized by a so-called "camp elder" named Rakowski, who was murdered for his efforts. In May 1943, transports containing survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising arrived in camp. Most people were immediately gassed, but at least one man managed to detonate a grenade he had smuggled from the battlefield, killing a Ukrainian guard. The Warsaw survivor was immediately beaten to death. These events certainly unnerved the Germans and presumably increased their alertness, while at the same time no doubt encouraging the prisoners.

Eventually, a plan took shape. Wary of informers, the camp underground divided itself into small cells of five, totaling about 60 men in all. They planned to revolt in late afternoon, undesirable in some respects but unavoidable as the weapons room was unguarded only during daytime. Late afternoon would at least limit exposure until nightfall and also allow the various cells to disperse themselves throughout the camp during their work details. Still, indecision reigned among the plotters. In late July 1943, they were finally galvanized to action as it became clear that the Germans were preparing to close and abandon the camp, liquidating the Jewish workforce in the process. The plotters set the revolt for the afternoon of Monday, August 2, 1943.

A cell planned to smuggle weapons from the arsenal between 2 and 4:30 PM on August 2. At the same time, other prisoners were to arm themselves with whatever weapons came to hand, such as axes or picks used by daily work details. A grenade would be detonated at 5 PM to signal the beginning of the uprising. However, shortly before 4, a German officer unexpectedly appeared in one of the Jewish work areas and began questioning a suspected informer. Panicked, and although weapons from the arsenal were not yet fully distributed, the plotters sent for help. An armed prisoner arrived as the SS man left the work area and shot him. This gunshot substituted for the grenade explosion as the signal to revolt.

The prisoners had managed to smuggle out a few dozen grenades and several pistols and rifles. Various work groups turned on their guards with picks and axes. Two prisoners ignited the camp gasoline store, causing a huge fire. The few prisoners equipped with firearms shot at their tormentors.

Initially, most prisoners and guards were uncertain what was happening. The situation quickly became chaotic. The majority of prisoners eventually ran for the camp fences or gates. Meanwhile, the Germans and Ukrainians, largely operating from watchtowers, began to overwhelm the rebels with machine-gun fire. In response, the prisoners could offer only rifle and pistol fire, and their ammunition was rapidly running out.

Prisoners assailed the fences with picks, axes, and their bare hands. Machine guns firing from the towers killed many, but scores managed to cut through and make their escape. Within the camp, other prisoners set fire to buildings or continued to engage in scattered and hopeless firefights. Bloch and Friedman were killed in

such battles, covering the escape of other prisoners. In the end, perhaps 300 of 800 prisoners made it out of the camp. Another 100 were captured within the camp and eventually executed. The rest were killed during the uprising. Of those who escaped, the majority were quickly hunted down and killed by German forces or perished from starvation, exposure, or at the hands of local Poles in the surrounding countryside. No more than 100 and most likely fewer than 60 people survived the immediate aftermath, and perhaps a few dozen survived the war.

About 600 Jewish prisoners worked in the Sobibor death camp in the spring of 1943. They, too, started suspecting that their time might be up when a transport of Jewish prisoners arrived from the Belzac death camp. From them the Sobibor prisoners learned the unsettling news that Belzac had been shut down. The Belzac prisoners had not been transferred to supplement the Sobibor workforce, but were designated for extermination. Knowing quite well what awaited them in the "showers," many of the Belzac prisoners tried to fight the Germans to no avail. They were slaughtered.

An underground movement had already taken root in Sobibor, but it lacked effective leadership. The chief organizer, Leon Feldhendler, was a Polish Jew and former Judenrat official. The Judenraten were ad hoc local Jewish governments organized within the ghettos that often assisted German officials in identifying and organizing Jews for transport east. All Judenrat officials worked under duress—many in ignorance of what the Germans intended. Others apparently realized they were sending fellow Jews to their doom and rationalized it as an attempt to save those left behind, including themselves and their families. Whatever Feldhendler's outlook was before coming to Sobibor, he certainly now knew of the German intentions and the fate that awaited him and his fellow prisoners.

Sobibor also had many Dutch Jewish prisoners, the byproduct of Sobibor's status as the chief extermination center for Jews from the Netherlands. Ironically, Dutch Jews, among the most prosperous, assimilated, and "Germanic" in Europe, proved easy prey for the Nazis. Orderly, and more trusting of the Germans than the Poles, Dutch Jews often went to their deaths quietly and unsuspecting until the final moments.

May 1943 brought a former Dutch naval officer and Spanish Civil War veteran, Joseph Jacobs, to the camp. Not content to go to his death quietly, he quickly organized a group of Dutch prisoners and planned an uprising or escape, coordinating, at least in part, with Feldhendler's group. By August, Jacobs's plan was well advanced but highly vulnerable to detection. Like Chorazycki's failed plan, Jacobs relied on the collaboration of some Ukrainian guards, who were to help acquire weapons for the prisoners and facilitate an escape. Inevitably, the Ukrainians betrayed Jacobs. The SS mercilessly tortured him, demanding that he reveal his co-conspirators. Jacobs, however, would not break. So, the SS simply murdered him along with 72 other Dutch Jews with whom he worked or associated. By SS logic, this both served to eliminate other conspirators and as a warning. But Feldhendler and his organization remained intact.

Sobibor was constructed similarly to the other death camps, and knowing its basic layout is important to understanding what occurred later. It was surrounded by double and at some points triple barbed-wire fences plus its unique minefield, and the interior of the camp was subdivided by wire fences into four distinct subcamps. Camp I contained prisoner barracks and shops for craftsmen, such as tailors, carpenters, and mechanics. Next to it was the SS officers' compound and guard barracks. Camp II contained an undressing yard where victims gave up their clothes and valuables and a complex of warehouses to sort and store the loot. Between Camps I and II stood a high forester's tower that predated the camp but was not one of the camp's regular watchtowers. Camp III, which was the most isolated and closely guarded, housed the gas chambers and an outdoor crematorium. It was here the Sonderkommando lived and worked, isolated from the other Jews in the camp. Camp IV, sometimes called the North Camp, contained more warehouses, an extra execution site at an old Catholic Chapel building, and many trees that were harvested by labor parties to fuel the crematorium.

During mid-September 1943, the Sonderkommando in Camp III built an escape tunnel. The Germans uncovered it before completion, and the entire Kommando was shot dead. The incident served as another warning to the remaining prisoners and demonstrated the difficulty of successfully tunneling, which was always a popular plan among those thinking about escape.

On September 23, 1943, shortly after the failed escape from Camp III, a transport from Minsk arrived. As usual, almost all the arrivals were murdered, but 80 men were spared for heavy construction work in Camp IV. Most of these men were Jewish Soviet Army prisoners. There were two officers among them. The higher ranking, a major, was melancholy and despondent. The second, Lieutenant Alexander "Sasha" Pechersky, proved to be a cool, tough, and inspiring leader.

The Soviet POWs stood out from the other prisoners. Organized, disciplined, and battle-hardened, they accepted Pechersky as their leader. Horrified by what they found in Sobibor, Pechersky and his men quickly began formulating plans for escape or revolt. This raised the morale of the other Jews and provided a glimmer of hope. Pechersky also brought news of German military setbacks, but he was a realist. The Germans had suffered serious reverses, but the Red Army was still hundreds of miles away. He knew the prisoners could not count on the local partisans or trust the Ukrainians. He told his fellow Jews, in essence, "We are on our own and must solve our own problems."

Pechersky started to cautiously coordinate with Feldhendler, but the two were suspicious

All is quiet in this view of Sobibor probably taken after the revolt in late 1944. The camp was eventually razed, and the Germans went to great lengths to conceal their atrocities at the site. (Holocaust Research Project)

of each other. Polish and Russian Jews, like their gentile counterparts, normally shared little trust or amity. Eventually, both men put aside their reservations. In Sobibor it mattered only that they were Jews.

Feldhendler provided Pechersky with vital intelligence. The Pole knew the strengths of the Nazi garrison and its vulnerabilities. Pechersky used Feldhendler's information to analyze tactical and strategic options in a way that Feldhendler could not. Among the weaknesses Feldhendler identified among the SS troops were their greed and a growing lassitude. The SS acted as if the camp were their own private flea market, with everything marked down to nothing. They routinely ordered custom-made goods from skilled craftsmen who worked for no more than the right to draw breath. As the number of transports dropped, the Germans also took every opportunity to escape the camp on official leaves, for outside duties, or to avail themselves of local recreation. Here was the Nazi Achilles' heel, and to exploit it Pechersky developed a bold plan.

The only sure way out of the camp without encountering mines was to exit the main gate, and this is precisely what Pechersky proposed the prisoners do. The SS force was relatively small and susceptible to attack. Pechersky hoped that if the prisoners could weaken or eliminate the SS, the Ukrainian auxiliary would be rendered ineffective and the prisoners could simply walk out the main gate. He proposed to wipe out the SS by luring them into kill zones, where they could be ambushed at close range, mainly by his POWs armed with homemade axes and knives. The Jews would strike on a day when many SS were already out of the camp on duties, leave, or recreation. That day was October 14, 1943.

As at Treblinka, the prisoners divided themselves into cells for security and for combat. In the workshops Jews secretly made weapons, while Pechersky and Feldhendler pieced together exactly how to set the ambushes and draw in the SS. They also planned to steal a few rifles from the Ukrainian barracks and to raid the main arms room.

To implement the plan, the leaders gained the cooperation of two of the camp's Kapos, Czepik and Pozyczka. The Kapos were controversial figures: Jews who helped the SS control and punish their fellow prisoners. Although some Kapos were true collaborators, most were simply victims of circumstance like everybody else. With their cooperation, security would be enhanced, and Pechersky would be able to move his killer teams around the camp since the Kapos could pass in relative freedom from one subcamp to another. The only other prisoners who could pass between subcamps were the so-called putzers, teenage boys used to clean the SS barracks and run errands. Kapo Czepik controlled the putzers, and Pechersky could make use of them to run messages, lure the Germans into ambush, and steal Ukrainian rifles.

Pechersky urged the prisoners to rise up. "Those that live must bear witness to what happened in this place!"

October 14 proved a particularly propitious day for the uprising. Among those absent from the camp that day were the commandant, Oberstürmfuhrer (1st Lieutenant) Franz Reichleitner, and his sergeant major. Some Ukrainian guards were on a swimming excursion to the nearby Bug River. The plotters were unlikely to have a better opportunity.

The operation was set to start in late afternoon. Since it was mid-October, dusk fell early, and Pechersky hoped this would give the prisoners the cover of night to make their escape through the woods that surrounded the camp. The plan called for the kill teams to distribute themselves around Camps I and II beginning at 3 PM. Feldhendler would control the action in Camp II, Pechersky in Camp I. Camp III and the Sonderkommandos were not included in the plan. The Kapos would help move the kill teams, which were posing as work parties. The putzers would run messages and help lure the SS men into ambush.

The SS were to be individually invited into various workshops and storerooms and quietly eliminated between 3:30 and 4:30. During this time, one of the putzers would attempt to steal the Ukrainian rifles. After the SS were killed, a Jewish electrician would cut the camp's phone lines and power, while a raiding party would attempt to take the arms room. Then, after the usual 5 PM roll call, the prisoners would walk through or rush the main gate.

October 14 dawned, and Pechersky was eager to act— especially to kill the first SS man, as he was somewhat mistrustful of his co-conspirators' determination. Once the first Nazi fell, there would be no choice but to complete the mission or die. This became clear when at about 2 PM an SS NCO, Walter Ryba, appeared in Camp I and demanded that Kapo Pozyczka get three other men and come with him. This threatened the entire operation as Pozyczka was to move a kill team to Camp II at 3 PM. In addition, Ryba carried a submachine gun, which was unusual. The SS usually only carried pistols.

Pechersky feared the plot had been compromised. Others thought the same and suggested he postpone or call off the revolt. But Pechersky refused. He doubted that many of the prisoners would survive a cancellation or postponement. They would have to make do. After an hour, Kapo Czepik reported that the SS man had taken Pozyczka for chores in Camp IV. Ryba had carried a submachine gun because he was alone, without a Ukrainian guard escort. Relieved, Pechersky ordered Czepik to move Pozyczka's kill team to Camp II.

That team killed the first SS man, Unterscharführer (Sergeant) Josef Wulf, on schedule. Wulf was invited into the Camp II warehouse to try on a coat. Suspecting nothing, he allowed a prisoner to assist him with the fitting. As this occurred, the kill team leader, Boris Tsibulsky, and another POW stepped out of hiding and split Wulf's skull with their axes. They took his pistol, hid the body, cleaned up the blood, and prepared for the next victim. This should have been Scharführer Beckman, lured by a putzer to the entranceway a few minutes later; but Beckman balked and walked to his office in the Camp II administration building. Feldhendler sent the putzer to Pechersky, where he reported Wulf's death and Beckman's escape. Pechersky was cheered by the news. He sent the boy back to Feldhendler with best wishes and instructions to eliminate Beckman.

As the SS arrived in Camp I for their appointments, Pechersky made sure he had men to greet them. Five came by, one after another, to visit the tailor, shoemaker, or carpenter. All were axed or knifed to death and their pistols distributed among the attackers. Back in Camp II, Feldhendler's men killed two more SS in the warehouse.

All the SS in Camp I were now dead; Beckman was the only SS man still alive in Camp II. Feldhendler sent Kapo Czepik and two POWs to Beckman's office. It was not unusual for a Kapo to report to an SS man, so Beckman was

not alarmed when he let Czepik in his office. Czepik and the POWs fell on Beckman with knives. Meanwhile, unknown to Pechersky, a prisoner working in the garage near the SS barracks, on his own initiative, spontaneously killed Walter Ryba.

It was now close to 5 PM, time for the final roll call and the escape. The electrician cut the phone lines and the power. The putzers managed to smuggle six rifles and some ammunition from the Ukrainian barracks concealed in a piece of pipe. These were quickly distributed.

The plan had called for one more SS man to die, Oberscharführer Karl Frenzel, a cruel man in charge of Camp I. But Frenzel did not show for his appointment at the carpentry shop and was on the loose somewhere else in camp. Pechersky was unwilling to wait. Other than Frenzel and a couple of others, all the SS were dead. It was now or never.

Feldhendler marched the prisoners from Camp II to Camp I, singing as usual, so as not to alert the Ukrainians in the guard towers. They assembled with Pechersky and the remaining prisoners from Camp I, perhaps 500 people in total. Excitement ran through the throng. Suddenly shots rang out. A Ukrainian guard and SS man returning from duty outside the camp had discovered a dead SS man. They shot at some prisoners near the corpse.

Pechersky was out of time. He made a brief, impromptu speech in Russian. He urged the prisoners to rise up. "Those that live must bear witness to what happened in this place!" With that, some of the prisoners let out a loud "Hurrah!" and called the crowd to move forward. Shouting and crying, the mass of prisoners surged toward the main gate, the fences, and, hopefully, freedom.

At about this time a prisoner combat team attacked the armory. Inside were an SS NCO and three or four Ukrainians. A desperate hand-to-hand fight broke out. The SS man was badly injured but escaped. The Ukrainians fled. Unfortunately for the Jews, the Ukrainians had been disassembling and cleaning the weapons. The revolt was already under way. There was little time, and few rifles were intact. The prisoners grabbed what they could and joined the mass of inmates rushing for the gate and the fences.

At the main gate, a Ukrainian guard was overpowered. Other Ukrainians in the towers finally awoke from their stupor. Like a demon, Frenzel appeared at the gate armed with a submachine gun. He and the Ukrainians in the towers opened fire on the crowd attempting to get through the gate, which remained locked.

The main gate exit turned into a death trap. Pechersky and most others chose to cut their way through the fences and take their chances in the minefields. Many of those who cut through first were killed by exploding mines. They cleared the way for others. Pechersky and a group of POWs cut through the fence in an area he hoped might be free of mines. They were lucky. He and his men dashed for the cover of the nearby woods. Other prisoners at various places followed suit.

Perhaps 300 of the 500 prisoners in Camps I and II made it out alive. A few injured, sick ,or frightened prisoners remained behind, as did a few armed men who preferred to fight to the death. All who remained were eventually killed by the Germans, as were the Sonderkommandos in Camp III. The woods and the gathering darkness gave the prisoners an initial advantage, along with the fact that the decimated garrison was unable to pursue without reinforcements. Nonetheless, many prisoners were captured or killed in the ensuing days, some by German or Ukrainian troops, and some by local Poles. Many were simply never heard from again.

Pechersky moved east toward the Bug River over the next three days. About 70 people either accompanied him or reached him during this period. Pechersky felt that such a large group could not make it across the river and remain undiscovered. He took most of the weapons and set off with about a dozen of his men, leaving the others behind to fend for themselves.

Pechersky and his men survived the river crossing and reached Russian partisans operating in the area. He survived the war. Feldhendler survived but was murdered by Polish anti-Semites in 1946. In the end, perhaps 50 other Sobibor escapees survived the war and its immediate aftermath. It was a small percentage, perhaps, but almost certainly none would have survived had they not revolted.

ABOVE: Jewish women and children board cattle cars during their evacuation from the Warsaw Ghetto in 1944. The destination of this train was the Treblinka concentration camp and, for most, extermination. OPPOSITE: Fortunate to be alive, a group of Sobibor survivors gathered for this photo during a reunion after the war. Many of their fellow prisoners had been killed during the uprising by machine-gun fire, land mines, or execution after recapture. Others simply disappeared and were never heard from again. (Above: ullstein bild/Opposite: Public Domain)

Following the uprisings at Treblinka and Sobibor, the SS destroyed the camps in an effort to hide their crimes. However, the few survivors lived to bear witness to the atrocities. □

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Fire from the Sky

BY SAM MCGOWAN

U.S. BOEING B-29 SUPERFORTRESS

heavy bombers rained destruction on major Japanese cities.

AS THE JAPANESE DELEGATION STOOD ON THE DECK OF THE BATTLESHIP USS *Missouri* on September 2, 1945, preparing to sign the documents that ended World War II, a large formation of Boeing B-29 Superfortress heavy bombers swooped low over Tokyo Bay as a reminder of the terrible destruction that had befallen their nation and turned Japan's cities into ruins. It was a reminder the Japanese really did not need—the bombed-out rubble and steadily smoking crematories around the country were evidence enough of the violent firestorm that had befallen the Land of the Rising Sun.

The national morale in Japan was so low that almost 70 percent of the people interviewed by U.S. military personnel after the surrender reported that they had reached the point where they were unable to endure one more day of war. Most Americans, especially the young soldiers and Marines who had been slated to invade the Japanese Home Islands of Kyushu and Honshu, believed that Japan surrendered because of the atomic bomb. They were wrong. In reality, the country had already been brought to its knees before the first atomic test at the Trinity Site in the New Mexico desert two months before. Japan had been destroyed by fire from above, fire that had largely been delivered from the bomb bays of an armada of Boeing B-29s.

In retaliation for attacks on B-29 bases in China, these giant bombers head toward Japanese installations on the island of Formosa. During Operation Matterhorn, the Allies attempted to bring the war home to Japan. OPPOSITE: The waterfront district of Osaka, Japan, goes up in flames as a rain of incendiary bombs falls from the bays of giant Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers. (All Photos National Archives)

The B-29 had come to symbolize American air power by September 1945 because of the role it played in the final defeat of Japan, but the large four-engine bomber had originally been conceived as a weapon for use against Nazi Germany. The initial invitation for bid had been issued in the fall of 1940 as the War Department began preparing for a seemingly inevitable entrance into the war in Europe. Design problems and production delays kept the very long-range bomber out of service until it had become obvious that such range was no longer necessary against Germany. The first production B-29s began rolling off the assembly lines in mid-1943, prompting requests for the new bombers from commanders in each theater.

Lieutenant General George C. Kenney, the air commander in General Douglas MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area of Operations, was particularly insistent in his claims for the bombers. Not only had Kenney been short-changed in aircraft and crews because of the high priority given the B-29s to the overseas air forces, he decided to establish a new air force under his personal command, a strategic bombardment unit headquartered in Washington, D.C. The new Twentieth Air Force would be controlled by Arnold's own staff, which would select targets for the huge bombers and command the war from thousands of miles away.

The ultimate decision on deployment of the B-29s was based largely on political considerations, including appeasing President Franklin D. Roosevelt's near-obsession with mounting an aerial bombardment campaign against Japan at the earliest opportunity. The liberal president was up for reelection to an unprecedented third term in 1944 and faced strong opposition from conservatives. The commencement of B-29 raids on Japan would boost his political stock.

In spite of their long range, there were only four places in the world close enough to Japan advance bases in China, an option that would allow attacks on Japan to commence several months before bases could be established on the island of Saipan in the Marianas, and this was the option Arnold chose. Operations from China were also seen as a means of improving the morale of the Chinese people, who had been fighting the Japanese since 1931.

To command the first B-29s, Arnold selected Brigadier Kenneth B. Wolfe, an ideal choice since he was the project officer for the entire program and was intimately familiar with the airplane. Wolfe established the 58th Bombardment Wing (H) at Marietta, Georgia, where B-29s were being produced, then began training crews at Salina, Kansas. He drew up plans for operations from China called "Early Sustained Bombing of Japan" and given the code name Matterhorn. The Matterhorn plan called for the B-29s to be based in the vicinity of Calcutta, India, with forward operating bases established around Chengtu, China. It was an ambitious plan, particularly in terms of logistics, since all military operations in China were solely dependent on air transportation for supply.

In June 1945, the Boeing B-29 Superfortress bomber named "American Beauty" is pictured winging its way toward a target in Japan. Fighters and antiaircraft guns made missions to the Home Islands extremely hazardous for American crews.

to the European Theater, but he had been heavily involved in B-29 development himself when he was in charge of Air Corps research and development at Wright Field near Dayton, Ohio, in 1941. Although Air Corps commander General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold was receptive to Kenney's recommendations on use of the B-29s—the Southwest Pacific air commander wanted to use them from Australia, then from the Philippines—he had his own ideas as to where and how they should be deployed.

Arnold was also prompted by his own ambitions. In spite of his high rank and responsibility, he had never seen combat or commanded men in battle. Now he saw an opportunity for his own combat command. Instead of assigning from which B-29s could operate, and one of those, Soviet Siberia, was off limits because of Soviet neutrality in the war with Japan. Bases in the Aleutians were in range of Japan, but the horrific subarctic weather presented problems for the untried bombers. The Joint Chiefs of Staff saw potential for establishing B-29 bases in the Mariana Islands, a concept that pleased Admiral Ernest J. King, the Chief of Naval Operations, because such a move increased the importance of the Pacific Ocean Area of Operations, the only area under U.S. Navy command. King also favored Arnold's plan for an independent command, as it would keep the B-29s away from Douglas MacArthur.

The third option was establishing B-29

Although there was an established airlift operation from India to China conducted by the Air Transport Command, Wolfe proposed that XX Bomber Command, the organization he would take to India, be entirely self-sufficient. The XX Bomber Command would include its own air transportation group equipped with older Consolidated B-24 Liberators that had been converted into C-87 transports and C-109 tankers. The B-29s would also be used as transports, and after they arrived in India several were converted into tankers to haul gasoline.

In an effort to maintain a degree of secrecy,

ABOVE: In the initial stage of a bombing run, the pilot of a B-29 Superfortress bomber switches to autopilot. The bombardier, meanwhile, zeroes in on the target 20,000 feet below. TOP LEFT: Peering from inside his B-29, a relieved crewman surveys the damage done to the heavy bomber by Japanese antiaircraft fire. The capture of Iwo Jima provided a haven for damaged bombers returning from Japan and saved thousands of lives. TOP RIGHT: Lieutenant General Kenneth R. Wolfe commanded the first B-29 heavy bombers deployed in the Pacific War.

the War Department took advantage of the B-29 development programs and put out a story that the planes had proven unsuccessful as bombers and were being converted into armed transports for duty in the China-Burma-India Theater. It is unlikely that the Japanese bought the story.

The first B-29 to depart for India went by way of England, where it was put on display for publicity purposes in an effort to indicate that the bombers would be used against Germany. B-29s began leaving for India in March 1944. By April they were flying transport missions from Calcutta to Chengtu. Matterhorn called for the first missions to be flown in June, and extensive preparations were made. Plans to airlift their own supplies proved optimistic, and the Air Transport Command was called on to provide additional air transportation. Supply problems were compounded in May when the Japanese went on the offensive in China and the theater commanders had a sudden increased need for supplies. They naturally took those that originally had been intended for Matterhorn, which had yet to fly the first combat mission.

The first B-29 mission, scheduled for mid-May, was an attack on the Makashan railroad yards in Bangkok, Thailand. Wolfe wanted to fly it at night since his crews had been engaged in transport operations and needed proficiency in formation flying and other combat tactics, but he was overruled by Arnold and the Twentieth Air Force staff, most of whom had come from the European Theater, where the emphasis was on daylight bombing. Arnold insisted that the first B-29 mission be a daylight precision attack.

Wolfe postponed the mission and instituted a training program. By June 5, 1944, Wolfe had 112 Superfortresses ready for the mission, but only 98 managed to get off the ground. One crashed immediately after takeoff. The weather was so bad that the B-24s that were supposed to participate in the attack canceled. Their commanders were not under pressure from the White House to perform, while reduced visibility and low clouds caused assembly problems for the B-29s. Fourteen B-29s aborted, and many of the crews failed to find the target. The remaining bombers were over Bangkok for an hour and a half, with each crew making its own decisions as to run-in and bombing altitudes. One navigator described the confusion as "Saturday night in Harlem."

There was little enemy opposition, but monsoon thunderstorms made the return flight hazardous. Three B-29s failed to return because of fuel problems, while more than 40 made forced landings at airfields all over China. One crashed on landing, bringing the total losses to five brand-new B-29s and 17 crewmembers killed or missing. Post-strike photographs revealed minimal damage to the target. Nevertheless, Twentieth Air Force considered the first mission a success.

The very next day, Wolfe received an order from Arnold to mount an attack on a target in Japan by June 20. Wolfe faced a dilemma. His supplies at the Chinese forward fields needed replenishing. He had set a date of June 23 for a 100-plane mission and needed the extra three days. General Joseph Stilwell, the senior American officer in China, had diverted the supplies intended for Matterhorn operations from China to the Fourteenth Air Force. Wolfe wired Arnold that he could put up 50 planes on June 15 or 55 five days later. Arnold responded by ordering an attack with 70 airplanes on June 15; the order also demanded an increase in Hump airlift operations.

Twentieth Air Force had decided to mount a campaign against the Japanese steel industry, and the target for the first attack was the Imperial Steel Works at Yamata on the island of Kyushu. June 15 was the date for the impending invasion of Saipan, and Washington wanted to send a message to Tokyo that the end was drawing near. Wolfe managed to dispatch 92 B-29s to China, but nine arrived with mechanical problems. Each bomber was armed and ready for combat and would only need fuel and rest for the crews at the Chinese bases.

The mission order called for 75 airplanes but only 68 got off. One crashed and four aborted, leaving 63 to continue to the target. The first airplane reached Yamata just before midnight. The crew reported that the target was "Betty," meaning the weather conditions were less than 50 percent cloud and that they had bombed. In spite of the good visibility, the steel mill was blacked out while smoke and haze obscured the ground. Only 15 crews were able to bomb visually, and 32 dropped their bombs using radar, a technique that at the time was considered inferior. There was strong fighter and antiaircraft opposition, but not a single B-

29 was damaged over Japan, although one was lost over China during the return flight. Six B-29s were lost due to various causes, and 55 airmen were reported missing. Damage to the target was insignificant.

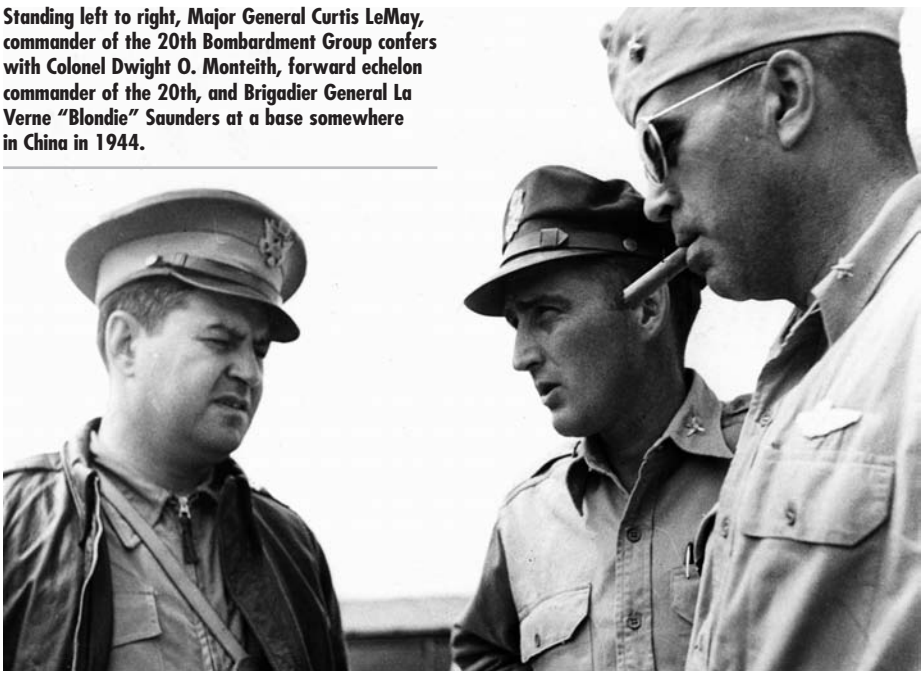
In spite of the lack of damage to the target, the mission produced results, causing the Japanese people to realize for the first time since the war began that they were in imminent danger. The following day, the War Department announced the existence of Twentieth Air Force, and the news of an attack on Japan competed with news from Normandy in the headlines. Arnold wired Wolfe that it was imperative that pressure against Japan be increased in spite of the logistical problems.

Immediate objectives were attacks on Japanese steel mills in Manchuria, harassing raids on Japan itself, and an attack on the Palambang oil refineries in Sumatra. Wolfe submitted a plan for a 50-plane mission against the Anshan steel works in Manchuria instead of the 100 that Arnold wanted and received a message that he was to return to the United States immediately for "an important assignment." Wolfe was being "kicked upstairs," with a promotion to major general and command of the Material Command, a move by Arnold to make way for a more aggressive commander.

With Wolfe gone, responsibility for XX Bomber Command operations fell to Brig. Gen. Laverne "Blondie" Saunders, the 58th Bombardment Wing commander. On July 7, an assemblage of 18 B-29s conducted a harassing mission against Japan. One aborted, but the other 17 managed to bomb "something." Two were forced to turn back because of fuel transfer problems, but their crews dropped the bombs on the Japanese depot at Hankow in China.

Saunders decided that he would be able to mount an attack on Manchuria by postponing the Palembang mission. He received a major boost when July turned out to be a banner month for the Air Transport Command Hump operation, but he still faced a shortage of operational B-29s, a condition produced in part by the conversion of several to tankers. He proposed a halt to transport operations 10 days in advance of the raid and that the bombers begin moving up five days early, a move opposed by Fourteenth Air Force commander Maj. Gen. Claire Chennault out of fear the presence of the bombers would provoke Japanese attacks. Washington approved the plan, and the feared attacks failed to materialize.

Of 111 bombers dispatched from India, 107 reached China. Weather led to the attack being moved up a day to July 29. Rain kept one group on the ground, but 72 got off. Aborts and a crash reduced the number to 60 bombers over the target. Although weather conditions were ideal, the first bombs fell upwind from the target, and the smoke from the fires drifted over the mill. Fighters met the formation, and the B-29 gunners claimed three probables and four damaged. The 444th Group managed to get off when the rains let up to bomb targets at Tak and Chenghsien. One B-29 was lost after it was damaged by flak, then jumped by five fighters, one of which was an apparently captured Curtiss P-40 bearing the markings of the Chinese-American Composite Wing.



Standing left to right, Major General Curtis LeMay, commander of the 20th Bombardment Group confers with Colonel Dwight O. Monteith, forward echelon commander of the 20th, and Brigadier General La Verne "Blondie" Saunders at a base somewhere in China in 1944.

Matterhorn missions five and six ran jointly on the night of August 10, 1944, striking the Palembang oil refineries and the docks at Nagasaki. The double-barreled attacks were made possible by reducing the number of airplanes required for the Palembang mission. Washington originally wanted a daylight strike with a minimum of 112 planes, but fear of heavy losses led to a change to a dawn or dusk strike with half that number. Further negotiations gained permission for a night attack.

Part of the new plan called for mining the Moesi River, through which all of the complex's exports were shipped. Eight 462nd Bomb Group minelayers went beneath a 1,000-foot ceiling to drop 16 mines "with excellent results." One crew ditched with one casualty. The Palembang raid turned out to be the only mission flown out of Ceylon in spite of extensive preparation. The Nagasaki mission was considerably smaller, with only 24 bombers reaching the target. The mission was memorable in that gunner Technical Sergeant H.C. Edwards was credited with the first official B-29 confirmed aerial kill of the war against a Japanese plane. The mission went off surprisingly well, although the bombing results were indistinct because of poor quality photo intelligence. In spite of heavy flak and reports of 37 Japanese fighters, not a single B-29 was even scratched.

Saunders faced opposition from Chennault, who felt that attacks on the steel industry were fruitless. As the senior air officer in China, Chennault put forth an ultimatum that Matterhorn should either concentrate on the Japanese aircraft industry or withdraw to India. He considered the B-29s more of a liability than an asset in his theater as they used up valuable air transport space and their advance bases had to be defended. Saunders elected to ignore Chennault and continued planning attacks on steel targets.

On August 20, a total of 75 B-29s took off for Kyushu. One group was unable to get off until later in the day after a crash blocked the runway. Sixty-one B-29s hit the target in spite of intense opposition that claimed four bombers. Three were lost to what may have been a suicide attack when a fighter rammed the tail of one B-29 and the falling wreckage brought down two more. The 462nd Group managed to get its airplanes off the ground over the wreckage after lightening their loads for a night attack. Ten got over the target with little resistance. Still, the day was costly, with 14 bombers lost to various causes and 95 airmen killed or missing. Although XX Bomber Command believed the target was damaged, Japanese records indicated otherwise.

Saunders planned another attack on

RIGHT: In a photo taken from another B-29 in formation, this heavy bomber disgorges incendiary bombs from the skies above Formosa. The largest B-29 raid of the war to date took place on October 14, 1944. The target was the repair and supply facilities at Okayama on the island.

Manchuria, but before it was flown Maj. Gen. Curtis LeMay arrived to take over XX Bomber Command. The mission was flown as planned, with LeMay going along to observe his crews in action. The attack resulted in considerable damage to the Showa Steel Works, but LeMay decided to institute new policies, including changing the basic formation from four planes to 12 to get a wider bombing pattern and consolidating the force into fewer groups with larger squadrons in a move to reduce support personnel and improve maintenance. He also instituted a new policy of "synchronous" bombing, with one bombardier staying on radar while the others attempted to acquire the target visually.

In spite of LeMay's new policies, Matterhorn's days were numbered. The XX Bomber Command only flew one more mission against a steel target, an attack on the Showa Works that produced absolutely no damage at all. Future missions were directed against Japanese aircraft industry targets and airfields on Formosa. Mining of rivers and harbors became a B-29 responsibility. In December, XX Bomber Command flew a mission that Chennault later claimed as a turning point. Since June, he had been pressing for a B-29 attack on the Japanese supply depot at Hankow with incendiary bombs but had been ignored by XX Bomber Command leadership.

After Japanese forces in China went on the offensive and threatened the Allied bases, Chennault renewed his efforts. He was supported by the new commander in China, Lt. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer. LeMay questioned Wedemeyer's authority since he only commanded in China and the B-29s were in India, but Arnold agreed to the mission since he really had no other choice in view of the military situation in the region.

The attack on Hankow was not the first B-29 incendiary attack of the war. Arnold had ordered experimental incendiary attacks from Saipan in November 1944, and a mission on the night of November 29 against Tokyo had met with little success. The Hankow attack was successful beyond expectations. Eighty-four B-29s were part of a more than 200-plane mission on December 18. In spite of the initial formation dropping its bombs upwind, damage to the docks and warehouses was tremendous. Intelligence estimated that 40 to 50 percent of the target had been destroyed by 38 percent of the bombs. Chennault reported that Hankow had been rendered useless as a military base.

On October 20, 1944, Brig. Gen. Emmett "Rosie" O'Donnell arrived on Saipan to open the headquarters of the 73rd Bombardment Wing, which originally had been intended to be part of Matterhorn but was switched to the Marianas when Saipan fell to the Allies. O'Donnell had been preceded by Brig. Gen. Haywood "Possum" Hansell, who arrived on Saipan on October 12 in the first B-29 to reach the islands. Hansell, a strong advocate of precision bombing, had been involved with the B-29 program from its inception and had previously served as chief of staff of Twentieth Air Force.

Hansell and O'Donnell faced a bomber

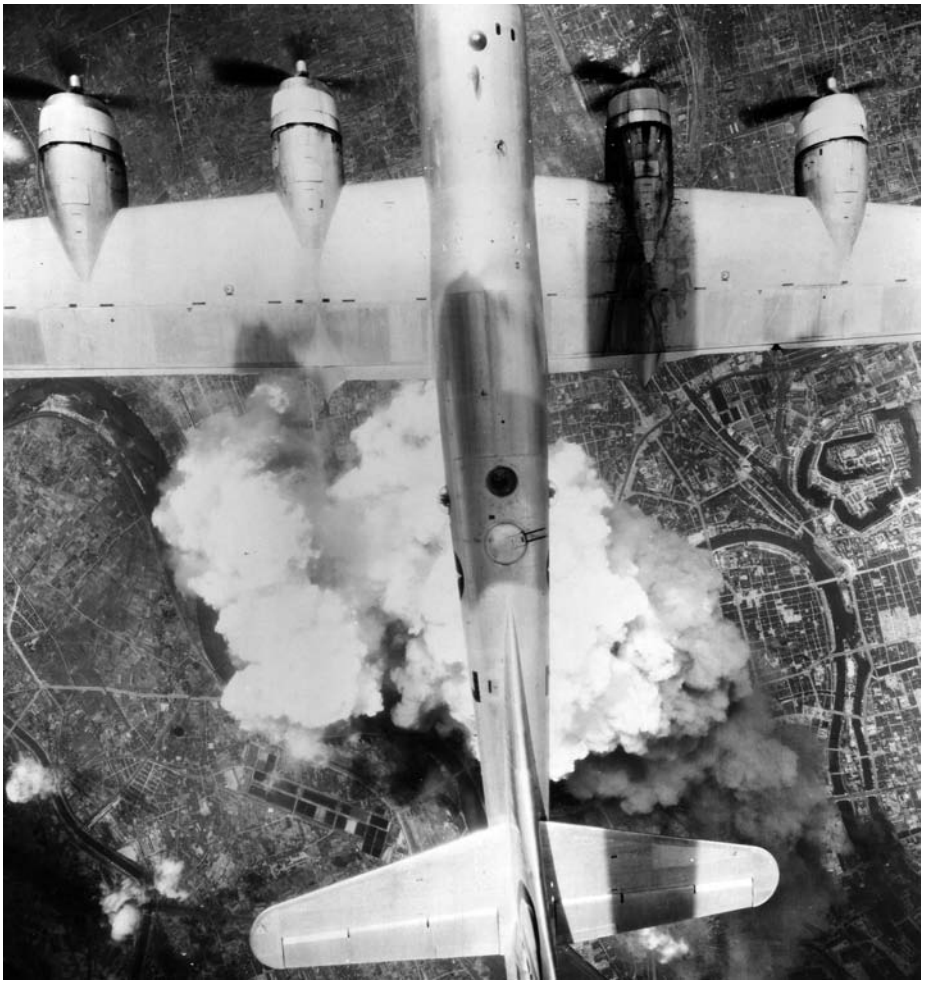
War on Civilians

The fire-bombing raids on Japan constituted all-out war on a civilian population, a method of warfare that would have been anathema to Americans only a few short years before. A major reason for the development of high-altitude precision bombing was the belief among most Air Corps officers that deliberately attacking civilians was immoral. Even as the British turned toward area bombing of German cities, American strategists continued hazardous daylight bombing from high altitudes. Yet, many of these same officers enthusiastically embraced a policy of deliberately attacking Japanese civilians. What was their rationale for such a change in thinking?

Flames erupt on the ground and can be seen for miles as the Japanese city of Nagoya suffers the agony of a B-29 fire bomb raid on June 25, 1945.

Racism no doubt was a major factor—not to mention that quite a few high-ranking American officers were of German descent while none were Asian. Hatred of—or resentment toward—the Japanese for attacking Pearl Harbor was another, although it is important to recall that the Japanese targets in Hawaii had all been military. Fears of high casualties from an invasion was another factor, even though the costly battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa were still long in the future when the Twentieth Bomber Command began considering a change toward urban attack. Rationalization for war on civilians was also likely based on Japanese decisions to turn the entire country into an armed camp, with all Japanese males aged 17 to 60 and all women 17 to 45 subject to military service. The new policy rationalized that there were no more civilians in Japan.

Fire-bombing constituted the worst form of warfare imaginable, as incendiary bombs and napalm were dropped with the intention of creating mass conflagrations that would sweep through Japanese cities, sending thousands of men, women, and children to painful, horrible deaths. The results of the atomic bombs were even worse, compounded by the effects of radiation. "Civilized" war had become the most horrible form of warfare ever imagined and no one was off-limits to the destruction. □



B-29s of Major General Curtis LeMay's 21st Bomber Command drop their deadly cargo on Osaka, the second largest city in Japan. This raid took place on June 1, 1945.

shortage. The 73rd Wing's aircraft were strung out across the Pacific all the way back to Kansas and the initially expected arrival of five planes per day had been reduced to two or three. The first mission flown by planes of the new XXI Bomber Command was against the former Japanese supply base at Truk in the Caroline Islands. Truk had originally been selected as the first target for the atomic bomb, but it had been reduced to near-uselessness after falling under attack by Navy carrier-based aircraft and B-24s of the Thirteenth Air Force.

That initial mission was a sortie of 18 B-29s in October. Four aborted, including Hansell's command ship, thus destroying his chances to fly a combat mission in a B-29. A few days later, his successor, Brig. Gen. Lauris Norstad, invoked a regulation prohibiting the commanding general of a very heavy bombing command from flying over enemy territory.

Once combat operations against Japan commenced, Hansell and O'Donnell lost their authority for mission planning to Twentieth Air Force in Washington. The first target directive was the destruction of the Japanese aircraft industry, with XX Bomber Command continuing the campaign it had commenced while XXI struck targets out of range of B-29s operating from China. The city of Tokyo itself was not on the list of primary targets, although aircraft factories in outlying areas were. For propaganda effect at home, Twentieth Air Force chose to fly the first mission against the Nakajima Hikoki plant at Mushasino, a Tokyo suburb, which was the number two target on the priority list. The plant was believed to produce more than 30 percent of all Japanese combat aircraft engines, but the main reason it was chosen was so that headlines would read "TOKYO BOMBED!!!" The attack was to be carried out in daylight using precision bombing methods.

Although Hansell submitted plans for an attack in October, the aircraft delivery problem led to a postponement until November. The first B-29 over Tokyo was actually a reconnaissance version, an F-13 piloted by Captain Ralph D. Steakly. Seventeen reconnaissance missions—eight were weather observation flights—were flown over Japan before the first raid. One F-13 was lost to fighter attack on a mission to Nagoya.

Hansell's plan, code-named San Antonio I, was predicated on intelligence estimates of Japanese fighter strength in the Tokyo area that turned out to be greatly overstated. Estimates ranged from 600 to 1,100 fighters around Tokyo alone, when in reality Japan only had 375 operational fighters to defend the entire country at the time. The attack was initially planned for early November, with Navy carrier strikes preceding the B-29s by five days. But the Navy was preoccupied with operational problems in the Philippine Sea and postponed its operations around Japan entirely.

Hansell decided to go it alone. The raid was set for November 17, but heavy rain and a wind shift led to a postponement. The rains continued for a week, but the morning of November 24 dawned clear, with winds favoring the downhill runway.

General O'Donnell led the formation off the runway with Major Robert K. Morgan, famous as pilot of the B-17 *Memphis Belle,* in the copilot's seat. A total of 111 B-29s took off from Saipan, but 17 aborted and six others were unable to drop their bombs. Poor weather over Tokyo and strong jet stream winds made bombing difficult. Only 24 airplanes actually bombed the target. Results were actually better than believed. Japanese records revealed that 48 bombs struck the factory. Damage to the facilities was minor, and less than 150 casualties were reported. Nevertheless, the raid had tremendous psychological value as many of Japan's civilian leaders realized the war was lost. They began moving production facilities underground, although none of the underground facilities had begun production by the end of the war.

Missions against aircraft industry targets continued into January, but results were poor. Weather conditions between Saipan and Japan presented major problems as cold, arctic air collided with warm Pacific air to produce thunderstorms, a virtual wall that the bombers had to penetrate on their way in and out of the target area. Actual damage to Japanese facilities was minor, although a raid on Nagoya on December 13 did significant damage to the engine factory target.

Twentieth Air Force was pressing for experimental incendiary attacks, a move that Hansell resisted to the detriment of his own future. The success of the Hankow mission on December 18 led Norstad to order a full-scale incendiary attack on Nagoya. Hansell protested the change of focus and did not fly the test mission

until January 2. Three days later, Norstad arrived from the United States to inform Hansell that he was being relieved. General Curtis LeMay was brought in from the China-Burma-India Theater to replace him.

Ironically, the last mission flown under Hansell's command was one of the best precision bombing missions of the entire war. On January 17, a formation of 73 B-29s attacked the Kawasaki plant at Aksahi with 115 tons of high explosive bombs. U.S. intelligence estimated that 38 percent of the buildings were damaged, but actual results were much greater. Japanese records revealed that the plant had been 90 percent destroyed, and Kawasaki decided to shut it down. The successful attack proved Hansell's theories of daylight precision bombing, but knowledge of the real results came too late to save him from the chopping block.

LeMay's arrival initially brought few changes. On January 23, he requested permission to attack more lightly defended targets but was advised by Norstad that while he had full latitude for target selection, an incendiary attack on Kobe would be more fruitful. LeMay realized where his bread was buttered and made plans to bomb Kobe on February 4 with an expected 157 planes. The mission was the largest of the war to date, with bombers from two wings participating for the first time. By the time the formation reached the target it had been reduced to just 69 planes. Only 129 had taken off; then aborts and other problems took a heavy toll. The formation dropped 159.2 tons of incendiaries and 13.6 of fragmentation bombs from high altitudes. Some 200 fighter attacks were reported, and one B-29 was lost while 35 suffered damage. Post-strike photos indicated major damage, and the estimates were supported by Japanese records that revealed that some 1,039 buildings had been destroyed or severely damaged. Casualties were moderate, but more than 4,000 people were left homeless.

Following the Kobe mission, the Nakajima plant at Ota, where the company was turning out its new Ki-84 "Frank" fighter, was hit. The Ki-84, a design with high-altitude capabilities, was a threat to the B-29s, which were still flying unescorted. In spite of poor bombing accuracy—only seven incendiaries and 93 high explosive bombs hit the factory—damage was substantial. The handful of incendiaries set fires that destroyed 37 buildings and 74 of the new Ki-84 fighters. Losses had been heavy, with 12 bombers shot down and 29 damaged.

Washington was still interested in a firebombing campaign, and Norstad reminded LeMay that results were still inconclusive. LeMay scheduled a massive firebombing attack on Tokyo for February 25, 1945, with more than 200 bombers participating. Out of 231 B-29s that took off from Saipan, 172 dropped 453.7 tons of incendiaries. Clouds obscured the city, and bombardiers had to release their bombs using radar, but the fires destroyed about one square mile of urban area. Japanese records reported that more than 28,000 buildings were destroyed and thousands died in the flames and from smoke inhalation.

On May 29, 1945, B-29 Superfortresses of the 500th Bomb Group, 73rd Bomb Wing drop incendiaries on Japanese installations in Yokohama.

In early March, LeMay commented to his public information officer, "This outfit is getting a lot of publicity without having accomplished much in bombing results." That was about to change. Twentieth Air Force had decided that precision bombing was ineffective and that the construction of Japanese cities made them ideal targets for fire-bombing attacks. The change was the result of a major moral shift in the United States. Deliberate attacks on noncombatant civilians had previously been considered immoral. Justification for urban attack was seen in recent Japanese announcements that all men up to age 60 and women to age 45 were part of a civilian mobilization to defend the country against Allied invaders.

LeMay also decided to make a major change in tactics, scheduling future missions at night, at comparatively lower altitudes, reasoning that Japanese antiaircraft defenses were not well organized and that Japanese guns were less accurate than German weapons. In a move to increase payload, he ordered many of the bombers stripped of their machine guns, which had been installed to defend against Japanese fighters.

LeMay developed tactics calling for lead squadrons to mark the target with napalm-filled bombs designed to cause fires to attract the attention of Japanese firefighters. The lead formation would drop its bombs at 100-foot intervals, but the main force, delivering M-69 incendiaries, would drop at half the distance for better concentration with each crew bombing individually. The mission plan called for 334 B-29s, the largest formation to date, with a target date of March 9, 1945. The force was so large that it took three hours for all the airplanes to become airborne.

The bombers encountered the familiar heavy clouds and turbulence on the way to the target, but navigators managed to find their checkpoints using radar. Weather conditions over Tokyo were good, and the pathfinders marked their targets without difficulty. The rest of the formation came in at staggered altitudes between 4,900 and 9,200 feet. An increasing wind fanned the flames of the fires caused by the napalm and incendiaries, producing an expanding firestorm. As the fires spread, bombardiers dropped their bombs on the edge of the fire, thus increasing the size of the conflagration. The target area bordered Tokyo's main industrial area and included a number of factories, but the main targets were the thousands of homes and feeder plant buildings. Construction in the area was so congested that the fires spread like they were in dry brush, causing flames so high and heat so intense that nothing could escape.

The disaster that befell the citizens of Tokyo that night was one of the worst in human history. The fires spread throughout the city and were only hampered by wide firebreaks, particularly along rivers and canals. Although thousands of people managed to find solace in the waters, the heat was so intense that water in some of the shallower canals literally boiled. Widespread panic increased the death toll as people attempted to run through the flames to escape, only to fall in the intense heat and perish. Radio Tokyo called the attack "slaughter bombing" and compared it to the destruction to Nero's Rome. The comparison was in error. The damage to Tokyo was far worse. Japanese morale plummeted, and the already rising peace movement in the government gained considerable strength. Resolve among those Japanese who had been willing to fight to the death against invasion began to crumble.

Losses among the B-29s had been high, but the rate was still less than that of previous missions. LeMay's decision to go in low had been justified. He did, however, decide to arm the bombers once again for future missions in the event Japanese night fighter defenses became

Continued on page 91

TROOPS OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF SOUTH AFRICA, PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN DRIVING THE ITALIANS FROM SOMALILAND AND ETHIOPIA.

SOUTH AFRICANS IN THE BREECH

BY JON LATIMER

Boarding a train at the famous station built by the French as a terminus on the line from Djibouti, the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God, Ras Tafari, Emperor Haile Selassie of Abyssinia left his capital Addis Ababa on May 2, 1936. He had been forced to abdicate by the indifference of the world to his plight and the impotence of the League of Nations to stop the march of fascism.

The emperor addressed the League on June 30, describing the suffering of his people at the hands of the Italians who had been prepared to use mustard gas to defeat his own hopelessly medieval forces. "It is us today. It will be you tomorrow." The Italians themselves cared only that they should avenge the terrible stain of Adowa, the field where they had so ignominiously failed in Abyssinia 40 years before. But at the same time, Jan Smuts, one of the great leaders of the Boers in their struggle for freedom from the British at the beginning of the 20th century asked, "Shall we fight evil with its own weapons? Can we allow force to submerge everything without mustering greater force to stop it?"

This was the dilemma facing the people of the Union of South Africa when war came. Indeed, it was a close call in Parliament before South Africa joined the rest of the British Empire in going to war with Germany in September 1939. At this stage, however, war with Italy was but a distant prospect. Mussolini's declaration of war against the British Empire on June 10, 1940, was a typical piece of opportunism, designed to benefit from the successful German campaign in Western Europe while casting a covetous eye on British possessions. For this greed, Mussolini would pay a heavy price in North and East Africa.

Despite the warnings of his senior officers, Mussolini was glibly unaware of the realities of modern warfare and of Italy's unpreparedness for it. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Italian East Africa. The strategic position of its colonies in Eritrea, Somalia, and Ethiopia (Abyssinia) was weak. Sea communications could be strangled easily; the British protectorates of Egypt and Sudan sat astride the air routes so that the nearest Italian post and landing ground lay over 1,000 miles away at Uweinat in Libya. If these links were cut, there was little enough that could be provided locally, and Ethiopia was a military liability during the best of times.

On July 13, 1941, Italian soldiers offer stiff resistance to advancing British Commonwealth troops near the onetime capital city of Ethiopia at Gondar. Contrary to popular belief, Italian troops often fought with bravery and discipline.

(Mary Evans Picture Library)

The situation presented an internal security nightmare to Viceroy Amadeo di Savoia, the Duke of Aosta, and despite the 250,000 troops present, these were organized and equipped only with security duties in mind. After pleading with Rome for reinforcements as war became increasingly likely, all that had arrived by the outset was a company of medium tanks, 48 field guns, and assorted specialists. Of the logistic backup needed for mobile warfare, Aosta had none, and his vehicles and aircraft were short of fuel, spare parts, and, above all, tires.

The South Africans were as unprepared as everyone else when war came, but one of the first actions taken was the requisition for war production of the Ford and Chevrolet plants located in the country. A survey was made of the "Great North Road" between Pretoria and Nairobi in Kenya. The commander in chief of British forces in the Middle East, General Sir Archibald Wavell, took a keen interest in the progress of the Union's defense forces. By May 1, 1940, some 20,000 South Africans were in Nairobi together with three South African Air Force (SAAF) squadrons, and the 1st South African Brigade was soon to disembark at Mombasa. For the British, this contribution was enormously significant; the South Africans were fully motorized, and previously only 8,500 troops had been on station to guard a frontier with the Italians that was over 1,000 miles long.

British forces in Sudan were equally sparse, and during July the Italians had little difficulty occupying Kassala and Gallabat in eastern Sudan. They remained nervous, however, and a mere company of British troops nearby was inflated on Italian staff maps to a unit of 20,000 men! The British took advantage of this until, in August, Wavell sent the 5th Indian Division to Port Sudan.

To the northeast of the Italians lay British Somaliland. Wavell was instructed not to augment the garrison there, but he eventually resolved to make a total of five battalions available for its defense, adding the 2nd Battalion of his old regiment, the Black Watch. The Italians duly crossed the frontier on August 3 heading for Berbera, the capital and main port. Greatly outnumbering the defenders, they inevitably forced them back after a stout resistance based on a line of hills at Tug Argan and entered Berbera after losing 2,052 casualties and failing to interfere with an evacuation on the 19th.

By now, a steady stream of vehicles was making its way along the Great North Road. By the end of the year, some 9,000 mainly one- and three-ton trucks driven by inexperienced Africans had made the trek across desert and bush, which would make a major contribution to the British move on Addis Ababa. There would be 29 transport companies for the South Africans and 25 to support the East African forces now assembling. As these operations were unfolding, the air campaign commenced with the SAAF beginning a series of raids from Kenya against their opposite numbers at Yavello and Naghelli. Wavell also took steps to encourage a revolt of patriots to prepare the way for a return of Selassie. All these measures would take time, and before any attempt to wrest Ethiopia from the Italians could be attempted, months of hard work would be necessary.

The invasion of Ethiopia from Kenya was to be a feat of military engineering that possibly ranks alone in history. Smuts called on the resources of the various government departments in Pretoria: roads, forestry, irrigation, survey, and railroads. They were staffed by men who knew Africa and knew about the lack of expertise and trained manpower in Kenya. They also knew the difficulties that would face a modern force with all its ancillary support services across waterless, trackless desert and bush. Smuts brought in Colonel A.J. Orenstein, who had been director of medical services during the East African campaign of 1916-1918 when the men of the Union and Empire had been decimated by the equatorial illnesses prevalent there. This time, both men were determined that these services would be the most efficient the times could supply, and here the engineers' provision of the means to go forward fully motorized would both spare the soldiers from the worst privations and enable casualties to be quickly evacuated.

From the gold mines came geodetic and mapmaking personnel who would produce 1:25,000 maps from aerial photography. Previously, the only maps available had been 1:1,000,000 scale. As the process of assembling the supply infrastructure took place, the Geological Survey Section was operating in the Northern Frontier District, searching for the water supplies that would be needed once the troops were on the ground. Much was needed immediately; the engineers were engaged in building roads through such areas as the 21-mile stretch of lava escarpment from Maikona to Kalacha in the Chalbi Desert. This tremendous effort was in preparation for a move that the Italians were convinced was impossible.

By October, the 1st South African Brigade had been joined by the 2nd and 5th South African Brigades, and the engineering tasks were steadily continuing. The SAAF in their Pretoria-built Hartebeest aircraft made systematic attacks on enemy camps, fuel dumps, and transport assets. Week after week, these operations continued, with the air crewmen risking an appalling fate if shot down in open bush.

With the Italian invasion of Egypt in full swing, Wavell's attention was concentrated

ABOVE: Having been issued ammunition, Abyssinian troops known as Shifta advance on the run to take up positions against the advancing enemy. LEFT: One officer directs riflemen into position, while another scans the horizon through binoculars as Abyssinian soldiers man positions along the rampart of a fort in Ethiopia. An antiquated artillery piece sits nearby. (Both: Australian War Memorial)

northward. He was still convinced that the best way of eliminating the threat posed in Ethiopia was through an armed uprising of patriots. The eventual campaign in Ethiopia would be the result of evolution rather than a comprehensive plan. Smuts argued that plans made for regaining Kassala and Gallabat should be accompanied by a plan for an attack up the Somali coast to remove the threat to Mombasa posed by Italian forces at Kismayu. This was regarded as impractical by both British and Italian experts. Neither, however, seemed to possess the Boer genius for mobility. Everything depended on the rains. These would reduce roads to impassable mud and were expected around March. Lt. Gen. Alan Cunningham, appointed to command in Kenya in November, advised against moving before May.

Before that, raids were to be conducted in preparation. The first was to be made by the 12th African Division under Maj. Gen. Alfred Godwin-Austen with the 1st South African Brigade, the 24th Gold Coast Brigade, and the 1st South African Light Tank Company, against El Wak, which was held by some 2,000 colonial infantry and a few light guns. El Wak was attacked on December 16, Dingaan's Day as it was known to the South Africans, anniversary of the Battle of Blood River in 1836.

When the light tanks could not pierce the frontier wire, 2nd Lt. Christopher Ballenden of 1st Battalion, Gold Coast Regiment, rushed forward through machine-gun fire with a Bangalore torpedo to blow a gap, and the Gold Coasters followed with fixed bayonets. By 11 AM, the 1st Transvaal Scottish had battered through thick bush for three miles to capture the 191st Colonial Infantry's headquarters, and the 1st Royal Natal Carbineers went in singing a Zulu war song in the final rush across 150 yards of open ground.

ABOVE: Italian cannons dominate the town of Makalle and its surroundings from Fort Enda Jesus, November 18, 1935. In 1896 the Italians under Major Guiseppe Galiano held the fort for 41 days against a far superior Ethiopian army before being granted passage out of the area. BELOW: Aboard trucks descending a winding road in the rugged desert country of Ethiopia, South African soldiers move relentlessly forward in 1941. The South Africans were instrumental in achieving victory over the Italians. (Above: National Archives/Below: Australian War Memorial)

Apart from the material gains of victory, El Wak demonstrated to both sides the moral ascendancy of the Allied forces and the ability of the South Africans to operate armor, motorized infantry, and air forces in unison. In mid-January, Cunningham directed the 1st South African Division, with the 2nd and 5th South African Brigades and the 25th East African Brigade, to attack El Yibo and its wells. A three-day ordeal ensued in which air force bombs and artillery accounted for the neutralized defenses but heat and lack of water prevented a follow-up attack. The divisional commander, Maj. Gen. George Brink, was most displeased. With the rains threatening to make the Chalbi Desert impassable and no sign of a patriot rising, Brink wanted to secure better communications. He advanced first on Mega, where 1,000 Italian troops surrendered without a fight, then on to Moyale, which was found abandoned. By this time, the main advance on Italian Somaliland had reached Mogadishu.

The Italians had been colonial masters of Somaliland for nearly 30 years. In the south, the Juba River forms a natural defense line that Mussolini had ordered fortified into the "Juba Line" for some 360 miles of its length. The impracticality of this was obvious, and in February 1941, with the news of the destruction of the Italian Army at Beda Fomm and the beginning of the assault on his northern bastion of Keren, Aosta could only tell his commander, Maj. Gen. Carlo de Simone, "There is no hope of reinforcement." Both men knew talk of "no withdrawal" was mere bravado and fooled nobody.

With the South African engineers once more producing Herculean efforts (170 miles of road in 17 days), the Italians abandoned Kismayu. An aerial bombardment led to the rout of the 94th Colonial Infantry, which was rapidly followed by the retreating 12th African Division, and on February 14, the 1st South African

Area of operations of South African Forces during the Abyssinian Campaign, 1940-1941.

Brigade reached Gobwen, some six days ahead of schedule.

Realizing the disarray facing them, Cunningham pressed on for the Juba. The Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles and the 1st Transvaal Scottish reached the river only to discover the pontoon bridge destroyed and find themselves under intense fire. The First Royal Natal Carbineers were sent north to find a way across and succeeded in making a crossing in canvas boats. Engineers then facilitated the support of the 1st Transvaal Scottish and several armored cars. Just before dawn on February 18, an attack was made by the 208th Colonial Infantry, and repulsed with heavy loss.

The South Africans resumed the advance in an attempt to outflank the Italians and encountered the 193rd Colonial Infantry. The armored cars, charging in line abreast like true cavalry, put the Italians to flight. Now a rush was on for the key road junction at Jelib. Both Cunningham and de Simone had their eyes fixed on the next encounter, and the latter decided, in effect, to abandon Somaliland and retreat into the fortress of Ethiopia.

The SAAF attacked repeatedly to add to the confusion of the Italian retreat. Aosta wrote Mussolini to complain: "The Dabat [soldiers from a province of Ethiopia] state they were employed to fight men and not airplanes. They dislike the air raids so intensely that some units refuse to fight." The support services for the Regia Aeronautica (Italian Air Force) had largely broken down, and the South Africans dominated the skies. In two weeks, the entire province of Jubaland was captured and 20,000 Italian prisoners taken. The 23rd Nigerian Brigade and the 11th African Division (into which the 1st South African Brigade was merged) took over the lead, covering 90, 120, 80, and then 65 miles per day to reach Mogadishu, barely 17 days after the opening of the campaign. Now they pressed on across the Ogaden Desert toward Harar.

At precisely 40 minutes past noon on January 20, 1941, Haile Selassie knelt to kiss the ground of his homeland once more. He was escorted by Colonel Orde Wingate during the trek to mountainous Belaya, in an area still loyal to the emperor. When they reached the green uplands, the little emperor could not keep up despite the urgings of Wingate. "You go ahead Colonel Wingate" he said, "and let us hope the people will recognize which of us is the emperor." Behind them trailed the miles-long caravan of arms and ammunition with which to raise the Rases (feudal lords) and their people, many of dubious loyalty. One of particular importance was Ras Hailu in Gojjam Province, a wily traitor whom nobody trusted. Treachery and disloyalty among the feudal lords were traditional and had been endemic for centuries. As Wingate prepared to take on the Italians, Hailu blocked the progress of the emperor. Meanwhile, the fortress of Keren blocked the Allies' entry into Eritrea.

Once the Italian invasion of Egypt had been defeated at Sidi Barrani, Wavell had taken the 4th Indian Division and sent it south to join operations against Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Italians had withdrawn from the open ground of Sudan but held up the progress by the Allied forces into Eritrea at Keren.

The South African Gazelle Force, under Lt. Gen. William Platt, reached Keren on February 2. The Italians had already deployed a colonial brigade and the 11th Savoia Grenadiers with two more brigades en route under the command of General Nicoangelo Carnimeo, who was known as the Lion of Keren. Platt stuck to the Indian Army tradition, formulated after so many fights in the mountains of the Northwest Frontier: always take the high ground. The first efforts over 10 days or more had failed in the Italian view because of the Allied inability in the first hours to get around the obstructions in the pass itself. Consequently, the battle became what one historian called "a miniature Passchendaele, with heat substituting for mud."

The key for Platt was the Dongolaas Gorge, and for 57 days the battle raged across the surrounding peaks in arid and boulder-strewn wilderness and in the face of a determined enemy. As the infantry struggled up the sheer slopes carrying the minimum equipment necessary and constantly short of water, the artillery fire was forced to lift as they approached the summit. Alert Italian defenders then manned the parapets to shower grenades among the rocks.

On February 21, Carnimeo sent a message to his men. "Your valor has thrown back the enemy ... the troops have demonstrated the heroic qualities of the Italian soldier." This was true. As the battle progressed, however, the air

situation became increasingly favorable to the Allies. Platt devised a plan involving both the 4th and 5th Indian Divisions, and careful preparations were made. On the night of March 15, following large-scale air attacks and supported by heavy artillery concentrations, the attack was resumed.

Engineers finally managed an inspection of the roadblock that they had said would take two weeks to deal with and concluded that it would take two days. While this obstacle was being overcome, the Italians launched a series of fierce counterattacks against Fort Dologorodoc, a system of trenches on a bare hill surrounded by wire that had finally fallen to the Allies after changing hands numerous times. The attack along the gorge took place on March 25, and the roadblock was cleared the next afternoon. The Allies had lost 536 dead and 3,229 wounded, but the Italians lost more than 3,000 dead and 4,500 wounded. The greatest set piece battle of the campaign was over. But by no means was the campaign itself finished.

De Simone was retreating across the Ogaden, with his army a disorganized rabble. What had once been a vast array of transport organized for the war of conquest six years before was now little more than a heap of junk. One prize find did appear: 350,000 gallons of gasoline. Cunningham was jubilant. It was, he said, "enough to carry the whole show into Abyssinia ... the fuel problem is solved!"

The 23rd Nigerian Brigade led off on March 6 along the Via Imperiale toward Jijiga and on to Harar. At Marda Pass, where the Ethiopian mountains begin, the Italians tried desperately to organize a defensive line. Aosta thought he could still buy precious time, although he did not know that in Mogadishu the South Africans had found detailed plans describing every airfield and landing strip in the country.

This information would prove extremely useful to the Allies, whose aircraft now began a relentless attack on the Italian air transport system. Soon, motorized columns could move only at night. On March 15, a heavy attack was made on the main Italian airbase at Diredawa, destroying a number of aircraft and reinforcing Allied aerial superiority.

As British engineers struggled to repair the numerous bridges along the route of advance, everyone wondered at the lack of interference from the Regia Aeronautica. SAAF aerial photographs revealed a strong defensive position at Marda Pass. Would this prove to be another Keren? Supported by South African artillery, the 23rd Nigerian Brigade attacked, and the Italians withdrew from the pass during the night.

The advancing Allies were now entering a land in which nothing is below 5,000 feet elevation. Three roads led from the pass to Harar, and these were taken by different formations. The Nigerians forced a position at Bisidimo, and two Italian colonial infantry regiments mutinied against their commanders. The beginning of the end was clearly in sight. Harar was surrendered on March 26, and Italian troops were rounded up by the hundreds. Intelligence estimates put total Italian losses from battle, desertion, and disease at about 50,000. Addis Ababa lay 320 miles away, a mere eight days for fully motorized forces.

Haile Selassie was also hundreds of miles from his capital, but his progress seemed less assured. Ras Hailu wanted to negotiate only with Wingate. One of Wingate's party noted, "Only a man who from his youth played the game of patience with long-term strategies of a cool head could have shown the forbearance that Haile Selassie now displayed."

De Simone's plan was to hold the Awash Gorge long enough to permit Aosta to withdraw from Addis Ababa to his chosen last place of refuge, Amba Alagi. He said, "I want every bridge destroyed. At Hubeta Pass, if the engineers do a good job of demolition, they (the Allies) should be held for weeks." But the South Africans now took the lead in the advance, and the destroyed or damaged roadways in Hubeta Pass were quickly repaired. The Johannesburg gold miners of the Transvaal Scottish repaired the roads with the inventory of a nearby brickfield.

The Allied column raced on but failed to intercept the evacuation from Diredawa. The area was full of mutinous colonial troops and a frightened white population of some 150. The arrival of armored cars restored order. A similar situation was expected in Addis Ababa, so Cunningham was granted permission by Wavell to approach Aosta, who agreed that Addis Ababa be declared an open city.

The 5th King's African Rifles led the 22nd East African Brigade, which had covered 910 miles in 12 days, across the Awash, and so earned the honor of leading the Allied entry into the city of the King of Kings on April 5. Thus ended the southern portion of the campaign to liberate Ethiopia, following an advance of 1,700 miles in eight weeks. To the rear, mop-up operations continued, and the 2nd and 5th South African Brigades were freed for transport to Egypt. Their compatriots in the 1st South African Brigade still had work to do.

Meanwhile, in the central areas, the fall of the capital provided additional impetus to the patriot uprising and Wingate's operations. It was apparent that Italian rule was crumbling. The Italians had withdrawn from Debra Markos, and Ras Hailu surrendered on April 4, although operations in Gojjam continued until May 19 before Italian resistance ended there. Platt now assumed control of the final operations. He was faced by three remaining centers of resistance, at Gallo-Sidamo, Gondar, and Amba Alagi, but he could deal with only one at a time.

The 1st South African Brigade was brought up from Addis Ababa on April 13 and came under shellfire at Combolcia, some six miles

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In a rare photo showing Colonel Orde Wingate (left) in full uniform and clean shaven, the British officer briefs Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie on the progress of the Abyssinian Campaign in 1941. (Imperial War Museum)

Speaking the Enemy's Language

BY DR. CARL H. MARCOUX

American soldiers of Japanese ancestry made remarkable contributions to the Allied victory during World War II. The best known of their exploits was the outstanding fighting record compiled by the 100th Infantry Battalion and later the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during the European campaigns. The soldiers of the 442nd received more decorations than those of any unit in U.S. military history for its size and length of service.

Less well known were the World War II contributions made by Nisei (American-born children of Japanese immigrants) troops on the other side of the globe in the Pacific and the China-Burma-India Theaters. The U.S. Army kept their service classified as secret until 1973 when the Freedom of Information Act finally provided the vehicle for the public release of this fascinating story. What were the reasons for this delay? Certainly, the story of the hazardous and valuable contributions of this group of soldiers merited the attention of the American public much sooner than 28 years from the war's end to the ultimate release of the information.

During the course of the war, some 6,000 AJAs (Americans of Japanese Ancestry) provided valuable language and information skills for Allied military and naval personnel throughout the Asian and Pacific areas. Their efforts proved to be doubly dangerous since, because of their racial identity, they could be mistaken for enemy soldiers by their own forces. In many cases, the linguists had to be provided with heavily armed bodyguards to keep them out of harm's way. On several occasions, Nisei soldiers were taken captive by their own comrades in arms who were unaware of the role played by the AJAs in defeating the enemy. It is believed also that in more than one situation the Japanese Americans involved in frontline action were killed accidentally by friendly fire because of mistaken identity.

Prior to the commencement of World War II itself, the U.S. War Department recognized the need for developing a facility capable of translating the Japanese language—to monitor broadcasts, translate documents, and to communicate, if necessary, with the Japanese. One of the world's most difficult tongues to master, Japanese was known and understood by few Americans. However, there were 200,000 American-born Japanese and their parents living in the United States. Unless born in the United States, Asians, by law, were excluded from citizenship, so most of the Issei, the foreign-born parents of the Nisei, could not change their legal status.

JAPANESE-AMERICAN INTERPRETERS serving in the U.S. Army provided valuable service to the Allies in the Pacific.

Lieutenant Pat Neishi discusses surrender terms with a Japanese lieutenant general on the outskirts of Manila in 1945. Japanese-American linguists provided outstanding service to U.S. and Allied forces in Asia and the Pacific. (All photos Author's Collection)

ABOVE: Kenji Yasui and Kari Yoneda, members of the War Information psychological team in Burma, pose with a pair of U.S. soldiers and Japanese battle flags which they have recently captured in combat.
RIGHT: Known as MISers, a group of Military Information Specialists poses during a rare period of free time in the China-Burma-India Theater.
FAR RIGHT: Attending a class in legal terminology as part of a training program to improve their knowledge of the Japanese language, Nisei soldiers serving as interpreters of the linguist section or the translator and interpreter section pay attention to an instructor. This photo was taken in September 1946, at General Headquarters, Allied Powers in the Pacific, Tokyo.

It was from the pool of Nisei that the War Department planned to recruit Japanese language experts. It ordered the testing of the nearly 4,000 AJAs serving in the Army at that time to determine their competency in Japanese. As it turned out, few of the young soldiers could read, write, or speak that language with any fluency. Most had made, to a greater or lesser degree, the transition to "the American way of life." English had now become their principal language. The U.S. Army, depending on two Caucasian officers who knew Japanese, Lt. Col. John Weckerling and Captain Kai Rasmussen, established what came to be called the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) at Crissey Field, on San Francisco's Presidio Army base.

Weckerling and Rasmussen, in turn, began to recruit Nisei instructors to lead the classes. John Aiso, of Burbank, California, and a Harvard Law School graduate, became the school's chief instructor. He was followed by Akira Oshida, Arthur Kaneko, and Shigeya Kihara, who managed to locate the necessary written materials for class use. In the short span of six weeks, the team assembled a staff, an initial class of students, and the buildings and supplies needed to begin the project.

The first class of 60 students at the Presidio commenced its studies on November 1, 1941. Fifty-eight members of the initial group were Japanese Americans. Two Caucasians with previous language training completed the first cadre. Five weeks later, the Japanese Navy attacked Pearl Harbor and other U.S. military installations on Oahu. Military authorities seemed confused as to the future of the new language school. The Army pulled both Weckerling and Rasmussen from the project and assigned them to other jobs. Fortunately, some Army officers realized the importance of the work that had begun and ordered Rasmussen back to the Presidio. The Danish-born immigrant with a native ability for learning foreign tongues remained head of the language training program thereafter.

The curriculum was designed to improve the students' ability to communicate verbally, to read and understand Japanese military terminology and documentation, to translate intercepted radio messages, to read maps, and to understand the basics of cryptography. Later in the war, the school's graduates proved effective in what came to be called "cave flushing," the persuading of Japanese soldiers and civilians hiding in caves in combat areas to surrender rather than resist or commit suicide.

After the Pearl Harbor attack, President

Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, requiring all Japanese Americans, whether foreign born or American citizens, to vacate the coastal areas of the western states and enter some 10 relocation facilities, dubbed by some critics of the program as concentration camps. In accordance with this policy, the Army established a new facility for the language school at Camp Savage, Minnesota. Rasmussen began a desperate campaign to find Nisei with sufficient knowledge of the Japanese language to undergo the planned intensive training. Soon the demands for the expansion of the program resulted in its being moved to more adequate headquarters at nearby Fort Snelling, a permanent Army installation.

Rasmussen shouldered the task of selling recruits on the importance of the mission. His candidates often had whole families confined to the relocation facilities, living under extremely trying conditions. Nevertheless, he managed to acquire recruits for a variety of reasons. Some candidates felt that participating in the program would demonstrate their loyalty to the United States. Others felt that the language program would at least get them out of the relocation camps and could possibly open

up other opportunities. By the fall of 1944, almost 1,800 students had completed extensive training in a variety of courses that would prove useful to the American military.

As the graduates streamed out of the Minnesota facility, they received assignments throughout the Pacific, from the Aleutian Islands campaign in the far north to General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in Brisbane, Australia, which became the center for the ATIS (Allied Translator and Interpreter Service). At its peak the facility had over 3,000 AJAs serving at that location. The other two major centers for the assignment of the Nisei language specialists were JICPOA (Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Area) in Hawaii and SATIC (Southeast Asia Translation and Interrogation Center) in New Delhi, India. From these key facilities the AJAs were sent to various subordinate units and on special missions.

The need for language school graduates far exceeded the supply, and Rasmussen became increasingly desperate to find candidates. He turned to the Japanese Hawaiians, for this group contained a far larger number of Kibei, American citizens who had been sent by their families to study in Japan, than the AJAs living on the mainland. The Kibei could be expected to quickly learn the curriculum developed at the Minnesota facility. The Hawaiians proved to be a hard sell. Many of them preferred to serve with the 100th Infantry Battalion, consisting of Nisei from their home territory.

General MacArthur, commander of U.S. forces in the South Pacific, had a great deal of respect for and confidence in the language specialists. He counted on them heavily to interpret all Japanese military documents that fell into Army hands. The translation of these often critical documents aided in the planning of future campaigns.

Ultimately, the AJAs would serve in every major area in the Pacific and the China-Burma-India Theaters throughout the war and act as language experts for Australian, British, Indian, and Chinese troops, as well as for their fellow Americans. The Commonwealth troops and the Chinese had no Japanese language specialists of their own.

The Military Information Specialists, MISers as they came to be called, all served in the Army. The Navy, clinging to archaic patterns of racial discrimination, refused to allow Nisei to enlist in its branch of the service. The same practice existed for the Marines as well. As a result, those two branches later came to depend on borrowed MISers from the Army on a temporary basis whenever the need arose. More than 100 were assigned to the Marines during land campaigns under such an arrangement. Yet. the role that the MISers played in the battles never appeared in Marine dispatches.

Initial attempts to draw information from Japanese prisoners of war proved difficult. Capturing them alive was a major problem itself, for the Japanese soldier had been programmed to fight to the death. The Army managed to take only 28 prisoners, about 1 percent of the defenders, when the Japanese were driven from the Aleutian island of Attu. The ferocious fighting that took place on Iwo Jima resulted in only 38 prisoners. Having once secured a prisoner, however, the interrogators quickly learned that he would respond to kind and courteous treatment. Often the simple act of offering a cigarette, some medicine, a glass of water, or a small bandage for a wound would establish a mood of cooperation during the captor's search for critical military information.

As the war progressed, the language specialists became increasingly effective in the art of persuading Japanese soldiers both to surrender and to divulge vital military information. The Japanese Army had apparently never taught its soldiers how to conduct themselves as prisoners of war since their military ideology stressed either victory or death in battle.

Nisei translators accompanied the Army throughout the campaign in the South Pacific. They served at Guadalcanal, the Solomons, the Carolines, New Guinea, and the Philippines, as well as in smaller and more limited engagements. MISers also accompanied the fabled Merrill's Marauders during their raids behind Japanese lines in Burma. They performed the same service for the British Chindit guerrillas as well. A specially trained group of Nisei language experts joined OSS (Office of Strategic Services) commandos who worked with the Kachins, native Burmese fighters from the country's northern hills. These guerrillas aided the Allies in their mission to open the Burma Road to resupply China with critical war materiél.

Possibly the most outstanding performance by the Nisei in the Pacific Theater took place during the struggle for Okinawa. This central island of the Ryukyus, some 350 miles south of the Japanese Home Island of Kyushu, repre-

As the war progressed, the language specialists became increasingly effective in the art of persuading the Japanese soldier both to surrender and to divulge vital military information.

On September 12, 1943, at Vella Lave, New Caledonia, Major John Burden and Nisei soldiers of the 25th Division Language Section, attached to G2 (Military Intelligence), interrogate a Japanese prisoner of war in a temporary stockade.

sented the key to the southern defenses of the Japanese empire. To the advancing Allied forces its capture would provide an ideal staging area for the invasion of Japan itself. The fight for the island would prove to be the greatest battle of the Pacific War.

The Japanese 32nd Army defended Okinawa. Its commander, Lt. Gen. Mitsuru Ushijima, led a force of some 75,000 Japanese soldiers plus an additional 25,000 or so Okinawans organized into a Boetai or Home Guard. These defenders were situated in an extensive system of fortified caves and underground tunnels, awaiting the arrival of the invading American Tenth Army, commanded by Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner. The total American force—ships, men, and equipment—numbered over 500,000 men, of which 180,000 assault troops (five Army and three Marine divisions) would actually go ashore.

The MISers' contribution to the invading army's ultimate success in capturing Okinawa was substantial. A copy of the Japanese Army's final defense plan was captured early in the fighting. Also discovered was a contour map of the island, which was found on the body of an enemy artillery observation officer. The translation and reproduction of these critical documents by the language specialists proved to be of immense value to the American forces.

Okinawa presented a unique challenge to the language specialists. The island's native inhabitants spoke a local dialect unfamiliar to the ears of most of the MISers unless their parents were originally from the island. The 450,000 Okinawans had also been warned by Japanese Army personnel that they would be raped, tortured, and killed by the invaders. In many cases, the civilians followed the Japanese as they began their retreat in the face of the powerful offensive launched against them by the Americans. Many chose to hide in caves and the tunnels. The job of the MISers consisted of trying to talk both the Japanese soldiers and the Okinawan civilians into surrendering.

Most Japanese soldiers chose to commit suicide rather than surrender, and they had urged the island's civilians to do likewise. During fighting on the island of Saipan in the Marianas, many of the island's civilians had committed suicide by hurling themselves off 800-foot cliffs into the sea. More than 50,000 Japanese soldiers and civilians died as the U.S. Army seized control of Saipan.

For the Okinawa campaign, the Army followed the suggestion of a MISer whose parents were Okinawan and set up a special unit proficient in that dialect. As the invasion progressed, the group worked to get the island's civilians away from the fighting. They also quickly identified any Japanese Army personnel who sought to escape capture by trying to blend in with the Okinawan civilians.

ABOVE: On April 14, 1948, First Lieutenant Fred Uyehara of Chicago, the assignment officer of the linguist training and control section, interviews Lieutenant Yoshio Hotta of Oakland, California, for possible reassignment as a linguist with the U.S. Far East Command. TOP: A Nisei soldier of the MIS stands at attention during a meeting with senior Allied officers. Nearly half a century after World War II ended, the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service received a Presidential Unit Citation for its service during the conflict.

Some of the Okinawan language specialists became "cave flushers." One heroic member of this group entered a cave and convinced its inhabitants, 350 Japanese officers and men, to surrender. Another MISer entered a total of 12 different caves and persuaded the holdouts in 11 of them to surrender.

Without question, the work of these Nisei translators saved thousands of lives, among both the Okinawan civilian population and the Japanese military. By the time the Americans secured the island, some 10,000 soldiers had given up in the only meaningful mass capitulation by the Japanese military of the entire Pacific War. About 300,000 civilians, approximately two-thirds of the island's population, also survived the holocaust. While it was true that many Japanese soldiers and some Okinawan civilians still chose to commit suicide rather than surrender to the American forces, there is no doubt that the toll would have been much higher were it not for MISer efforts.

The work of the Nisei translators was not concluded at war's end. They traveled throughout the Pacific, participating in the surrender of Japanese troops on small islands and in major cities. They moved quickly to POW camps as well to ensure the safety of Allied troops in Japanese hands. They also acted as interpreters during the war crimes trials of Japanese soldiers that followed in the Philippines and Japan. Their postwar contributions proved equally as important as their wartime efforts.

The Army sought to hold on to as many AJAs with Japanese language skills as possible following the war because the United States needed their skills during the occupation of Japan. Many Nisei chose to make a career in the Army, receiving advancement in the officer structure as time passed, before eventually retiring.

The MIS linguists earned three Distinguished Service Crosses, five Legion of Merit medals, and five Silver Stars. They also received numerous Bronze Stars, Soldier's Medals, and Purple Hearts. In total, 39 MIS personnel gave their lives in the service of their country.

During the war and for many years thereafter, the American public knew little about the service provided by the MIS linguists to the Allied forces. During the war, many MISers had relatives still in Japan, some even in the Japanese Army. The U.S. Army sought to protect the identity of the translators, so as not to bring harm to these family members. There has also been a natural reticence on the part of the Nisei themselves to discuss their accomplishments while in the service. However, General George Willoughby, MacArthur's chief of intelligence, estimated that the work of the MISers shortened the war in the Pacific by two years.

The MISLS was moved to Monterey, California, after the war, and the language center has grown significantly since it began in 1941. It has remained the major U.S. facility for the instruction of foreign languages for military purposes. More than 100,000 students have passed through the school to date. It currently offers instruction in 50 different languages and has a library of 20,000 volumes on site. In January 2000, the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service finally received a Presidential Unit Citation from the secretary of the Army. □

Dr. Carl H. Marcoux is a World War II veteran of the U.S. Merchant Marine and a Korean War veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He resides in Newport Beach, California.

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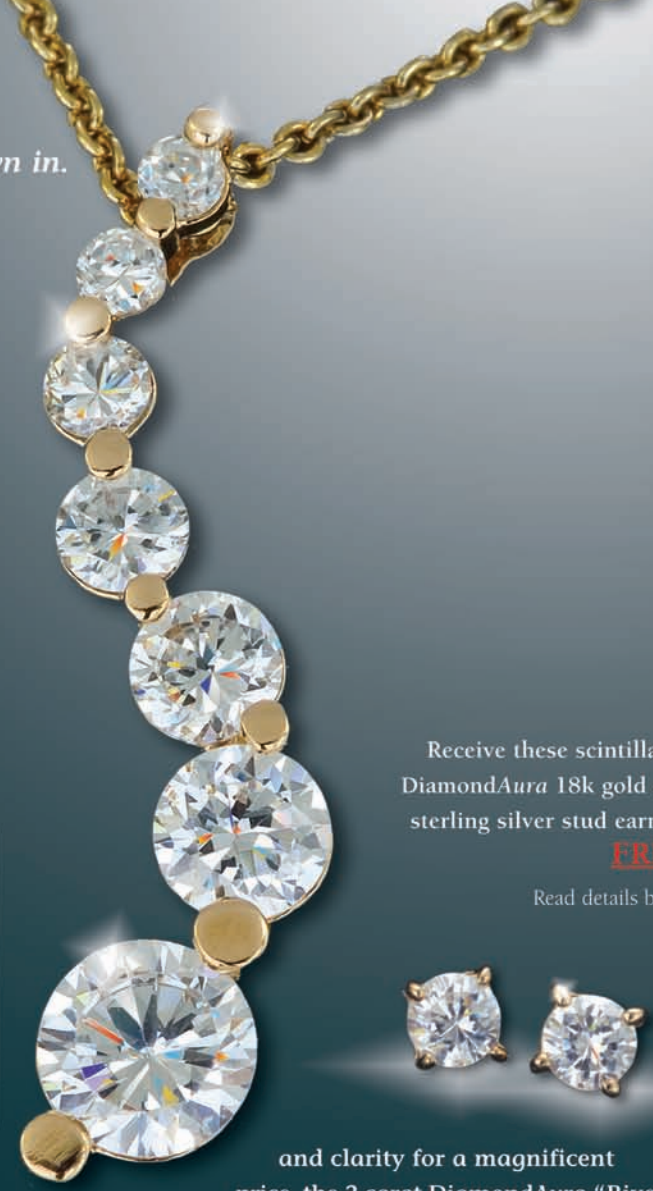

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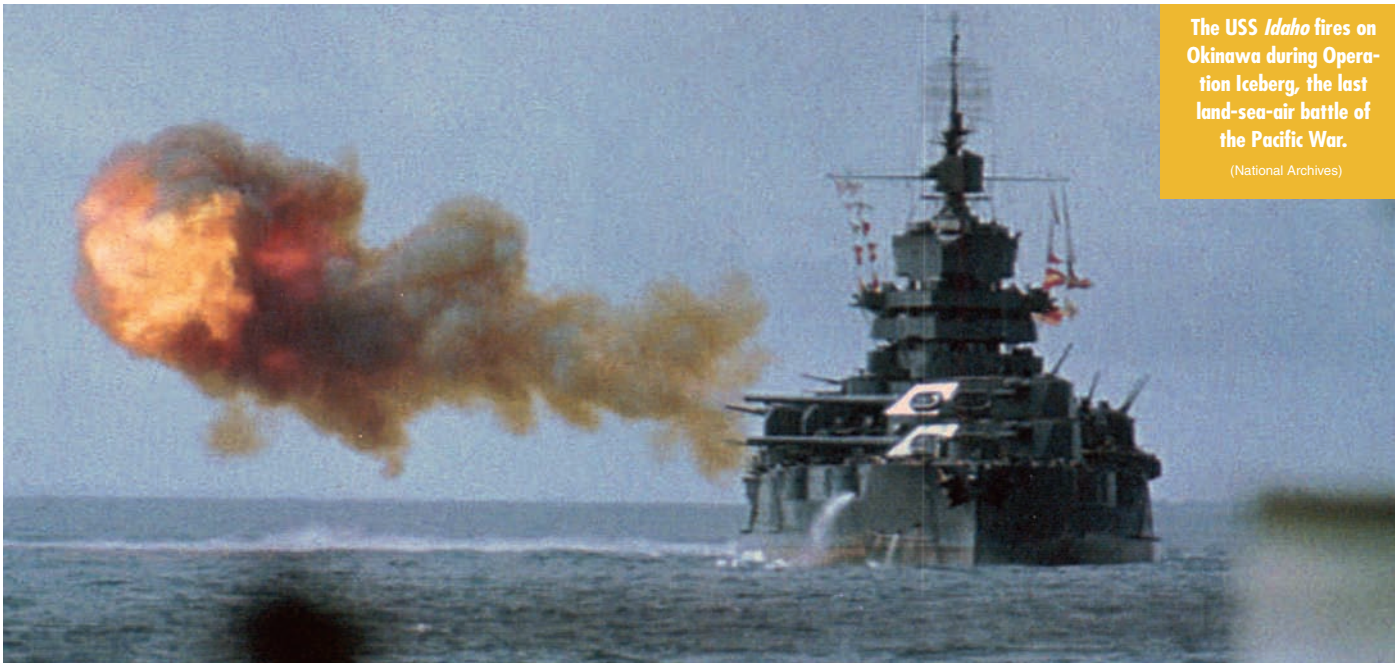
By Mason B. Webb



The USS *Idaho* fires on Okinawa during Operation Iceberg, the last land-sea-air battle of the Pacific War.
(National Archives)

Horrific Fight on Land and Sea

The Battle of Okinawa was the last major campaign of the Pacific War.

OPERATION ICEBERG, THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA, WHICH LASTED FROM APRIL to June 1945, was the final and largest air-sea-land battle of the Pacific campaign. Strangely, this titanic clash has gone largely underreported.

Correcting that oversight is Bill Sloan, whose monumental work ***The Ultimate Battle: Okinawa—The Last Epic Struggle of World War II*** (Simon & Schuster, 2007, 416 pp., photographs, maps, bibliography, index, hardcover, $27.00) encompasses everything from the grand strategy to the stories of individual participants. Basing his book on official records as well as in-depth interviews with more than 60 veterans, Sloan takes the reader onto the beaches, into blood-soaked foxholes, through shell-blasted villages, and onto the decks of flaming ships and aircraft flying through sheets of lead.

During the three-month slugfest, the 110,000 soldiers of the Japanese 32nd Army, knowing that their stand would mean either victory or defeat for Japan, and more than a half million Army and Marine Corp invaders of the U.S. 10th Army were locked in a death struggle that would decide the outcome of the war in the Pacific.

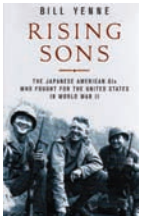
Supporting the boots on the ground were 1,500 American ships, 36 of which were sunk and 360 damaged in wave after wave of kamikaze suicide attacks.

When the smoke of battle finally cleared, General Simon B. Buckner, commander of the 10th Army, was dead—the highest ranking American general to die in World War II. Also dead were some 100,000 soldiers, sailors, and airmen from both sides—plus 150,000 civilians caught in the crossfire. Killed by their own hands in ritual *hara-kari* fashion were the two top-ranking Japanese generals.

So costly was the horrific battle for the island, which measures only 60 miles long by 18 miles wide, that President Harry Truman realized the enemy would put up a similar or even worse stand if America invaded the Japanese Home Islands. To put a sudden end to the war and the slaughter, he made the fateful decision to use the atomic bomb.

The Ultimate Battle is *the* ultimate book about heroism, death, and sacrifice that seldom has been more compellingly told. A definite "must-read."

Rising Sons: The Japanese American GIs Who Fought for the United States in World War II, by Bill Yenne, Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, New York, 2007, 302 pp., photographs, maps, bibliography, index, hardcover, $25.95.



Just Americans: How Japanese Americans Won a War at Home and Abroad, by Robert Asahina, Gotham Books, New York, 2006, 340 pp., photographs, maps, bibliography, index, hardcover, $27.50.

Within months of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government, worried about fifth columnists and the loyalty of persons of Japanese heritage, began displacing over 100,000 Japanese-Americans living along the West Coast. They had their homes, businesses, and property confiscated and were moved to "relocation camps" in various parts of the country.

Yet, incredibly, thousands of young men from these camps flocked to recruiting centers to join the Army, eager to prove their loyalty to a country that had denied them their rights.

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The Depths of Courage: American Submariners at War with Japan, 1941-1945 (Berkley/Caliber, New York, 2007, 432 pp., photographs, maps, index, bibliography, hardcover, $25.95)

During World War II, no other unit of the United States Navy suffered a higher percentage of casualties than the Fleet Submarine Force. Facing a daunting challenge, particularly early in the war, the intrepid sailors who manned submarines lived the old adage describing military service during wartime of long periods of seemingly relentless boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror. Indeed, more than 3,400 sailors, or 22 percent of those deployed, were killed in action while on war patrols.

Flint Whitlock and Ron Smith have delivered one of the finest books on the U.S. Navy's heralded silent service to come along in years, drawing on first person accounts and records of wartime submarine operations. The authors succeed in presenting the saga of the submariners in the Pacific from a very personal perspective while also relating the strategic progress of the war. They relate the story of Machinist's Mate Clay Decker, one of eight survivors of the ill-fated USS *Tang* (SS-306), which was destroyed by one of its own errant torpedoes running in a circle, and tell of the systematic strangulation of Japanese supply lines which contributed mightily to final victory. They describe the mundane, such as the correct operation of a submarine's toilet, and the harrowing tension of combat.

Smith was himself a torpedoman who survived five war patrols aboard the submarine USS *Seal* (SS-183). Known as Smitty to his fellow crewmen, he vividly remembers the ordeal of a depth charge attack by a Japanese warship.

"*Aaaaooogaa!* blared the alarm throughout the sub, sending men scrambling to their battle stations. Lieutenant Frost, the diving officer, flooded negative tank with eight tons of sea water and the screws bit into the ocean, sending *Seal* on a steep downward descent. It was organized chaos in the narrow passageways as men bumped into each other, dashing in both directions. Smitty found himself running uphill toward the stern on a thirty degree slope. An officer's voice came over the intercom: 'Rig for depth charge!' Smitty squeezed through the watertight door openings of each compartment just seconds before they were slammed shut and dogged down.

"He had just entered the aft torpedo room when a tremendous blast threw him like a rag doll across the room, smashing his legs against one of the heavy steel I-beams that crossed the room about a foot above the deck. Big Ski, already in the compartment, grabbed onto a bunk frame while Woody was knocked flat on his skinny ass. Men who had been asleep in the bunks were wide-eyed and wide awake, fear and confusion written on their faces. Smitty, prone on the deck and in intense pain, looked down; blood was streaming from his shins and he thought he could see white bone."

During the course of World War II, the U.S. Navy's Fleet Submarine Force evolved from a thinly stretched collection of obsolete boats standing vigil against long odds and coping with an aggressive enemy, faulty torpedoes, and inadequate doctrine, into a modern, efficient, and offensive force eventually responsible for sinking 55 percent of all Japanese shipping, which was sent to the bottom from 1941 to 1945.

The Depths of Courage is a compelling read, well worth the price of admission. History enthusiasts will devour this generously illustrated and superbly crafted volume. Smith has also written the book *Torpedoman*, while Whitlock is the acclaimed author of *Soldiers On Skis: A Pictorial Memoir of the 10th Mountain Division*; *The Rock of Anzio: From Sicily to Dachau—A History of the 45th Infantry Division*; and *The Fighting First: The Untold Story of the Big Red One on D-Day*. □

Once trained at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, and deployed to Italy (and later France), the 4,000-man 442nd Regimental Combat Team cut a swath through German formations that made them one of the Nazis' most-feared opponents. Two new books recount the epic experiences of the 442nd.

Conducting operations with their motto, "Go For Broke," firmly in their minds, the Nisei won battle after battle, garnered official accolades and public praise, earned thousands of medals and decorations, but paid for their accomplishments with tremendous casualties—over 300 percent. (The men of the unit earned an aggregate total of nearly 5,000 medals for valor—and over 9,000 Purple Hearts.)

With clarity and moving prose, using official documents, memoirs, and interviews with the handful of 442nd veterans who still remain, both Asahina and Yenne tell the story of what General George C. Marshall called "the most decorated unit in American military history for its size and length of service."

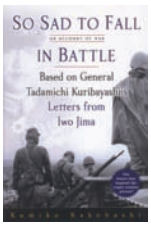
There is no doubt, too, that the outstanding battlefield accomplishments of the Nisei soldiers convinced American politicians that the Japanese American civilians posed no threat to national security and deserved to be released from the relocation camps.

While there is some natural overlap and repetition in both books, each one is well worth reading for, as President Bill Clinton said in a 2000 ceremony at the White House honoring the surviving members of the 442nd, "As sons set off to war, so many mothers and fathers told them, 'Live if you can, die if you must, but fight always with honor, and never, ever, bring shame on your family or your country.' Rarely has a nation been so well served by a people it so ill-treated."

And as General Jacob Devers so aptly put it, the soldiers of the 442nd had "more than earned the right to be called 'just Americans,' not 'Japanese Americans.'"

Both books are very highly recommended.

So Sad to Fall in Battle, by Kumiko Kakehashi, Presidio, New York, 2007, 211 pp., photographs, map, bibliography, hardcover, $24.95.



Those who saw Clint Eastwood's gripping 2007 film *Letters From Iwo Jima* saw something American audiences seldom have seen—a view of the Pacific War from the Japanese side. The film was based on this book and, as the dust jacket copy says, "Most Americans know only one side of this pivotal and bloody battle [for Iwo Jima]."

First published in Japan to great acclaim, *So Sad to Fall in Battle* depicts the epic struggle—in which more than 20,000 Japanese soldiers and over 8,000 American Marines died, with another 19,000 wounded—through the eyes (and letters) of the commander of the doomed garrison, General Tadamichi Kuribayashi.

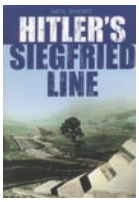
As Kakehashi depicts him, Kuribayashi was far from the stereotypical fanatical Japanese warrior. Unique among his country's officers, he refused to send his men on suicidal *banzai* charges. Instead, he personally walked every inch of the island to plan the positions of the thousands of underground bunkers and tunnels from which his men would make their final stand. As a side note, the flagpole to which the American flag was attached atop Mt. Suribachi, as shown in the famous Joe Rosenthal photo, was a pipe from the water-collection system the

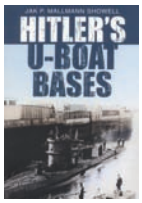
general had engineered himself.

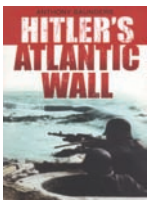
On hot, sulfurous Iwo Jima, Kuribayashi rejected the comforts due him as an officer and endured all the hardships with his troops, knowing that neither rescue nor reinforcements were coming his way. And, as the tide turned against him, Kuribayashi displayed his true mettle: though offered a safer post on another island, he chose to stay with his soldiers, fighting alongside side them in the brutal, no holds barred clash, and eventually falling with them.

There were very few Japanese survivors of the battle (just over 200), but author Kakehashi was able to track down many of them and record their memories of the battle and their courageous leader.

Yes, the Japanese were ruthless in battle and in their occupation of other countries and treatment of POWs, but *So Sad to Fall in Battle* is a tremendously moving, sobering experience, full of reflections and observations about the human cost of war. Not to be missed.







Hitler's Siegfried Line, by Neil Short; ***Hitler's U-Boat Bases,*** by Jak Showell; ***and Hitler's Atlantic Wall,*** by Anthony Saunders, all from Sutton Publishing, London, 2007, photos, maps, diagrams, indexes, various lengths, each $24.95.

In the history of warfare, no nation built more—or more formidable—defensive works than Nazi Germany. Hitler was obsessed with fortifications, and the bigger, the better.

He had Dr. Fritz Todt, the head of Germany's construction arm, Organization Todt, and his armaments minister Albert Speer, constantly adding to Germany's seemingly indestructible inventory of gun and observation bunkers, casemates, individual fighting positions, tank barriers, submarine pens, missile- and rocket-launching ramps, beach obstacles, and underground headquarters and command centers—all designed to make Germany immune from invasion and defeat.

As the authors of these three fine, well-researched, and profusely illustrated books (with many then-and-now photos) point out, tens of thousands of men—some conscripted laborers—worked for years to build immense structures that would be unfazed by time and enemy munitions. Billions of Reichsmarks and millions of man hours went into the creation of these incredible reinforced concrete structures, but it was all for naught; in the end, the fortifications designed to keep out the invaders failed miserably. The Atlantic Wall at Normandy, for instance, was breached by the Allies in the span of a morning.

Fortunately for fortification buffs, many of these once mighty construction projects still stand as tourist attractions or have been put to civilian use, some a little worse for wear, but still awe provoking in their size, scale, and obvious craftsmanship that was designed to last as long as the "Thousand-Year Reich."

Besides being filled with interesting, little-

WWII HISTORY Second Annual Book of the Year Awards

With so many outstanding books produced during 2007, the editors of *WWII History* had a hard time choosing a single book. After all the votes were in, however, one book nosed out the competition at the finish line. (Listed alphabetically by title)

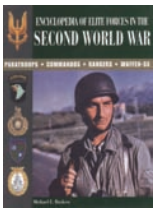
- *Berlin Games,* by Guy Walters (reviewed in July 2007)
- *The Dead of Winter,* by Bill Warnock (reviewed in March 2007)
- *The Depths of Courage,* by Flint Whitlock & Ron Smith (reviewed in this issue)
- *The Few,* by Alex Kershaw (reviewed in May 2007)
- *Flying Tigers,* by Daniel Ford (reviewed in November 2007)
- *Iwo Jima,* by Eric Hammel (reviewed in January 2007)
- *Masters of the Air,* by Donald Miller (reviewed in May 2007)
- *One Square Mile of Hell,* by John Wukovits (reviewed in May 2007)
- *The Pentagon,* by Steve Vogel (reviewed in November 2007)
- *Sea of Thunder,* by Evan Thomas (reviewed in May 2007)
- *So Sad to Fall in Battle,* by Kumiko Kakehashi (reviewed in this issue)
- *A Special Mission,* by Dan Kurzman (reviewed in July 2007)
- *The Ultimate Battle,* by Bill Sloan (reviewed in this issue)
- *We'll Always Have The Movies,* by Robert L. McLaughlin and Sally E. Parry (reviewed in March 2007)

And the winner is...
The Ultimate Battle, by Bill Sloan

known facts, these books can also serve as a guide to the many sites that still exist for the battlefield visitor.

Anyone who finds military fortifications intriguing will be fascinated by any or all of these three books.

Encyclopedia of Elite Forces in the Second World War, by Michael E. Haskew, Amber Books, London, 2007, 192 pp., photographs, index, hardcover, $34.95.



Although elite forces have been around since the dawn of warfare, it was not until World War II that they were extensively employed by virtually all of the major combatants.

Just the knowledge that a relatively small band of highly trained, highly specialized troops (think American paratroopers dropping behind enemy lines at Normandy, or Peiper's *kampfgruppe* during the Bulge, or Japanese *kamikaze* at the Battle of Leyte Gulf) was facing them was enough to give opposing commanders and forces pause.

The stories of many of these elite forces—paratroops, rangers, commandos, special air and naval units, and the like—have been captured in a highly interesting and factual compendium by *WWII History* magazine editor Michael Haskew. Within this book's 192 pages are concise, intriguing histories of many elite formations that served in American, British (and Commonwealth), German, Belgian, French, Italian, Japanese, and Soviet armies, air forces, and navies, and struck fear into the hearts of their enemies.

Here the reader will find little-known information about such groups as the British SAS, the American-manned RAF Eagle Squadrons, Popski's Private Army, Darby's Rangers, the Waffen-SS, Long Range Desert Group (the Desert Rats), Flying Tigers, Special Boat Service, and scores more. Each entry is studded with plenty of little-known facts, and Haskew covers each unit's battlefield failures as well as its successes.

Lavishly illustrated with over a hundred high quality color and black-and-white photos, Haskew's work will be applauded by researchers and history buffs alike. A "must have."

Hitler's Headquarters: From Beer Hall to Bunker, 1920-1945, by Blaine Taylor, Potomac Books, Washington D.C., 2007, 209 pp., photographs, maps, bibliography, index, hardcover, $29.95.

In this well researched, profusely illustrated volume, Blaine Taylor has created a fascinating photographic history of Adolf Hitler's many headquarters, offices, command posts, private residences, and even mobile headquarters from which the Führer planned his rise to power and directed his war against East and West. Taylor recounts the background history and physical description of each location while relating the importance of these locations to the

Short Bursts

The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Kesselring, Greenhill, London, 2007, 320 pp., photographs, maps, index, softcover, $24.95.

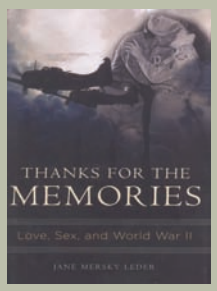
Known as "Smiling Albert" to friends and foes alike, behind the friendly exterior the dashing, paradoxical Kesselring was a formidable warrior and a top tactician, especially when it came to defense. A young officer in the "Great War," in 1935 he transferred from the Army to the Luftwaffe, where he became Luftwaffe Chief Hermann Göring's deputy and commanded air fleets during the Battle of Britain.

In this reprint of his 1960 memoirs, Kesselring discusses with candor his involvement in the many major battles in which he was engaged—North Africa (sharing the direction of the command with Erwin Rommel), Sicily, and Italy, where his leadership brought the Allied drive to a virtual halt.

In March 1945, Hitler appointed Kesselring Commander-in-Chief West, and gave him the responsibility for holding off Allied armies charging through France, Belgium, and Holland—an impossible task. But if anyone could do it, it was Kesselring, who had supplanted Rommel as Hitler's favorite general. That he ultimately failed to prevent defeat in the West was no reflection on his abilities.

A very worthwhile study of command at the highest levels.

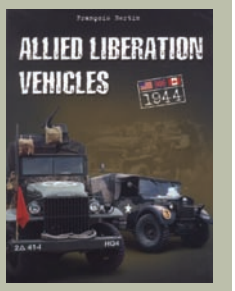
Thanks for the Memories: Love, Sex, and World War II, by Jane Mersky Leder, Praeger, Westport, CT, 2006, 185 pp., photographs, bibliography, index, hardcover, $39.95.



World War II turned the world upside down. Thirty million American men and women were uprooted during the war, either as members of the military or as civilians in search of work in the defense plants. Away from the strictures of family and church, they tested the limits of sexuality and morality—and often broke the rules.

In her highly interesting study of wartime morés, Jane Mersky Leder explores, with the help of scores of interviews of men and women of the Greatest Generation, life on the home front and the sex lives of GIs overseas and at stateside bases. She tells a story that has rarely been mentioned before, discussing such formerly taboo topics as prostitution, "cheating," contraception, unplanned pregnancies, gays in the military, "Good-Time Charlottes," love, marriage, and much more.

Thanks for the Memories fills in the unspoken gap about some of the things that really went on during World War II. A highly interesting read.



Allied Liberation Vehicles, by François Bertin, Casemate, Philadelphia, 2007, 128 pp., photographs, softcover, $24.95.

Chock full of 280 crisp, clear color photographs, all of pristine, restored American, British, and Canadian vehicles taken at reenactments and military vehicle shows in Europe and the United Kingdom, *Allied Liberation Vehicles* is a fine book for anyone who owns or is restoring an MV, or those who simply have an interest in the myriad vehicles that helped win WWII.

The informative text, translated from the original French, covers the gamut: listings of manufacturers, production numbers, vehicle markings, model classifications, and charts of specifications of all the types shown. The author admits, however, that he was selective in his choice of which vehicles to include, and that the book is not an exhaustive catalog of every Allied vehicle. However, the nearly 60 different types he does feature are all pictured and described to their maximum advantage.

Covering everything from motorcycles to jeeps to trucks to tracked vehicles to tanks, *Allied Liberation Vehicles* is guaranteed to provide many hours of enjoyment for the military vehicle enthusiast. □

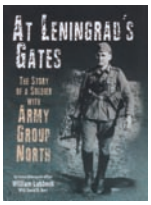
larger story of Nazi Germany and World War II.

Included in this book are such well-known spots as the Braunhaus (Nazi Party HQ in Munich), Munich's Hofbräuhaus (site of an early attempt on Hitler's life), the old and new Reich Chancellery buildings in Berlin, the Berghof and "Eagle's Nest" at Obersalzberg, the *Wolfschanze* at Rastenburg, and the *Fuhrerbünker* in Berlin.

Also included are little-known locations such as the room Hitler rented in Munich in 1913-1914, the Sterneckerbräu beer hall (the "birthplace" of the Nazi Party), Hitler's disguised headquarters in the Ukraine, and even photos of his special train. Several of the visuals are then-and-now comparison shots—many of them published for the first time.

A number of these buildings still exist, and Taylor's comprehensive work will serve as a fine guidebook for the traveler who wishes to seek out the actual places where history was made. Highly recommended.

At Leningrad's Gates: The Story of a Soldier with Army Group North, by William Lubbeck, Casemate, Philadelphia, 2007, 256 pp., photographs, maps, hardcover, $32.95.



What was life like for the average German soldier on the Eastern Front? In 1940, a young Wehrmacht draftee named Wilhelm Lübbecke (he changed it to William Lubbeck after the war when he moved first to Canada and then to the U.S.) discovered the answers firsthand after his division took part in the invasion of France and then transferred to the East.

The next year, he found himself in on the invasion of the Soviet Union. Lubbeck's unit, the 58th Infantry Division, made the deepest penetration into Leningrad's suburbs before it was pulled back to take part in the brutal siege of the city. Fighting the terrible winter conditions as well as the enemy, Lubbeck's unit managed to hang on, but barely, and suffered horrendous casualties. In 1943, he returned to Germany and trained to become an officer. After being commissioned, he returned to his old company and took command, guiding it on a year-long retreat from Russia.

Taken prisoner, Lubbeck survived a Soviet POW camp, struggled to exist in postwar East Germany, and escaped to the West to begin to build a new life.

This is a remarkable book about a remarkable soldier who went through hell and ended up making a success of his life in a new land. Inspirational and strongly recommended. □

b-29 bombers

Continued from page 73

more effective. Nicknamed "Old Iron Ass," LeMay did not give the Japanese any breaks.

On the afternoon of March 11, a force of 313 bombers took off for Nagoya. Some 285 actually got over the target, but the damage was not as great as inflicted on the Tokyo mission. Bombardiers spread their loads over a wider area, and the light winds over the city failed to produce the conflagration that destroyed Tokyo. Smoke was still rising from the Nagoya attack as the first of 301 bombers took off for a mission against Osaka, which had yet to be hit by American bombs. Aborts left 274 B-29s to find a target obscured by 80 percent cloud cover. The necessity of using radar actually led to a closer concentration of bombs and a resulting conflagration that wiped out eight square miles of the heart of the city, including the main commercial and industrial areas. The Nagoya raid proved that the Tokyo mission had been no fluke.

LeMay flew five fire-bombing missions before the kamikaze crisis during the invasion of Okinawa led to a diversion of the B-29s to attacks against the airfields on Kyushu from which they originated. The success of incendiary missions led him to conclude that while the official Twentieth Air Force mission was to prepare the Home Islands for an invasion, it was possible to force Japan to surrender by bombing alone.

On April 25, LeMay wrote a letter to Norstad informing him of his belief. LeMay was not alone in his conclusion. Two weeks before LeMay wrote his letter, Twentieth Air Force Director of Plans Colonel Cecil Combs recommended that fire-bombing missions be stepped up immediately after the surrender of Germany to force Japan to do likewise. Former ambassador to Japan Joseph C. Grew believed that Japan was on the verge of surrender and advised President Harry Truman of his belief. Numerous other high-ranking officers, including MacArthur and his subordinate, General Kenney, shared the belief.

The strategic bombing campaign was placed on hold for almost a month as 75 percent of XXI Bomber Command missions were directed in tactical attacks. Most of the strategic missions during the period were high-altitude precision missions with high explosives, but LeMay managed to get in a few fire-bombing raids, including two against targets around Tokyo Bay. By the end of May, LeMay had sufficient resources to mount raids of more than 500 planes, and by mid-June the cities ringing Tokyo Bay had been burned to the ground. June 15 concluded Phase I of LeMay's Urban Bombing Campaign, and the results were spectacular. Japan's six largest cities had been bombed to ruins, and the country's industrial base was in shambles. Casualties among the Japanese population were well over a million, with the dead numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

The capture of Okinawa brought Fifth and Seventh Air Force B-24s within range of targets in Japan, and the Liberators joined the Superfortresses in the fire raids against Japanese cities while North American B-25 Mitchell bombers struck targets on Kyushu in preparation for the upcoming invasion scheduled for November 1. Navy aircraft carriers joined the attack on Japan along with Army fighter-bombers operating from Iwo Jima and the Ryukus. The Japanese people were being subjected to the most intense aerial bombardment in history, and their resolve was beginning to wear down.

President Harry Truman issued the Potsdam Declaration on July 26, 1945, calling for the unconditional surrender of Japan, and many in the Japanese government wanted to accept it. Three members of the cabinet objected on the basis that the Declaration placed the fate of the emperor in question and branded members of the country's former government as war criminals (the Japanese government had gone through two reorganizations since the invasion of Saipan).

American bombers began dropping leaflets warning the Japanese that their entire population was in danger of starvation, and it was hardly an empty threat for a country that was largely dependent on food imports. The fact that the Japanese were losing their resolve became apparent on August 4, when Fifth Air Force pilots operating over Kyushu came back to report that white flags were being waved throughout the island. Two days later, the first atomic bomb exploded in the sky over Hiroshima.

Although popular myth relates that Japan surrendered because of the detonation of the atomic bombs, in reality the new weapons had little effect on an already demoralized population. This was partially due to the distances from the target cities to Tokyo. Most Japanese were only aware that a terrible new weapon had been detonated—few realized its importance. When President Truman promised a rain of destruction from the skies on Japan, he was addressing a country that had already been bombed into near oblivion. On August 14, the emperor addressed the Japanese people for the first time in history, telling them that the country was surrendering. □

Frequent contributor Sam McGowan is himself a pilot. He resides in the Houston, Texas, area.

in the breech

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from the key town of Dessie. For six days, the South African gunners worked their pieces in a fierce duel while the infantry battalions eventually managed to roll up the position from the left flank. Dessie fell on April 27 after little more fighting, and another 8,000 prisoners were bagged. That same day, Haile Selassie was given permission to make his final journey to Addis Ababa.

The demolition of bridges and roadways once more held up the progress of the South Africans, and once more their engineers were swiftly able, through skill and improvisation, to bridge the gaps. Aosta was ensconced in a stronghold in mountains 10,000 feet high. The Italian fortress was, nevertheless, more a showpiece than a bastion. The 5th Indian Division was given the task of breeching it, and the plan was to stretch the thinly held Italian line until it broke.

The Allies gradually increased the pressure, and the Italians were jittery about their treatment at the hands of the Shifta irregulars of Ras Seyoum who were assisting the Allies. On May 19, the Italians surrendered to the sound of "The Flower of the Forest," played by the pipers of the Transvaal Scottish.

This still did not mark the end of the campaign. Operations against scattered remnants of the Italian forces continued in the mountains until the end of November 1941, when the final battle was fought at Gondar. The Italians showed a fighting spirit to the bitter end but were simply not capable of winning against a modern enemy. The finale was as ignominious as the entry into Addis Ababa had been triumphal on May 5, 1936.

On May 5, 1941, Emperor Haile Selassie reached the green hills of Entoto and looked down on his capital city. Far from returning as the Conquering Lion of Judah, the little emperor was the last to enter his capital, an irony that was not lost on him. Being deeply religious, however, he believed the British were mere instruments of God, and His ways, inscrutable but infallible, had enabled Selassie to accept his burden with patience.

The emperor delivered an address before an honor guard from the 5th King's African Rifles. "My people, do not repay evil with evil ... do not stain your souls by avenging yourselves on your enemies ..." He had returned. □

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thick Georgia drawl to Chief Picking, polishing the 3-pounder's shiny brass pedestal. "I've got orders to the *Lanikai,* but this cain't be it!" After assuring him this was indeed it, Tolley asked him, "Have you ever been in sail before, Boats?" Tolley was well aware that his own experience in sail was limited to a catboat on the Severn at Annapolis.

On December 6, in spite of the heroic efforts of all concerned, *Lanikai* was still in port. The biggest problem was the radio. The yard had installed a good receiver but had no transmitters available. The existing transmitter was "a homemade rig, probably made by a radio shop in Manila or by some ham," the chief radioman recalled, and it refused to emit a beep. "Evidently, one of the windings on the plate transformer was open, as I could never obtain any high voltage."

By now, Lieutenant Tolley suspected that the cruise—whatever its mission—would likely be one-way, and he stored most of his possessions, leaving his sword, class ring, will, and a last letter home with a friend. He would never see any of it again. What he brought aboard—typewriter, camera, a few khaki shirts and slacks, sneakers, steaming cap with grommet removed, a set of white shorts and shirt—fit easily into a small locker in the captain's cabin. "If I managed to survive," he thought, "it would be by swimming, in which case excess baggage would be no help."

On December 7 (Manila time), ready or not, USS *Lanikai* was to put to sea. Tolley got no admiral's briefing, just a small envelope that Commander Slocum passed him with the instruction to open it only when clear of Manila Bay. "I can tell you that you are headed for the coast of Indochina. If you are queried by a Japanese man-of-war, you are to explain you are looking for a downed U.S. Navy patrol plane." When Tolley told him his radio was not transmitting, Slocum breezily told him to have his radioman work on it en route.

Tolley's second concern was fresh water; *Lanikai* was designed for a crew of five and now carried 19. "You have a set of international signal flags, don't you?" Slocum responded, adding sardonically, "If you run short of water, ask a passing Jap for some." Years later, he confessed to Tolley, "I feel sure you realize that by the time you were ready to sail that almost all of us understood that time had run out and that whatever FDR had in mind could in all probability never be realized."

By 2:10 PM, the last three crewmen, the engineer, pharmacist's mate, and the long-awaited radioman had reported aboard, and a yard tug towed *Lanikai* clear of her mooring. By 2:15, she was under way on auxiliary power, shifting to her main propulsion at 2:20 with the hoisting of the jib staysail and forestaysail. There was no hurry crossing Manila Bay; ships were permitted to traverse the minefield at the entrance only in daylight—even though, as Admiral Hart had complained to OPNAV on October 7, the ancient mines were so covered in barnacles as to be useful only for bluff.

The sun was low when Tolley dropped anchor off Corregidor. The cook served out the crew's first supper at sea, and everyone turned in early. Around 3:30 AM, December 8 (9:30 AM December 7, Honolulu time), the radioman nudged Tolley awake with a message from fleet headquarters: "ORANGE [i.e., Japan] WAR PLAN IN EFFECT. RETURN TO CAVITE." Tolley decided to let the crew sleep until dawn and went topside into the cool night air. He noticed that the lights on Corregidor had gone out and guessed they would not be coming on again for a long time.

At 5:35 AM, three hours after the first bombs fell on Oahu, *Isabel* gained entrance to Manila Bay, having been shadowed all the previous day by a Japanese twin-engine reconnaissance bomber. When Payne reported to Hart, the admiral looked surprised: "I didn't expect to see you again," he said.

The Japanese had identified *Isabel* and refrained from attacking her in order not to set off alarms before the Pearl Harbor raid. The day before, however, Japanese fighters chased or fired on three British and Australian patrol planes off the Pointe de Camau, which had been *Lanikai*'s assigned station. Several hours after *Isabel* docked, Japanese warplanes hit Clark Field on Luzon. World War II had overtaken the United States.

Thirty years later, over lunch with Rear Admiral Kemp Tolley, retired Admiral Thomas Hart remarked to another guest, "I once had the unpleasant requirement to send this young man on what looked like a one-way mission," and briefly related *Lanikai*'s narrow escape. "Would you tell [us]," Tolley asked him, "if you think we were set up to bait an incident, a casus belli?"

"Yes," Hart replied, "I think you were bait! And I could prove it. But I won't. And don't you try it, either!" □

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By Eric T. Baker

SMERSH takes on the Germans.

The Soviet counterintelligence agency known as SMERSH is so famous for its role in Ian Flemming's James Bond novels, that its real, historical role is comparatively unknown. Created in the 1930s as a way to root out disloyalty in the Red Army, SMERSH reached its height during the three years from 1943 to 1946 when it was placed directly under Stalin's control and given the mandate of not only maintaining order in the Red Army, but also stamping out insurgency in the newly captured regions of Eastern Europe and Germany. It is ironic that the postwar setting of Flemming's novels made SMERSH a famous threat during an era during which it had officially ceased to exist.

The designers at Haggard Games, a Russian game company, however, have based their new game for the PC, ***Death to Spies***, on the historical SMERSH at its apex, battling German troops and Allied spies behind the enemy lines. Cast in the format of a third-person shooter (the player controls a single SMERSH commando from a viewpoint of over his shoulder), the player will sneak his character around on large, open maps, trying to achieve objectives that include stealing documents, kidnapping officers, doing surveillance, and, of course, assassinating spies.

Most first-person games set in WWII tend to be of the run and gun sort. *DtS* does allow for some gunning, but attempting to kill the character's way through a mission is much harder than sneaking to the objectives. The main reason is that most of the weapons in the game are almost realistically deadly, and grenades actually are. The 2-D tactical map on the screen displays the guards with a wedge that shows which way they are looking and if they can see the player's character. If the player is seen in Soviet uniform or even carrying Soviet weapons, the guards tend to throw grenades first and ask questions later. So players are better off making use of the character's ability to put on captured uniforms, hide corpses, pick locks, and even stare through key holes.

In matters of equipment, *DtS* is a historically accurate game, but the missions it portrays are more an exercise in making an interesting challenge than they are an exact modeling of the exploits of SMERSH agents during the war. Still, this is an angle from which a stealth game has never come at WWII before. That in itself makes it an interesting game, and the graphics and interface are good enough to carry it off.

And then there is ***Wings of Power II: WWII Fighters*** from Tri Synergy for the PC. This is not a stand-alone product, but an add-on for Microsoft's *Flight Simulator 2004*. When installed, it lets the player use the *Flight Simulator* engine to fly five of the best fighters of WWII: the P-51 Mustang, the Spitfire, the Messerschmitt Bf-109, the Japanese Zero, and the P-47 Thunderbolt.

Unlike *DtS*, there is no "game" per se in *WoPII*. The add-on is a strict modeling of the five fighters, but because *Flight Simulator* is not a combat sim, there is no fighting. Players can load the fighters out in different configurations, and the planes are so well modeled that players will actually be able to "feel" the difference between each one, but they can't actually fire any guns or drop any bombs in anger. So, players who are looking to rule the skies should wait for the next game, below, but for players looking for the most realistic experience of flying these great planes possible to have on a computer, *WoPII* is the way to go.

As promised above, ***Blazing Angels II: Secret Missions of WWII*** for the PC and Xbox 360 from Ubisoft is much, much more of a game and far less of a simulation than *WoPII*. Instead of five planes, there are 50. Not all of them actually flew during the war. In fact, some of them were little more than prototype drawings when the war ended, but in the game players can fly the Kyushu J7W Shinden, the Lockheed P-80 Shooting Star, the Gotha Go 229, the Heinkel He-162 Salamander, and many other exotics. While *BAII* does try to model real-world locations (Cairo, Moscow, and Rome to name three) it doesn't try to model real-world battles. In the story mode, players take the role of a member of an elite undercover squadron called Operation Wildcard. Its mission is travel the globe, trying to prevent the Nazis from creating weapons of mass destruction. A minor spoiler here shows just how far this game diverges from history: there is a boss battle at the end of the Cairo level against a giant Zeppelin.

For players who don't mind WWII used as a springboard for a fantasy story line, and for players who want an easier time flying period plans than a strict simulation would provide, *BAII* is a terrific game. The planes are very flyable, and pulling off the missions with flair and fancy flying earns bonus victory points that can be used to upgrade the player's hangar of planes. All the planes are upgraded at once, so that the player isn't forced to choose between a tricked out plane and an unmodified one. The player can always pick the right plane for the mission a head. □

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