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Cover: Private George Curran with the 80th Infantry Division takes a break during the division's assault on Argentan, France, August 20, 1944. Private Curran is armed with a 1903A4 Springfield rifle with mounted scope.
See story page 36. Photo: National Archives.

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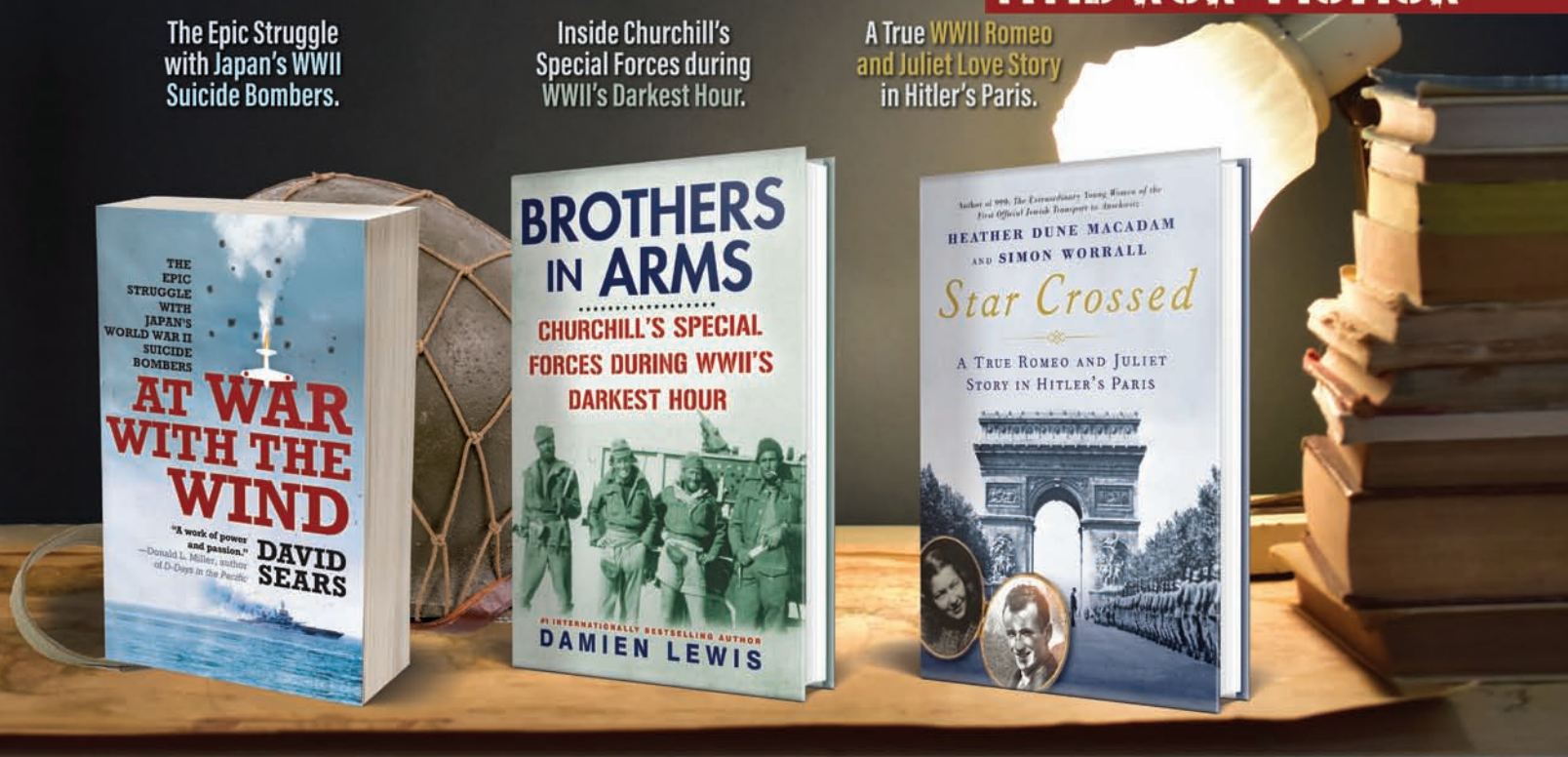

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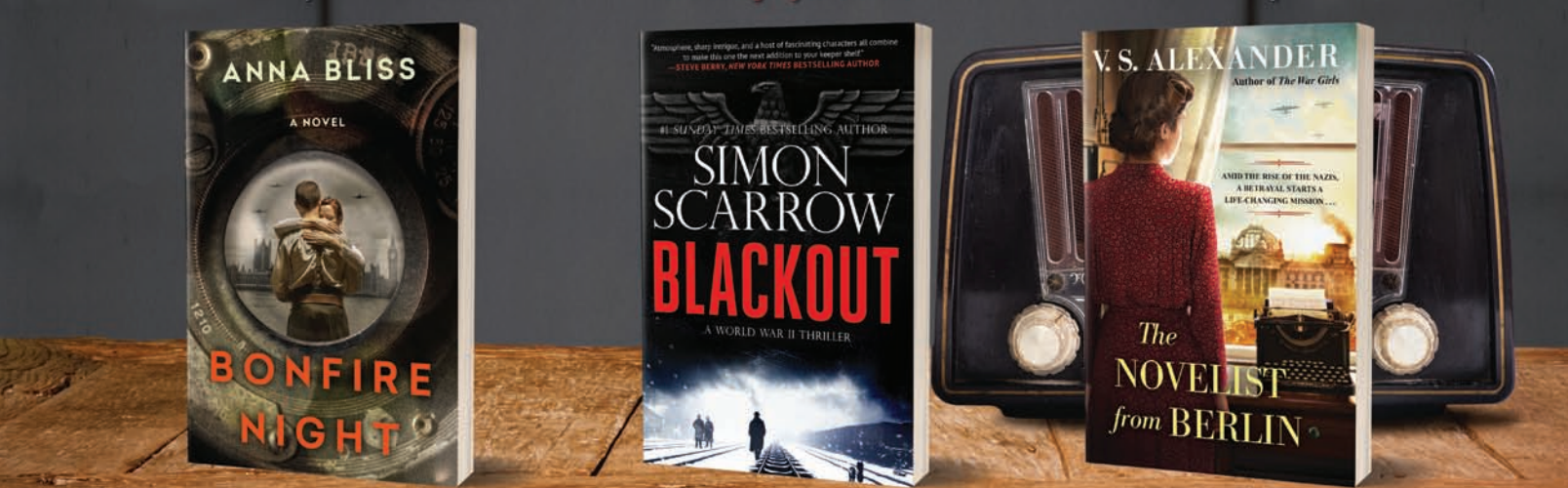

Troubling History: the controversy over a bronze eagle with swastika crest salvaged from the German battleship *Graf Spee*

The pocket battleship *Admiral Graf Spee* was conceived as a commerce raider. Along with the other panzerschiffe, literally "armored ships," of the Kriegsmarine, *Graf Spee* was heavily armed with 11-inch main guns. These were sufficient to take on any merchant ship at a safe distance and to outduel cruisers, destroyers, and smaller escort vessels. However, should *Graf Spee* come upon a more powerful enemy, she was sleek and fast enough with a top speed of 28.5 knots to outrun an adversary if overmatched.

Commissioned in 1936, *Graf Spee* proved adept at her purpose after the outbreak of World War II, sinking more than 50,000 tons of British merchant shipping between September and December 1939. In mid-December, the pocket battleship was off the coast of Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay, at the mouth of the River Plate, when the heavy cruiser HMS *Exeter* and the light cruisers HMS *Ajax* and HMNZS *Achilles* came into sight. On December 13, the Battle of the River Plate was fought, both sides sustaining heavy damage.

Graf Spee was struck multiple times by six- and eight-inch shells that killed 36 crewmen and wounded at least another 60. The British were battered as well. Captain Hans Langsdorff ordered *Graf Spee* into the harbor at Montevideo to assess the damage and possibly make repairs. However, the British remained on station and Langsdorff was convinced that more Royal Navy warships were on the way. Rather than renew the fight, he ordered *Graf Spee* scuttled in the estuary of the River Plate after seeing to the safety of the crew. He then retired to a hotel room in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and committed suicide with a pistol. Some accounts say that he was lying atop the battle ensign of *Graf Spee*, others that the flag was that of the old Imperial German Navy.

The wreck of *Graf Spee* has remained an object of curiosity for decades, and salvage operations were begun in 2004. The first major artifact recovered was a 27-ton gunnery range finding telemeter, which is now on display in a Montevideo park. In February 2006, the bronze 880-pound eagle and swastika crest was recovered from the stern of the ship. Its disposition became a source of controversy, particularly due to the repugnant nature of displaying Nazi artifacts emblazoned with the swastika. Court cases involving ownership ended in 2022, and the Uruguayan government took full possession of the crest.

Earlier this year, Uruguayan President Luis Lacalle Pou announced a plan to melt the crest down and have it recast in the form of a dove to promote "peace and unity," according to *The Telegraph*. However, the idea was quickly dropped amid an outcry from preservationists. Within two days of the announcement, 18,000 people had signed a petition that the crest should remain in its original form and be responsibly put on display in a museum.

One of the advocates for preservation is Guido Manini, a senator and former army general, who commented, "Cultural heritage must be cared for and cannot be left at the mercy of a leader's whim." Apparently, President Pou had been startled by the immediate and unexpected response to his meltdown initiative. During the rapid retreat, he confessed to *The Telegraph*, "If you want peace, the first thing one has to do is to create unity, and this clearly has not done so."

Therefore, in December 2023, a full 84 years after *Graf Spee*'s brief commerce raiding career came to an ignominious end in the estuary of the River Plate, the pocket battleship remains a source of controversy and debate.

The line separating historical preservation and the destruction of the remaining vestiges of pure evil will, for now and perhaps forever, remain blurred as individual sensibilities are aired while consensus remains elusive.

—Michael E. Haskew, Editor

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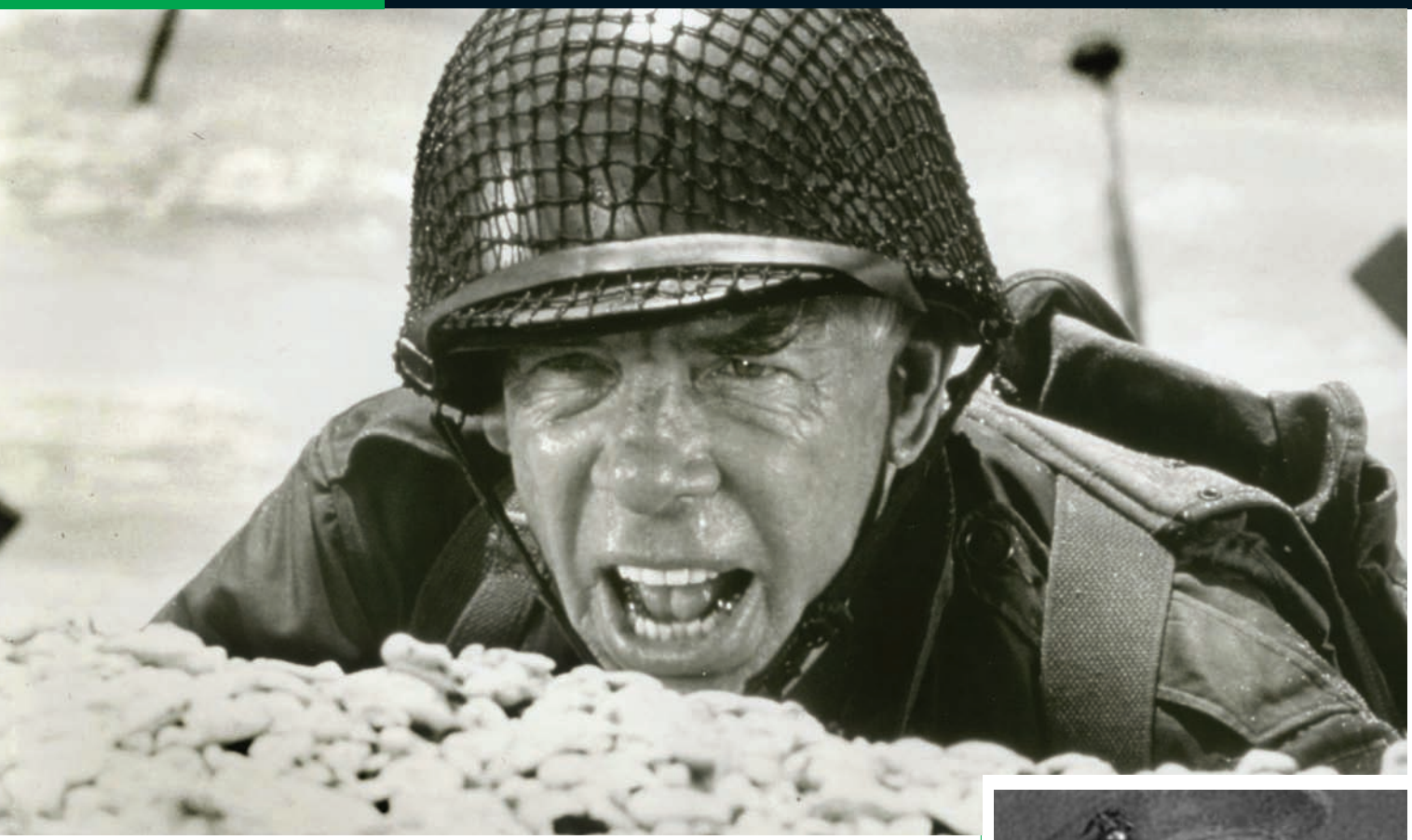

Both: Wikimedia

Lee Marvin, acclaimed star of *Cat Ballou* and *The Dirty Dozen*, was most proud of his service as a Marine in World War II.

Near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and beside the grave of world heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis in Arlington National Cemetery is the resting place of a film star who chose to be remembered first and foremost as a U.S. Marine.

Lee Marvin achieved acclaim with many film and television portrayals, but he never forgot that he had found a home in the Marine Corps and was proud to be a wounded veteran of the Pacific theater in World War II. His life echoed the familiar refrain, "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

As a leatherneck and as an actor, on the screen and in real life, he worked and played hard—a rough-hewn maverick who brawled frequently, drank too much, and never hesitated to defy authority. He said that he learned an important lesson in the corps: "Life is every man for himself. You can't ever let your guard down, and the most useless word in the world is 'help.'" But the oft unruly free spirit could be kind, understanding, and steadfast.

Marvin was born in New York City on February 19, 1924. He and his brother, Robert, who became an artist and teacher, were the sons of Lamont Marvin, a decorated World War I Army captain and advertising executive, and Courtenay D. Marvin, a fashion writer and beauty consultant. Lamont collected guns and instructed his sons in handling firearms.

When Lamont became advertising manager for the Florida Citrus Commission in 1940, it was decided that Lee should attend St. Leo's Preparatory School, near Dade City, Florida. The lean, muscular youth hated it as he had previous schools, but he shone in track and

ABOVE: Picture of USMC Private Lamont Waltman "Lee" Marvin Jr., as listed in the "Red Book," 24th Regiment, 4th Marine Division, published in 1943. Marvin was wounded during the Battle of Saipan in June, 1944, and later given a medical discharge. TOP: This publicity still shot from the 1980 film, *The Big Red One*, shows actor and former U.S. Marine Lee Marvin portraying a sergeant in the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division.

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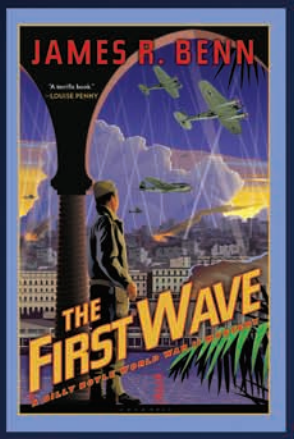

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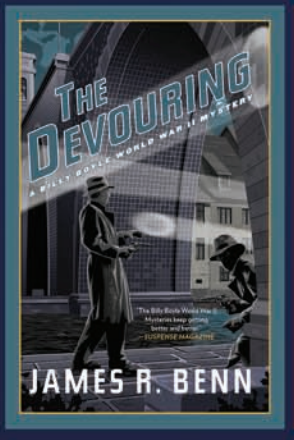

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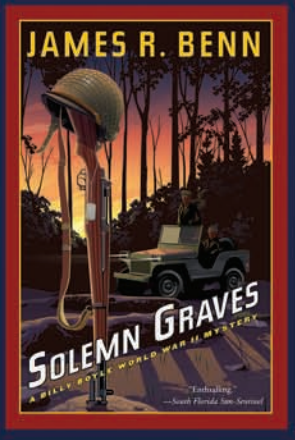

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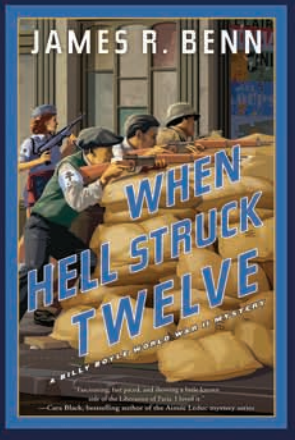

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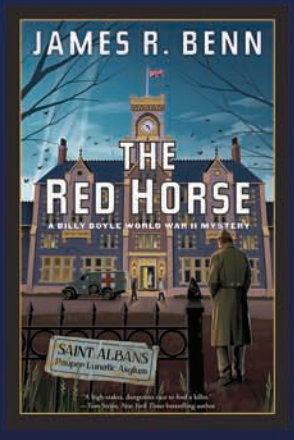

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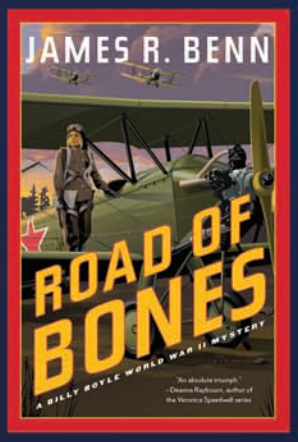

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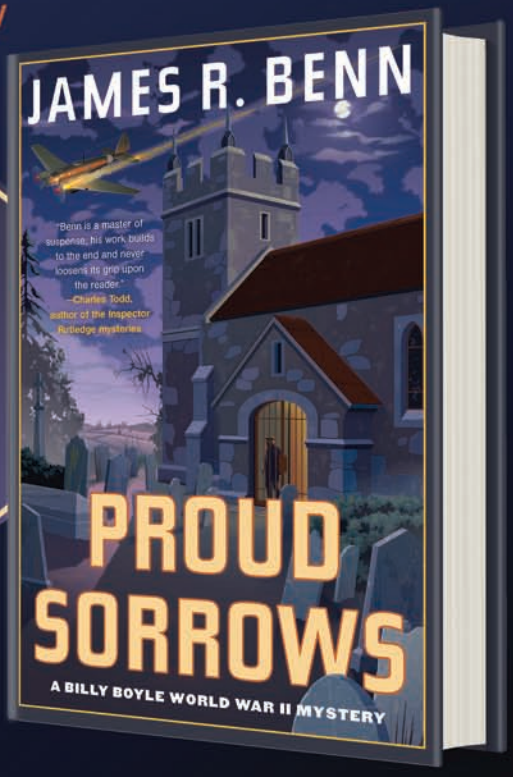

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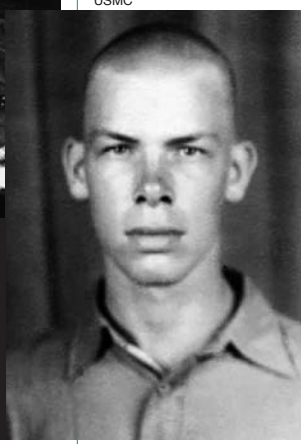

ABOVE: U.S. Navy landing craft approach the islands of Namur (center) and Roi (right), part of the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands on February 1, 1944. Serving with the reconnaissance company of the 24th Marine Regiment, Marvin arrived the night before the U.S. invasion, where he endured the Navy shelling of the island. Smoke from the bombardment can still be seen rising from Namur Island. RIGHT: A young Lee Marvin in the Pacific, where he first saw combat as a scout-sniper with the reconnaissance company of the 24th Marine Regiment during Operation Flintlock, the invasion of the Marshall Islands.

field. In his free hours, he hunted feral pigs with a bamboo spear in the woods near the campus. He was expelled just shy of graduation for his habitual flouting of regulations. He then attended a high school for three years before dropping out.

By this time, America was at war, and the restless rebel knew what he wanted to do—join the Marine Corps. "I knew I was going to be killed," said the fatalistic Lee. "I just wanted to die in the very best outfit. There are ordinary corpses, and Marine corpses. I figured on the first-class kind and joined up."

His father was delighted and decided to get into the war himself. At the age of 51, he went back into the army and was shipped to England, where he helped to set up antiaircraft gun emplacements that destroyed a number of German V-2 rockets in 1944-45. Lamont survived the war as a top sergeant with more decorations.

After his brother joined the Army Air Forces, 18-year-old Lee enlisted in the Marine Corps in New York on August 12, 1942. He underwent basic training at the Parris Island, South Carolina, Recruit Depot and the New River, North Carolina, Marine Base. He excelled in boot camp, and, thanks to his father's influence, made sharpshooter. He missed expert status by one point. He was promoted to corporal at New River, assigned to a service company at Camp Elliott, near San Diego, California, and received instruction in demolitions. He mastered combat training but was still rebellious, and some minor scrapes saw him reduced to private, confined to barracks, and assigned to a month of mess duties.

Disgruntled and eager to see some action, his chance finally came when he was assigned to D Company of the 4th Tank Battalion, 4th Marine Division. The scout-sniper unit, soon to be redesignated as a reconnaissance outfit, shipped out for the Pacific theater in January 1944 to take part in Operation Flintlock, the invasion of the Marshall Islands by leathernecks of Major General Holland M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith's Fifth Amphibious Corps and Army troops of Major General Charles H. Corlett's 7th Infantry Division. The Marshalls' sprawling chain of 32 atolls included two major Japanese bases, Kwajalein and Eniwetok.

Marvin's role as a scout-sniper with the reconnaissance company of the 24th Marine Regiment was more suited to his personality than the spit and polish of other outfits. Rank and regulations were set aside, and the emphasis was on physical prowess, independence, and camaraderie. Paddling in small rubber boats, Marvin and his comrades were sent in to reconnoiter Kwajalein on the night before the invasion early on Tuesday, February 1, 1944. His introduction to the chaos of combat was a rude awakening.

"If you were fired on, you were supposed to throw a poncho over your head, whip out a blue flashlight, and draw an 'X' on the map where the fire was coming from," he reported. "Well, I don't think anybody actually threw a poncho over their head, and nobody fired back, either. Because once you fired, you were dead. Of course, we'd all get miserably lost and screwed up.

"The next morning, if you got that far, the sun would come up, and there would be the whole U.S. Navy out there because it's D-Day. And they would be shelling you because if they saw you they figured you were Japs and nobody told them otherwise. So, God, it was absolute confusion. You're hit by friend and foe. So you eventually swim out to a reef and pray, and hope, goddam it, that somebody's listening."

The Marines captured Kwajalein on February 4, and Marvin saw more action later that month. He and his comrades scouted Eniwetok before landings by Marines and Army troops on the atoll's Engebi and Parry Islands on February 18-19. Marvin's luck held through several more missions before he was shipped to Maui, Hawaii, for leave. After receiving some more training, he was then assigned to I Company of the 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment. His next stop would be Saipan in the Marianas. The 70-square-mile island was needed as a forward base for B-29 heavy bomber raids against Japan.

General Smith's 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions, supported by the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, started landing on the morning of Thursday, June 15, 1944. The leathernecks were reinforced two days later by Major General Ralph C. Smith's 27th Infantry Division. Saipan was fiercely defended by 32,000 Japanese troops, and the month-long campaign was bitter and costly.

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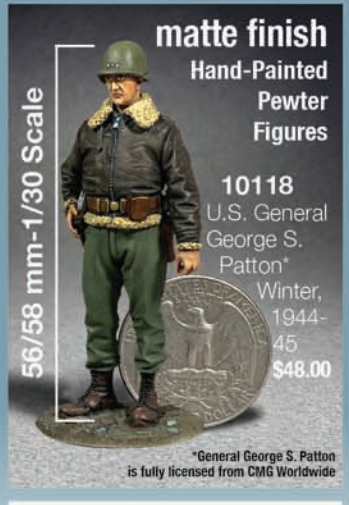

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After going ashore on Yellow Beach 2, Marvin and his company crawled forward through brush and into large cane fields, where stood thousands of sticks topped by sake bottles. Marvin assumed that they were being used as insulators for wires which had been knocked down, but he was wrong. They were artillery markers.

"They had us nicely pinpointed on a checkerboard," he reported. "They didn't miss. The artillery got very bad, and all the bombing was coming down real heavy." Casualties began to mount, but Marvin and his surviving comrades pushed forward and took shelter in a long trench. By the end of the day, he estimated, the Marines and the enemy were only 30 yards apart.

After losing more men that first night, I Company pushed toward Aslito Airfield, which was eventually taken by the 165th Infantry Regiment, a New York National Guard outfit, and renamed Isely Field. After getting pinned down and losing more men, Marvin's company was pulled out.

On Sunday, June 18, the fourth morning of the campaign, I Company headed into "Death Valley." Its objective was 1,554-foot limestone Mount Tapochau, an extinct volcano. But the company was ambushed before it could start its ascent. Shellfire from 27 Japanese emplacements rained on the leathernecks. In 15 minutes, the company was reduced from 247 men to six. "It was just decimation," said Marvin, one of the survivors.

Wikimedia

ABOVE: Private Lee Marvin, left, and an unidentified Marine pose with a Japanese machine gun in the Pacific in 1944. TOP: U.S. Marines in a shell hole search for snipers on the Pacific island of Saipan. Private Lee Marvin was wounded June 18, 1944, during the assault on the island's highpoint, Mount Tapochau. "In 15 minutes, the company was reduced from 247 men to six," Marvin recalled.

Then it was suddenly his turn. His luck ran out and he "got nailed" by an enemy machine-gun round. Ripping through his lower back, narrowly missing the spinal cord, and severing his sciatic nerve, it tore a nine-by-three-inch hole in Marvin's buttocks. "Jesus Christ!" he yelled. "I'm hit!" Another leatherneck shouted, "Shut up, we're all hit." Marvin said later, "There are two prominent parts of your body in view to the enemy when you flatten out—your head and your ass. If you present one, you get killed. If you raise the other, you get shot in the ass. I got shot in the ass…But I was alive and still had my .45 automatic, which gave me some blast if I needed it."

Marvin was placed on a stretcher, given a shot of morphine, and laid with the other wounded men. A few seconds after he had gulped some water from a plasma bottle, a captured Japanese ammunition dump 150 yards away exploded. The tremendous blast blew Marvin off his stretcher, and he landed squarely on his lacerated behind.

As the wounded were carried back to the beach, Marvin and another man were placed into a jeep. The vehicle started off but headed into enemy-held territory. The driver realized his mistake, however, and swiftly wheeled around and made it to the beach. That night, Marvin was loaded into a passing landing craft and taken out to the hospital ship USS *Solace*. After six months of combat, during which he assaulted 21 enemy-held beaches from Kwajalein to Saipan, the war was over for him and he was finally safe. But he wept for the men who were not and experienced nightmares for the rest of his life.

Marvin spent the next 13 months in naval hospitals. He was awarded the Purple Heart while in a hospital on Guadalcanal, and later received a Presidential Unit Citation, a letter of commendation with ribbon, and campaign medals. At the Boston Naval Hospital, he learned that he had closely escaped being permanently paralyzed. He was discharged on July 24, 1945, at the Philadelphia Marine Barracks with a modest disability pension.

Marvin was soon reunited with his father and brother when they returned from Europe. Like many returning veterans, the three men were bewildered and depressed. A few months later, Lamont, who had soldiered in both world wars, suffered a total breakdown. Courtenay Marvin, meanwhile, gave up her career and moved the family to a new home in the small Ulster County town of Woodstock, New York.

After trying unsuccessfully to rejoin the Marine Corps, Marvinb worked odd jobs and became a plumber's assistant. It was a humble existence, but it eventually led him

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Lee Marvin and Jane Fonda in a 1965 Columbia Pictures publicity still for *Cat Ballou*. Marvin won an Academy Award for Best Actor in the dual role of Kid Shelleen-Tim Strawn. At left is actor Dwayne Hickman who starred in the TV show *Dobie Gillis*.

to a new career.

A local doctor befriended the veteran who mowed his lawn, inviting him on fishing trips. On one trip Marvin met the manager of Woodstock's Maverick Theater. While working on the theater's backed-up toilet one day, Marvin's attention was diverted by the bustle of a summer-stock rehearsal.

He was intrigued by the camaraderie and tension, reminiscent of his Marine days. The director had asked the theater manager to find a tall, boisterous man to fill in for a sick actor. Marvin got the bit part.

With the aid of the GI Bill of Rights, he studied at the American Theater Wing in New York, and from 1948 to 1950 played minor roles off-Broadway, on live TV, and in repertory. He was in Herman Melville's *Billy Budd* on Broadway in *1951*.

That same year, Marvin made his film debut in *You're in the Navy Now*, a comedy about a hapless destroyer crew, starring Gary Cooper. Impressed with Marvin, director Henry Hathaway enlarged his role, and introduced him to an agent in Hollywood.

In a series of westerns and melodramas, Marvin was usually a mean gunman, gangster, or social misfit, before landing better roles. He appeared with Tyrone Power and Patricia Neal in Hathaway's 1952 Cold War thriller, *Diplomatic Courier*, and the following year in Fritz Lang's *The Big Heat*, a police drama with Glenn Ford, and *The Glory Brigade*, with Victor Mature and about Greek infantry in the Korean War.

Marvin had a breakout year in 1954. He played Marlon Brando's snarling rival, Chino, in *The Wild One*. He was in *The Raid*, based on a real-life attack on a Vermont town by escaped Confederate prisoners. In *The Caine Mutiny* with Humphrey Bogart, Marvin played a slovenly sailor. In 1956, he was in two more landmark war films—as a wounded soldier in *The Rack*, with Paul Newman, and as a colonel in Robert Aldrich's *Attack!*, starring Eddie Albert as an infantry captain in the Battle of the Bulge.

After landing roles with John Wayne in two John Ford films—the acclaimed western, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962) and the comedy, *Donovan's Reef* (1963)—Marvin finally established himself as a star in 1965. In the western comedy, *Cat Ballou*, starring Jane Fonda, he won a best actor Academy Award with his dual role as a drunken gunman and his desperado twin.

In 1967, Marvin gave one of his best leading performances in the box office hit, *The Dirty Dozen*. Cast with former Marines Robert Ryan and Robert Webber, Navy veteran Ernest Borgnine, and ex-B-29 tail-gunner Charles Bronson, Marvin portrayed hard-bitten Major John Reisman. The film was nominated for four Oscars.

Marvin starred in two low-budget war films released in 1968. In *Sergeant Ryker*, he was an Army sergeant court-martialed for alleged treason during the Korean War. In *Hell in the Pacific*, he and Toshiro Mifune were opposing soldiers, one American and one Japanese, stranded on a deserted atoll.

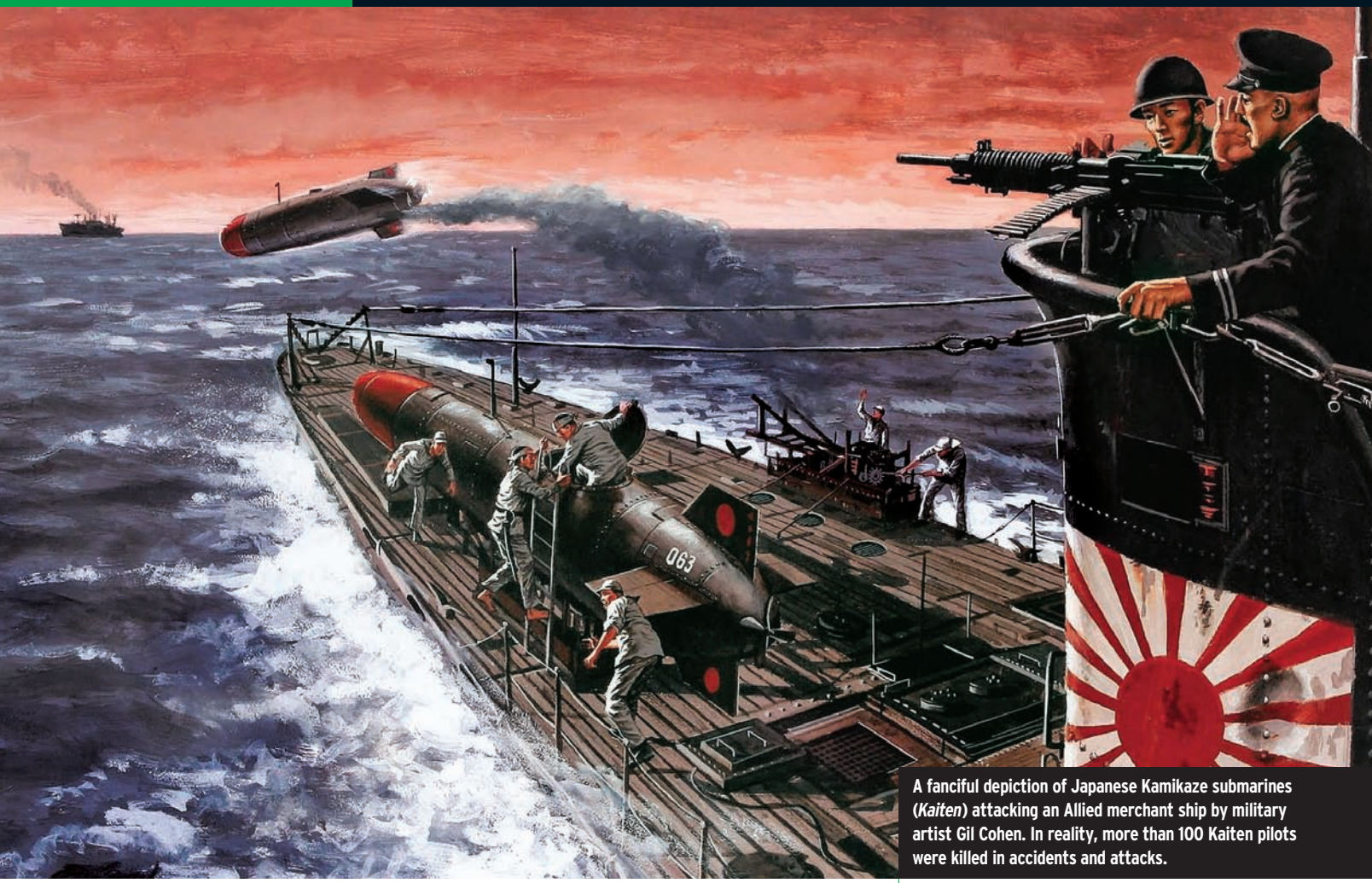
His later films were less than memorable, with the exception of Samuel Fuller's *The Big Red One* (1980). Marvin was cast as a sergeant and World War I veteran nursemaiding four young riflemen as the U.S. 1st Infantry Division slogs through North Africa, Sicily, France, Belgium, the Rhineland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

The Saipan veteran did more than turn in one of his best roles. Seeing his fellow actors had no idea of how to handle weapons, he acquired M-1 rifles and ammunition and had them fire blanks off the set. He held target practice and taught them how to break down and clean their weapons. He even had them take rifles home at night for cleaning.

Fuller's masterpiece was seen as one of the most telling films about the European war. A Big Red One veteran and Silver Star winner, Fuller also had directed *The Tanks Are Coming, The Steel Helmet, Fixed Bayonets,* and *Merrill's Marauders*.

Marvin could be unruly and unpredictable, but his loyalty to the Marine Corps was unshakable. He was proud to have served and missed the esprit de corps. He often attended reunions of the 4th Marine Division Association. In 1986, he told a *Leatherneck* writer, "When I see a young Marine in the airport, I think about how this guy is getting his presence together—that boot camp is doing its job. There's a mettle to him standing in the airport wearing that uniform with his rifle badge. Yeah, I guess I see myself."

Marvin, 67, died of a heart attack on August 29, 1987. His Arlington headstone reads, "Lee Marvin, PFC, U.S. Marine Corps, World War II, Feb. 19, 1924-Aug. 29, 1987." □



A fanciful depiction of Japanese Kamikaze submarines (*Kaiten*) attacking an Allied merchant ship by military artist Gil Cohen. In reality, more than 100 Kaiten pilots were killed in accidents and attacks.

Imperial Japan's *Kaiten*—human-piloted torpedo—damaged some Allied vessels but didn't turn the tide in the Pacific Theater.

For nearly three years World War II in the Pacific surged, raging in a hundred places from the Coral Sea to Guam, from Guadalcanal to Tarawa, and from Wake Island to the Philippines. No longer on the offensive, Japan was running out of resources as U.S. submarines sank its merchant fleet. But the Imperial Navy Combined Fleet refused to see the obvious: that Japan would lose the war.

Japan's military leaders were focused on a new—and desperate–secret weapon being built by the hundreds that would soon be ready to turn the tide of war against the U.S. There was no doubt that the weapon and the brave Samurai warriors being trained to employ it would bring a smashing victory.

On the night of November 20, 1944, two Japanese submarines, running silently on batteries, crept eastward to the largest opening in the reef that surrounded the 230-square mile lagoon of Ulithi in the Caroline Islands. Ulithi was the U.S. Navy's largest forward base, with everything from destroyer escorts to aircraft carriers. Numerous anchorages, pontoon piers, and depots supplied and repaired the fleets between invasions and campaigns. A mandated possession of Japan, it was captured in September 1944. More than 24 miles long and 22 wide, the deep lagoon and its 40-odd islands had been converted in less than three months into a massive supply, replenishment and repair base.

U.S. destroyers with sensitive sonar hydrophones patrolled the entrances. Radar swept the sky and the sea, but luck often favors the brave. The water was deep enough for the subs to approach. Through their periscopes, the captains had seen several tankers and transports, at least one large cruiser, and beyond them on the horizon, several more big ships, including aircraft carriers. Ulithi was open to Japan's new secret weapon.

When *I-47* was as close as Lieutenant Commander Genji Orita dared, he signaled the engines to stop. Onboard the sub, besides its 100-man crew, were four young volunteers for the historic launch of the new weapon—including Lt. Sekio Nishina, one of the original designers and test pilots. He held a small white wooden box of the ashes of Lt. Hiroshi Kuroki, his co-designer, killed in an accidental

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A Japanese Kaiten pilot in training maneuvers. The one-man subs were made from Japan's successful Type 93 torpedo.

explosion. Nishina, with the ashes of his dead comrade, would be the first to enter the lagoon and sink an American warship.

The four pilots stopped to pray at the sub's small Shinto shrine. Then they paid their respects to Orita and left letters, poems, and keepsakes to be sent to their families. They wore dark jumpsuits, a short ceremonial sword and a white silk hachimaki emblazoned with the Imperial Rising Sun. Shackled on the sub's deck on wooden cradles were four modified Type 93 Long Lance Torpedoes, 48 feet long and three feet in diameter. Each had a small humped protrusion jutting up amidships, fitted with a periscope. There were diving planes on the bow, just behind the 1,500-pound warhead.

They were *Kaitens* ("Turn the Heavens")—the newest version of the *kamikaze* ("Divine Wind") that had damaged many U.S. ships in the past year. Like the kamikazes, the Kaiten pilots were to drive directly into the hulls of ships, going out in a blaze of victory for the emperor.

Lieutenant Nishina and his fellow Kaiten pilots would be the first to strike the blow that would assure the future of Japan. Still carrying his box, Nishina watched as a crewman undogged and opened a hatch set into the sub's overhead hull. Having as many as six holes cut through the pressure hull was not something a sub crew took lightly, but it eliminated the need to surface in enemy waters to launch the Kaitens. Nishina slid up into the narrow access shaft and into the cramped compartment, settling into the canvas seat behind the simple control panel. Once he was inside the big torpedo, ahead of the hydrogen peroxide motor and behind the air flask that activated the rudder and diving planes, he closed the hatch below him.

The hatch locked when closed, assuring the pilot could not escape. There was a self-destruct lever if capture was imminent. A battery would provide light to see the instrument panel. Stifling and damp, the interior smelled of oil, peroxide, seawater, and recent welding. The cockpit held enough oxygen for at least half an hour. Air was then filtered through sodium peroxide filters, a primitive precursor to what would be used in manned spacecraft a generation later.

After checking his trim, he gripped a yoke control for the diving planes and his feet rested on a rudder bar. The torpedo left its wooden cradles with a few clanks and bumps, then rocked slowly.

Nishina checked the periscope to be sure he was clear, then activated the motor. With a deep thrumming, the 550-horsepower motor came to life, spinning its contra-rotating bronze propellers. In moments Nishina was moving at about 15 knots. He took his bearing from the gyroscope and headed away. From that point on nothing is known for certain. With a maximum range of nearly 40 miles, he could reach anywhere in the vast lagoon. His only thought would have been on his mission. Before him was Ulithi, which only three months before, had belonged to Japan.

Now it was full of enemy ships, and he was determined to sink one, preferably a battleship. He would avenge Japan and his dead comrade, Hiroshi Kuroki.

While the Combined Fleet had faith in the Kaitens, few submarine officers did. They had good, long-range submarines and well-trained crews. Each sub carried at least 19 Type 95 torpedoes, a variant of the successful Type 93 Long Lance that had inflicted such damage on the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and Guadalcanal. The Type 93 was the world's best, surpassing the G7A used by German U-boats.

Unleashed on the long and vulnerable sea routes between the U.S. and the War Zone, the Imperial Navy's sub fleet could cut off all supplies and ammunition to the front. Germany had near success in World War I and was still doing well in the Atlantic. The hated U.S. Navy's fleet of submarines were daily sinking Japan's merchant fleet, causing major shortages across the island nation. Fuel was in short supply, making fleet plans difficult. Iron ore, needed to make the steel for new ships and tanks, was being cut off. Even food was growing scarce, and there were periodic blackouts in the cities. It was obvious to any pragmatic line officer the best way to win was to cut the U.S. Navy off from its supplies.

But a tradition that went back to the days of feudal Japan reared its head even in the mid-20th century. *Bushido* was the unbreakable code of the samurai, who were trained from childhood to fight and kill any enemies with their deadly katana swords. Samurai lived for the opportunity to face a worthy foe and defeat him in mortal combat. The word "worthy," in naval warfare of the 20th century meant warships. Only a ship carrying guns and able to fight back was considered a proper adversary for the modern naval samurai.

The Japanese submarine force was forbidden to attack unarmed merchant ships, even to the point of ignoring them when a worthy target presented itself. It was no way to win a war. Imperial Navy subs had sunk some capital ships, the carriers *Yorktown, Wasp,* and *Hornet*. They had also damaged battleships and sunk numerous destroyers. But with transports outnumbering the surface fleet's war vessels nearly 20 to one by 1944, those

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ABOVE: Four Japanese Kaiten pilots wave before launching their kamikaze attacks in one-man subs. Pilots were instructed to strike only military targets, not merchant shipping. BELOW: Sailors prepare the Kaiten—modified torpedoes—for an attack. Imperial Japanese Navy submarines equiped with Kaiten typically carried four of the piloted mini-subs.

sinkings little in the quest for victory. U.S. industrial might was launching new carriers so quickly that Ulithi Lagoon was home to a dozen big fleet flattops by November 1944.

The High Command was interested only in the grand gesture of destroying the U.S. battle fleet. Such triumphs would put steel in the hearts of Japan far more than a list of nameless transports. But there could be no doubt, the fossilized admirals at Yokosuka saw something had to be done. The seeds had been sown by Admiral Onishi, the father of the kamikaze. By mid-1944, his Special Attack Force had claimed many U. S. ships and lives. But he had thousands of planes and pilots who had been quickly trained to dive their bomb-laden planes into enemy ships. But they suffered shocking losses. Still, the idea of a suicide craft mated to a submarine was not too great a leap to two young submarine officers, Lieutenants Sekio Nishina and Hiroshi Kuroki.

Desperate to destroy enemy ships, High Command tried suicide boats loaded with explosives, suicide divers carrying magnetic limpet mines, and even human suicide mines. Ultimately, they saw a torpedo with a human pilot as their best hope. Proposed by Nishina and Kuroki in 1943, it was not until February 1944 that Combined Fleet submarine and torpedo officers looked at it.

The first concept was simply a Type 93 torpedo mated to a cylinder housing the pilot. With crude controls and an electric gyroscope, the pilot could steer the hybrid craft reasonably well. Being only a test, no warhead was used. Experiments led to a modified Type 93 with the guidance system removed to make room for the pilot, who would be cramped in a tube along with 1.5 tons of high explosive.

By the summer of 1944, the Type 1 was under construction. Eventually, over 300 would be built in six variants.

Testing and training was done in the Inland Sea at the island of Ōtsushima. The facility was fitted with launching ramps, repair and machining shops, cranes, and classrooms. A shallow bay allowed the tests to be overseen. Most Kaiten volunteers were in their early 20s, but some were as young as 17. They trained in the unarmed craft, learning how to use the controls and navigation equipment. Each candidate learned how to manage the unwieldy craft in daylight, in circles, toward specific points, and getting a feel for the controls. Then they advanced to night attack simulations, using the periscope and illuminated panel. They learned to navigate around rocks and obstacles and how to trim the craft as the hydrogen peroxide fuel was expended. Final training was in the open sea, being launched from a mother sub and moving at the full 40 knots at a target ship. A dozen pilots, including Kuroki, were killed. Even sans warhead, hitting a ship at that speed was dangerous.

No one denied that an attack would be very hazardous, and even more so, in patrolled enemy waters.

The two mother submarines, *I-47* and *I-36*, had reached a favorable launch point without being detected. To the west a waxing crescent moon cast little light on the sea. The subs were only able to launch four Kaitens in all, with one running aground. The other three made it into the lagoon, their pilots determined to die for Japan and their emperor.

Inside the atoll, the pilots would have used their periscopes to locate a worthy target. At that point they were to surface and check their bearings and range to the target ship. This was when the Kaiten was most vulnerable to being detected on radar. After arming the warhead, the pilot dove and headed toward his target at maximum speed.

It is known that only two Kaitens were able to get close to their prey. Whether Nishina was one of them can never be confirmed, but

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The U.S. fleet oiler *Mississinewa* was sunk by one of two Kaitens that got close enough to attack the Navy supply base on Ulithi in the first successful attack by Japan's suicide subs.

he was the most experienced Kaiten pilot. One ship, the fleet oiler USS *Mississinewa*, loaded with volatile aviation fuel, was hit and sunk. The destroyer *Case* rammed another Kaiten and depth charges turned the lagoon into a boiling cauldron of foam. There were no more explosions. *Mississinewa* was the only victim of the new Kaiten. On Radio Tokyo the attack was a roaring success. Two big battleships had been sunk and carriers and cruisers damaged. The Kaiten would turn the heavens as they had been meant to do.

But well before the Kaiten threat had spread in the spring of 1945, U.S. destroyers and aircraft were hunting for the mother subs. And though Kaitens were fast and wakeless, they were noisy and easily heard on sonar.

The Ulithi attack group had been visited by the commander in chief of the Combined Fleet, Admiral Soemu Toyoda. That was an indicator of how seriously he regarded the Kaitens. The *I-37* was ordered to Leyte Gulf to attack the fleet supporting the invasion. But she was spotted by the destroyers *Conklin* and *McCoy Reynolds*, which moved in for a sonar and hedgehog attack. None of the submarine's 117 officers and crew survived, becoming the Kaiten first combat casualties.

The second wave was far larger and aimed at five U.S. anchorages. Ulithi was targeted, along with Manus, Guam, Hollandia in New Guinea, and Kossol Roads in Palau. On January 9, 1945, six submarines, each carrying four Kaitens, slipped out of Kure for what was intended to be a simultaneous attack. One of the subs was *I-58*. Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, who would become infamous eight months later as the man who sank the cruiser *Indianapolis* in the Philippine Sea, saw little value in the new weapon. A torpedo expert, he probably saw the similarity between Kaitens and German Vengeance weapons like the V-2 rockets. They were little more than terror weapons with scant practical military value.

At Ulithi, *I-47* launched four Kaitens but only succeeded in damaging the small transport *Pontus*. The destroyer *Conklin* sank the *I-48* with all hands.

Of the four launched by *I-36*, one was detonated by depth charges dropped from a PBY Catalina flying boat of VP-21. The remaining Kaitens only managed to damage the Lassen-class ammunition ship *Mazama* and sink a landing craft. Eleven Americans died from these attacks.

Hashimoto's *I-58* launched all four Kaitens into Apra Harbor in Guam. One exploded immediately. As dawn rose, columns of smoke were visible in the distance. Hashimoto recognized the real flaw in the Kaiten project. Without communication between the Kaiten and the mother sub, there was no way to assess it. Time and again a mother sub could do little more than make a guess, usually wildly optimistic, at what its Kaitens had done.

Yet the high command continued to order more strikes. A third group of Kaitens left for Iwo Jima on February 20, 1945. First, *I-44* was hunted for over two days until the submarine's air was nearly unbreathable. She managed to slip away and returned to Japan. *I-368* was sunk by a mine dropped from a Grumman TBF Avenger near Iwo Jima.

I-370 was depth charged by the destroyer *Finnegan*. All four Kaiten pilots died, along with *I-370*'s crew. Then a radar-equipped Grumman TBF Avenger with depth charges bombed *I-368*, sinking her with all hands.

Two more subs, *I-58* and *I-366* were sent to supplement the first attacks, departing Kure on March 10, but were recalled to base for a special operation called "Heaven One." The mighty battleship *Yamato* and nine

escorts were to leave Kure on April 6 and race south to attack the U.S. invasion fleet at Okinawa. The subs were to be ready to launch Kaitens in support. The *I-47*, still in the game, was bombed by Grumman Avengers and damaged. She was forced to head back to Kure for repairs.

Near Okinawa, five destroyers and the light carrier *Bataan* used depth charges to sink the *I-56* with all hands and six Kaitens. One of the destroyers was USS *Heermann*, a survivor of the Taffy 3 fight at Samar in October.

Hashimoto was never able to get close to Okinawa due to sustained air attacks. After heading west and sending a report, he returned to Kure. By then *Yamato* and four of her escorts had been sunk with the loss of over 4,000 men.

Another group of Kaiten submarines left Kure on May 24 for Guam. *I-36* saw a tanker and launched two Kaitens, but both missed. Firing four Type 95 torpedoes at the landing craft tender *Endymion*, *I-36*'s captain was shocked when all four exploded prematurely, possibly from being improperly set in the torpedo room. *Endymion* was damaged, but there was no further attack.

The Kaitens were not through with Guam. *I-36* launched a single Kaiten at USS *Antares*, a general cargo ship. *Antares* was the ship that was towing a barge into Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Her crew spotted one of the midget submarines and alerted the destroyer *Ward*.

Antares fired on *I-36* and called in the destroyer *Sproston*, which made a run on the submarine. The hasty launch of a Kaiten distracted the *Sproston*. The attack failed, but *I-36* was able to escape with minor damage.

The last Kaiten raid left Kure on July 14, headed for the area east of Okinawa. Six submarines, including *I-47* and *I-58*, were unable to launch any successful strikes. In the Philippine Sea, Hashimoto sank the USS *Indianapolis*—his only victory—with six Type 95 torpedoes, not the six Kaitens on board.

The only recorded sinking of a U.S. warship by a Kaiten was on July 24, east of Okinawa when *I-53*, carrying six Kaitens, was ordered to intercept a convoy. The destroyer escort *Underhill* altered course to avoid a mine—a dummy, launched by *I-53* for just that purpose. *Underhill*'s sonar made several contacts, determined to be the sub and its Kaitens.

Underhill made a depth charge run that probably sank a Kaiten, but didn't damage *I-53*. The ship rammed a second Kaiten, but was hit by a third, whose warhead erupted in a towering column of dirty water. The rammed then Kaiten exploded, sinking *Underhill* with more than half of her crew.

Two days after the second atomic bomb destroyed Nagasaki, *I-366* launched two Kaitens at a convoy near Palau. Neither hit a ship, or even exploded.

On August 13, the surviving mother subs were ordered to return to base. Japan had surrendered. Between November 1944 and August 1945, at least 106 Kaiten pilots died attacking the U.S. Navy. Fifteen of those died in training accidents. Another 800 died in the sinking of eight mother subs. Unlike the kamikazes, the Kaiten was little more than a Japanese pipe dream. The human torpedoes sank only three U.S. ships. For every one American killed, four Japanese sailors died in the Kaitens and their mother subs. □

Author Mark Carlson is a prolific writer on the topics of World War II and the history of aviation. He lives in San Diego, California.

All: National Archives

Pearl Harbor jitters: Following Japan's December 7 attack, reports of enemy activity swept across the United States.

Shortly after noon on Tuesday, December 9, 1941, in the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, hostile warplanes were reported 200 miles off the Virginia coast and heading for New York City.

The entire U.S. East Coast went on alert. At 1:30 p.m., New York heard its first-ever air-raid warning as a fire truck sped through the streets with siren wailing. More baffled than alarmed, shoppers and strollers stared skyward, office workers crowded windows, and children streamed out of dismissed schools. Police precincts went on emergency standby.

The first report of the sighting had been sent to Mitchel Field on Long Island, home base of the First Air Force led by Major General Herbert A. Dargue. Within minutes, interceptor fighters took off and ground crews hastily manned antiaircraft guns. An "all clear" siren sounded in the city at 1:45 p.m., followed by another warning at 2:04 p.m. The second "all clear" did not come until 2:41 p.m.

In the city streets, the alarms did not affect vehicular traffic, but small groups of people gathered around newsstands, staring at headlines. "Air raid alarms are sounded here," shrilled *The Sun*, one of the city's nine daily newspapers. Many New Yorkers cracked wise, unable to believe an air attack on their city was imminent. The sky remained clear except for clouds, no planes appeared, and there was confusion along the East Coast.

General Dargue said he did not think that the warnings constituted a rehearsal. "We can't explore the mechanics of our alarm system," he told reporters. "Remember the number of alarms over London without any bombs being dropped. I will not disclose the source of this alarm." The Brooklyn-born Dargue, a 1911 West Point graduate, Coast Artillery veteran, and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross, was killed three days later in the

FLEET'S 'FAILURE' PROBED

BROOKLYN EAGLE

N. Y.-BOUND ENEMY PLANES ALARM ENTIRE NORTHEAST

HOUSE PROBES Baroness Kapri-Seized on L. I. NAVY 'LAXITY' In Roundup of Germans, Italians IN HAWAII RAID

Navy Hunting Jap Aircraft Off California

Defenses Leap Into Action; City Schools Evacuated

WAR BULLETINS

House Unit O. K's Overseas Service

Tokio Reported Bombed by U. S. Planes

JAPAN SUFFERS HEAVY TOLL IN PHILIPPINES RAID

HONGKONG GUNS REPULSE STRONG ATTACK BY JAPS

MISSING U. S. LINER SEIZED, JAPAN CLAIMS

1ST CASUALTY LIST NAMES 37 KILLED

Stocks Plunge In Wild Trading

WHERE TO FIND IT

Searchlights pierce the early morning of February 25, 1942, as a Coast Artillery Brigade fires more than 1,400 antiaircraft shells at a rumored Japanese attack on Los Angeles. Coming two days after a Japanese sub shelled an oilfield near Santa Barbara and less than three months after Pearl Harbor, the incident showed the nervous state of the nation. INSET: Published two days after the Pearl Harbor attack, the *Brooklyn Eagle* reports air raid sirens heard in New York and hysterical claims of enemy planes two hours away.

Actual size is 38.1 mm

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The entire market was thrilled when the U.S. Mint brought the Morgan Silver Dollar back in 2021, in honor of the popular, vintage coin's 100th anniversary.

Legal Tender, Struck in 99.9% Fine Silver

The program was a huge success, and the relatively small mintage instantly sold out at the mint. Buyers loved the fact that these new coins were the first legal-tender Morgans in 100 years, and that they were struck in 99.9% fine silver—instead of the 90% silver/10% copper alloy of the originals.

But with only 175,000 coins struck, many buyers were left empty-handed, and frustrated by the instant sell-out. If you were able to acquire a 2021 for the 100th anniversary—congratulations!

Then—An Unplanned One-Year Hiatus

Then last year, the *entire market* was left empty-handed because—although these modern Morgans were intended to be an annual release—the U.S. Mint was caught off-guard by the global shortage of the silver blanks required to strike the coins, and cancelled the 2022 release! No silver? No Morgans!

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ABOVE: A husband and wife hang black-out fabric over their windows in California, as encouraged by the civil defense sign. RIGHT: The February 26, 1942, *Los Angeles Times* front page featuring the events of the "Battle of Los Angeles"—a mysterious Japanese air attack in which no bombs were dropped.


Los Angeles Times

ARMY SAYS ALARM REAL

U.S. Flyers Reap Indies Victories

Storm Grows Over Delay in Alien Ouster

INFORMATION, PLEASE

Five Deaths Laid to Raid Blackout

Roaring Guns Mark Blackout

Rangoon Aces Bag 38 Planes

Americans Sink Jap Ships

IN THE 'TIMES' TODAY

Knox Indicates Raid Just 'Jittery Nerves'

Rubber in Corsets Ordered Banned

Attention Subscribers!

crash of an Army Air Forces plane near Bishop, California.

In Boston, Massachusetts, which was alerted for more than an hour on the afternoon of December 9, State Public Safety Director J.W. Farley stated eventually, "The Army and Navy now inform us that this was a dress rehearsal. All phases of the test were met satisfactorily."

Similar alarms shook residents on the West Coast. At 11:59 a.m. that day, the San Francisco police broadcast a warning that "planes had been sighted approaching from sea," and the Oakland police issued a similar alert at noon. An "all clear" signal was flashed nine minutes later. The Fourth Army Interceptor Command reported that "30-odd enemy planes ranged last night from San Jose at the south tip of the bay to the huge naval yard at Mare Island." It triggered the first blackout in San Francisco history.

The command said that USAAF pursuit planes followed the first of the enemy squadrons, but were unable to locate them. Navy units then launched a fruitless search for an aircraft carrier possibly 500 miles off the coast. Lt. Gen. John L. DeWitt, leader of the Fourth Army and the Western Defense Command, said, "I don't think there's any doubt that the planes came from a carrier… Why bombs were not dropped, I do not know. It might have been better if some bombs had dropped to awaken this city." He warned, "This is war. Death and destruction may come from the skies at any moment."

In the hours following the Pearl Harbor disaster, fears of a possible Japanese invasion on the West Coast were real, with widespread confusion and panic. There were only 100,000 troops to guard the entire Pacific shore and little ammunition. A frantic official called the White House and suggested that, because the Pacific coast was so vulnerable, new defense lines would have to be drawn up in the Rocky Mountains. Major General Joseph W. Stilwell, wrote in his diary, "If the Japs had only known, they could have landed anywhere on the coast, and after our handful of ammunition was gone, they could have shot us like pigs in a pen."

A *Newsweek* reporter wrote from San Francisco that, "First air raid alarm caught the city unprepared and uninstructed. The only sirens were on the Ferry Building and two small bridges. Police and Fire Department vehicles, racing through the streets as auxiliary sirens, increased the confusion. Neon signs, operating on a time-lock device, could not be doused." Irritated by incessant sirens, one San Franciscan asked, "If there are Jap planes around, why aren't they dropping bombs?"

The jitters had started in San Francisco on the night of December 7. City officials ordered the Golden Gate Bridge blacked out, but lights were on at the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. A driver was shot and critically injured by a civilian sentry when she refused to halt and dim her headlights. Army intelligence officers reported Japanese planes over San Francisco Bay, but they turned out to be American. Someone mistook the red circle at the center of the USAAF insignia for the rising sun of Japan.

In Los Angeles, home to an estimated 50,000 Japanese-Americans, Sheriff Eugene Biscaliuz mobilized the 10,000-man Civilian Defense Committee while FBI agents and troops from Fort MacArthur herded "key" Nisei citizens into a wire enclosure on the Sixth Street pier. An antiaircraft battery defending the city opened up on imaginary warplanes, and the shell fragments injured dozens of unsuspecting residents.

In San Diego, naval authorities stationed guards to prevent any Nisei from fleeing to

Mexico, and antiaircraft batteries were set up at vital communications and power stations along the California coast. Machine-gun emplacements were dug on California beaches, and Coast Guard motor lifeboats escorted San Francisco crab fishermen. Uncoordinated defense measures along the Pacific coast were offset by outbursts of hysteria. In Seattle, a mob of 2,000 angry citizens attempted to enforce the blackout by smashing windows and looting lighted stores.

The first efforts at civil defense in the nation's history were inept and chaotic on both coasts. Few cities had air-raid sirens. San Francisco had only five low-range sirens for signaling drawbridge openings and special events, Los Angeles used a combination of police and fire sirens, and New York used the "super whistle" at Consolidated Edison's East River generating plant. In Boston, merchants urged the mayor to shun practice alarms until after the busy Christmas season.

Invasion fears mounted across the country as guns sprouted on city rooftops and along the seashores. Searchlights probed the night skies as air-raid wardens patrolled the streets, and families tacked up black cloth on their windows. No one felt safe. Even in Wyoming, nervous citizens called for the construction of bomb shelters while others eyed caves and mine shafts for refuge in case of attack.

New York's colorful Mayor Fiorello La Guardia warned, "The war will come right to our cities and residential districts. Never underestimate the strength, the cruelty of the enemy." As he spoke, German U-boats off the East Coast prepared for a five-month onslaught against Allied merchant shipping.

The Pearl Harbor attack had silenced the isolationists and shocked Americans into realizing that World War II was now much more than just a matter of headlines and radio broadcasts. Though thousands of miles away from the action, millions feared an invasion at any moment.

The American Legion commander in Wisconsin called for a guerrilla army composed of the state's 25,000 licensed deer hunters. The Georgia State Guard, a militia of men too old or young for the draft, started erecting coastal defenses, while Peach State convicts were conscripted to strengthen seashore approaches and build bridges for carrying military transport. A coat of dull-gray paint

ABOVE: In northen California, an armed sentry in a leather flying suit guards a barrage balloon, which could be flown in case of a Japanese air attack. RIGHT: American soldiers model gas masks and protective gear during a press conference in Detroit in 1942.

was daubed over the distinctive gold-leaf dome of the Massachusetts State House on Boston's Beacon Hill to make it less conspicuous from the air, black paint was slapped on the gold-leaf roof of the Federal Building in Manhattan, and, as part of an Army experiment, a dense smoke screen was released to conceal the steel mills of Gary, Indiana.

The colonial spirit of 1775 was echoed in the central Massachusetts town of Athol, where latter-day minutemen drilled with shotguns and squirrel rifles, while farmers on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound, Washington, took up pitchforks, shotguns, and clubs to patrol the beaches.

In the nation's capital, an antiaircraft gun crew set up on the roof of the Commerce Building, across from the Washington Monument, and machine-gun emplacements were installed on the roof of the White House and near the Lincoln Memorial. Around the executive mansion and other key federal buildings, policemen, soldiers bearing aging Springfield .30-caliber rifles, and Marines with fixed bayonets stood guard. Every entrance to the U.S. Capitol was guarded, and the credentials of congressmen and journalists were checked rigorously.

Roosevelt rejected an Army proposal to paint the executive mansion black but agreed to have blackout curtains measured for its 60 rooms and 20 bathrooms. The lamps on the grounds were extinguished, FDR's Secret Service contingent was quadrupled, and in the White House basement, Army engineers marked off the entry for a tunnel leading to a temporary air-raid shelter in the old vaults of the Treasury Building. But Roosevelt balked at the idea of holing up there and told Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr. with a grin that he would use the shelter only if he could play poker with the nation's gold hoard.

In case of an attack on the White House, contingency plans were drawn up for men of the crack 3rd Infantry ("Old Guard") Regiment to be rushed in from nearby Fort Myer, Virginia, and for Army engineers to stand by with bulldozers and other heavy equipment. At an air strip on the edge of Washington, a bomber was ready to whisk the president away if necessary. FDR, who was about to host British Prime Minister Winston Churchill for three weeks during the Christmas season, was issued a gas mask, which he slung over his wheelchair.

Though stunned and angered by the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor, Guam, Wake Island, and the Philippines, the president kept his jaunty demeanor while fear swept the country. After dining with him and briefing him on the situation in bomb-ravaged London, famed CBS radio correspondent Edward R. Murrow reported, "I have seen certain statesmen of the world in time of crisis. Never have I seen one so calm and steady."

In cities and towns across the country, department and hardware stores quickly sold their stocks of black paint and cloth, lanterns, portable radios, flashlights, candles, shovels, first-aid kits, whistles, hatchets, oil stoves, and thermos flasks. Sleeping bags disappeared from the stores almost immediately. A New York housewife ordering 22 mattresses explained, "If we're going to have to sleep in the subway, at least we'll be comfortable." She was unaware that Mayor La Guardia had officially ruled out the city's subways as safe air-raid shelters, although thousands of Londoners were finding refuge underground every night.

The alarms and confusion, meanwhile, continued. A blackout interval in Los Angeles caused five times the usual traffic injuries, while an alarm in Seattle on December 23 prompted a modern Paul Revere to clamber on a horse and gallop through the streets shouting, "Blackout! Air raid! The Jap bombers are coming!" Naval stations around Chicago were placed on alert on Christmas Day when someone reported "strange planes" over Lake Michigan. But no one informed police, civil defense, or Army officials. During a false air-raid alarm in New York City, school officials disregarded civil defense advice and released a million children from their classrooms. They played in the streets, shouting, "Air raid, air raid!" while

frantic parents searched for them.

Christmas Eve, 1941, arrived, and Americans strove to put aside their fears and celebrate in traditional ways. Thirty thousand shivering people were admitted to the White House grounds to watch Roosevelt light the national tree and listen as Churchill tried to lift their spirits. "Let the children have their night of fun and laughter," he declared. "Let the gifts of Father Christmas delight their play. Let us grownups share to the full in their unstinted pleasures before we turn again to the stern task and the formidable years that lie before us, resolved that, by our sacrifice and daring, these same children shall not be robbed of their inheritance or denied their right to live in a free and decent world."

New Year's Eve brought another respite—albeit briefly—for troubled Americans. According to veteran observers of New York society, the celebration in Times Square was one of the most uninhibited on record as some 500,000 revelers blew horns, rang bells, while Broadway's neon lights blazed. In the city's Father Duffy Square, a large crowd joined in as Lucy Monroe sang "The Star-Spangled Banner."

But 1942 found America woefully unready for war and facing its sternest six months ever as U-boats marauded unmolested on the Atlantic coast and Japanese forces rampaged in the Far East. Invasion fears persisted.

When a reporter asked Roosevelt in February if the country was open to attack, he said, "Enemy ships could swoop in and shell New York, enemy planes could drop bombs on war plants in Detroit, enemy troops could attack Alaska." The reporter persisted, "But aren't the Army and Navy and the Air Force strong enough to deal with anything like that?" FDR answered, "Certainly not." His pessimism was confirmed a week later.

On the evening of February 23, while Roosevelt was delivering one of his radio "fireside chats" to the nation, the Japanese submarine *I-17* surfaced a mile off Santa Barbara, California, and lobbed 25 shells in 20 minutes at an oil refinery. It was the first direct enemy attack on the continental U.S. The damage was minor, but West Coast nerves were shaken. Two nights later, "Japanese bombers" were reported over Los Angeles, and the city panicked. Although there were no planes, antiaircraft guns opened up. Shells

falling back to earth damaged two houses, and two people died in traffic accidents on the darkened streets.

Many fearful, frustrated citizens turned their anger on the 900,000 Americans of German, Italian, and Japanese descent, seeing potential spies and saboteurs. Soon after war was declared, an estimated 5,000 German-Americans and Italian-Americans were rounded up by the FBI and interned.

Roosevelt told Attorney General Francis Biddle, "I don't care so much about the Italians. They are a lot of opera singers, but the Germans are different. They may be dangerous." On February 19, FDR signed an executive order authorizing Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson to bar German, Italian, and Japanese aliens from certain "military areas" in the U.S. Broad in tone, it was aimed at Japanese-American citizens.

The FBI rounded up suspected German spies in the New York area, but German-Americans were spared the mob attacks and hysteria that beset their parents during World War I. The 1941-42 hatred was directed mainly at Japanese-Americans, the majority of whom were law-abiding and well educated, as demonstrated in Hawaii just after the December 7 attack. Two thousand Nisei serving there in the U.S. Army helped to protect island installations, aided by Japanese civilians and members of the Hawaii Territorial Guard. The *Honolulu Star Bulletin* dismissed reports of Japanese subversion in the islands as "weird, amazing, and damaging untruths." Later nearly 10,000 men answered when the Army called later for 1,500 Nisei volunteers.

Yet, Japanese business and fraternal organizations were assumed to be subversive, fishermen in Hawaii and on the West Coast were accused of equipping their boats with powerful radios for transmitting to Japan. Store windows were smashed and doors daubed with hostile slogans. Nisei merchants hung "I am an American" signs in their windows, but banks refused to cash their checks, insurance companies canceled their policies, and traders stopped deliveries. Along the Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C., zealots felled four cherry trees which had been presented to America by the people of Tokyo in 1912, the S.S. Kresge chain removed all Japanese merchandise from its five-and-ten stores, a Buddhist temple in Los Angeles was ransacked, and Tin Pan Alley loosed a flood of anti-Japanese songs.

Children born in Germany, or with a German parent, at an internment camp in Texas. Government estimates put the number of people with German ancestry interned in the U.S. at more than 11,000.

When a Japanese-American bar owner and his wife were attacked by a mob on skid row in Los Angeles, folk singer Woody Guthrie and a few sailors interceded. Strumming his guitar, Guthrie sang an old union song: "We will fight together, we shall not be moved." Singing passersby linked arms and the mob melted away.

Acts of sabotage preceding a Japanese invasion were expected on the West Coast, but none were reported. This proved nothing, fumed California Attorney General Earl Warren. The Japanese-Americans were just holding back, he suggested, "until the zero hour arrives." General DeWitt declared, "A Jap's a Jap. It makes no difference whether he's an American or not…I have no confidence in their loyalty whatsoever." Led by such strident voices as columnist Walter Lippmann, a growing chorus demanded swift action against Americans of enemy-alien descent.

Life magazine spread alarm with its March 2, 1942, issue. Behind a cheery cover photograph of actress Ginger Rogers smiling broadly while fishing in a western creek, the editors warned, "Now the U.S. must fight for its life." With illustrations, the magazine painted a grim portrait of San Francisco and the Bay Bridge burning, war plants and New York's La Guardia Airport being bombed by German planes, and Japanese troops dragging chained Americans through the snow after an invasion of Alaska.

The outlook worsened for the Japanese-Americans. The Roosevelt administration created the War Relocation Authority as part of the Office of Emergency Management on March 18. It was headed by Milton Eisenhower, the youngest brother of then-Major General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and its objective was to "take all people of Japanese descent into custody, surround them with troops, prevent them from buying land, and return them to their homes at the close of the war." Late that month on the West Coast, General DeWitt's troops began rounding up 114,490 Japanese-American men, women and children—including 75,000 U.S. citizens.

Although no charges of espionage or sabotage were ever brought against the Japanese-Americans in the United States or Hawaii, their treatment went unquestioned.

Many Japanese-Americans were given only 48 hours in which to uproot their lives and dispose of homes, stores, farms, and cars. Predatory bargain-hunters snapped up their belongings for a fraction of the true value. Then families, name-tagged and hauling suitcases and bedrolls, were led off by armed soldiers in trains or trucks to assembly centers, such as hastily converted fairgrounds and the Santa Anita racetrack.

The Nisei families went without protest and were generally stoical about their fate.

Eventually, during the spring and summer of 1942, they were shipped to 10 inland "relocation centers" scattered from the California desert to remote areas in Utah, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming, and Arkansas.

Penned in compounds ringed by barbed-wire fences and armed troops, the displaced Japanese-Americans lived in drafty wood-and-tarpaper barracks, with a 20-by-25-foot "apartment" allocated to each family. They slept on Army cots, ate in mess halls, shared communal washrooms, and no one was allowed to have a razor, scissors, radios, or pets. The children attended WRA-run schools, where essay assignments asked ironically, "Why are you proud to be an American?"

Most internees spent at least three years in the camps. The only way to leave was to join the armed forces. More than 17,000 young Nisei men—many of them the brothers and sons of incarcerated families—fought in World War II. Trained at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, the soldiers of the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team distinguished themselves in the Italian campaign and from the Vosges Mountains to Champagne in France. The most decorated Army unit in American history, "Go for Broke" suffered 30 percent casualties, earned eight Presidential Unit Citations, a Medal of Honor, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, 560 Silver Stars, and 3,600 Purple Hearts.

The first months of 1942, meanwhile, brought a severe test of American fiber as Allied bastions fell in the Far East, British and U.S. troops retreated in Malaya and the Philippines, and German U-boats sank thousands of tons of merchant shipping within sight of the East Coast. But the urge to fight back against fascism soon took hold, and invasion fears and hysteria dissipated.

Six months after Pearl Harbor, the tide began to turn. Col. James H. Doolittle's daring B-25 bomber raid on Tokyo in April ignited American spirits, and the battles of Coral Sea and Midway in May and June blunted Japanese naval aggression. Then the Allies went on the offensive—in the skies over Nazi-occupied Europe, on the Eastern Front, and at Guadalcanal, El Alamein, and North Africa. By the end of the crucial year which had started so badly, Allied forces were rolling along the hard road that led to the eventual defeat of the Axis Powers. □

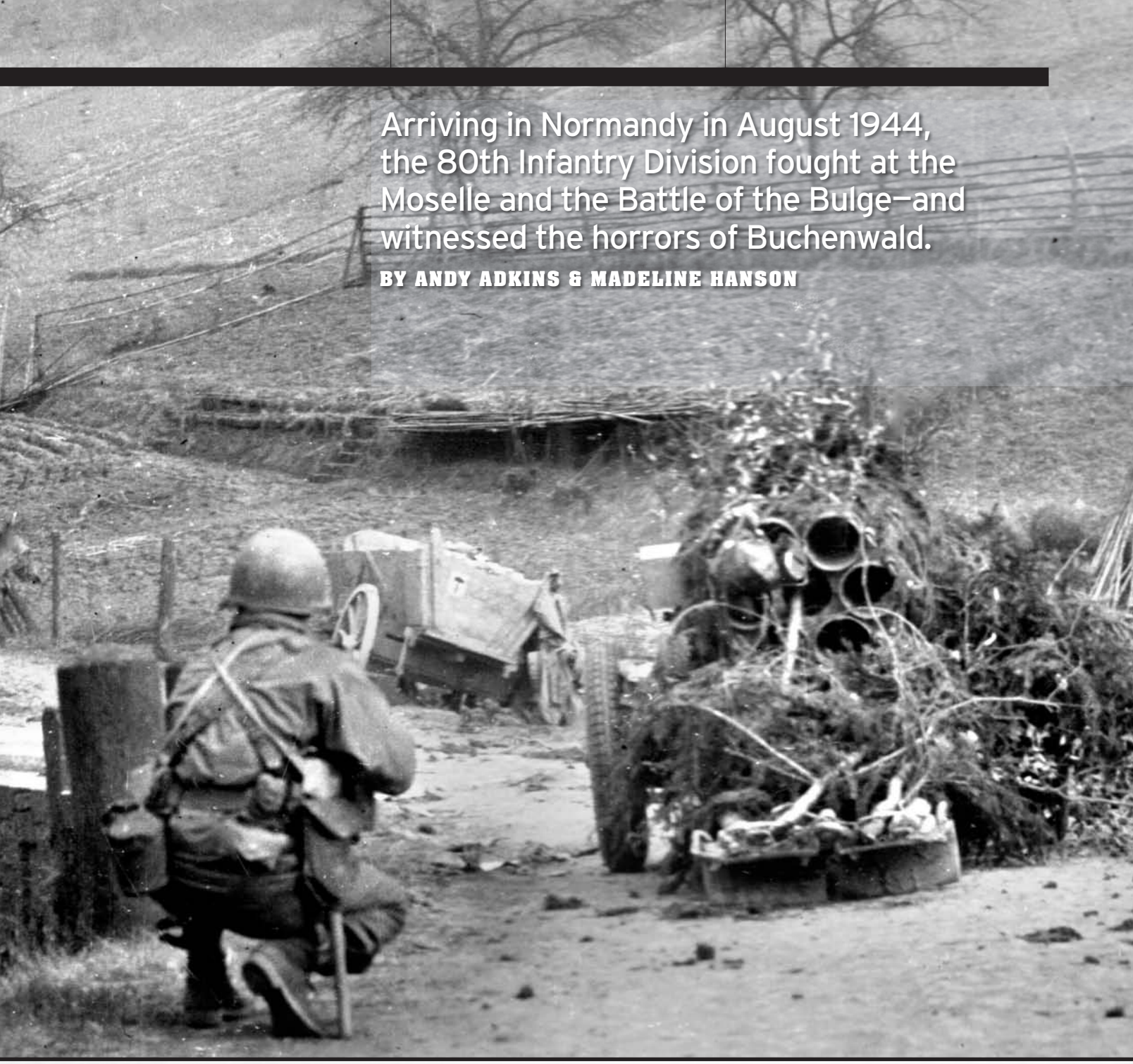
The Blue Ridge Division in Europe

The 80th Infantry Division's lineage goes back to the First World War. It was first organized at Camp Lee, Virginia, on August 5, 1917. Originally consisting of men mostly from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, the "Blue Ridge Division" nickname seemed apropos, as does its motto, Vis Montium—Latin for "Strength of the Mountains."

The 80th sailed to France with 23,000 soldiers, landing on June 8, 1918, and joined the Allied Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.), fighting in the Somme Offensive of 1918 and in the Meuse-Argonne. The division returned to the states in May 1919 and was deactivated at Camp Lee on June 26, 1919.

Twenty-three years later, July 15, 1942, the 80th Infantry Division was again ordered into active service. Soldiers initially reported to Camp Forrest, Tennessee. The Division later moved for training at Camp Phillips, Kansas, then to "Camp Laguna" (California-Arizona Desert Training Center).

The division set sail aboard SS *Queen Mary* on July 1, 1944, landing five days later at Greenock, Firth of Clyde, Scotland. The 80th, under the command of Maj. Gen. Horace McBride, was now part of the European Theater of Operations (E.T.O.). After a month of training and organization, the division proceeded south to Southampton and crossed



Arriving in Normandy in August 1944, the 80th Infantry Division fought at the Moselle and the Battle of the Bulge—and witnessed the horrors of Buchenwald.

BY ANDY ADKINS & MADELINE HANSON

An infantryman of the U.S. 80th Division advances cautiously toward Frankenstein, Germany, on March 21, 1945, as a German tank explodes just down the roadway. The 80th Division, Third Army, reached Normandy in August 1944 and fought until the surrender of the Nazis.

the English Channel in LSTs and Liberty Ships, with initial troops landing on Utah Beach at Transit Area "B" shortly after noon on August 2, 1944—D-day plus 57.

Argentan–Baptism of Fire

After arriving at Utah Beach, the 80th was assigned to George Patton's Third U.S. Army and Maj. Gen. Walton H. Walker's XX Corps ("Ghost Corps"), and assembled near Saint-Jores, 15 miles from the beach sector. Within a few days, Third Army was directed to move eastward to the line of the Mayenne River, crossing the river at Laval, France, August 7-11.

The 80th now had its first combat mission—to assist in stemming the powerful counterattack of five panzer divisions that were trying to cut Patton's tenuous supply line at Avranches.

Once the division reached Sillé-le-Guillaume on August 11, they discovered several other Third Army divisions had already engaged the enemy. The 80th designated three combat teams based on the

All Photos: National Archives

317th, 318th, and 319th Infantry Regiments. Combat Team (CT) 317 included the 315th Field Artillery Battalion (FAB), as well as a company each of tanks, engineers, medical aidmen, and Tank Destroyers (TD). CT 318 employed the 314th FAB together with armor, TD, and combat support elements. For CT 319, the 905th FAB (105mm towed) provided artillery support. The 313th FAB's powerful 155mm howitzers remained under division control.

The three combat teams surrounded the area and met only scattered resistance in the town.

On August 11, Combat Team (CT) 319 arrived in Le Mans in the early afternoon. Its mission was to outpost the town, safeguard the vital installations in the town, maintain law and order, and maintain the routes of communication in the vicinity. Two days later, CT 317 and CT 318 were ordered to advance northeast in three columns at 8 a.m. and contact and destroy any hostile forces in the zone of advance.

The advancing elements encountered enemy minefields and, even though engineers removed mines, the Germans replanted them during the night. These minefields and blown bridges hindered the division's advance.

Field Order Number 6, issued at 6 p.m. on August 17, ordered the division (less CT 319, which remained in Le Mans) to attack and seize Hill 213, the high ground north of Argentan, France. The ultimate objective was to seize Argentan and participate in the closing of the Argentan-Falaise Gap and, by doing so, perhaps destroy the entire German Seventh Army.

The city of Argentan and the high ground to the north were strongly held by elements of the 116th Panzer Division and the German 728th Infantry Regiment. The enemy numbered between 2,000 and 2,500 seasoned soldiers, and were well dug in. They occupied the best defensive positions, protected by tanks, artillery, anti-aircraft guns, automatic weapons, barbed-wire entanglements, and well-placed minefields.

The terrain was also tough, favoring the enemy in defense, with its hedgerows and sufficient open spaces offering good fields of fire for tanks, and mutually supporting automatic weapons. In addition, the enemy had zeroed in every key avenue of approach to their positions for accurate artillery fire. Colonel Harry D. McHugh's CT 318 faced a difficult task.

CT 318 jumped off on the attack at 7 a.m. on August 18 in a column of battalions and encountered the expected heavy resistance almost immediately; 1st Battalion was forced to withdraw south of the Argentan-Le Bourg Leonard Highway, where they dug in for the night to consolidate and prepare to continue the next day.

Second Battalion moved west along the highway and was also stopped by extremely heavy firing coming from Argentan and the high ground northeast of the town. Third Battalion succeeded in cleaning out the enemy resistance in the vicinity of Sai, occupying the area by 3:30 p.m. Ninety minutes later, the 3rd Battalion was on its way to Bordeaux.

On August 19, Colonel A. Donald Cameron's CT 317 was ordered from division reserve to be committed to the attack, firing in support from Hill 171 and advancing on Argentan from the north, while at the same time lending support to CT 318's 3rd Battalion.

Despite terrific resistance from enemy infantry, artillery and armor, CT 317 passed through CT 318 at 5:30 p.m. to assume the initiative. Advancing in a column of battalions with the 2nd Battalion leading, the Combat Team launched an attack on Argentan and the high ground near the city. By 8:30 p.m., CT 317 had advanced to the southern out-

skirts of Argentan, despite heavy fire from the west edge of the Forêt De Gouffern, which made progress slow and difficult.

During the hours of darkness between August 19 and 20, the enemy had secretly withdrawn most of its forces from the area, leaving only delaying forces for rear-guard action. During that same time frame, seven battalions of the 80th Division and attached artillery blasted the city, setting it afire.

Amid this barrage, the enemy suffered great casualties and had chosen to withdraw most forces from the shell-torn city. The roads and fields were littered with thousands of dead and wounded, wrecked and burning vehicles, smashed artillery pieces, overturned and smoldering carts laden with the loot of France, dead horses, and cattle swelling in the summer heat.

By 3 p.m. on August 20, CT 317 and CT 318 had cleared the enemy out of Argentan and had it under control—in spite of the Germans' earlier boast that they would throw the Allies back into the sea. The three-day battle for Argentan was the first test of the 80th Infantry Division against a seasoned enemy in force.

The division's contribution to the closing of the Argentan-Falaise Gap resulted in the destruction of large numbers of enemy forces as well as the capture of huge stores of equipment, supplies, and ammunition. During the operation, more than 1,000 prisoners were taken and 27,000 tons of ammunition captured. Several enemy tanks and self-propelled guns were destroyed. But the victory was not without a cost, as more than 400 80th Division soldiers were killed or wounded.

Colonel Orion L. Davidson's CT 319 had slightly different orders, but its objectives were similar to the other combat teams. His regiment headed nearly 90 miles south to Angers, between Nantes and Le Mans, with a mission to defend the inner defenses of the medieval-walled town and prevent the enemy from crossing the Loire River. There were reports of a pair of large-caliber railroad guns located at the station at Cholet, 30 miles southwest of Angers, that harassed CT 319 throughout the day and night.

ABOVE: Soldiers of the 80th Infantry Division rest after securing the French city of Argentan. The soldier in the foreground holds a bolt-action Springfield Model 1903 rifle fitted with a scope and probably served as a sniper with his unit. M2 hand grenades hang from his uniform. OPPOSITE: American infantrymen, probably from the 80th Division, enter the city of Argentan, France, after bitter fighting in the area. This photo was taken on August 20, 1944, as German troops were retreating during the Normandy campaign.

Despite this, Davidson's men secured Cholet. On August 21, they received orders to move and rejoin with the rest of the division, but this was quickly changed; CT 319 was needed elsewhere. They headed northeast toward Orleans to create a defensive line between Orleans and Gien. In their path were small pockets of Germans with four machine guns, three 75mm anti-tank guns, one tank, and two halftracks.

CT 319 remained in this area and held tight until August 26, when they moved to help take the town of Châlons, between Paris and Metz. Once the town was secured, they crossed the Marne River and headed to Fresnes, a southern suburb of Paris, linked up with the 4th Armored Division, and eventually rejoined the rest of the 80th. During this month-long action, CT 319 captured 2,172 prisoners and destroyed 18 enemy tanks.

For most of the men, these battles were their first time in action. There is no way to know how a soldier will react when the enemy begins firing. The men of the 80th acted with bravery, but most remember feeling scared out of their minds.

"It is a pretty frightening experience for the first shot, when the bombs are dropping all around you," said Henry C. Einolf, Jr. of Company L, 319th Infantry. "The first shell [hits] beside you ... you maybe messed your pants."

During this action, Einolf remembered his company was heading into a wooded area. The Germans were zeroed-in and threw everything they had at them. There was nothing they could do but turn back and find cover. He recalled that they lost their company commander and 10 other soldiers that day.

Despite the heavy casualties and tough new reality of constant active combat, the 80th Division moved forward to face their biggest challenge to date: crossing the Moselle River.

Over the Moselle

The Moselle would be 80th Division's first major river crossing under enemy fire. The M2 assault boats carried a crew of three engineers and a 12-man rifle squad, complete with weapons and equipment. Seventeen M2 boats would be required to carry an entire rifle company of 193 officers and men.

Normally, river crossings were planned in several phases and usually done under the cover of darkness. First, the troops would assemble to complete preparations for the crossing. Next, they would move closer to the river in attack positions. Then, with the guidance of the engineers, they would slowly and steadily travel down the riverbank and board the assault boats to be ferried across the river by the engineers.

Once across the river, they would attempt to capture the area around the varying crossing sites. After securing the sites from enemy small-arms fire, the engineers would first build foot bridges, then larger treadway bridges, allowing more troops and equipment to cross, thereby expanding the bridgehead. At least, that was the plan on paper.

During the initial advancement toward the Moselle in early September 1944, the 1st Platoon of the 80th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop moved to Martincourt in the Toul region of Lorraine. Here, the Germans had burned the village to the ground with flamethrowers on September 4, killing 15 civilians and wounding many others.

Martincourt, along with the towns of Nettancourt and Laheycourt, was the 80th's first encounter of German vandalism. Word quickly spread through the division and the troops were determined the Germans would pay for their crimes.

The 80th first tried crossing the Moselle River on September 5 in the vicinity of Dieulouard and Pont-a-Mousson. However, the Germans had finally reorganized to make a stand against any Allied advance. The terrain on the east bank of the Moselle offered the enemy excellent fields of fire and observation. The high ground concealed troop movements, allowing the Germans to organize a defense line.

One company made it across in their first effort, but with devastating results. Eugene Patrick O'Neil, Jr,. of Company L, 319th Infantry, remembers this costly crossing well: "Once you went in the river, it was over with."

Despite the intense enemy fire, he and his company made it across, "and fortunately, with the river being swollen, we went in the area above where the mines had been laid along the riverbank. We were organized and, there on the other side of the banks, 20-25 of us got across, walked across this flat ground that was loaded with minefields, and settled into the high ground of the bank.

"From there, we went up on the bank and dug in our foxholes. And once we dug in the foxholes, we were pinned down for five or six days. We couldn't get anybody else across the river and we couldn't evacuate the wounded. We were pretty much isolated for that time. We couldn't get any armored across because there were no bridges."

O'Neil continued, he "watched as the engineers tried to put a bridge across . . . every time they tried to get the last link in, the Germans had an artillery observer and would call it in. They must have blown six bridges. The engineers finally used it as a decoy and built another bridge at another spot." It would be days before the rest of the division would be able to make it across and relieve the stranded company.

To reach the Moselle River, the troops first needed to cross the Rhine-Marne Canal. That in itself was a challenge, since most of the bridges had been destroyed and the Germans were watching every move. Even though several companies managed to cross the canal, most were held back by artillery and small-arms fire. The 80th's higher command decided to hold and attempt the crossing at a later date.

It was later determined that the 80th had advanced so quickly across France that they reached the Moselle before the Army could properly support them. When the division initially arrived at the Moselle, they didn't have enough time for proper reconnaissance

ABOVE: Standing at a World War I monument in the village of Montsec, France, spotters of a field artillery unit survey the distant landscape through binoculars on September 3, 1944, in support of 80th Infantry Division operations. This photo was taken near the Meuse River. OPPOSITE: American soldiers wade and drive a Jeep across the Moselle River in September 1944, pausing to watch another vehicle move in the opposite direction, probably carrying wounded. Note the Red Cross identification and the presence of medics.

or sufficient supplies of food and ammunition.

Intelligence, normally gathered from reliable sources, underestimated enemy strength, both in men and artillery. Lack of air support and minimal artillery support certainly didn't help. But, with lessons learned, the next attempt would see the 80th better prepared.

After several days, division staff finally completed plans for the river crossing, which included placing some 50 heavy machine guns on the high ground near Bois de Cuite, on the west side of the Moselle near the German border, to provide overhead fire. Eight battalions of artillery were made available to help cover the crossing. The engineers would once again ferry the men across in assault boats.

The date and time of the crossing was closely held for security reasons and not disclosed until the last minute. At 6 p.m. on September 11, word was passed to prepare to move out at dark. The men were tense, but ready and determined to succeed.

The plan was for the artillery to lay down a 15-minute concentration beginning at 4:30 a.m. According to Regimental S-2 (Intelligence), 5,000-6,000 enemy troops from the 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment and the 3rd Motorized Division were waiting on the other side of the river.

The mission was to cross the Moselle River between Metz and Nancy and take Genevieve Hill (Hill 382), the high ground east of Dieulouard.

The canal crossing turned out to be anticlimactic. The men expected to be met with heavy artillery and machine-gun fire like they encountered several days before, but that resistance failed to materialize. However, it was known that the Germans had placed anti-personnel mines all around. But the engineers from the 305th Engineer Combat Battalion made sure the locations were known and well-marked; they removed 44 booby traps.

Brigadier General Edmund Searby's division artillery opened up right on time—4:30 a.m.—and did its job. The heavy pounding pulverized the German defenders and drove most of them out of the way. But the few who remained fired machine guns and 88s at the river crossing, causing casualties among the boats loaded with soldiers.

The current was stronger than expected and some of the troops grabbed a paddle and pushed harder to reach the eastern bank. The 80th completed its crossing of the Moselle on the morning of September 12.

Lieutenant Charles Coward, Company I, 318th Infantry, remembered the crossing well, and wrote about it in his journal, describing the journey and the heavy equipment each man had to carry across: "It was a bright day, although the entire Moselle River was at flood stage!

"Upon arrival to the river's edge, we were confronted by a narrow canal with what appeared to be a dam beyond leading across the river proper. Our outfit forded the canal in water up to our armpits, and once we made it to the dam we climbed up and shuffled across, single file with shells exploding in the river nearby. The top of the dam had wide, wooden planks placed on top, thus making it easier for us to navigate with all our equipment.

"The light machine guns were 'broken down' into smaller parts, as were the 60 mm mortars to make them easier to carry. The larger problem was having each GI carry as much ammo/mortar rounds as he could, plus his own rifle, belt, and bulky jacket. You name it, we carried it!"

Battle of the Bulge

Much has already been documented and

written about the Battle of the Bulge. The 80th Division experienced much the same as other divisions: a sudden call to arms, an unknown mission, and the harshest winter Europe had experienced in more than 50 years.

The 80th had been in reserve at Saint Avold, France, scheduled for two weeks of rest, training, and reorganization when they received their initial orders to move without delay.

Field Marshal Karl Gerd von Rundstedt, the German commander in the West, launched his big Ardennes counteroffensive. Under the cover of snow, fog, and freezing cold, the Germans moved up three field armies, surprised the Allies, and overran part of the front, heading for Antwerp to cut off the Allies' supply port and supply lines.

German infantry and tanks attacked along a 90-mile front in an effort to split Allied armies on the Western Front. This caused a "bulge" in the American lines, and the battle to flatten out this bulge by troops for the next month was to become known as the Battle of the Bulge.

One of Rundstedt's spearheads headed for Luxembourg City, to capture the city and its famous radio station, Radio Luxembourg. The 80th Division was given the mission of holding Luxembourg City "to the last man," as General Patton put it.

General McBride's men began moving out from Saint Avold on December 17, traveling 45 miles to the north in open trucks, and stopping only for fuel. The men, unequipped for the frigid weather, had only a few blankets and huddled close to keep warm.

There was an endless stream of military vehicles. The 305th Engineers led the way, checking the roads and bridges for mines. The MP Platoon acted as road guides to keep the convoy as closed up as possible so no one would get lost.

Next came the deuce-and-a-halves carrying the three infantry regiments (317th, 318th, and 319th), followed by the 702nd Tank Battalion, the 633rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion, and the four field artillery battalions (313th, 314th, 315th, and 905th). Last in the convoy were the service companies, headquarters units, and the division headquarters.

Normally, travel at night would require vehicles to use "cat's eyes"—headlight covers to point the beam downward toward the road. However, because General Patton ordered the division to travel as quickly as possible, the convoy traveled with full beams. A full moon improved visibility.

For most of the men, the cold is one of the most memorable parts of this battle. Some days only saw a high of 14 degrees Fahrenheit. Henry S. Burch of D/319th, remembered it was nearly impossible to dig in, and the best bet was to try to dig out a mortar-shell hole. "The little shovel they provided us would almost bounce back in your face," he said.

During the Battle of the Bulge, the 2nd Battalion, 318th Infantry, was heavily engaged with the enemy in the vicinity of Ettelbruck, Luxembourg. It was withdrawn from the front lines for movement to the Bastogne, Belgium, area to help relieve the 101st Airborne Division.

Attacking on Christmas Day after several days without rest, the battalion began its assault on the enemy positions encircling Bastogne. Through the next four days and three nights, the depleted battalion (its effective rifle-fighting strength had been reduced to 20 men—about half a platoon) battled its way in freezing temperatures through the strongly

held woods and villages separating them from the besieged forces in Bastogne.

The enemy's stubborn resistance and well dug-in positions required constant use of the bayonet and hand grenade in their destruction. Suffering heavy casualties, constantly exposed to raking enemy machine-gun and small-arms fire from flanking positions, the 2nd Battalion fought with an unrelenting determination that overcame all obstacles, routed the enemy, and established contact with the forces within Bastogne.

Richard Radock remembered this attack to relieve the 101st Airborne: "We attacked and advanced 14 miles in 48 hours in deep snow and caught the enemy by surprise and slaughtered about two-thirds of a grenadier division of the Wehrmacht Seventh Army." This aggressiveness of the heroic infantrymen of the 2nd Battalion, 318th Infantry, earned them a Unit Citation.

The official end of the Battle of the Bulge was January 25, 1945. Yet the men of the 80th Division would continue to endure the freezing cold and extreme weather for several more weeks.

Sauer River Crossing/Siegfried Line

On February 1, 1945, the 80th was manning a line running northwest of Diekirch southeast to Beaufort, along the south bank of the Sauer River (also known as the Sûre River). The weather remained frigid, with occasional snow flurries. Cold, intermittent rain began to drench the sector. Soon thereafter, the division received orders directing them to attack what the British and Americans called the "Siegfried Line," also known as the "Westwall."

Years earlier German engineers had constructed concrete "dragon's teeth" in parallel rows across hills and valleys, forming the Siegfried Line. In some cases, the dragon's teeth were only heavy posts or steel beams embedded in the ground. More commonly, they were five rows of pyramid-shaped, reinforced-concrete projections resting on a concrete mat, 10 to 30 meters wide and sunk a meter or two into the ground.

ABOVE: Manning an antiaircraft gun at Wallendorf, Luxembourg, in February 1945, soldiers of the 80th Division look over the Our River. This photo was taken after the reduction of the German advance during the Battle of the Bulge. OPPOSITE: Troops of the 80th Infantry Division advance into the city of Wiltz, Luxembourg, on January 23, 1945. Soldiers of the Signal Corps are laying telephone wire as the infantrymen move through the street.

The dragon's teeth were staggered and spaced in such a manner that a tank could not drive through. Interspersed among the teeth were minefields, barbed wire, and pillboxes that were virtually impregnable to artillery and set in such a way as to give the Germans interlocking fire across the entire front. (See *WWII Quarterly*, Spring 2023)

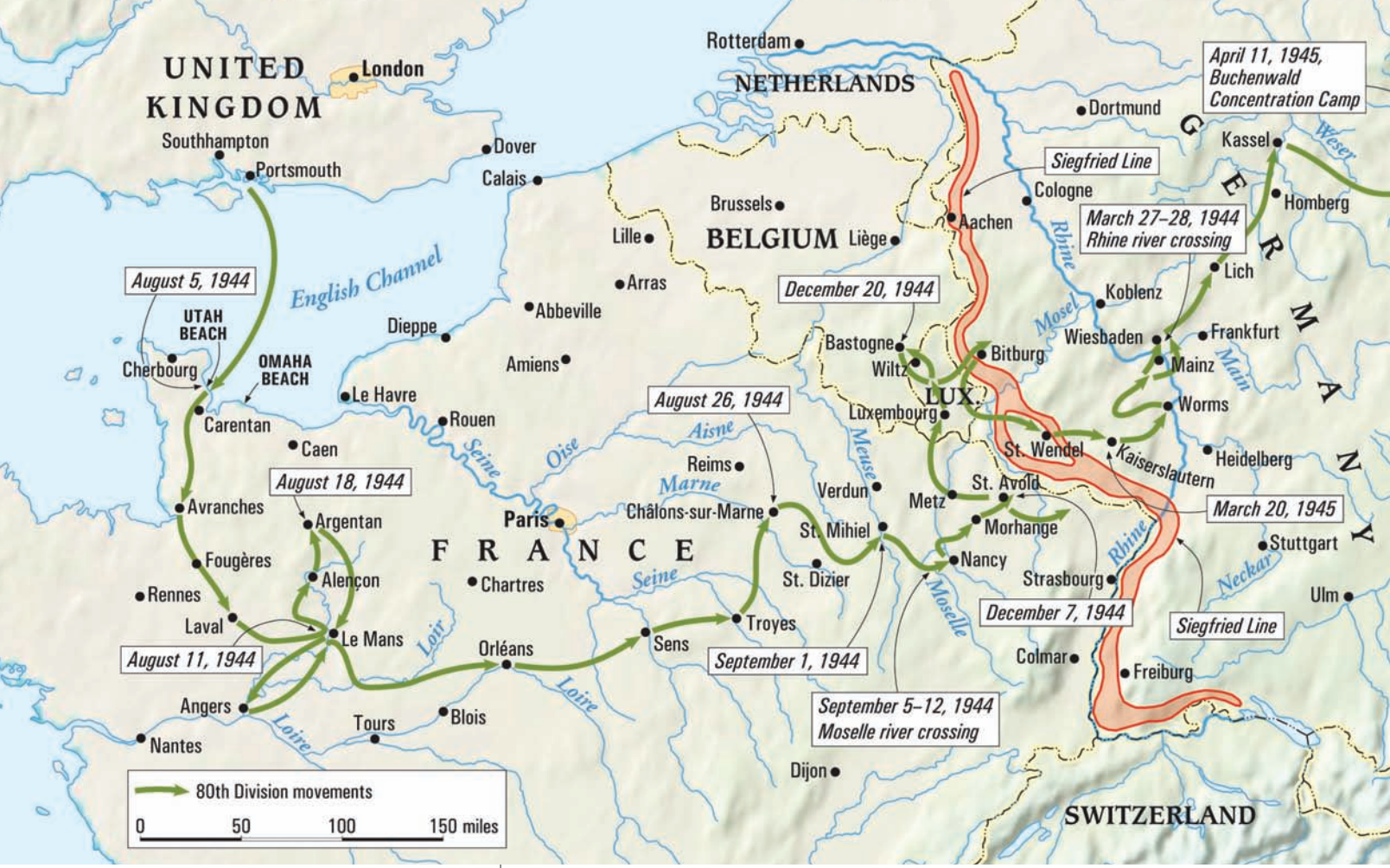
To get to the Siegfried Line, the division would have to cross the Sauer and Our Rivers, just west of the ancient German town of Wallendorf, northwest of Trier—both of which were twice their normal size and very swift, estimated at about 10 miles per hour, because of the massive snowmelt from the historic European winter of 1944-1945. The men knew the crossing would be more difficult than prior river crossings.

The three 80th Division regiments were spaced several hundred yards apart, each with their orders of where and when to attack. As Colonel Ralph E. Pearson so eloquently stated in his book, *Enroute to the Redoubt*, "The battle-tested 80th was again moving forward. The impregnable Siegfried Line was to feel the onslaught of the men who in two World Wars had never failed to take an objective and never retreated from one they had gained."

At 3 a.m. on February 7, the 318th Infantry jumped off in the attack across the Sauer River, near Haller. The order of attack was the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Battalion, with the 1st Battalion in regimental reserve to move on orders.

While Company F was able to cross and move out against light opposition, other companies in the battalion reported difficulty launching their rubber and wooden boats into the debris-filled flood waters. At daylight, enemy small arms, mortar, and artillery fire increased in intensity at the crossing point.

During the day, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions established a bridgehead across the river. However, due to exceptionally heavy artillery and mortar fire, the engineers were unable to construct a bridge; the engineer



Map © 2023 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

assault boats were continuously riddled by machine-gun fire.

Many lives were also lost as men waited to cross. Olander Jack Barrett, Jr., of L/319th, remembers losing buddies right next to him, and also being wounded while trying to make the crossing. "The engineers were supposed to have built a pontoon bridge that night. But every time they almost got it built, the Germans would send a barrage—they had it pinpointed. They could see what was going on down there. I don't know if the moonlight was shining or what, but they kept knocking it out.

"We laid there in a ditch ... laid there for a long time. The boy right next to me ... a shell hit him dead center and turned him into hamburger meat, but I didn't get a scratch. They gave us orders to withdraw. I had a squad of men, and two of them were missing, so I went back to look for them. But after I couldn't find them, I was turning back and a big shell hit right behind me, and it got me. Blew me up with some thirty-some shrapnel wounds. I went numb all over and couldn't feel anything. Laying there like a drunk man."

The 319th was also making a crossing early on that same morning. Troops moved from the assembly area at Bettendorf into Moestroff and Kleinreisdorf, preparatory to the crossing. The 3rd Battalion, 319th Infantry, began to move to its crossing site, but a few minutes after six in the morning, only 27 men had made it across—the enemy artillery concentrations had wrecked most of the boats at the crossing sites. Even though additional boats were brought up, crossings at 9:15 a.m. and again at 4:05 p.m. proved unsuccessful.

Burt Marsh of M/319th, remembered the three days it took the company to get across the Our River: "We spent three nights trying to get across the Our. The engineers were trying to get a bridge up for us ... they just had an awful time ... the river was flooded and swift. We received many casualties due to the heavy artillery fire and strong resistance on the German side."

The 317th Infantry was in division reserve at the village of Dillingen, Luxembourg, and would cross after the 318th and 319th. At 9 p.m. on February 9, the Regiment received instructions to move Company F to Beaufort on the Sauer to be attached to the 318th Infantry, arriving by 1:25 a.m. on February 10, and in position to cross at 7:55 a.m. Two platoons made the crossing in assault boats by 1:35 p.m. and a perimeter defense was set up around the crossing site. This site was to be used in new attempts to bridge the river about 400 yards below Dillingen.

Despite the high, swift water and the continuous enemy shelling and machine-gun fire, by February 11, the majority of the 80th had crossed the Sauer. The 319th continued to supply units across the Our River by boat. That morning, Companies F and G, 319th, were released from attachment and reverted to battalion control.

Meanwhile, the 2nd Battalion, 319th Infantry had discovered the organization of the German pillbox defenses. The primary pillboxes were strongly built of reinforced concrete and located to give each other mutual support. They were usually found three to a group,

BELOW: As the 319th Infantry Regiment, 80th Division, crosses the Our River from Wallendorf, Luxembourg, into Germany, a chemical generator unit lays down a heavy smoke screen to mask the movement. Substantial enemy artillery fire was encountered during the river crossing on February 8, 1945. LEFT: During the last nine months of World War II in Europe, the U.S. 80th Infantry Division trekked across much of France and engaged in heavy fighting against the Germans. The division was a component of the Third Army under General George S. Patton, Jr.

each of which housed about eight men. A command pillbox in the rear completed the setup and formed more or less the outline of a kite on the ground.

Adjacent to the command pillbox was a bunker for personnel, having from 18 to 20 men. In the rear of the primary command pillbox was a secondary row of pillboxes, less strongly reinforced, and behind these was still another command pillbox. Underground communications connected the defensive pillboxes to the command pillbox. The command pillboxes were also connected for control purposes.

Having discovered the nature of the Siegfried Line installation, the 2nd Battalion, 319th, began a systematic assault. First, artillery would hit around the box or boxes being attacked on a perimeter of about 200 yards square. This usually drove the defenders to the field fortifications adjacent to the pillbox.

Then accurate mortar fire would saturate the fortifications, driving the Germans into the pillbox. Meanwhile, tanks jockeyed into position in Hoesdorf and, where possible, fired directly into the pillboxes, assisting to keep them buttoned up. It was noted that 76mm fire seemed to have no effect on the primary pillboxes, but machine guns and small arms accomplished the job.

Sometimes it would take a few assaults to finally achieve capturing a pillbox, and often a different company would have to help by attacking it from the rear, as Burt Marsh remembered. "At daybreak, we ended the attack [on a previous pillbox] only to come under mortar fire from a pillbox about a quarter mile in front of us. Since we had heavy casualties during the night, we set up a defense line for three days.

"We attacked the pillbox that was firing mortars on us on February 2, only to retreat because of heavy mortar fire, and we were under-manned. We never did capture that pillbox. Our first gunner was killed during this attack. Another company worked their way around us and captured it, taking 47 prisoners."

Once the box was buttoned up, the assault squad would move in on the rear. Few boxes had to be taken by use of explosive charges. Of the first 20 taken, satchel charges were used only on the first. Thereafter, once the initial phases of the reduction had taken place, a representative talking to the German occupants usually succeeded in bringing about their surrender.

The Germans would occasionally set up their machine guns in the corridors of the pillboxes and ricochet the bullets off the walls to the exterior of the box after the embrasures had been buttoned up by the fire. The concussion of the satchel charges usually took care of the gun. Those boxes holding out were in almost every case controlled by an officer.

Although difficult, this was also an opportunity to try and get the Germans within the pillbox to surrender. Once the division started to take more and more pillboxes, the hope was to neutralize them simply by talking the enemy into giving up.

Charles Robert Harmon, assigned to the Anti-Tank Company, 319th Infantry, spoke a little German. He was sent to climb atop one of those pillboxes and try to talk

sense to the Germans inside.

"The war is over, save your life," he said, quoting the propaganda leaflets that the Allies had been dropping on the area. It certainly was a tense few minutes while Harmon laid on top of this pillbox. Finally, those Germans surrendered and came out with hands up.

This certainly was not always the case and most pillboxes had to be taken by force. But as the war was crawling to the finish line, the men of the 80th would do what they could to preserve their lives and the lives of their buddies.

Liberating the Concentration Camps

As the 80th Division entered and continued into Germany and Austria, they would encounter two of the Third Reich's worst concentration camps. For the men who witnessed the inhumanity of these camps, the memory would stick with them forever.

The first camp they encountered was Buchenwald—one of the largest camps established within German borders. With the fall of the city of Weimar, the 80th was sent in to relieve the 6th Armored Division, which had first discovered the camp, which held over 20,000 living skeletons. Immediately, all possible steps were taken to relieve the suffering of the inmates.

The SS guards had begun to evacuate their camps with the news of the advancing Allied forces. The Buchenwald prisoners used the opportunity to storm the watchtowers and take control of the camp prior to liberation.

Upon entering the camp on April 11, Pfc. Don Schoo of the 633rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion described what he and the others smelled and saw. "Everyone got sick from the stench ... bodies were stacked up on each side of the road."

These soldiers had seen some of the bloodiest combat to date, yet they described Buchenwald as hell on earth, and the worst they had seen in the war's entirety. As Schoo said, "If I live to be 100 years old, I will never, never forget the day I spent at Buchenwald. Hell on earth. I saw it. I smelled it. And I am still doubtful—how can anyone treat another human being that way? They have got to be a monster."

In early May, the division encountered yet another camp, Ebensee. Located in Austria, Ebensee was a sub-camp of the larger Mauthausen camp. The prisoners of Ebensee were being used for forced labor during the construction and maintenance of an underground rocket factory.

The 80th found 16,000 prisoners still alive, but on the edge of death; the SS had fled the region the day before liberation. The army brought in portable showers and doctors in attempts to clean and heal the prisoners. Large tents were set up as field hospitals. They could only feed them liquid soup; anything more substantial would have killed them.

The soldiers, eager to help, were warned not to feed the prisoners anything. Isadore Zaritsky of the 80th, recalled the experience. "I could not be but astounded at the look of many of the inmates. They were actually walking skeletons made of skin and bones."

Many of the soldiers walked throughout the camp and discovered the crematoriums with human remains still within the ovens. For most of the GIs, the feelings did not sink in until later because they were just so shocked at what they saw. In their testimonies, men questioned how it was humanly possible to treat other humans this way.

The 80th Infantry Division would be recognized as a liberation unit by the U.S. Army's Center of Military History and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1985.

End of the War/Austrian Alps

The troops received word on May 1 that Hitler had committed suicide the previous day. After enduring months of fighting fanatic Germans in the cold, living in rain-filled holes,

ABOVE: Elements of the Third Army, including the 80th Infantry Division, witnessed the horrors of the Buchenwald concentration camp, liberated on April 12, 1945. In this stark image, German civilians from the area surrounding the camp are forced to view the bodies of victims of the Nazi cruelty. They were brought to the camp under U.S. military escort. OPPOSITE: General Horace McBride, commander of the 80th Infantry Division, and Major General Pavel Voskresensky of the Red Army 21st Rifle Division inspect a Soviet unit near the town of Liezen, Austria, along the Enns River on May 11, 1945. This photo was taken just three days after the end of World War II in Europe.

seeing so much death, and witnessing the horrors of the concentration camps, the end of the war couldn't come soon enough. It was a rat race now. Armored columns were everywhere, and all the Allied troops could do was to jump into their jeeps and trucks and drive like hell to catch up.

During these long trips along the autobahns or other roads, the division didn't even bother with prisoners—there were too many, giving themselves up by the thousands. Wives walked with their soldier husbands while they turned themselves in. No one paid attention to these defeated Germans. If Hitler was dead and the Germans were retreating, then the surrender couldn't be far off, could it?

In early May, the 80th crossed the Danube River and moved into Austria, close to Vöcklabruck. Over the next few days, the three regiments moved through various picturesque small towns.

The morning of May 8 found the 2nd Battalion, 317th Infantry settled into Spital, Austria. Lieutenant A.Z. Adkins, Jr., CO of Company H, remembered that day: "I was sitting under a tree and cleaning my rifle. I took my shoes off. It really felt good to wiggle my toes in the grass. [A.Z. Adkins is the father of author Andy Adkins–*Ed.*]

"Sergeant Albert Melcolm came out and said there was a conference call for all COs. The Battalion CO read a message to us and said that an order would be down in a few minutes. I prayed to God. I asked Sergeant Zane Turner to assemble the company.

In a letter dated May 8, 1945, Adkins wrote his parents in Starke, Florida:

Dearest Mom & Dad,
Shortly after I wrote to you the day before yesterday, I received the cease-fire order. At that particular time, I had my shoes & shirt off & was playing with a little dog on the grass of some Austrian's yard. My men were all in houses taking it easy. "My battalion had momentarily stopped in a little mountain village. I told the first sergeant to assemble the company. As my men came marching up, a big lump formed in my throat because many familiar faces were missing from the files of men who were to hear me read to them General Eisenhower's order that hostilities had ceased.

I told my men to sit down & take it easy & that I had something to tell them. Then I read to them General Eisenhower's order telling of the unconditional surrender. When I finished no one said a word. Finally, one man said, "Lieutenant, read that again please." The day that we had died & bled for so long had finally arrived.

No one knows what the word "peace" means except those who have been at war. As yet, I feel no great emotional change. But gradually I am beginning to realize that there will be no more suffering & no more dying & the sensation is truly wonderful.

Tonight, I am in another mountain village high in the Bavarian Alps. I have a radio & can listen to the celebrations that the people in England & America are having. Here, we are having a different type of celebration. Ours is a quiet celebration. We still have to maintain order, but we are so happy & it's hard for us to realize this mess is over.

I love you both dearly.
Devotedly, Andy

The division's official history notes, "By the end of the war, May 7, 1945, the 80th Division had seen 277 days of combat and captured 212,295 enemy soldiers. However, it cost the 80th 17,087 men killed and wounded."

Four members of the 80th received the Medal of Honor: Sergeant Day Turner (B/319th) for action in Dahl, Luxembourg

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Remembering TORPEDO 8 of

In 1982, Captain Bert Earnest and Commander Harry Ferrier were present at an event to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Midway. The guest of honor was George Gay, the lone survivor of the doomed Torpedo Squadron 8. Gay talked about the battle and his lost squadron mates. Eventually one man noticed Earnest standing nearby and asked him who he was.

"Oh," said Earnest, glancing at Ferrier, "we're the other 'lone survivors' of Torpedo 8."

The June 1942 Battle of Midway has sparked its share of legends, but the most enduring is the tragedy of 15 obsolete TBD Devastators of USS *Hornet*'s Torpedo 8 flying into a swarm of Japanese Zeros and anti-aircraft fire as they attempted to launch torpedoes at Admiral Chuichi Nagumo's carriers. Of the 30 men of Torpedo 8 who took off from *Hornet* that morning, only Ensign George Gay survived. Gay became an immediate celebrity. Featured in newspapers, wined and dined by movie stars and politicians, he was the symbol of the doomed aviators of Torpedo 8.

But contrary to popular belief, Torpedo 8 was not destroyed. Lieutenant Commander John Waldron only led half of the squadron. They flew the slow and vulnerable Douglas TBD Devastator, which was even then being replaced by the newer, faster and more powerful Grumman TBF Avenger. The rest of the squadron was

Courtesy of Navy Art Collection

USS *Hornet*'s Torpedo Squadron 8 was decimated during the Battle of Midway, but there were other survivors besides the celebrated Ensign George Gay.

Midway

BY MARK CARLSON

Under the relentless onslaught of Japanese Mitsubishi A6 Zero fighter planes, the Douglas TBD Devastator torpedo bombers of the USS *Hornet*'s Torpedo Squadron 8 are massacred as they attempt to attack Japanese aircraft carriers during the Battle of Midway in this dramatic painting by artist John Hamilton titled "Destruction of a Torpedo Bomber."

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still on Naval Air Station Ford Island at Pearl Harbor with their new TBFs. Torpedo 8 was the first squadron to receive the new torpedo plane. The other pilots and gunners were under the command of Lieutenant Harold "Swede" Larson, an Annapolis graduate who ruled with an iron fist. They had arrived from Norfolk with their planes aboard two transports the day after Hornet left Pearl, too late to participate in the carrier battle.

Ensign Albert "Bert" Earnest, who had joined the squadron six months earlier, was a 25 year old from Richmond, Virginia. He had started flight training at Pensacola in February 1941. Upon receiving his wings in November, he reported to VT-8 at Norfolk three days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. "The *Hornet* was leaving in about a month," Earnest said. "Commander Waldron decided who would go with the ship. The newest men would remain behind to be trained on the new TBF-1. When we finally reached Pearl at the end of May, the *Enterprise* and *Hornet* were already gone, and *Yorktown* was still in drydock. The next morning *Yorktown* was gone."

Earnest loved the TBF. With close to 90 hours of flight time he felt good about the power and speed of the new bomber. "The Devastator was a fairly good airplane but its time was long past. It was quite slow especially after you put on a torpedo. That slowed it down a great deal. The TBF was much, much faster and carried the torpedo internally."

Even as the American carriers raced to place themselves in harm's way, another desperate phase of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's daring scheme was underway at Midway. A motley collection of Army, Marine, and Navy planes were being hastily assembled to beef up the island's air strength. Among them would be six of Torpedo 8's new TBFs. Larson was ordered to choose the six planes and their crews that were most ready for combat and send them to Midway. But Larson was not to go with them. The leader of the detachment would be 32-year-old Lieutenant Langdon Fieberling. The TBFs would carry long-range fuel tanks for the 1,200-mile flight to Midway, where they were to be ready for an attack on the Japanese striking force. It was a tall order. None of the pilots or airmen had ever been in battle. Few had ever dropped a live torpedo or even had experience in long over-water flying. But they went to Midway to do their part in the most desperate battle of the Pacific war.

The Grumman TBF, which did not yet bear the name "Avenger," had been developed as the most advanced long-range torpedo and level bomber for the Navy's carrier fleet. The prototype had first flown in August 1941. They were only now rolling off the Grumman assembly line on Long Island. Built to the Grumman "Iron Works" rugged standards, it was a massive plane with a 54-foot wingspan and towered over 15 feet high. A Wright Cyclone R-2600 1,950-horsepower engine drove the five-ton bomber and her three-man crew for 1,000 miles at 275 knots. The payload was a single 2,000-pound torpedo or a ton of bombs or depth charges. For defense, the early models carried twin forward-firing .30-caliber Browning machine guns in addition to the single .50-caliber in the dorsal ball turret and .30-caliber in the ventral position. They saw service throughout the Pacific War and participated in some of the most important campaigns against Japanese ships and land installations. But in June 1942, they were an unknown entity in the air war.

At 0600 on June 1, the six planes were fueled. Each was painted in the light blue and pale gray scheme used by the Navy in 1942. Larson made up some large decals bearing the squadron's emblem of a clenched fist with the word "attack!" With a wave, Fieberling led them off NAS Ford Island at 0700 hours. The new Wright Cyclone engines pounded out the smooth cadence of power as they climbed to 1,500 feet and took up a compass heading of 270 degrees to the west. Fieberling was leader of the first three-plane element with Bert Earnest trailing on his left wing and Ensign Charles Brannon on his right. Behind them were Ensign Ozzie Gaynier with wingmen Victor Lewis and Darrell Woodside trailing behind.

Unlike most of his squadron mates, Earnest had actually dropped a torpedo during training at NAS Quonset Point in Rhode Island. He thought that may have been why he had been selected to join the detachment. Seated in the turret at the rear of the canopy was Gunner's Mate Jay Manning, and in the lower compartment under the turret was Radioman Harry Ferrier from Springfield, Massachusetts. Both were still in their teens. In fact, Ferrier was only 17, having altered his birth certificate to join the Navy at 15. Ferrier could only see out of the small side and back windows of his ventral position. Below the TBF was a vast, empty blue ocean.

"I never saw a ship on that entire flight," he later recalled. Eight hours after leaving Pearl Harbor, the big Grumman planes approached Midway. The antiaircraft gunners were warned of the incoming torpedo planes. "What's a TBF?" one gunner had asked. "What does it look like?"

"It looks like a pregnant F4F Wildcat," he was told. When Fieberling's planes arrived over the island, not a finger touched a trigger.

Ferrier saw the runways on Eastern Island lined wingtip to wingtip with 16 B-17s and four brand-new Martin B-26 Marauders, as well as 20 Consolidated PBY Catalinas, 26 Marine fighters, and 32 dive bombers. Ferrier said that there were so many it seemed they would barely have room to land. Yet some of the planes were long past their prime. The Marine F2A Brewster Buffalo fighters were woefully obsolete, while the Vought Vindicator dive bombers had surgical tape patching the control surfaces.

ABOVE: A TBD Devastator torpedo bomber of Torpedo Squadron 5 skidded off the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS *Yorktown* in this 1940 photo. After repairs, the aircraft was reassigned to Torpedo Squadron 8 aboard the carrier USS *Hornet* and was shot down during the Battle of Midway on June 4, 1942. OPPOSITE: One of a pair of Grumman TBF Avenger torpedo bombers releases a practice torpedo during training. Ensign Bert Earnest was one six of the VT-8 pilots who flew the new plane from a land base rather than joining the carrier USS *Hornet* at sea during the Battle of Midway.

After the VT-8 men found cots in tents along the airfield perimeter, they learned that a huge Japanese fleet was coming to attack and invade Midway. The tiny atoll was where the U.S Navy had chosen to make its stand. Earnest wasn't scared. He knew his job, and the TBF was the best plane for that job. He was sure they could hold their own when the battle began. "We were told that the carriers were protecting the Hawaiian Islands. We shouldn't expect any help from them. We were on our own."

Ferrier and Manning had an idea. They affixed wide masking tape to the leading edges of the wings, about where machine guns would be on a fighter. Then they inked black holes on the tape to appear as gun ports. They hoped this might make some Zero pilot think twice about attacking it.

The Americans knew what was coming, but were hardly able to stop it. At 0430 on the morning of June 4, the first wave of 36 Japanese A6M Zeros, 36 D3A Val dive bombers, and 36 B5N Kate level bombers took off from Nagumo's four carriers. At that moment Earnest was awakened by the heavy roar of big radial engines as the 16 B-17s took off. He headed to his TBF and began preflighting it. Ferrier and Manning checked their guns and equipment. To the left and right the other pilots and crews did the same.

The dawn sky lightened as the Torpedo 8 aircrews waited for orders to take off. Somewhere out there, a huge battle was about to be fought. At 0555 the SQR-270 radar picked up a series of contacts at 175 miles, coming south toward Midway. Instantly the alarms went off and the island's Navy and Marine defenders took their positions. In the air went the Wildcats and Buffalos of Major Floyd "Red" Parks's VMF-221. Their job was to intercept and shoot down as many of

the incoming bombers as possible.

Then, amid the howling sirens, Earnest watched as a jeep drove up and a Marine officer called out to Fieberling that the Japanese fleet had been sighted. "Another Marine yelled up to me that the Japanese force was at 320 degrees, 150 miles," said Earnest. "We started the engines and took off right after the [Marine] fighters. But we were on our own. No fighters at all. They were needed for the defense of Midway." In the radio gunner's compartment, Harry Ferrier looked out the small window and saw the island fall away as they banked to the north.

Lieutenant Langdon Fieberling was easy-going and unruffled in the most trying of circumstances. He was the perfect man to lead his small detachment into battle for the first time. His TBFs were to join up with the B-26s and Marine dive bombers to make a combined attack on the Japanese fleet. But this would prove to be impossible. The mixed bag of Navy, Army, and Marine planes flew at different altitudes and speeds. The Vindicators were 100 knots slower than the new TBFs. But some of Waldron's independent nature had worked its way into Fieberling's own personality. In the end, he told his pilots they would find the enemy carriers and attack, alone if necessary. Their planes were armed with a single Mk 13 aerial torpedo. The Mk 13 weighed 2,200 pounds with a 600-pound Torpex warhead. Having a range of 6,000 yards, it could do great damage to a thin-hulled aircraft carrier. But carriers were fast and maneuverable, and the only way to guarantee a hit was to move in low and get as close as possible before dropping the "fish."

They climbed to 2,000 feet and took up the heading of 320 degrees at 160 knots. Then a formation of enemy planes passed them and one Zero peeled off to make an attack but was apparently recalled. That was the first Japanese plane they had ever seen. It would not be the last. Just as the island disappeared over the southern horizon the first wave of Japanese bombers and fighters began their attack on Midway. Bright blasts of exploding bombs and antiaircraft guns punctuated the columns of black smoke that rose into the morning sky.

They climbed to 4,000 feet into the scattered clouds. At 0655 hours Earnest, farthest to the left, saw a single ship headed south. It looked like a transport. Then suddenly the whole ocean was covered with ships. "It looked like the whole damned Japanese Navy," he said. "A massive battleship was just ahead and beyond that, he saw two big carriers steaming side by side."

The two carriers were the *Akagi*, flagship of Admiral Nagumo, and *Hiryu*, steaming 5,000 yards apart, while the other two carriers, *Kaga* and *Soryu*, were 10,000 yards behind. Their course was 140 degrees, about south-southeast. Their flight decks were packed with fighters and bombers being fueled and readied for a possible attack on any U.S. ships that might be in the area.

Unknown to the Torpedo 8 detachment they were in fact the spearpoint of the entire American attack. But instantly the Torpedo 8 men were no longer alone in the sky.

"Enemy fighters!" Jay Manning called over Earnest's interphone. The turret's .50-caliber began banging away as Manning turned and aimed at the darting Zeros. Earnest had never seen such nimble and swift fighters. "There were so many they were getting in each other's

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ABOVE: An Mk 13 torpedo slung below its fuselage, this TBD-1 Devastator, most likely from Torpedo Squadron 3 off the USS *Yorktown,* searches for Japanese ships on June 4, 1942. BELOW: A Douglas TBD Devastator torpedo bomber over the Japanese-held Wake Island atoll during a raid on February 24, 1942. Obsolescent as World War II began, the Devastators suffered heavy losses during the Battle of Midway four months later.

ABOVE: Members of the aircrew of Torpedo Squadron 8 photographed on the flight deck of the USS *Hornet* in May 1942. The squadron was decimated at the Battle of Midway the following month, with Ensign George Gay (circled) the only survivor from Torpedo 8 that flew from the USS *Hornet*. Squadron commander, Lieutenant Commander John C. Waldron, is shown standing third from left. LEFT: From left are replacement gunner Basil Rich, pilot Ensign Albert K. Earnest, and Radioman 3rd Class Harry H. Ferrier. During the Battle of Midway, Earnest, Ferrier and Seaman 1st Class Jay D. Manning flew with a detachment of six TBFs from Midway. Manning was killed in action, but their plane was the only one of Torpedo 8 to survive the day. The Japanese shot down Five of the TBFs and all 15 TBDs launched from the USS *Hornet*.

way. I triggered my nose guns but nothing happened." Nagumo's carriers were protected by at least 24 A6M Zeros, veterans of the attack on Pearl Harbor. They had six targets. Cannon shells and 7.7mm machine-gun bullets tore into the big TBFs. Earnest felt and heard the thump and zing of enemy fire tearing through his plane.

Still holding formation, the Americans moved in at full power. Fieberling began his attack run, diving at the sea towards one of the carriers.

Then Jay Manning's gun stopped firing. In the ventral compartment, Ferrier felt something warm and sticky running over his head and shoulders. It was Manning's blood. A 20mm cannon shell had exploded in his chest, killing him instantly

Fieberling's TBF leveled off at 200 feet as the Zeros followed them down. Earnest saw his leader's bomb bay doors open, and he followed suit. More bullets lanced into Earnest's plane, and the howl of the 250-knot airstream added to the din of aircraft engines and gunfire. Tracers streaked all around them as he tried to concentrate on the *Hiryu* which grew larger with every passing second. Suddenly, he felt a sharp blow on his neck as shrapnel hit him. Blood sprayed over the instrument panel. Another Zero moved in behind the TBF.

Ferrier was about to fire when the tail wheel fell, blocking his view. The hydraulic

system had been hit. Unable to fire, he could only wait. The big Grumman was taking fierce punishment as dozens of bullets tore into the thin aluminum skin. Earnest felt the plane slipping out of formation as his control cables were shredded. Pulling back on the control stick had no effect. He could not climb or dive. Then a cannon shell exploded in the instrument panel. Unable to control the TBF, he knew they were going down.

The five remaining torpedo planes were boring in amid a swarm of fighters and increasing antiaircraft fire. Just then one of them burst into a ball of orange flame and spun into the sea with a titanic splash, but the others tried to get as close as they could to the huge ship. Two of them managed to release their torpedoes, but the *Hiryu* was able to avoid them. One by one, the rest of Earnest's squadron fell from the sky and crashed into the sea. Not one torpedo hit the ship. Fieberling, Brannon, Gaynier, Lewis, and Woodside were all dead, along with their gunners. They had died before Lieutenant Commander Waldron's 15 Devastators had even launched from the *Hornet*. The first casualties of the attack on the Japanese fleet had been men of Torpedo 8.

But Bert Earnest and Harry Ferrier were still alive. Against all odds, their shot-rent and shattered TBF was still flying. Earnest had no elevator controls, no hydraulics, no radio or navigational instruments. He still wanted to try and sink an enemy ship. Just ahead to the left was a cruiser, antiaircraft guns blazing away. With a kick on his left rudder, he cobbled the crippled TBF around and aimed at the enemy ship and triggered the switch to release the torpedo. Expecting to feel the sudden release of weight he was surprised that nothing happened. He tried the emergency release with the same results. The torpedo would not fall free of the plane. The big plane slipped closer and closer to the rolling swells, and there seemed no way to stop it.

Then Earnest did something that had become a habit during training. "I had my hand on the elevator trim wheel and the plane suddenly jumped up. I realized I could still control the elevator that way. But I had two Zeros coming at me. Then they left. I don't know why. They had me dead to rights."

That was when the USAAF B-26 Marauders bored in on the carriers with their own torpedoes. After that came the Marine dive bombers. Earnest was north of the fleet, with the Japanese between him and Midway. "I decided to head south until I was past the fleet

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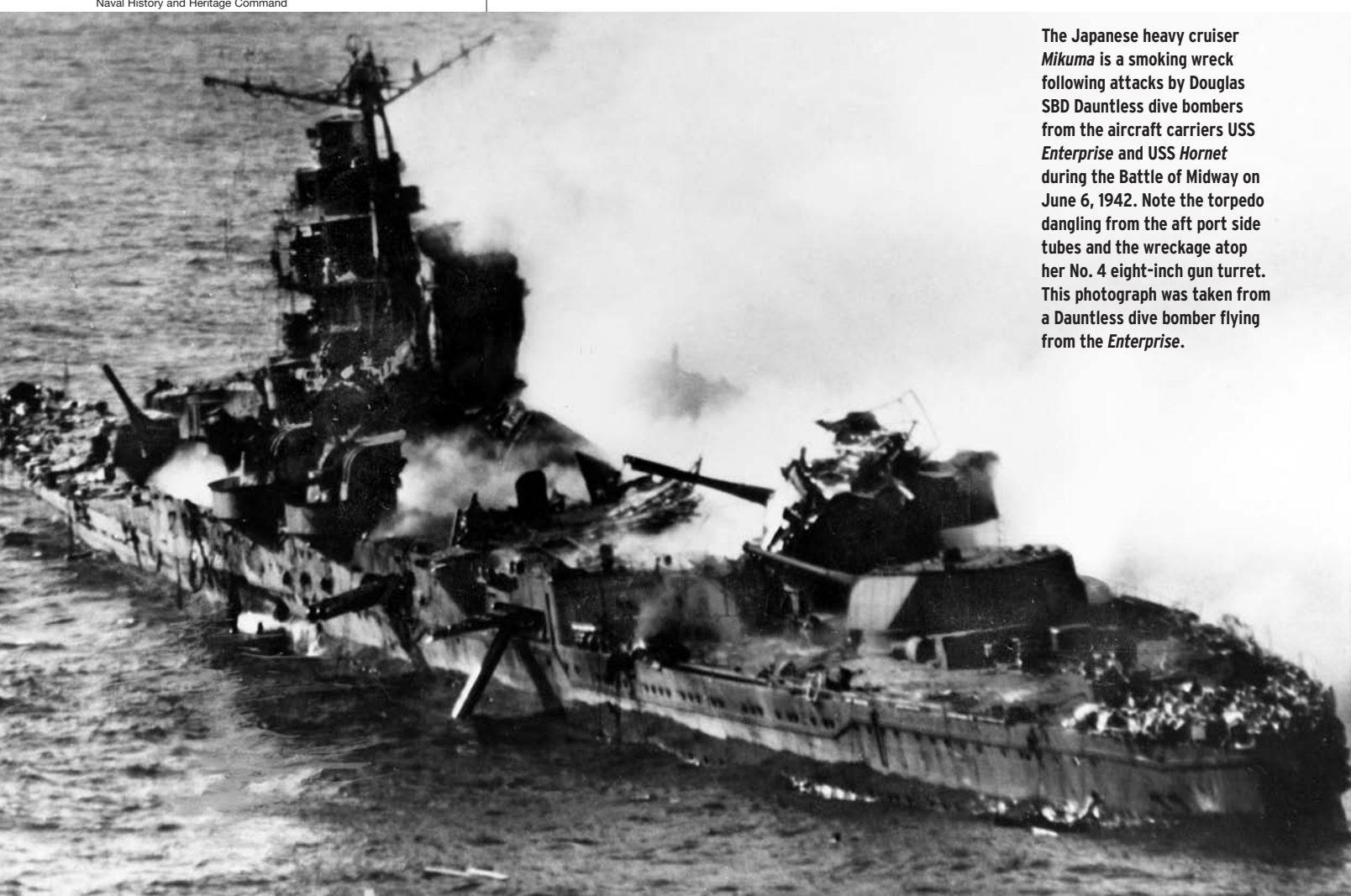

The Japanese heavy cruiser *Mikuma* is a smoking wreck following attacks by Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bombers from the aircraft carriers USS *Enterprise* and USS *Hornet* during the Battle of Midway on June 6, 1942. Note the torpedo dangling from the aft port side tubes and the wreckage atop her No. 4 eight-inch gun turret. This photograph was taken from a Dauntless dive bomber flying from the *Enterprise*.

Both: Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: This badly damaged TBF-1 Avenger, flown by Ensign Albert K. Earnest, was the only plane of Torpedo Squadron 8 to survive the Battle of Midway and would never fly again. Radioman Harry Ferrier and Seaman 1st Class Jay D. Manning were also aboard. Manning, who operated the .50-caliber machine gun, was killed in action. Six Avengers based at Midway and 15 Devastators from the USS *Hornet* had taken off that morning. LEFT: Torpedo Squadron 8 launched 15 Devastators, each with a crew of three, from the USS *Hornet* during the Battle of Midway. Ensign George Gay was the only survivor. A nurse at Pearl Harbor Naval Hospital hands him a copy of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, probably on June 7, after he had undergone surgery to repair his injured left hand.

until I figured I was west of Midway." But all his navigational instruments, including his compass were shot away. "The sun was relatively low in the sky so I knew where east was. I climbed to about 4,000 feet." There were several planes in the distance heading south but he had no way of knowing who they were. They were probably Marine dive bombers returning home after being savaged by the Zeros.

Somehow Earnest's damaged plane kept going. The big Wright Cyclone, despite being hit several times, never faltered. With no compass or airspeed gauge, he was going to have to be extremely lucky. If he missed Midway, he and Ferrier were doomed to vanish into the empty sea. As he coaxed the crippled TBF south, Ferrier came on the interphone. "He said he had been knocked out but was okay. I asked if he could see if the torpedo was gone, but there was so much blood from Manning covering the small window into the bomb bay he couldn't see."

About an hour after leaving the enemy fleet behind, Earnest turned east. Eventually he saw a smudge of dark gray, which resolved itself into columns of black smoke rising from the island. He lowered his altitude and lined up on the runway for a landing. But his troubles were not over. "I couldn't get one wheel down," he said. "I didn't have any flaps or hydraulics." With consummate skill, the aviator managed to bring the battered TBF into a one-wheel landing, skidding to a noisy stop just off the runway.

The main attack by the carrier-based Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bombers was then wreaking havoc on the first three Japanese carriers. All but one of the VT-8 men that left with Waldron were dead. But the bloody day had been an American victory.

After landing, Earnest found the torpedo had released. The single surviving TBF was found to have nearly 100 holes from small and large caliber shells. Even all three propeller blades were riddled. But that tough Grumman beast never let its pilot and crew down. It was shipped back to Pearl, where Grumman aeronautical engineers examined it with respectful awe. After the battle, the name "Avenger" was given to the new plane.

As for Torpedo 8, the squadron reassembled in Hawaii and shipped out on the USS *Saratoga* in August. They were headed for a small island in the Solomons called Guadalcanal. The war had just started for the men of VT-8.

After the long and desperate Guadalcanal campaign, Earnest served 30 years in the navy, rising to the rank of captain. He flew B-17s as a hurricane hunter and commanded the Naval Air Station at Oceana, Virginia. Harry Ferrier continued to fly Avengers throughout the war, seeing combat from the *Enterprise*. He was commissioned as an Ensign in 1945, and retired as a commander in 1970.

The author highly recommends Robert Mrazek's excellent 2008 book *A Dawn Like Thunder—the True Story of Torpedo Squadron 8*. □

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COUNTERATTACK AT ARRAS

The orders he received didn't make much sense to Lord Gort, but he was going to obey them.

By the middle of May, 1940, the Allied situation in France was desperate. Hitler's panzers had cut a bloody swath across the nation from Sedan nearly to the English Channel, trapping the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) to the north, putting its back against the sea, severing its link with the disintegrating French armies to the south.

To regain the situation, the War Office in London ordered General Viscount Gort—John Standish Surtees Prendergast Vereker—the BEF's Commander-in-Chief, to counterattack and punch a hole in the German drive, cutting it off from its extended supply base across the Meuse River. The attack would be supported from the south by two French armored divisions.

It didn't seem to be the best of ideas to Gort, who was personally a brave soldier—he held a Great War Victoria Cross, Distinguished Service Order with two Bars, and was wounded four times—but an indifferent strategist. He spent a good deal of time during the "Phony War" fretting over trivia such as whether soldiers should wear their gas mask straps on the right or left shoulder.

Now he was facing the massive German onslaught, which relied on a new style of warfare—tanks and armored infantry coordinated with dive bombers, which *Time* magazine called "Blitzkrieg." While the British Army was 100 percent motorized—90 percent of the German troops moved on foot or horse. However, British leadership was still rooted in the horse-drawn thinking of 1918.

More importantly, an offensive was the last thing Gort wanted to launch. His troops were cut off from their supply bases at Le Havre and St. Nazaire, and many of his men were already on half rations. He wanted to retreat up the corridor that existed between the closing panzers to the south and German infantry to the east, to the ports of Calais and Dunkirk, which he saw as a springboard to evacuation, saving the lives of Britain's only army and hope of home defense against German invasion.

However, orders were orders, and Gort was a good soldier. The theory that French armored forces would attack from the south while his troops moved in from the north made some tactical and operational sense—it would cut off the German advance from its own supply bases, leaving the panzers without gasoline and ammunition.

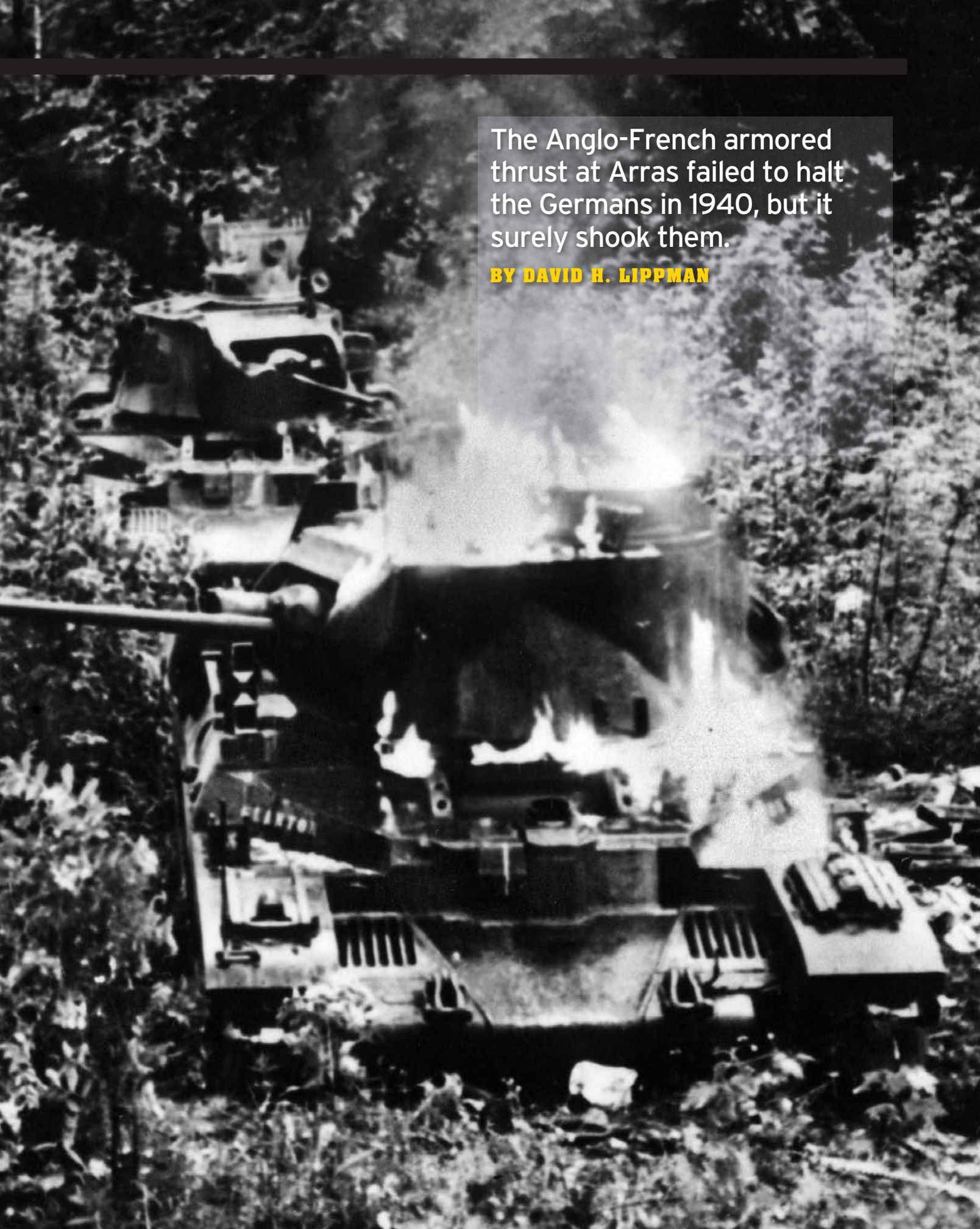
The attack plan was the invention of Britain's Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir Edmund Ironside, a huge and volcanic man, whose nickname was, in the British spirit of irony, "Tiny."

Ironside had difficulty proposing this offensive to the French. General Gaston Billotte, French First Army commander, presented an overwhelmed, defeated, and tearful figure when Ironside flew to meet him at Lens.

Ironside towered over the quaking Billotte and shook the Frenchman by a tunic button, berating his fellow general officer at length. The intimidated Billotte came to attention and agreed to launch his portion of the attack. Posterity does not record how Billotte

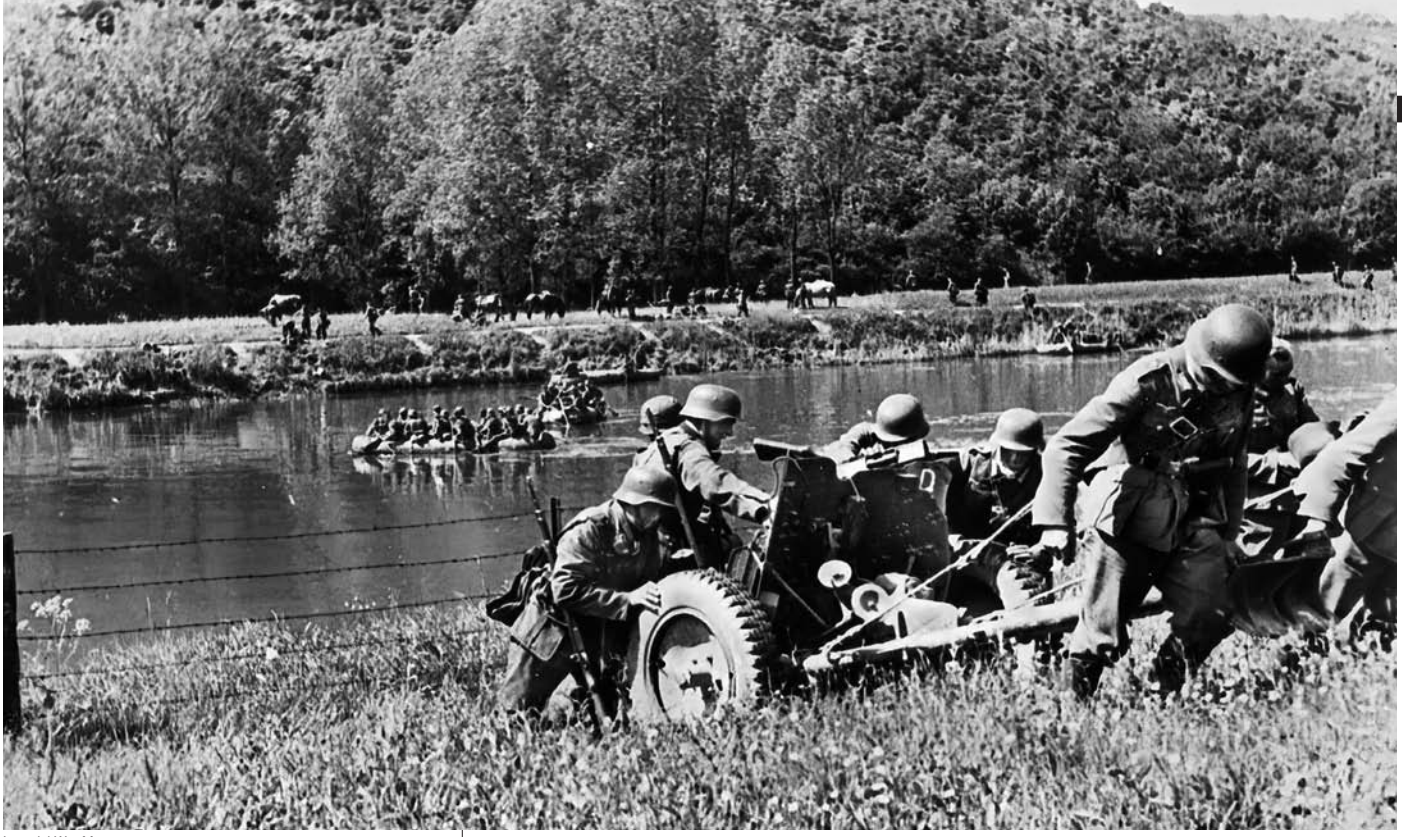
These two Matilda Mk.IIs of the 7th Royal Tank Regiment were part of the 74 tanks of the British "Frankforce," that counterattacked the German spearhead at Arras in May 1940. Cutting through the woods to avoid Junkers Ju 87 attacks, these tanks got stuck in mud and were set on fire by their crews.

National Archives



The Anglo-French armored thrust at Arras failed to halt the Germans in 1940, but it surely shook them.

BY DAVID H. LIPPMAN



Imperial War Museum

faced the ensuing assault—he was killed in a car crash the next day.

Ironside however, wrote caustically in his diary, "I begin to despair of the French fighting at all. The great army defeated by a few tanks." He was right: French troops didn't bother to lay land mines, blow bridges, set up artillery positions on high ground, or hold the lines. They simply threw down rifles and joined endless streams of refugees fleeing German attacks.

The southern attack was to be borne by two French Light Cavalry Divisions, which were really armored divisions, while the British assault was assigned to "Frankforce," named for its commander, Maj. Gen. Harold Franklyn, who headed the 5th Infantry Division, which would provide some of the troops, along with the 50th (Tyne and Tees) Infantry Division from Northumbria, and the 1st Army Tank Brigade, with its 58 Mark I and 16 Mark II Matilda infantry support tanks. The Matildas were heavily-armored, but they moved slowly and were all in need of maintenance. Worse, their engines had a lifetime of only 10 hours before requiring overhaul and checks.

Two Territorial battalions of 151st Brigade, 6th and 8th Durham Light Infantry (DLI), both from 50th Division, would lead the attack in two columns, the tanks behind. As the two infantry battalions came from the Tyne & Tees Division, their CO, Maj. Gen. Gifford Martel, would command the assault. He was a 1930s proponent of armor, so that was helpful. However, the British infantry lacked armored Bren gun carriers and would have to attack on foot in 1918 style.

The Tommies in this assault were draftee coal miners and shipyard workers. Their officers were either young men fresh out of schools like Eton and Harrow, or Great War retreads. The troops lacked radios, supporting artillery, and the reliable Bren machine guns now being issued to the British Army.

Other units included anti-tank companies with their Boys AT Rifles, which had a powerful kick that could break the operator's shoulder but not punch a hole in a German tank, and the 4th Royal Northumberland Fusiliers (RNF) on their motorcycles.

Like Ironside, Gort feared that the French would never attack and told his generals, "If our counterattack was not successful the French and British Armies north of the gap would have their flank turned and would no longer remain in their present positions."

Just to make life harder for the British, the French told their ally their portion of the attack would "start from 21 May onwards," which showed neither a definitive date nor any imperative.

Franklyn set his line of departure approximately 90 degrees from the German offensive, slamming into them from the north. He had poor intelligence on enemy deployments and movements, as he lacked air reconnaissance. As a result, Franklyn and Martel were unaware that they were facing two divisions that represented the opposite extremes in the German military: the 7th Panzer Division, under Maj. Gen. Erwin Rommel, and the SS Totenkopf (Death's Head) Division, under SS Gruppenführer Theodor Eicke.

Rommel was not yet a legend, but he was already one of the most outstanding division commanders in the German army. He had earned the Pour le Mérite on the Italian Front in the Great War, leading infantry assaults against enemy positions. After the Armistice, Rommel stayed in the Reichswehr, and wrote lectures on his battles, which were collected into a book titled *Infantry Attacks*, which stressed boldness. Thousands of staff officers to this day read the work, and millions of moviegoers have seen George C. Scott as Lt. Gen. George S. Patton read a book called *The Tank in Attack*, allegedly written by Rommel. However, Rommel was not a tank expert when he took over the 7th Panzer Division after the conquest of

Poland. But he learned quickly, adapting his personal methods of leading from the front and stressing mobility and flexibility to his new command. As a result, the 7th Panzer Division outraced many of its rival divisions in the drive across France.

By comparison, the Totenkopf Division and its leader represented everything that was evil about the Nazi regime. Impetus to create the division came from SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, who wanted his own personal army—a necessity for the feuding vassals of the incompetently run Nazi state.

Barred from recruiting German civilians or from the Wehrmacht, Himmler turned to men he controlled—concentration camp guards—and appointed Eicke, a former Dachau camp commandant, to lead them. Even by Nazism's questionable standards, Eicke was considered a lunatic, who ordered his camp guards and SS soldiers to practice "inflexible harshness," telling them that international legal conventions were mere scraps of paper—brutality was the rule.

His men responded willingly. In Poland, they carved a bloody trail of massacres and atrocities. When they got furloughs after that campaign, some men went back to their own camps to regale their buddies with inflated war stories and to kill more prisoners for their own enjoyment.

The British infantry debussed from their trucks on May 21 at 2 p.m. at Vimy Ridge, scene of the legendary Great War battle, and began an eight-mile march to their line of departure. There was no time for further reconnaissance or a proper "Orders Group" for all the officers, so Martel limited his pre-attack briefing to his brigade commanders near the immense Canadian Vimy Ridge memorial from the Great War. They passed the word down the chain of command.

While officers planned, men kept busy. The 6th DLI's war diary recorded: "0730: Milked cows to provide tea for breakfast." The 8th DLI had it worse—they didn't get fed all day.

The result was that there was no common conception about infantry-tank coordination, a subject "the British Army still had a great deal to learn about," as Royal Marine General and historian Sir Julian Thompson wrote decades later. Nor did infantry and tanks have any means of communicating directly with each other. Many of their radios had "drifted off-net" during the intense campaign. Some British troops lacked maps of the area.

The afternoon was spent in the usual work of connecting radio sets on the same frequency, infantrymen moving up, artillery deploying on the high ground, and Matilda tank commanders kicking their drivers gently on the right or left shoulders to go right or left—British tanks lacked intercoms.

Finally, the attack moved out. For the first three miles, the Tommies found no opposition. Martel followed the advance in his staff car—jeeps were another marvel yet to come—with their reserve battalion and artillery behind him.

At Duisans, the British met opposition, and the tanks blasted open the houses, forcing the defenders inside to surrender. B and C 8th DLI Companies were assigned to secure the area as a flank guard, while A and D Companies continued the attack. They ran smack into 7th Panzer's dug-in infantrymen, who treated them to mortar

ABOVE: A column of Hotchkiss H35 (Char léger modèle 1935 H) French cavalry tanks moves to the front in the Ardennes Department of France in May 1940. British Chief of General Staff Sir Edmund Ironside was unsure whether the French Light Cavalry Division (armored) would carry out their part of the attack. OPPOSITE: German troops advance into Belgium in the opening days of Hitler's blitzkrieg in May 1940. In just six weeks, the Nazis would conquer France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

fire, stopping the 8th DLI cold.

Meanwhile, at Dainville, Y Company of the 8th RNF made history, launching the first and only attack ever made by a British motorcycle unit. Major Clarke, the company commander, dismounted one platoon and sent it forward. A section of the 4th Royal Tank Regiment (RTR) supported the attack.

German halftracks towing anti-tank guns were headed for this battlefield, so Lieutenant David Hunt of 4th RTR set up an ambush in a sunken road, which led to an archway under the railway line. He sighted a tank so that even if it was damaged it would plug the road under the railway. The plan worked—most of the German vehicles exploded under the weight of the tanks' 2-pdr. (37mm) fire, yielding 40 frightened POWs and securing Dainville.

The rest of 4th RTR crunched across the line of departure at about 2 p.m., shredding ground and the railway. German 37mm guns opened up on the British tanks, and German gunners were astonished to see their shells bounce off the hard Matilda armor. The German crews packed up their guns and vehicles, fleeing in disorder.

The 4th RTR took little time for amusement—they drove up the slope to Beaurains and Wincourt, running into German medium guns, which sprayed the advancing tanks with armor-piercing shells. At close range, they knocked out at least 20, killing the regiment's CO, Lt. Col. James Fitzmaurice, and his executive officer.

Captain Cracroft, the 4th RTR's adjutant, took over and ordered a charge, which annihilated the Germans. However, distant artillery opened fire, blasting open more tanks. Cracroft ordered his tanks to withdraw and the crews of wrecked machines to abandon ship. Wounded men dragged torn bodies through the grass. Cracroft flagged down a passing tank, only to find it was from the 7th Panzer Division's 25th Panzer Regiment. German tanker and British officer stared at each other in mutual incomprehension, but Cracroft made his escape.

Behind the tanks, 6 DLI had entered Achicourt and Agny, mopping up many shaken Germans. The 6 DLI CO Lt. Col. Miller sent two companies on to Beaurains,

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ABOVE: Generalmajor Erwin Rommel, seated center holding map, discusses the next attack with members of his staff during the advance into France in the spring of 1940. Rommel was appointed as a Commander of the 7th Panzer Division in February 1940, replacing Generalleutnant Georg Stumme. BELOW: From left, Field Marshal John Standish Surtees Prendergast Vereker, 6th Viscount Gort, Commander in Chief, British Expeditionary Force; Field Marshal William Edmund Ironside, 1st Baron Ironside; General Sir Harold Edmund Franklyn. OPPOSITE: Matlida II tanks of the Royal Tank Regiment photographed during a training mission. The unit only had 23 Matilda IIs during the battle for France, while the rest of the unit's tanks were the A11 Matilda 1s, armed only with machine guns.

taking more POWs, 400 in all, from the 7th Panzer Division. Curiously, their fate is unrecorded.

The 8th DLI brought home considerable badges and shoulder tabs from these prisoners. For the panzertruppen, it was their first battle against a serious enemy. Hitherto, they had defeated poorly trained and motivated Frenchmen and Belgians with ease.

The right-hand column split, with 8th DLI advancing on Warlus and 7th RTR crunching towards Wailly, having lost connection with the infantry. Lt. Col. Heyland, commanding 7th RTR, was shot when he tried to get out of his tank to re-form the regiment by using hand signals. His adjutant suffered the same fate.

Imperial War Museum

Some 7th RTR tanks headed to Wailly, others to Mercatel. There, two Matildas knocked out four German tanks and two anti-tank batteries. The British continued to advance until they met up with 7th Panzer's 88mm antiaircraft guns, converted into the anti-tank role because of the seriousness of the situation. They blasted open the two Matildas, ending the threat.

Meanwhile, at Wailly, a British tank caught a German infantry unit on the move and shot it up along with an artillery battery.

The noise and fighting brought the 7th Panzer Division's CO to the scene. Accompanied by his aide, Lt. Most, Rommel leaped out of his command car and found an artillery battery's men milling around in panic, guns still limbered, British tanks moving in.

With speed and fury, Rommel ordered the gunners to unlimber their guns, prep the ammunition, and form a gun line.

The senior gunner pointed out to Herr General that his battery was an antiaircraft outfit and lacked anti-tank ammunition.

"The Tommies will not know the difference," Rommel retorted. "Open fire!" The gunners were not prepared to argue with their CO. They set up their guns—with Rommel himself dashing about to help—and watched the British tanks close to 200 meters.

Rommel ordered his men to open fire and make every shot count. The 88mm guns proved superior to the Matilda armor, and at close range the shots ripped holes through the tanks, starting fires and grinding them to a halt. One tank's top hatch opened, and the commander emerged, arms raised, walking unsteadily to the guns. His driver had just been killed.

Rommel rested his binoculars and rolled a spent, hot, brass shell case, off his boot. He turned to Most, looking triumphant, and was stunned to see the aide fall toward him and collapse on the ground, bleeding from the mouth, mortally wounded. Had the British soldier who fired that shot done so just a fraction to the left, he might have dramatically changed history. "The death of this brave man, a magnificent soldier, touched me deeply," Rommel wrote later.

With 4th and 7th RTR having rushed ahead of the infantry and out of range of their own supporting artillery, they were now easy targets for German anti-tank guns. The reality of Blitzkrieg warfare was that infantry and artillery were needed to dig out well-sited anti-tank guns, but British military thinking—defined by Sir Basil Liddell Hart—was that tanks could "swan about" the battlefield like ships at sea, without their crews worrying about artillery and anti-tank guns.

Unfortunately, that approach didn't work. With radios useless, commanders had to wave semaphore flags to give their tanks orders. Tanks' worn-out tracks couldn't handle the strain of driving off the roads and broke down. While Matilda armor was often impervious to German shot, the tanks carried highly flammable external clutter: spare fuel, timber baulks for emergencies, grease pots, spare clothing and "boiling vessels," for that most important British ration item—tea.

An additional problem was that British tankers were only issued revolvers. When they bailed out, they could not match German rifles and machine guns. "The sooner sub-machine guns are provided for RTR personnel, the better," stated a post-battle report.

Sergeant T. Hepple, commanding the Mk VI light tank "Guinevere," tried his best, in a vehicle that packed only two machine guns in its turret, and drove forward. Guinevere

promptly took three hits by anti-tank fire. The Germans ceased fire—they likely thought Hepple and his crew were dead—and tried to bring an abandoned AT gun into action to administer the coup de grace. Hepple took care of them with machine-gun fire.

With more British troops and tanks arriving, Hepple and his men dismounted to inspect Guinevere's damage. The tracks and radiator were wrecked. They could not be repaired on site. Hepple and his men abandoned ship and set fire to their mount to ensure the Germans could not repair it for their own use. They also burned three abandoned German motorcycles, found a map in one, and an abandoned Bren carrier. That managed to start, so he and his crew drove off. Hepple presented the map to a higher officer.

Franklyn might have needed the map, but what he really needed that day was Royal Air Force support, and that had not been forthcoming throughout the campaign—the Luftwaffe ruled the skies.

Now, responding to Rommel's pleas for help, Ju-87 Stukas plunged down on 8th DLI at 6 p.m., sirens screaming and bombs exploding. Few Britons were hit, but the effect of both the bombs and what the Luftwaffe called the "Trumpets of Jericho" terrified the weary 8th DLI. Lieutenant English had to kick dazed men to their feet.

After the Stukas flew away, the 8th DLI heard the sound of the approaching counterattack—Rommel's Czech-made Pz38(t) tanks absorbed into the Wehrmacht when that nation was seized bloodlessly in March 1939.

Luckily for the 8th DLI, there were three French tanks at hand to cope with Rommel's tanks, which gave the British time to carry off wounded and start digging in.

The Germans did not press their attack home, which was lucky, as 8th DLI was looking like it might break and run. Senior officers went to the scene to restore order among the men.

More than 300 Stukas also plunged down on 6th DLI at Agny, Achicourt, and Beautrains, inflicting more casualties than 8th DLI suffered. These attacks forced Franklyn to order Martel to withdraw his columns back to the River Scarpe west of Arras. Franklyn realized that while he had a bridgehead across the Scarpe, the German Totenkopf Division could swing around it on his right and cut off the attack.

The 6th DLI pulled back at dusk on Achicourt, leaving Y Company of 4th RNF to serve as a rear guard. Soon enough, the 5th Panzer Division attacked, and an RNF anti-tank gun knocked out one tank. The Germans outflanked the RNF position, burning houses with high explosive shells and flamethrowers. Y Company had done their job, buying time for the rest of the column to get clear.

In Achicourt, what was left of 4th RTR, under Captain Cracroft, regrouped. Every time a Matilda crunched up, Cracroft waved his map in the driver's face, to show him which way

Both: Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: Light tanks (*PzKpfw II Ausf. C*), motorcycles and cars of a motorized column of the German 10th Panzer Division on the march near Sedan, France, in May 1940. Captured French soldiers are visible on the right. OPPOSITE: A 7th Tank Regiment Matilda II photographed on the move during the fighting in France. The Matilda II had the heaviest armor protecting its crew on the battlefield at the time.

to go. Unfortunately, when one tank arrived, a German face popped out of it. The British greeted him with machine-gun fire. The Germans shot back, but both sides were too tired to aim accurately, and the Germans withdrew. The British were lucky that the Germans showed a distinct lack of aggressiveness by night.

The British 8th DLI, which had marched and fought heavily before the Arras attack, were exhausted, mostly from hunger. Men kept falling out of marches, and some had to be kicked by officers and NCOs.

The 4th RTR reconnaissance tank CO Lieutenant Peter Vaux was out of touch with his unit. He spotted a bunch of immobile tanks ahead of him and wondered why so many German tanks were apparently out of the game. They were 20 tanks from 4th RTR, all "brewed up" by German tanks and guns. Tank crewmen lay dead on the ground or half in their tanks, trying to escape when their machines were hit. Vaux realized that his tank was in view of enemy guns and ordered a withdrawal.

Vaux's tank was so close to the Germans that he saw a German rifleman rest his weapon on a kitbag to take a headshot at him. Cracroft, in another tank, saw this and "pulled out his revolver and quick as a flash, shot the chap in the throat," Vaux said later. "It must have been a jolly good revolver shot, and it saved my life."

Vaux and his tank withdrew, saving all aboard, but the lieutenant had ample time to ruminate on the dead men and wrecked tanks left behind. "This was the end of the 4th Tanks as we knew it," he wrote later. "In that valley, the best of crews, our tanks, soldiers, and officers were left behind."

Some British forces never achieved their objective, like Hunt of 4th RTR. His tank threw a tread, a common failing. While his crew struggled to repair the track, he met up with Sergeant Strickland, who was escorting 40 German prisoners. Strickland was convoying them along with an empty rifle. Hunt was forced to leave his tank behind, destroying the radio set first.

All across the battlefield, the same results applied. Matilda tanks gained an initial edge from the German shock at seeing their shells bounce off of the British armor, but then determined tank counterattacks and 88mm gunfire tore them apart. Lacking tank support, the British infantry had to withdraw.

If British second-line infantry fell back, Himmler's vaunted Totenkopf men, unused to fighting men who could return fire, were routed in their portion of the battle, fleeing the scene. A British report noted "the poor fighting qualities of the (Totenkopf) German troops encountered. They were very young and large numbers were observed lying on the ground downwards feigning dead, others ran up to the tanks surrendering."

Disgusted, senior officers assigned Totenkopf to work more suited for bullies: occupation duties. However, on May 27, they met up with an isolated company of the 2nd Royal Norfolks in Le Paradis in northern France. The Norfolks put up a spirited defense until they ran out of ammunition and surrendered. The German commander, Fritz Knöchlein, lined up the prisoners against a wall and had them machine-gunned and then bayoneted. Two Britons survived and were able to rejoin their forces.

For this atrocity, Knöchlein faced a German Army murder court-martial, but Himmler intervened with Adolf Hitler to quash the charges. All Knöchlein drew was a mild reprimand—for not burying his own dead. However, a postwar British war crimes trial sent Knöchlein to the gallows.

Despite fighting a war of atrocities, Eicke did not join his subordinate in the dock, however. He was shot down in his personal plane —all motorized division commanding officers had one—by Soviet infantry machine-gun fire in October 1943.

As night fell on the 21st, both sides tended casualties and took stock. Sergeant Hepple's Bren carrier broke down. He, his crew, and some lost infantrymen set off cross country and reached Arras by dawn. They were sent to the remnants of their regiments, regrouping near Vimy.

Meanwhile, Y Company of RNF did its job holding out against Rommel's panzers. They were either all killed or taken prisoner.

The casualty bill was hefty by the small standards of 1940. Rommel lost between 30 and 40 tanks, 378 dead and wounded, and a similar number taken prisoner. Totenkopf and 7th Panzer men had panicked in this battle with an equally-trained enemy. Seventh Panzer had to be pulled out for the men to rest and to repair the tanks.

The British lost 100 men. Only 22 of 88 British tanks returned from the assault, while the French lost 20 tanks. While the numbers

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were a seemingly tactical victory for the British, they had fewer men and tanks in the field than the Germans—they could not afford to have two whole tank regiments wiped out. Furthermore, the attack had not broken through the German advance to cut off the head from the tail.

The Germans also learned a valuable lesson from the battle—while the 88mm gun was designed and configured for antiaircraft work, it could easily be converted to the antitank role. It soon was, and by 1943, 88m guns designed strictly as anti-tank guns were produced to cover the endless retreats. They were also mounted in the Mark VI Tiger tanks of 1944.

The German Army was also annoyed at the performance of Eicke's concentration camp guards in battle. They had been lavishly supplied, but had not covered themselves in anything approaching martial glory. Their massacres of British prisoners—as opposed to Jews, who were universally regarded as fair game—offended the army's sense of military honor.

A German figure who emerged from this battle with his reputation enhanced was Rommel himself, built up by the Ministry of Propaganda officer assigned to him, Karl Hanke, a fanatical Nazi and Alte Kämpfer from the 1923 Munich Putsch. He glamorized Rommel, much to the general's chagrin. When not building up Rommel's strengths, Hanke was carrying on an affair with Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels' wife Magda, in a case of dueling adultery.

The British were also irritated by the results of the attack. It was the last hope for the northern armies in general, and the BEF in particular. The official history called the attack "a haphazard affair, more a swipe in the dark than a deliberate attack. Yet it came at a time when a swipe offered the only alternative to an ignominious retreat, and certainly the troops made it a glorious swipe." However, it showed London that the British presence in France could no longer be maintained—it was time to evacuate.

This decision also had a major impact on the Anglo-French alliance. From here on in, the British would be only concerned with saving their army and the French were on their own.

The first British armored attack of World War II had a greater effect on the Germans than the number of casualties. Rommel had reported that he was attacked by five enemy divisions, not two armored regiments and two brigades. His message rocketed up the German chain of command to General Ewald von Kleist, who commanded the panzer force driving to the Channel. Based on this report, he was reluctant to attack any further westward until the situation at Arras had been resolved. His boss, Col. Gen. Gerd von Rundstedt, commanding Army Group A, was equally worried.

Rundstedt was the quintessential Prussian general staff officer down to the craggy face and solemn demeanor. Studying his maps, he saw the situation as a "critical moment in our drive to the Channel." Fearing further counterattacks, he issued a May 24 order for his panzers to halt their advance, repair their vehicles, and wait for infantry to come up and dig in to hold the flanks of the advance.

Rundstedt's decision was approved by Hitler himself. Thus was made perhaps the most important decision of World War II—the "halt order" that kept the Germans from driving to the sea, then north to capture the channel ports in a timely manner.

To the hard-driving 19th Panzer Corps' Lt. Gen. Heinz Guderian, the order "made no sense," but he obeyed, and the tanks stopped to refuel, re-arm, and repair.

While they did, the German attacks on the eastern side of Gort's corridor continued. The pressure on the Belgian army was immense. As the days ticked by after the Arras counterattack, King Leopold III of Belgium, who was that nation's wartime Commander-in-Chief under its constitution, decided his army and nation could not hang on under German pressure, and he surrendered his collapsing armies to the advancing Nazis on May 28.

The British were caught in a dreadful situation with tanks to the south, infantry to the north, and Dunkirk the only way out. Gort called off further counterattacks and ordered his battered divisions and troops, short of ammunition, food, and everything else, to make for Dunkirk, where Admiral Bertram Ramsay was organizing "the emergency evacuation of very large forces" under the codename "Operation Dynamo." The German pause, about two to four days, gave the British time to flee to the port and its beaches.

The Dunkirk evacuation that would become legend began at the end of May. Years later, a new legend, this one started primarily by historian Basil Liddell Hart again, saw German generals explain their failure to bag the British Expeditionary Force.

As they often did when confronted with their failures—like so many other generals, past and present—the German generals denied guilt and avoided responsibility. In this case, their failure to reach Dunkirk ahead of the British and the "stop order" was blamed on Hitler.

Despite his heavy drinking and disinterest in the new armored warfare, Rundstedt was a revered figure to German generals, and they would not blame him for the bad decision. Nor would they blame Rommel for 7th Panzer performing poorly at Arras in one of its first major battles.

Instead, they blamed Hitler—which was typical for German generals in interviews and memoirs—saying that the "Greatest General of All Time" would never listen to his professional soldiers' advice. However, they claimed that Hitler prevented the final crushing drive on Dunkirk not because of the Arras counterattack unsettling everyone, but because Der Führer wanted the British to escape, thus creating conditions that would enable him to make a peace offering that would end the war in the West, obviate the need to invade England, and unite the two powers in an alliance against the Soviet Union. These German generals argued about Hitler's immense admiration for the British Empire.

However, they fell flat in the face of facts—the British counterattack had frightened the German generals. Hitler's posturing about uniting with Britain to fight the Bolshevik foe came long after Dunkirk, in his endless late-night conversations with his immediate entourage, who became increasingly weary of his repetitious monologues.

ABOVE: German troops examine a knocked out Matilda II. The tank was used effectively in the desert of North Africa, and served through the war. OPPOSITE: As British Tanks closed in, Rommel ordered an antiaircraft battery to unlimber its guns—even helping them to do so. When they opened fire at 200 meters, the 88mm rounds punched holes in the British armor, starting fires and forcing the tanks to halt.

Anyway, it also seemed academic at the time. The British were evacuating their troops by sea across the notoriously difficult English Channel. That meant Hermann Göring's Luftwaffe could sink their ships by daylight, and the German Navy could send E-Boats in to sink them by night with torpedoes. There was no need to risk panzers in the marshy terrain around Dunkirk—no good for tanks—when they had to head south to defeat what was left of the French army, seize their major industrial cities, and above all, conquer Paris. On May 26, the Halt Order was lifted. The same day, the British lifted 26,000 men off the Dunkirk beaches, in the first day of evacuation.

The Arras counterattack would be subsumed in the horrors of a long war to follow. The value of the Matilda tank was seen again in December 1940 and January 1941, when they clanked into battle against Italian forces in Egypt and Libya, defeating their superior numbers with great ease. When Rommel came to that battlefield to become the "Desert Fox," his 88mm guns wrecked the Matildas. Future tank-to-tank slugfests would see larger numbers of more powerful tanks and crewmen die in horrific battles.

Arras itself, like many cities, expanded after the war, covering most of the battlefields. However, alert British officers going on modern "staff rides" to study and learn from these past engagements easily found walls marked with scars created by artillery or bomb bursts.

The human losses also remain to this day. At the Dunkirk Commonwealth Military Cemetery stands the gravestone of Private D.R. Harris, of the Worcestershire Regiment, killed on May 27, who was not in the Arras battle. Yet his epitaph surely speaks for every British soldier killed in that entire campaign, including Arras:

Into the mosaic of victory
I lay a pattern piece
My only son
Into thy hands. □

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DESTROYING THE PEARL: Liberation of

All Photos: National Archives

Manila

As U.S. troops moved to liberate the beautiful city of Manila in 1945, the Japanese embarked on a campaign of destruction and death.

BY DAVID H. LIPPMAN

The "Pearl of the Orient" had lost all of its luster by January 1945.

Three years of brutal Japanese occupation had left many of Manila's 800,000 native residents humiliated, tortured, or dead. The city's economy was in shambles. American and British citizens living and working in the Philippines—some as young as 12-year-old Sascha Weinzheimer—were imprisoned in conditions of starvation and utmost cruelty in Santo Tomas University Internment Center (STIC) and Bilibid Prison.

Japanese troops guarded nearly every intersection and did not hesitate to smack Filipinos if they failed to bow properly. That included Filipino women, who were highly regarded in Manila's society. Starving Manilenos robbed graves looking for jewels to sell for food.

Though starving and humiliated, Manila's residents could still gaze upon one of the miracles of the war: the Philippine capital and its architecture—a mix of renaissance Spain and 20th century America—was still intact. When the Japanese invaded the Philippines in 1941, General Douglas MacArthur had declared Manila an "open city," withdrawing troops to spare it from heavy Japanese bombing.

Three years later, the historic Spanish fortress of Intramuros with its massive walls and giant dungeons was still pristine. So were enormous American structures like the Legislative Building, the Finance Building, the Agricultural Building, and the Malacanang Palace—all designed by Daniel Burnham, who had created New York's Flatiron Building and Washington's Union Station. The Manila buildings were created in the heavy Roman style that the Americans used for their official structures back home. These buildings impressed Manilenos as symbols of authority and power.

An M4 Sherman medium tank of the U.S. Army enters Old Fort Santiago in the city of Manila after the bitter fighting to liberate the "Pearl of the Orient" from Japanese occupation. This photo was taken on February 26, 1945

The grand structures could also become superb defensive positions, something the Japanese resorted to when, on October 20, 1944, MacArthur grimly waded ashore at Leyte Island in the southeast Philippines, keeping his promise to return to the archipelago. There was no question that his troops, after conquering Leyte, would head for Luzon, the Philippines' main island, to liberate it and Manila.

To prevent that, the Japanese sent in one of their best officers, General Tomoyuki Yamashita, who had conquered Malaya and Singapore in 74 days in 1942. Since then, because of official jealousy, he had languished in Manchuria. Now he was needed back in the field.

With only 275,000 men and no air or naval support, Yamashita soon realized that preventing an American invasion of Luzon was an impossible task. The U.S. dominated the seas and skies. They could outmaneuver him and had more soldiers. The best he could hope to do was keep his troops in the field long enough to support Japanese negotiations with the Americans to achieve a peace that would leave his country in possession of the archipelago.

The American assault came precisely where the Japanese had attacked in 1941—at Lingayen Gulf, on January 9, 1945. This invasion saw 200,000 Americans of the U.S. 6th Army go ashore, backed by Navy and Army Air Forces fighters and bombers, and Admiral William Halsey's 3rd Fleet. The Japanese offered limited ground defense to the seaborne assault.

German-born Lieutenant General Walter Krueger, commander of the 6th Army, was no stranger to the Philippines, having served there as an enlisted man during the 1899-1901 Insurrection.

When war broke out, MacArthur asked for Krueger as an army commander, and he was sent to Australia to build the 6th Army. He launched successful invasions of New Guinea, capturing key towns and ports. Next up was Leyte, and while the invasion went in properly, it turned into a plodding drive in heavy rains. When Leyte was finally secured, the 6th Army loaded up for the assault on Luzon and, once ashore, started moving steadily and cautiously south.

Recognizing that his men could not counterattack Krueger's tanks, artillery, and troops without frittering away their lives and Luzon, Yamashita divided his forces into three groups—none of which would actually defend Manila. He would impose upon the Americans the humanitarian duty and logistical nightmare of feeding its population of nearly a million people.

Yamashita's first force, the Shimbu Group, 80,000 strong, would dig in amid the mountains east of Manila. Numbering 30,000, the Kembu Group was to occupy hills 40 miles north of Manila, and deny the Americans the use of Clark Field, the Army Air Forces' great pre-war air base. Finally, Yamashita would command the Shobu Group, with 152,000 men and all the armor, in the rugged northeast of Luzon.

That left the city of Manila. Yamashita wanted the capital abandoned, but Rear Admiral Sanji Iwabuchi—who did not answer to Yamashita—refused to withdraw his 31st Naval Special Base Force from Manila. Iwabuchi could muster some 12,500 men to defend the city. The Japanese used their sailors as marines and infantrymen, so they were trained in that role. Iwabuchi also prepared Manila's defenses with all the energy and fanaticism the Japanese could offer, with pillboxes, machine-gun nests, and artillery—they even knocked down the tall coconut palms on Dewey Boulevard along the harbor coast to slow down the attack.

At least Iwabuchi didn't have to worry about a seaborne assault on Manila. Japanese troops still occupied Corregidor, which had been America's last foothold in the Philippines, and it was well defended. Facing the three dispersed Japanese army groups and occupied

Manila, Krueger was forced to divide his men. Two divisions headed northeast to take on Yamashita's Shobu Group. Another advanced cautiously to take on the Kembu Group.

MacArthur was furious over the pace of Krueger's assault. He wanted Manila liberated by January 26, his 65th birthday, but the triumphal parade he had planned would clearly not happen. In addition, he wanted to liberate the American prisoners, out of pure sentimentality—many of them had served under him on Bataan.

On January 31, MacArthur visited the headquarters of the 14th Corps, under Major General Oscar Griswold, and ordered him and the newly-landed 1st Cavalry Division, under Major General Vernon D. Mudge, to do the job. MacArthur was blunt: "Go to Manila! Go around the Nips, bounce off the Nips, save your men, but get to Manila! Free the internees at Santo Tomas. Take the Malacanang Palace and the Legislative Building."

MacArthur had given the job to the right division. The 1st Cavalry was "dismounted," meaning that its troopers fought as infantry, and they had done so with energy and ferocity in New Guinea and Leyte. Its regiments included the legendary 7th Cavalry of Custer fame, which would play a major role in the assault.

MacArthur wanted Mudge to make a 100-mile dash through enemy lines without any reconnaissance or flank protection, with three flying columns of blacked-out, all-arms groups. The attack would go in at one minute after midnight on February 1—flying columns racing ahead—the rest of the division following.

Unhappy with Krueger's plodding nature, MacArthur also wanted the 37th Infantry "Buckeye" Division, under Major General Robert S. Beightler, to drive south on the 1st Cavalry's right flank. The Buckeyes were an Ohio National Guard outfit, and Beightler's pre-war job had been the state's transport director. However, the 37th lacked transport—its GIs had to slog down dusty roads in Luzon's humidity 150 miles to Manila.

Yet the race was not just between two divisions from the north. Lieutenant General Robert Eichelberger's 8th Army was tasked with liberating South Luzon and the rest of the archipelago, turning the attack into a pincer assault. On January 31, paratroopers of the 11th Airborne Division, commanded by Newark native Major General Joseph Swing, came ashore from landing craft at Nasugbu, 30 miles southwest of Cavite, just south of Manila.

ABOVE: Asking for directions during the fighting around Manila, American tankers talk with a group of Blue Eagle Guerrillas. Among the primary tasks of the paramilitary Blue Eagles was to alert the Americans to the presence of snipers and mine fields. OPPOSITE: On February 5, 1945, American soldiers service their 105mm howitzers, firing against Japanese positions in the vicinity of Manila, from the grounds of Santo Tomas, where a university had been turned into a detention center for prisoners.

MacArthur wanted this base seized; he also wanted Manila surrounded. The airborne troops would have to move fast on their own feet to cross the vital Palico River Bridge over a 250-foot gorge before the enemy detonated it. They did, coming astride a paved, two-lane road to Tagaytay Ridge, which was taken by the 511th Parachute Regiment after a difficult airdrop. From there, the 11th could look down on the Cavite Peninsula and Nichols Field, with its enemy pillboxes, some three stories high.

Supported by Lockheed P-38 Lightning fighters and Douglas A-20 Havoc attack bombers, the 11th attacked Nichols Field immediately, facing Japanese naval troops whose defenses bristled with weaponry. The Japanese counterattacked with the usual ferocity, getting chopped up by American .50-caliber machine guns. The 11th Airborne's hopes to be first into Manila ended with 900 casualties on Nichols Field. The division was turned over to 6th Army's 14th Corps for better coordination.

On February 17, the paratroopers attacked Fort McKinley, seizing the old bastion and killing 5,210 Japanese. They had prevented Iwabuchi's men from escaping the closing trap, but the victory ended their role in the Luzon campaign.

Averaging 15-20 miles an hour, the 1st Cavalry Division continued driving south—liberating a POW camp at Cabanatuan in a daring raid that saw only one casualty—and was the first to reach Manila on February 3. A few hours later, the 37th Infantry broke across the city limits.

First up was the Malacanang Palace, guarded by the Japanese puppet government's all-Filipino Presidential Guard Battalion. They were delighted to see the Americans back and greeted them. Next was the Legislative Building, on the south side of the Pasig River, 190

yards southeast of Intramuros. The Cavalry met fierce resistance as they approached the Pasig. They were ordered instead to liberate the 3,800 prisoners at STIC.

The university was surrounded by a 12-foot concrete-and-stone wall, perfect for keeping prisoners in. The Japanese filled the classrooms with captured Allied personnel from all walks of life. Among them were 900 children, including Sascha Weinzheimer, the polio-ridden daughter of an American plantation manager.

Also held at STIC was a collection of U.S. Army nurses bagged at Bataan, who suffered with the added burden of struggling to care for their fellow prisoners.

The camp's executive officer, Lieutenant Abiko, cut rations in 1944 and ordered prisoners to build barbed-wire defenses. All prisoners began suffering from the various diseases connected with malnutrition. Abiko was universally hated for his sadism. Sascha and her family lived in one of many shanties in STIC's courtyard, which gave them a grandstand seat when U.S. aircraft began bombing Manila on September 21.

When Christmas came, rations were cut again—everybody was hungry. The average male had lost 51 pounds, the average woman 32. By January, rations were down to 700 calories a day. The Japanese doctor would not let the Allied medical staff write "malnutrition" or "starvation" on death certificates, denying such conditions existed. The American doctor Theodore Stevenson, who refused these orders, was dragged off to a separate jail and put on his own starvation diet.

As American troops came closer, the Weinzheimers' shack swayed from the bomb concussions. Parents asked their kids to drop to their knees and say to guards, "Nice Japanese, I like you. Give me candy. Give me sugar." If a sentry didn't like the gesture, he would push the child off. One child coaxed a banana out of a guard because her father had been killed at Cavite in 1941.

On February 3, Iwabuchi ordered his men: "You must carry out effective suicide action as members of special attack units to turn the tide of battle by intercepting the attacking enemy at Manila."

At STIC, the prisoners could see a memo-

ABOVE: The Japanese had prepared substantial defenses at the Intramuros in Manila, and many of them were willing to die in the subsequent fighting. American troops were compelled to search house to house through the maze of defenses, continually under fire, and kill 67 Japanese soldiers before the positions pictured were secured. BELOW: The bodies of Japanese soldiers killed in the heavy fighting in Manila lie unburied in a heap on February 22, 1945. The Japanese are known to have committed numerous atrocities against Filipino civilians during the battle for the city. OPPOSITE: Taking partial cover behind a stone wall, American soldiers fire at Japanese troops ensconced within the confines of the Intramuros in Manila. The heavily defended complex of buildings was wrested from Japanese control after a bitter battle. This image was captured on February 23, 1945.

Japanese troops told Manilenos, "If you are not for us, you are against us." The Japanese regarded even women and children as guerrillas, ordering them put to death wherever possible.

rable red sunset as American bombers attacked Japanese defenses and American artillery rounds detonated. Sascha said later, "It was like throwing a rock at a beehive and having it come alive."

At 6:30 p.m., the camp lost power. At about 9 p.m., two umbrella flares lit up the dark STIC and a tank crashed through the front gate. The top hatch of the lead tank, named "Battlin' Basic," popped open and its commander shouted, "Hello, folks! We're Americans!" As the five tanks from the 44th Tank Battalion clanked into the compound, sending Japanese guards fleeing, an elderly woman asked a GI, "Soldier, are you real?"

"Yes, I reckon I am," the American responded laconically.

Incredibly, Lieutenant Abiko ran in front of "Battlin' Basic," brandishing his Samurai sword and pistol, a pouch of suicide grenades on his shoulder. The GIs gunned him down.

About 63 Japanese guards held out, fleeing to the Education Building, pursued by the liberators. The Japanese held 267 internees as hostages. Unaware of those hostages, one of the tanks opened fire on the building. A woman shouted from a STIC window, "Stop it. Stop it. My husband and son are in there." The troops ceased fire.

Rather than endanger the hostages, the 1st Cavalry dug in for the night, waiting for Brigadier General William Chase to arrive to lead negotiations. As dawn broke on January 4, internees in the Education Building leaned out windows and begged for relief. They also smelled the bacon and eggs the GIs were cooking and asked for food.

Chase spent the day exchanging messages across the line with the senior Japanese officer, Lieutenant Colonel Toshio Hayashi, with Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Brady and his waxed mustache going back and forth. Hayashi greeted Brady with his hands on his twin holsters. Brady nervously twirled his mustache.

Hayashi demanded "safe conduct with honor" to release the hostages: his men had to be allowed out with full arms and ammunition. Finally, they reached an agreement. The Japanese could keep their personal weapons, but no grenades or machine guns. At daybreak on February 5, marching three abreast, the Japanese left, going past Brady's men, scrambling for cover when they neared their own lines.

But the Battle of Manila had only just begun. In addition to the casualties 1st Cavalry had suffered in the drive, more were coming in. The relief column brought army doctors and medics, who asked the liberated nurses to help out in a temporary hospital, set up in the Education Building. Despite being weak and faint from hunger, the liberated nurses were energized by adrenaline and turned to.

The nurses, veterans of Bataan and Corregidor, knew their trade of changing bandages

and giving medications, but soon discovered that science and history had passed them by. Asked by a doctor to fetch some "penicillin," Nurse Rita Palmer had no idea what the man was talking about. Nurse Rose Rieper was astonished by the GIs' K-ration packs, and asked a soldier if she could eat one.

"Ma'am, if you'll eat that, you must be hungry," the GI answered.

Meanwhile, the 37th Infantry began driving toward the Pasig and Bilibid Prison, where more internees were held. As they did, the Japanese dragged scores of Filipino civilians to the Pasig's estuaries, where they bound them, bayoneted them, shot them, and slashed their throats and bellies. More than 100 civilians were either left to rot or had their bodies burned.

The 37th Infantry's 148th Regiment drove into Manila, and the 2nd Battalion, 148th Infantry, liberated a highly desired objective—the Japanese-owned Balintawak Beer Brewery. The 2nd and 148th were delayed in their advance while the division's engineers built a bridge over the Tullahan River, so the battalion took advantage of the break for a beer party.

On February 4, the 2nd/148th reached Bilibid Prison. Here, the Japanese commander, Major Ebiko, packed up with his men and left behind some food and medicine, posting a sign: "Lawfully released Prisoners of War and Internees are quartered here. Please do not molest them unless they make positive resistance." The 37th freed 447 civilians and 828 military prisoners.

With the 37th and 1st Cavalry menacing northern Manila, Colonel Katsuzo Noguchi, commanding the Northern Sector unit of the Manila Naval Defense Force, started demolishing buildings with explosives to narrow the American advance to areas that were covered by pillboxes and machine-gun nests. The 37th found a blazing city and heavy enemy fire.

Incredibly, because of the liberation of Malacanang and the prisoners, the American media proclaimed Manila liberated and the battle over. MacArthur would write the same in his memoirs shortly before his death in 1964.

Griswold and Krueger were opposed to indiscriminate artillery bombardment on the inner city, knowing it would only endanger a million innocent Manilenos and provide the Japanese defenders with more cover. Artillery could only be called down on a tightly defined target. For the same reason, air support was banned.

The 14th Corps' first objectives in the city were its water and power plants. The 7th Cavalry grabbed the water plants, east of Malacanang Palace, but the powerhouse was on Provisor

American soldiers pause in a Manila street prior to advancing toward Japanese positions. A self-propelled 105mm howitzer is seen in this photo of February 17, 1945, along with a jeep, while a string of other vehicles extends into the distance.

American tanks are poised to enter Manila in this photo taken in March 1945, but their progress is temporarily held up by Japanese sniper and machine-gun fire. American soldiers crouch behind the vehicles, taking cover from the hail of bullets.

Island in the middle of the 150-yard-wide Pasig River, and all the bridges across it had been blown. The 129th Infantry Regiment crossed the river in small boats and came under heavy Japanese fire, losing three boats. For three days, the 129th slugged it out with Japanese sailors. Griswold begged for artillery support and finally got it. On the 11th, at a cost of 300 GIs, the island was taken, but the power plant was wrecked—Manila would have no electricity for some time.

The 148th rode the 672nd Amphibious Tractor Battalion's vehicles across the Pasig to clear the Pandacan district and met more resistance around the railroad station on February 9. The 800 men of the Central Force's 1st Naval Battalion refused to retreat or surrender, so artillery was called in to turn the area to rubble.

The 148th attacked the station, but Japanese fire pinned them down. Privates John Reese, Jr., of Oklahoma and Cleto Rodriguez from San Antonio, continued forward to a house 60 yards from the objective. They spent an hour killing up to 60 Japanese. They moved forward again, killing more enemy troops for a total of 82. When they ran out of ammunition, they tried to return to their platoon, but Reese was killed. Both were awarded the Medal of Honor, Reese posthumously (Rodriguez died in 1990).

The 37th Division could now resume its advance despite losing 19 dead and 216 wounded on February 9—more than in the entire Luzon campaign.

Heavy American attacks had cut Iwabuchi's manpower to 6,000. Their command and control structure disintegrated, but they were as fanatical as ever. Knowing they would all die, they burned down buildings, raped women and girls, and slaughtered many Filipinos.

Japanese troops told Manilenos, "If you are not for us, you are against us." The Japanese regarded even women and children as guerrillas, ordering them put to death wherever possible. In Intramuros, Japanese troops separated neutral Spanish citizens—mostly priests—from 3,000 Filipinos and gunned down the latter while imprisoning the former without food or water. Japanese troops stormed through residential areas, shooting and bayoneting refugees. The Spanish consulate in Manila, representing a neutral nation, protested to Iwabuchi. He ignored the complaint.

Instead, Iwabuchi allowed his officers to separate a large group of men and teenage boys from women and children and take them all to the Manila Hotel. There, females aged 15 to 22 were taken to surviving fancy apartment buildings where they would serve in combat bordellos for Japanese troops. One woman was raped 15 times in a day.

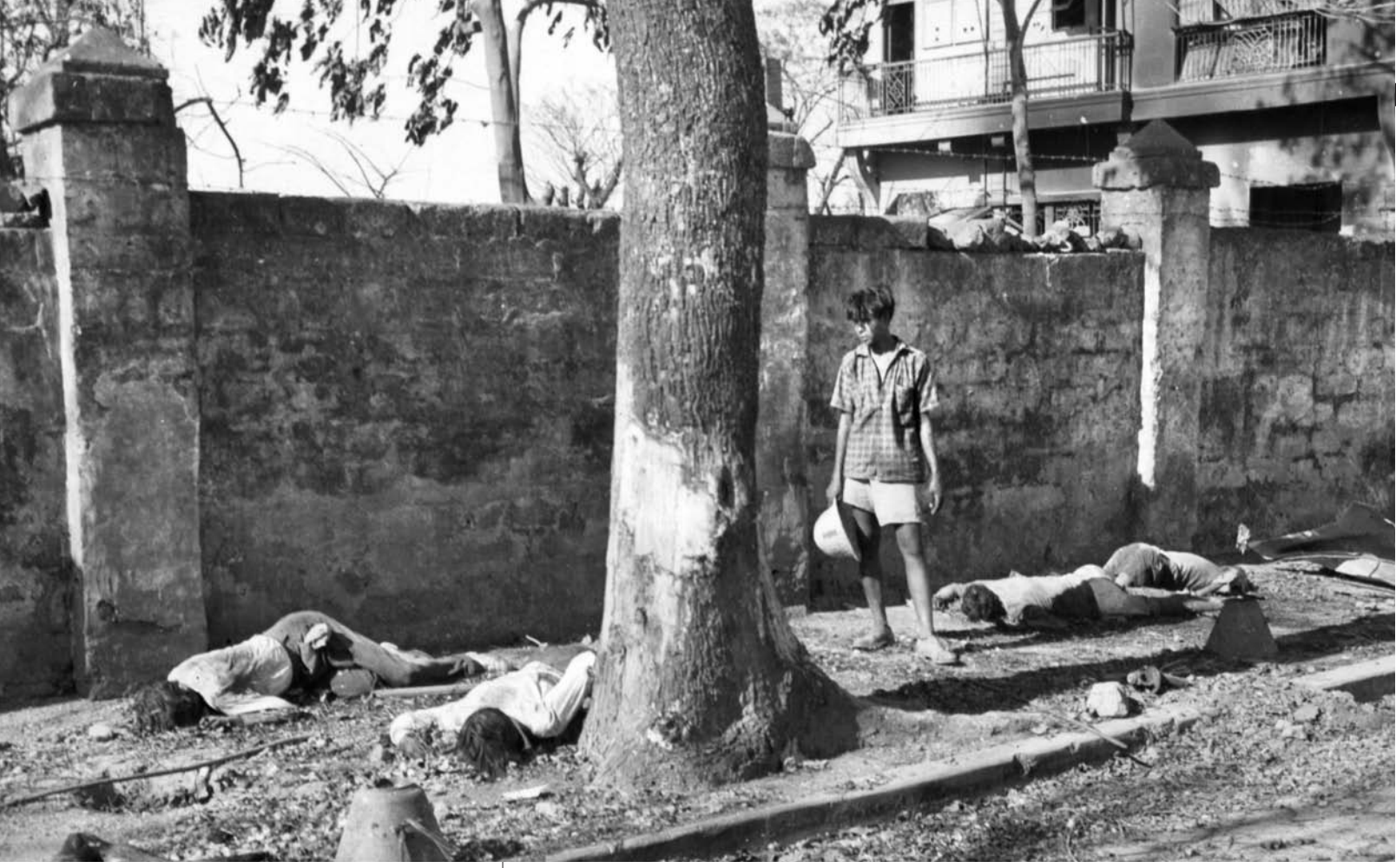
The Japanese showed no respect for their allies, either. The massive concrete German Club, center of that country's expatriate community, now sheltered 1,500 refugees. Manager Martin Ohaus begged the Japanese to give his refugees safe conduct. Instead, they stormed into the club, hauled out the women, and set the building alight. When men and boys emerged from the burning building, the Japanese gunned them down. Among the dead were 18 Germans. Then, 32 German Christian Brothers were killed in the La Salle College Chapel. The body of the Vichy French consul was found with his throat cut.

At La Salle College, a Japanese battalion commander ordered the Filipinos brought together, massacred, and their bodies thrown into the river. On February 12, the Japanese battalion did just that, shooting and bayoneting refugees there. Dying Filipinos begged Father Francis Cosgrave to offer them an Act of Contrition and Absolution, and he did so. Incredibly, 10 survivors avoided further killings by hiding behind the high altar.

Yet, in literal terms, the U.S. cavalry was coming to the rescue. The tanks and infantry of the 1st Cavalry Division attacked into the Pasay City District, then La Salle University and the Japanese Club. Shermans blasted open Japanese bunkers. Infantrymen, however, fought street by street, house by house, and room by room. The best way to dig out the Japanese 2nd Naval Defense Battalion seemed to be to get on the roof of an enemy-held building and work downward, floor by floor, with grenades, satchel charges, and flamethrowers.

American 4.2-inch mortars could not penetrate reinforced concrete. It was ugly and bloody work, leaving behind many Japanese, American, and Filipino dead. The 3rd/148th suffered 58-percent casualties. Lacking time to bury the thousands of Filipino dead, GIs dumped quicklime on their bodies.

Worse, American fire was often indiscriminate. On February 13, U.S. artillery shelled the hospital at the University of the Philippines. However, while Japanese troops held the hospital's administration building, they did not occupy the hospital itself, and some



of the 7,000 patients and refugees perished, some from lack of food and water amid the intense heat and smoke.

The GIs slowly drove through the city toward the hospital, battling Japanese troops. As they closed in, two North American P-51 Mustang fighters swooped over the hospital and strafed it until their pilots saw civilian faces. The advancing Americans liberated the hospital on the 17th.

Griswold's plan to liberate Manila was to cut up the Japanese defenses so that they would have to fight as isolated units. The 1st Cavalry moved south across the Pasig against limited opposition on February 10, then swung southwest to link up with the 11th Airborne. Iwabuchi was trapped—his only options were death or surrender.

Hearing this news, Yamashita ordered the Shimbu Group to counterattack the Americans from the east. Yamashita also ordered Iwabuchi to evacuate Manila when the hole was opened. On February 15, Iwabuchi retorted, "The headquarters will not move."

Backed by airstrikes, the 112th Infantry Regiment stopped the Shimbu Group cold and forced them to retreat. Historians later argued that locking a vise around Iwabuchi was a blunder—if he had been offered a way out of the trap, he might have abandoned the city. However, retreat and withdrawal were not part of the Japanese approach to war.

Fierce fighting raged on February 12 between the 1st Cavalry and the 2nd Naval Battalion around Fort Antonio Abad, Harrison Park, and Rizal Stadium, Manila's main baseball park. The stadium was made of concrete, 15-foot-high walls, and had four large stands, with a drainage ditch that could serve in the anti-tank role. More importantly, it was a major Japanese supply dump. The enemy set up their machine guns on the diamond. It took two days for the 1st Cavalry to clear the ballpark, inflicting 17 Japanese casualties for every American loss. After they did, long columns of Filipinos emptied the stadium of non-military supplies.

American artillery opened fire on the Remedios Hospital and only stopped when civilians ran out waving Red Cross flags, despite sniper fire, at the orbiting Piper Cub. The pilot waggled his wings, and the artillery fire stopped, saving 800 to 1,000 patients and refugees. Even so, 400 had died in the initial shellfire. Father Julio Lalor stayed in the hospital, comforting the wounded.

At Dr. Rafael Moreta's house on Isaac Peral Street, Japanese Marines shoved about 60 refugees into the building, searched the place for valuables, shot the men, put others in the bathroom, and tossed in a hand grenade. The survivors were herded into the street, where Japanese machine guns waited. However, the Americans spotted this horror and hurled artillery fire to kill the Japanese.

Despite these atrocities, as Americans advanced through rubble they had created, the Manilenos were happy to see them. They sang "God Bless America," and kids shouted, "Victory Joe!" as American troops handed out candy and Hershey bars.

Determination, tanks, and technology enabled the Americans to clear Dewey Boulevard and head north past the Manila Hotel to Intramuros City. Before the war, the hotel had been Manila's equivalent of London's Dorchester or New York's Waldorf-Astoria, and both

ABOVE: General Douglas MacArthur pauses after fulfilling his promise to return to the Philippines. MacArthur is seen aboard *PT-373* at a wrecked dock on the island of Corregidor in Manila Bay. He is accompanied by Brigadier General Carlos P. Romulo, commander of the Philippine Forces of Liberation. RIGHT: General Tomoyuki Yamashita arrives under MP guard at the residence of the Philippine High Commissioner for arraignment on war crimes charges. He was found guilty at Bilibid Prison in December 1945, and hanged on February 26, 1946. OPPOSITE: A Filipino resident of Manila, confronted with the terrible sight of civilian corpses, attempts to identify some of the victims. These individuals were taken into "protective" custody by the Japanese and then shot down as they tried to escape from the Ermita section of the city.

the Filipino and American elite had apartments there. MacArthur himself lived in the hotel's penthouse. He was particularly determined to recover his residence, which held vast amounts of his personal belongings, including his birth certificate, father's Bible, the library of books that belonged to him and his father, General Arthur MacArthur, who had conquered the islands in the Spanish-American War, and a pair of silver vases presented to Arthur by Emperor Meiji. MacArthur's wife Jean had left them there, hoping that the Japanese would respect the vases and the apartment.

When the Japanese refused to yield or flee, MacArthur reluctantly authorized the 82nd Field Artillery to turn its 105mm guns on the five-story hotel. For three days, they pounded the building. The Manila Hotel withstood the bombardment, but the surrounding area was turned to rubble. The cavalrymen forced their way to the hotel, and MacArthur joined them on February 22, walking with his entourage up Dewey Boulevard, ignoring sniper fire.

"Suddenly, the penthouse burst into flame," he wrote in his memoirs. "They had fired it. I watched, with indescribable feeling, the destruction of my fine military library, my souvenirs, and my personal belongings of a lifetime."

The GIs stormed the hotel and captured it by nightfall. MacArthur climbed the stairs to his former penthouse. In the entrance, he found the bloodstained corpse of a Japanese colonel. MacArthur looked gloomily at the shards of his ceremonial vases. The book bindings were intact, but when he touched them, they disintegrated. A young 1st Cavalry lieutenant came up. Apparently the lieutenant thought that MacArthur had shot the colonel personally, so he grinned and said, "Nice going, Chief!"

MacArthur could only shake his head. He wrote later, "There was nothing nice about it to me. I was tasting to the last acid dregs the bitterness of a devastated and beloved city."

Sometime later, GIs discovered in a warehouse a barrel marked "Japanese Medical Supplies." The barrel was taken to MacArthur's headquarters and opened. It yielded a complete silver tea service, cocktail shaker with matching cups, a silver candelabra, and silver pitcher. A furious MacArthur accused Yamashita of the larcenous act.

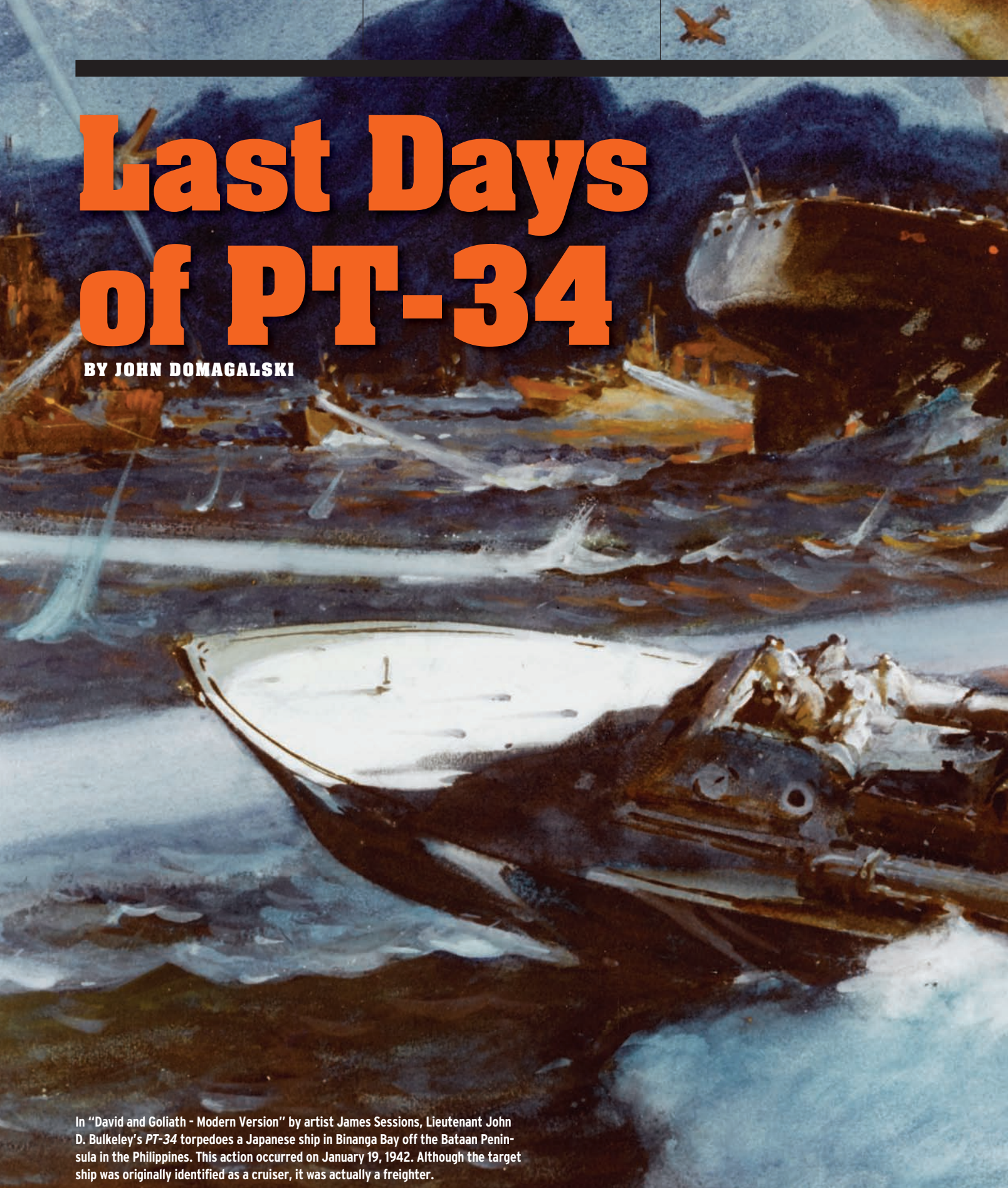
Now the fighting moved into the government complex and Intramuros. City Hall, the General Post Office, the Legislative Building, and the Agriculture Building were all proud replicas of similar American structures back home. The New Police Station alone was one of the toughest obstacles the 129th Infantry would face in the entire war. The Japanese held the upper floors. GIs had to fight their way up, against hand grenades dropped down staircases. The Americans brought point-blank artillery and tank fire against the concrete buildings, blasting holes in them.

Even so, the GIs were stymied. The 148th relieved the exhausted 129th and the Americans kept firing at the New Police Station until its walls started collapsing. The 145th

Continued on page 98

Last Days of PT-34

BY JOHN DOMAGALSKI



In "David and Goliath - Modern Version" by artist James Sessions, Lieutenant John D. Bulkeley's *PT-34* torpedoes a Japanese ship in Binanga Bay off the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines. This action occurred on January 19, 1942. Although the target ship was originally identified as a cruiser, it was actually a freighter.

Courtesy of Navy Art Collection

The Navy's newest and smallest warship, patrol torpedo boats like *PT-34* proved their worth in the Philippines early in World War II.

The bleak opening days of World War II in the Pacific found the American territory of the Philippines under attack from the Japanese. American and Filipino army forces under the command of General Douglas MacArthur quickly withdrew into the Bataan Peninsula off Manila Bay and the adjacent fortified island of Corregidor. Here they would hold back the invading enemy as long as possible—either until reinforcements arrived or until a last stand.

Most of the large American warships stationed in the Philippines quickly retreated south to safer waters in the Netherlands East Indies. Among the assorted small craft left behind were the six torpedo boats of Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Three under the command of Lieutenant John Bulkeley. The patrol torpedo or PT-boats were among the newest and smallest warships in the U.S. Navy—and were untested in battle.

Built by the Electric Boat Company in Bayonne, New Jersey, each of Bulkeley's PT-boats measured 77 feet in length, displaced 40 tons, and were constructed of wood. Three supercharged engines turned a like number of screws allowing for speeds up to 40 knots. Armament consisted of four 21-inch torpedoes and a small assortment of machine guns. The boats, manned by 10-15 sailors, had no armor protection as afforded on larger warships.

As the defense of the Philippines crumbled, the PT-boats battled Japanese shipping and supported ground forces. The brave sailors manning the boats had no way of knowing they were armed with faulty torpedoes—problems with the underwater weapons were not identified until later in the war. The PT-boats gained fame for the March 1942 evacuation of General MacArthur and other key officers from Corregidor to the southern Philippines, where the evacuees were then flown to Australia. The torpedo boats remained in the southern Philippines after the evacuation operation.

The squadron was down to two operational boats when John Bulkeley received a report of Japanese warships operating in the Cebu area during the late afternoon of April 8. The information appeared to be specific and actionable—Army aircraft spotted two Japanese warships on a southerly course off the west coast of Cebu at 5:20 p.m. "The estimated enemy speed was five knots," Bulkeley recorded. "It was believed that the enemy

would arrive at the strait between Cebu and Negros Islands, south point at midnight."

The enemy vessels were in Tanon Strait. The long and narrow body of water was wedged between the two similarly slender islands of Cebu and Negros. The strait was not very wide at any point but closed to a channel of less than four miles at Tanon Point off the southern tip of Cebu and Negros before emptying into the larger Mindanao Sea.

The squadron commander speculated the enemy was searching for the many small inter-island steamers known to ply the waters throughout the Philippines. After a careful study of the maps, he concluded it was a perfect setup for a night ambush. His plan was to catch the enemy ships as they passed through the Tanon narrows. Bulkeley ordered his two available boats—*PT-34* and his flagship *PT-41*—to be ready to put to sea at 7 p.m.

Lieutenant Robert Kelly rushed to get his *PT-34* ready for departure. Ensign Iliff Richardson was serving as his executive officer. Two sailors from the idle *PT-35* were pressed into service to cover for others on shore leave. "I hope this isn't another wild goose chase," Kelly remarked as the boats pulled out of Cebu City at dusk with Bulkeley's *PT-41* in the lead.

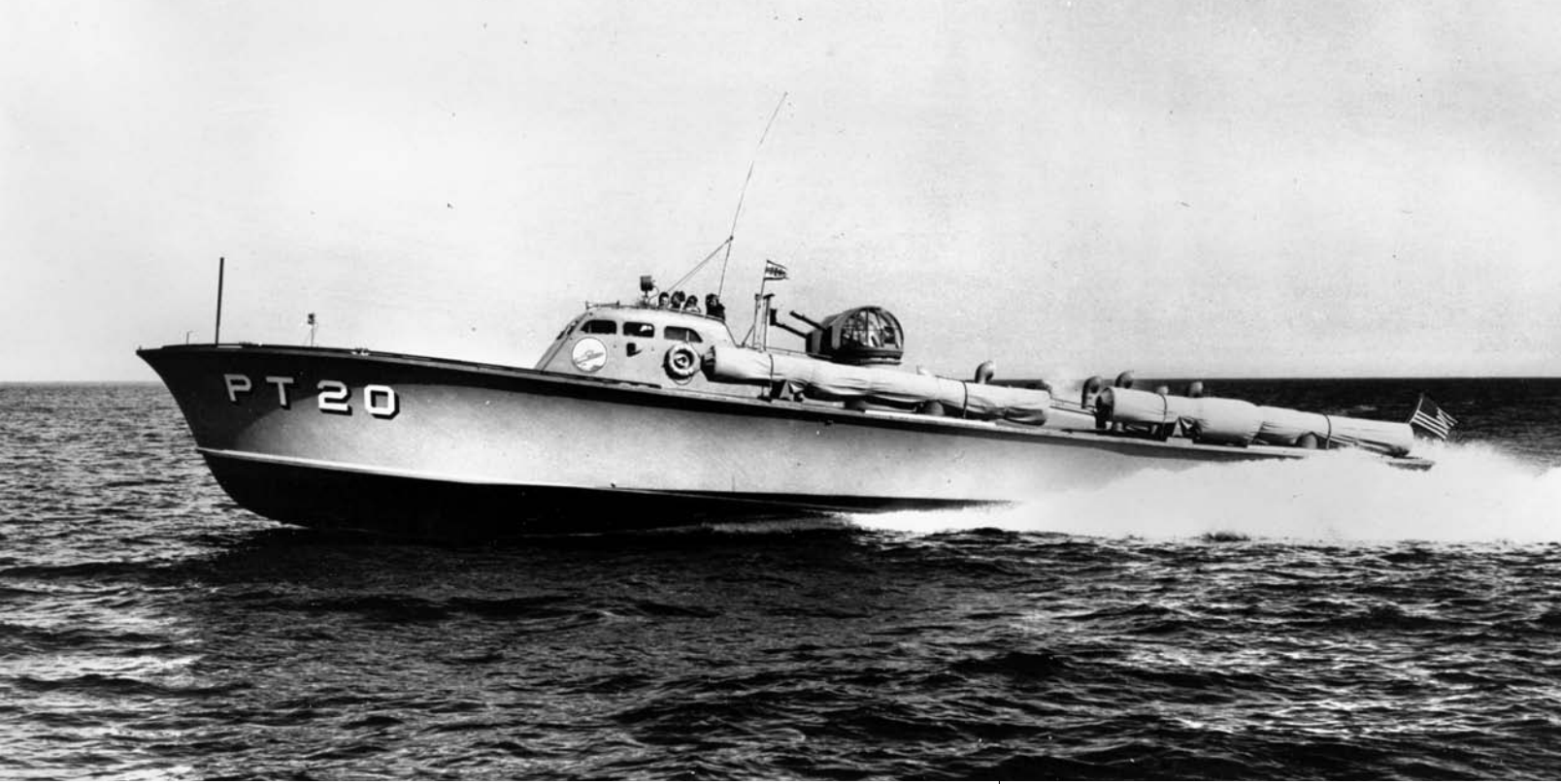
"Weather conditions were ideal," Kelly reported. "It was a dark night with no wind and calm seas. Moonrise was about 2 a.m." The boats were off the east coast of Cebu traveling south. "The night was clear and the outlines of the island peaks and valleys could be seen in silhouette against the starlit sky," Richardson wrote. Kelly sent him below for some rest. "As I went below, I was particularly pleased with the sound of the grinding whine of the engines and vibration-less shafts and propellers." Richardson quickly fell asleep.

The PTs arrived off Tanon Point at about 11:30 p.m. "The boats lay-to with engines idling about 1,000 yards apart roughly in a left formation," Kelly wrote. Partially obscured by Cebu Island, they waited patiently for the enemy ships to be spotted.

"The plan of attack, if there were only one target, was for the *PT-41* to lead the attack from the target's port beam," Kelly recalled of the operational plan. "The *PT-34* was to follow, attacking from the port bow. If two

All Photos: Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: This recruiting poster features the PT boat service of the U.S. Navy and a photo of Lieutenant John D. Bulkeley, one of its greatest heroes. The photograph of the PT boat probably depicts *PT-18*, and the photo was likely taken in 1941 when *PT-18* was assigned to Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Two. BELOW: Lieutenant Commander Robert Kelly is shown in a 1943 photo taken just after his promotion. While a lieutenant, Kelly commanded *PT-41*, which accompanied Lieutenant John Bulkeley's *PT-34* during the daring rescue and transport of General Douglas MacArthur and his family from the embattled Philippines. OPPOSITE: *PT-20*, built by the Electric Launch Company (Elco) of Bayonne, New Jersey, was the first vessel of Motor Torpedo Squadron One (MTBRon 1), formed on July 24, 1940, as the first operational command for U.S. Navy's new Patrol Torpedo boats. Popularly believed to be made of plywood, PT boat hulls were constructed of two layers of one-inch mahogany planks with canvas (impregnated with glue or lead paint) between them. A planing hull and the horsepower of three Packard 3A-2500 V-12 liquid-cooled aircraft engines gave the small craft exceptional speed.



targets were seen to emerge from Tanon Strait, then each boat would attack separate targets with the *PT-41* leading the attack." They maintained radio silence, not wanting to risk discovery by the Japanese.

Sailors aboard the boats carefully scanned the horizon for any sign of movement. A lookout aboard *PT-41* was the first to spot the enemy. "There she is," he shouted "Jumping Jesus! There she is!" The Japanese light cruiser *Kuma* slowly emerged from the darkness. The ambush was playing out almost exactly as Bulkeley had planned.

The Japanese warship was the largest ever confronted to date by the small PT boats. She stretched a length of 535 feet and weighed 5,870 tons. The *Kuma* was armed with seven 5.5-inch main battery cannons—each capable of blowing a small PT boat to pieces—and an assortment of smaller guns. Japanese sources report the torpedo boat *Kiji* was operating with *Kuma* on the evening of April 8. Not similar to the small American PT-boats, the *Kiji* was almost 300 feet in length armed with three 4.7-inch guns and one smaller antiaircraft cannon.

At first, the American sailors only saw the light cruiser. "No other vessels could be seen at the time although her escorts must have either been obscured by the Negros coastline or been following some distance astern," Kelly wrote. He called the crew to general quarters.

Iliff Richardson abruptly awoke from sleep and raced to his battle station. He arrived at his assigned station—the boat's wheel—and spotted the enemy. "The cruiser loomed bigger and bigger in the semi-darkness as we continued on," he wrote.

The attack began with *PT-41* approaching the port side of the target. She unleashed two torpedoes from about 500 yards. Both of the underwater missiles missed the cruiser after running erratically. *PT-41* increased speed while turning to the right in preparation to fire her two remaining torpedoes.

While *PT-41* was making her torpedo run, *PT-34* approached off the cruiser's bow. The machine guns on Kelly's boat were ready for action. The two single .30-caliber guns on the forward deck were manned by Chief Machinist's Mate Velt Hunter and Quartermaster First Class Albert Ross. The more powerful dual .50-caliber machine guns were manned by Chief Commissary Steward Willard Reynolds and Torpedoman's Mate Second Class David Harris. An additional sailor was stationed below deck ready to pass up extra boxes of .50-caliber ammunition.

Both officers were positioned in the small bridge area known as the conn. Kelly was intently watching the target through the torpedo director while Richardson manned the nearby wheel. "Steering was easy and my job was simply to line up the forward radio antenna mast with the metal brace supporting the windshield and alter course as necessary to keep these lined up with the cruiser's mid-section," Richardson later wrote. "All was silent aboard, except the noise of the exhaust and an occasional terse command from Mr. Kelly."

PT-34 unleashed two torpedoes on Kelly's order at a distance of 500 yards. The depth settings were set to run at six feet. "The cruiser appeared to come to life at about that same instance and was seen to be increasing its speed rapidly," Kelly reported. A searchlight on the Japanese ship suddenly snapped on. Richardson recalled it looked "like a lighthouse beacon, dazzlingly brilliant on eyes already accustomed to the darkness."

Located on the after part of *Kuma*, the searchlight briefly swept the sky before stopping on *PT-34*. "Apparently the engines of the PTs (there were no mufflers on PTs at that time) plus the powder flash from the torpedo impulse charges had aroused the cruiser," Kelly wrote. "The two torpedoes of the *PT-34* passed considerably astern due to the cruiser's unexpected increase in speed."

As the war progressed, becoming caught in an enemy searchlight was to become every PT sailor's nightmare—a precursor to a deadly hail of gunfire. The *Kuma* opened fire, unleashing shells from her main guns and a

variety of smaller automatic weapons. "The white orange flash of the five-inch gun from the cruiser was accompanied by the scream of the shell and then two explosions," Richardson recounted of the terrifying moment. "One from the gun and the other from the exploding shell as it hit the water several hundred yards astern of the *34*." Each shell could blow the small PT boat to pieces.

Willard Reynolds opened fire on the searchlight on orders from Kelly. "Streams of our own orange tracers poured in the direction of the cruiser as I came right so that the port gun would bear on the target," Richardson wrote. "Bursts from the twin .50-caliber machine guns cut paths in the darkness and sometimes ricocheted from the water high into the air." The searchlight was not hit in spite of the torrent of bullets sent its way.

The boat skipper shouted a continuous stream of orders in an attempt to elude the Japanese gunfire. Richardson routinely repeated each command as he made various turns of the wheel. He briefly saw a geyser of water gush up behind the boat and could hear the clatter of enemy machine gun fire between the booms of the larger guns.

Suddenly, Richardson heard a different sound of gunfire. He assumed it was some type of rapid fire antiaircraft gun. The sound was quickly followed by an explosion almost directly overhead. He was knocked to his knees but did not seem to be hurt. Glancing around he saw the boat was still intact. Richardson jumped back up to his position at the wheel and continued following the skipper's orders.

At the same time *PT-34* was under intense fire *PT-41* made an abrupt U-turn causing the sailors on *PT-34* to lose sight of her. "Thereafter the movements of the *PT-41* were unobserved by the *PT-34* due to being almost constantly blinded by enemy searchlights for the next 10-15 minutes," Kelly wrote.

Bulkeley knew *PT-34* was in trouble. His own boat was out of torpedoes leaving only machine guns available to provide help. *PT-41* passed along the starboard side of *Kuma* raking her with machine-gun fire to draw attention away from the other PT-boat. He wanted to deceive the enemy and "give the illusion that there were many torpedo boats in the vicinity."

Enemy shells continued to fall all around *PT-34*. Kelly still had two torpedoes and decided to make another run at the Japanese cruiser. Moving back about 2,500 yards to turn around he then approached *Kuma* from almost dead stern. "It was estimated that the cruiser was making 20-25 knots," he recalled. "The *PT-34*'s speed was now about 32 knots. Pursuit was maintained for about five or 10 minutes by which time the *PT-34* was within 300 yards of the cruiser whose searchlight beam was depressed almost to the vertical in order to keep the *PT-34* illuminated."

Kelly ordered his gunners to again open fire on the searchlight once the torpedo boat moved as close as possible to the target. "Reynolds is hit, came a yell from behind, which put the port turret out of commission," Richardson wrote of the moment. The gunner fell to the deck with grave wounds to his throat and shoulder.

Kelly now made the critical decision to fire the two torpedoes. The poor shot angle was from almost dead astern of the target—but saved the boat from likely being blown out of the water had she moved any further forward. The underwater missiles shot out toward the

Kuma's starboard quarter.

The focus of the PT sailors quickly turned to getting away. The PT turned sharply to the right and poured on all available speed in an attempt to get away to the south. Suddenly, a ship Kelly identified as a Japanese destroyer—most likely the torpedo boat *Kiji*—suddenly appeared about 2,000 yards away and opened fire. All the while, *PT-34* was still under illumination and fire from the cruiser.

The action unfolded at a furious pace. "Hard right," Kelly shouted out. "Rudder is hard right," Richardson repeated as he grasped the wheel. The PT temporarily fell out of the searchlight but was soon back in its grasp. "The cruiser turned, apparently to follow us and prevent our escaping the destroyer closing us to port," Kelly wrote. He momentarily thought his boat was trapped. "Just then two spouts of water some 20 feet high and 30 feet apart were seen by me through the binoculars to appear amidships at the cruiser's waterline at five second intervals. My first reaction was that the cruiser had been hit by two rounds from the destroyer firing on me to starboard."

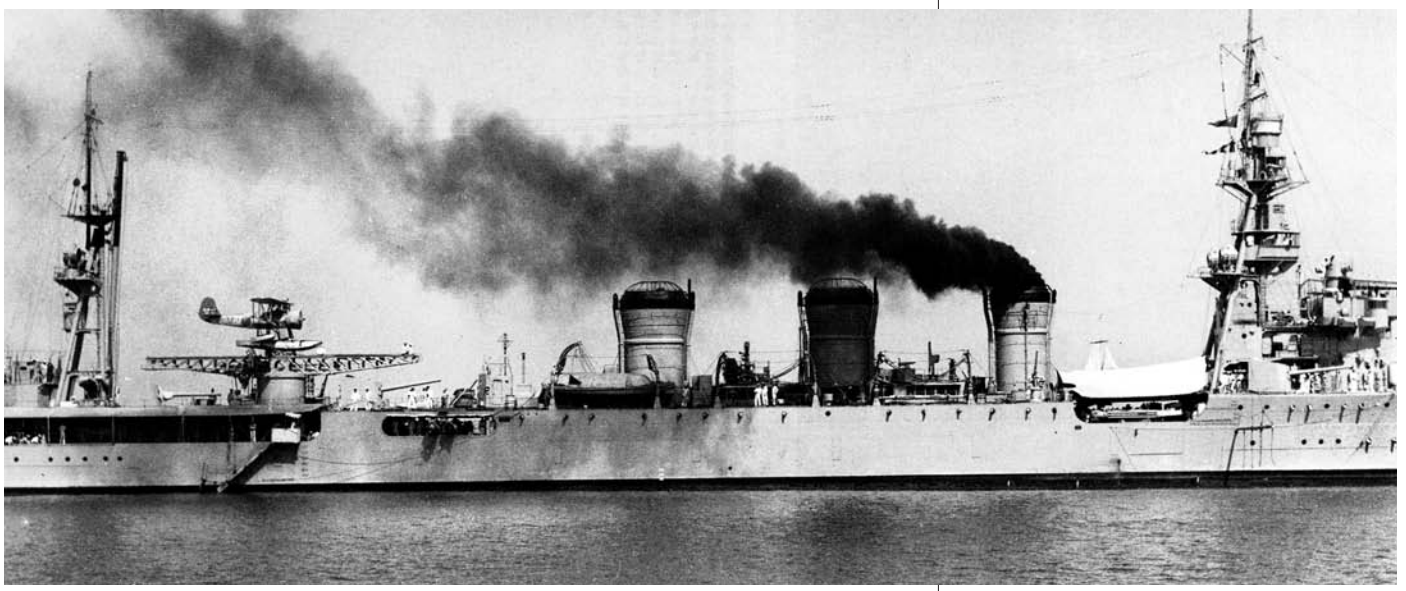
Chief Torpedoman's Mate John Martino was also watching the target and reported she was hit by the torpedoes after apparently turning into the path of the weapons. "All this had occurred in less than a minute after firing," Kelly wrote. "The cruiser's searchlight immediately began to fade as though there had been a power failure aboard. All its guns stopped firing and that was the last I ever saw of it."

The skipper now focused on getting away from the other Japanese ship. His boat was caught in her searchlight and taking heavy fire. "As a result of having expended its torpedoes and being light on fuel, the *PT-34* could now make a maximum speed of about 38 knots," Kelly wrote.

"Moments were like years," Richardson recalled of the tense minutes. "The increased speed of the Mighty *34* seemed a snail's pace." The torpedo boat was able to slip away from the second warship after about 10 minutes of high speed running, zig-zagging, and making a series of sharp turns. Kelly set a course for Cebu City.

Bulkeley saw most of the action, including *PT-34* attacking *Kuma*. The squadron commander's diversionary actions did little to fluster the Japanese. He noticed "the enemy ship was observed to be totally enveloped in a heavy brown yellowish cloud of smoke. Her searchlight beam was growing weaker by the moment," he wrote. "*PT-34* appeared to have hit her."

Bulkeley wanted to get a closer look at



ABOVE: The Japanese cruiser *Kuma*, shown here off the coast of Tsingtao, China, in 1935. On April 9, 1942, *PT-34* and *PT-41* ambushed the *Kuma* in the Tañon Strait between the islands of Negros and Cebu, hitting it with a torpedo that caused significant damage. Note the Mitsubishi F1M2 Pete floatplane on the *Kuma*'s catapult. LEFT: The Japanese torpedo boat *Kiji* was involved in the melee off Cebu on April 9, 1942, and was later surrendered to the Soviet Union at the end of World War II. OPPOSITE: Its blast causing the camera to twitch, blurring the image, two PT-boat sailors fire what is most likely a .50-cal. M2 Browning machine gun during a night engagement. The PT-boats were small but swift and heavily armed.

what he was certain was a sinking enemy cruiser. He thought better of it after suddenly spotting another Japanese ship. Thinking the route to Cebu City was blocked by enemy warships, he set a course for the large southern island of Mindanao.

The end of the battle allowed Robert Kelly to assess the condition of his boat. He directed two sailors to take the wounded Reynolds below deck to the forward compartment "and find out how badly he's hurt." They administered first aid in an attempt to slow the bleeding and gave the gunner a smoke.

The boat escaped any serious damage from large caliber shell hits but was riddled with many small bullet holes. Her main mast was shot away, putting the radio out of action. "Our victory emblem had been shot down," Richardson lamented after finding the boat's souvenir mounted Japanese bayonet was gone.

The sudden spotting of a Japanese destroyer abruptly ended the short lull in action. "Only by swerving to the left was a collision avoided and we passed down their starboard side close aboard without their firing a shot," Kelly wrote of the encounter. "They immediately turned and commenced pursuit, illuminating us with their searchlight and taking us under fire with their main battery."

The chase was over by about 1:30 a.m. when *PT-34* pulled five or six miles away from the enemy warship due to her faster speed. The sailors continued to see enemy searchlights far to the south for another half hour. "After the danger was past, all hands were secured from general quarters and the regular watch was set," Richardson recalled. Glancing off into the distance he saw "the moon came up in full splendor over the hills of Bohol, lighting the whole coast with a lunar brilliance rivaling the sun." Many of the crewmen, with the exception of the injured Reynolds, later gathered near the conn to talk about the battle.

As *PT-34* made for Cebu City the calendar passed to April 9 with her sailors believing they had sunk a Japanese cruiser. However, postwar records revealed no enemy ships were sunk during the battle. The *Kuma* reported one torpedo hit far forward. The weapon failed to explode and broke in half.

Robert Kelly's boat never made it to Cebu City. The men were operating in narrow waters leading to the harbor with no detailed charts of the area—challenging conditions for even the most experienced sailors. "Although it was a bright moonlight night, navigation was still difficult," Richardson recalled. There were various shoals, mountains in the background, and few recognizable points to aid in navigation.

PT-34 was inching forward at idling speed with skipper Kelly at the wheel. Something seemed amiss to Richardson. "There was a gentle grating and we were aground," he wrote. Crewmen shined a flashlight over the side. They could see about 20 feet of depth in the water—plenty of room for a PT boat. However, pinnacles of sharp coral were spiraling upward to within five feet of the surface like a petrified forest. She was hung up on the coral short of the harbor during the early morning darkness.

Kelly decided to send Richardson ashore in a small row boat to find an army doctor to help his wounded man and to see about locating a tugboat to help free the PT. "As I was getting dressed, the punt was lowered into the water," Richardson recalled. "I strapped my service .45 automatic pistol to my waist and put on my cap (which was never worn underway because of the wind) and boarded the punt." Two sailors rowed the boat nearly 200 yards to the shore. "After stumbling in the rough sand filled with crab holes, I arrived at a fisherman's hut and yelled," Richardson continued. He was soon on his way to a train station a mile away.

The sailors aboard *PT-34* shed clothing and went over the side to help free the boat. They eventually dislodged her after a concerted effort. By then it was about 4:30 a.m., and daylight was fast approaching.

Robert Kelly was faced with a critical decision on how to proceed when morning light revealed a thick blanket of low fog. The boat captain decided to wait until about 7:30 a.m. after some of the fog burned off before entering the channel. "Under ordinary conditions it would have been considered suicidal to have been operating in this area after daylight," Kelly wrote about the threat from Japanese planes. "However, the army authorities had assured us of air cover and given us the assigned radio frequencies of the planes. These planes were scheduled to arrive that morning from Australia to form an escort for coastal steamers due to leave Cebu the next day carrying food for Corregidor." With his radio knocked out during the battle Kelly had no way to confirm the arrangements.

Unaware of the events aboard the boat, Iliff Richardson made it to a small village about nine miles south of Cebu City. He phoned the local army headquarters. "I requested the officer on duty to send a tug to Minglanilia and to have an ambulance at Pier I in Cebu at 5 a.m. to pick up a wounded man; also to have everything ready [to] place four more torpedoes aboard the *34* and the same for the *41*," he wrote. "This last statement made the officer at the other end of the line curious so I told him we had had an engagement with the Japanese cruiser."

Richardson returned to the beach to find no sign of his boat and quickly deduced she had freed herself. He frantically canceled the request for the tugboat and waited for his PT to arrive. The clearing of the morning fog allowed him to see some type of action taking place in the distance involving planes and a small boat. Richardson suddenly realized it was *PT-34* under attack!

The air attack started with a bomb exploding off *PT-34*'s port bow just after 8 a.m. The explosion blasted a hole in the crew's washroom, disabled one of the machine gun mounts, and damaged the windshield in the conn. "We had not heard any planes due to the noise of our engines," Kelly recalled. "Four Japanese float planes were seen to be diving on us out of the sun, the first already having dropped its bomb." The PT sailors were taken by complete surprise.

ABOVE: The Mitsubishi F1M2 "Pete" floatplane was intended primarily as an observation and general purpose aircraft. It was the last biplane approved for service by the Imperial Japanese Navy. The morning after their attack on the *Kamu*, *PT-34* was pursued by four "Petes" and hit by a bomb. Taking on water, it was intentionally run aground near Kawit Island. OPPOSITE: An unidentified U.S. Navy PT boat fires two torpedoes during exercises off the Newport, Rhode Island, torpedo station. The PT boat's torpedoes are Mk. 8 types, and at the time of the action off Cebu they may have been faulty due to issues that also surfaced with the later Mk. 13.

The attackers were most likely Mitsubishi F1M "Pete" floatplanes from the seaplane tender *Sanuki Maru*. The machine guns aboard the PT quickly opened fire as crewmen rushed to break out extra ammunition. Skipper Kelly had limited options to maneuver due to the confined waters of the channel.

Gunners were able to extract a small amount of revenge when a stream of bullets hit one of the attackers. The plane began to trail smoke but was not seen to crash. All of the guns eventually fell silent with some of the gunners dead or grievously wounded.

The attack lasted for about 15 minutes with eight bombs exploding in the water and near misses causing additional damage to the boat. The PT was riddled with bullet holes. "When I received word that the engine room was flooded with about three feet of water and the engines could not last much longer, it was decided to beach the boat since we could no longer fight," Kelly reported. The boat went aground near Kawit Island just south of Cebu City. It was 8:20 a.m. All the sailors could do was pull the wounded men off the boat to a safer place ashore as the enemy planes made additional strafing runs.

Two sailors from *PT-34* were killed and several more wounded. The surviving crewmen returned to the damaged boat later in the day to salvage any equipment still usable. The Japanese planes returned to make additional attacks with bombs and machine guns. "The bombs missed but the boat was set afire and exploded, the gas tanks apparently having been hit," Kelly explained.

The end of the defense of the Philippines was soon at hand. The beleaguered defenders on Bataan surrendered on the same day *PT-34* was destroyed. The island of Corregidor—and the remainder of the Philippines—capitulated about a month later.

Robert Kelly was among the servicemen escaping to Australia via air evacuation. He later commanded a squadron of PT-boats in the South Pacific. Iliff Richardson was not as lucky. He was unable to escape after the surrender and decided to join the Philippine guerrilla movement. He remained in the Philippines until his rescue in late 1944. □

A squadron of B-25 "Mitchell" medium bombers fly in formation over the Italian countryside. Lieutenant Ben Ernst (inset) of Nashville, Tennessee, joined the Army Air Force for the "glamour," but was shot down off the coast of Palermo, Sicily, in 1943 and spent 23 months as a prisoner of the Germans.

Bomber Pilot to Prisoner of War

Pilot Ben Ernst bailed out of his stricken B-25 Mitchell bomber off the coast of Palermo and spent two years as a POW.

Ben Ernst, Jr.

BY AMY WANNEMACHER

The second World War seems like a long time ago for most of the world, with the harsh realities of blitzkrieg warfare and the Holocaust primarily learned through books and films, possibly a museum. Though sadly their number shrinks daily, there remains scattered across the globe many people for whom that era of history is all too real—they lived through those traumatic years. Their experiences are unique and important, especially if they are willing to share it with the generations that follow. One of people is Ben Ernst of Nashville, Tennessee.

Ben seems, at a glance, like many men of his generation: he worked, married, and raised a son. But before building his adult life, Ben served the United States during World War II as a B-25 Mitchell bomber pilot and spent nearly two years as a prisoner of war in German Luftwaffe POW camps. Those experiences are not interesting to Ben, but all who have heard his story disagree.

He was born in 1918, the last year of the Great War, and had a relatively normal childhood despite surviving bronchial pneumonia when he was only a year old and being hit by a car when he was five. He grew up reading Boy Scout stories, Tom Swift novels, and other stories about the amazing

National Archives

World War I flying aces. When he was older, Ben joined the ROTC for three years and later, when he was 17, spent a year in a National Guard cavalry unit in Tennessee.

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Ben was 23, but upon hearing the news he knew his responsibility was to his country. "I knew it was inevitable for me to join something," he said. "I was military minded,"

Ben resolved to be a part of the fight and enlisted in the Army Air Corps. In his mind, that was the most exciting and revered branch of the military since its inception during World War I. They were the "Glamorous Heroes," and that's what Ben wanted to be.

In January 1942, Ben took his oath and was sent to flight school for a year of training. Based on his experience ROTC and the National Guard, he was made a cadet officer. Flying planes within six months of schooling, he was sent to B-25 school, followed by advanced training, where his flying abilities earned him the title of instructor.

"Every bomber pilot wishes he had been a fighter pilot," Ben said, chuckling. "We all wanted to be fighter pilots and fly P-51s. I never did get to, though." He was bound to be a bombardier.

The twin-engine B-25, manufactured by North American Aviation in Los Angeles, California, and given the name Mitchell in honor of aviation pioneer Major General William "Billy" Mitchell, was a tough, durable airplane that could absorb a lot of punishment and still complete the mission. It is probably most famous as the type of plane that Colonel Jimmy Doolittle used in the April 18, 1942, raid on the Japanese homeland off the deck of the USS *Hornet*.

The B-25 had a crew of six, could carry up to 5,000 pounds of bombs, had a dozen .50-caliber machine guns, and a 75mm cannon on board. Its cruising speed was 230 m.p.h., and it had a service ceiling of 24,200 feet and a range of over 1,300 miles. A total of nearly 10,000 examples were built, with some 900 of them being used by the British Royal Air Force through the Lend-Lease program. Others were flown by the Royal Canadian, Free French, Soviet, and Polish Air Forces, and other allies.

Despite orders to remain in the States as an instructor, Ben pleaded to be sent to the front with the rest of his buddies. "Everyone else was getting a crew but me. I was not going to be left behind. So I went to the colonel and said 'Colonel, I have to go out of here with my class. I cannot be an instructor.' He said, 'Okay,' and they put together a crew for me."

The men were sent to North Africa in early 1943 and Ben spent four months there with the Twelfth U.S. Air Force, flying multiple missions without issue, including participating in the initial invasion of Sicily in July 1943. Four nights after the invasion began, Ben's plane was one of many sent to bomb the city of Palermo, Sicily.

Tragedy struck at 10 p.m. on July 13, when Ben's plane, with its crew of six, was shot down over the Mediterranean Sea by antiaircraft artillery.

With a direct hit to the bomber, Ernst's crew was lost instantly. Ben narrowly escaped, taking multiple fragments of flak in his arm, wrist, and leg. He recounted, "I got hit in the air over Palermo. And when you get hit, you didn't pay attention to where the plane was, or how high you were. You just got out! So I hit the alarm button and bailed out."

Ben tried to guide his parachute as he had learned during training, but with little success. He used the limited hang time he had to wrap his injured wrist with a handkerchief before landing in the Mediterranean. After hitting the water, he inflated his life vest, tore off his parachute, and began to swim.

For the next 18 hours Ben swam toward Palermo, visible miles off in the distance. Bleeding from multiple wounds, he convinced himself not to worry about sharks, even though the sea was flush with thousands. Surprisingly, he did not encounter a single shark, which was a true miracle in his mind.

Ben finally reached Palermo's harbor after four in the afternoon the next day. The city had been destroyed the night before, but people still gathered on shore to see the man they had watched swimming all day. A little old Italian colonel drove down to Ben in a small, puttering car just as he was pulling himself out of the water. The colonel gave Ben his own overcoat for warmth and escorted Ben to his car.

As the two men were walking, a civilian brought Ben a small bowl of cherries. Dehydrated

Ben Ernst, Jr.

ABOVE: Posing for a photo, Ben Ernst stands in front of his Stearman PT-13D "Kaydet" trainer during flight instruction (probably at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama) in 1942. He wanted to be a fighter pilot but was assigned to B-25 bombers instead. OPPOSITE: B-25s fly over Tunisia. Ernst's plane left North Africa en route to Palermo when it was shot down over the Mediterranean. Ernst, the only survivor from his plane, swam for 18 hours to reach land.

National Archives

from the extensive swimming and accidental swallowing of salt water, the cherries were a cherished gift Ben devoured in only a few minutes. The sweetness of the cherries is still fresh in Ben's mind.

The Italian colonel drove Ben to the German Luftwaffe headquarters and turned him over to a very intimidating German lieutenant. It was obvious that the Italian colonel feared the Germans, taking orders from an officer of lesser rank. The German lieutenant, using perfect British English, told Ben he was being taken prisoner and sent him to be held in a cave the Germans were using to house the men they captured.

Along with the other prisoners, Ben was kept in the cave for a few days before being moved to a small school for boys farther inland. Soon thereafter, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's U.S. Third Army forced the Germans and their prisoners to evacuate northern Sicily across the Strait of Messina to the "toe" of the Italian peninsula.

While the men were halted at a train station, waiting for an Italian invasion barge to carry them across the Strait of Messina Ben remembered, "It was my first encounter with the real British. There was a British colonel with a red beard on top of the invasion barge, wearing nothing but a G-string, male thong-type thing. And he was the one in charge of the prisoners! It was strange." But Ben and the other prisoners continued to move and kept one step ahead of the advancing Allies.

In September 1943, as the Americans and British armies continued their push up the mainland of Italy, the Germans continually moved their prisoners through Italy and through the Alps into Germany. Ben was finally moved to Stalag Luft III, the Luftwaffe-run POW camp for allied airmen located 100 miles southeast of Berlin near Sagan, Poland, made famous by the 1963 movie, *The Great Escape*.

Once in Stalag Luft III, one of six POW camps operated by the Luftwaffe, the prisoners were divided into compounds based on their nationalities, then housed in ramshackle barracks. The barrack interiors were lined with bunks and contained small stoves the men used for heat and cooking. The prisoners called themselves "kriegies" derived from *Kriegsgefangene*, German for "prisoner of war." The guards were the "goons."

With a dozen or more men in each barrack, there was no privacy, but that was never an issue. The men did everything together. They developed a bond only few people have come to understand—a bond that outlasted the war and created life-long friendships.

Prisoners also got to know the men in the other barracks during the daily morning roll call, but the majority of the day was spent in their own barracks idling the day away—reading, playing sports and chess, cooking, and smoking cigarettes. Nighttime bombing missions caused some excitement when they got close to the camp. But according to Ben, "It really was a drab, dull life. Every day was the same and so were the people."

Ben says the worst part of his time in the camp was the food. The war had caused mass food shortages across Europe, and even though the Germans tried to feed their prisoners, the rations were so small the men were always hungry. The scarcity of food inevitably led all prisoners to lose large amounts of weight. Ben, for example, lost 40 pounds during his 23 months as a prisoner. To stretch the rations, the Germans primarily fed the prisoners different soups and stews.

In order to survive, the men relied heavily on Red Cross food parcels, especially when the German-supplied meals seemed inedible—a thin watery soup flavored with grass or rotten vegetables and bits of spoiled, maggoty meat.

"One day a soup came in to the barracks

and it had eyeballs floating, along with little bones and some skin." Ben still cannot say what type of rodent was used in the stew but he believed it to be either squirrel or rat. Either way, in those days he forced himself to eat everything in the bowl, but he could never bring himself to eat the eyes. "From that day forward, we called stews of that nature 'Seeing Eye Stew' after Seeing Eye Dogs. We had to laugh it off."

When the food was just too gross to eat, the men worked together to dispose of it down the drains. If the Germans discovered that the food had not been eaten, they would deduct rations from all future meals. Since food was already so scarce, the men did everything they could to prevent losing more. As a result, many men, including Ben, took up smoking cigarettes. They claimed the cigarettes helped curb their appetites, allowing them to better endure the gnawing hunger pains.

Ben still remembers the winters in camp. The frigid temperatures lasted weeks, often dipping well below zero. Despite the Germans' attempts to supply coal and wood for burning in the stoves, the barracks were always cold, often making it impossible for the men to even bathe. Inedible bread was even used as a source of fuel but the chill never went away.

Ben does have one proud memory from his days as a POW—when he helped build a library for the camp. The men were already receiving 10-pound packages of books each month. While many of the books never made it to the prisoners, the ones that did were shared around the camp until they fell apart.

Needing a break from the monotony and recognizing the need, Ben and a few other men requested that the commandant, Colonel Friedrich Wilhelm von Lindeiner, allow them to have a library to make sharing the books easier for the prisoners.

The Germans agreed, and provided a room lined with rows of bookshelves. The books in the camp were collected and arranged in the new library. The men used cigarette boxes to make index cards for each book and, when the books' bindings fell apart, the Germans supplied material for the men to rebind the books themselves.

Ben worked in the library his last year at Stalag Luft III and, relatively speaking, "enjoyed" his time there. He was extremely thankful for the change in his daily routine because the time he spent in the library helped the last months in camp pass by a little quicker. And the books helped the POWs "escape" from their situation, at least temporarily.

While prisoner life was not easy for the men at Stalag Luft III, the inmates were thankful, even happy, to be in the German Luftwaffe-controlled POW camp. After all, they were alive, away from the front lines, and treated relatively well by their captors. The men always hoped for their liberation but never stopped counting their blessings for their relative safety as prisoners. Ben says they were fortunate because they were handled with respect and dignity.

According to Ben, there was a drastic difference between the German military and the German SS and Gestapo. The German military comprised enlisted men serving their country, just like American infantry. The German SS and Gestapo, however, were responsible for the atrocities against Jews and other people they deemed as "undesirables."

It was not until after the war that the men learned a concentration camp had only been 50 miles from their own POW camp. Many of the prisoners were just thankful they were dealt with humanely, unlike the men being taken prisoner in the Pacific by the Japanese.

The night of March 24-25, 1944, marked a turning point in the camp—the night of the "great escape" from Stalag Luft III. The escape had been planned for nearly a year, with 600 prisoners contributing to the effort—all so that 200 prisoners could break out of the camp's British North Compound. Forged passports were created and blankets and military uniforms were turned into civilian clothing by men who had been tailors before the war. Three tunnels were dug from beneath barracks to beyond the perimeter fence, giving the men a better chance to escape.

But, on the night of the great escape, multiple unforeseen obstacles kept most of the men from reaching freedom. As a result, instead of 200, only 76 men were able to flee the compound before the alarm was sounded, and that freedom was brief—only three made a successful escape.

After Hitler was informed of the breakout, he flew into one of his usual rages, demanding that 50 of the 73 recaptured prisoners be executed as a lesson to any other POWs who might be contemplating escape.

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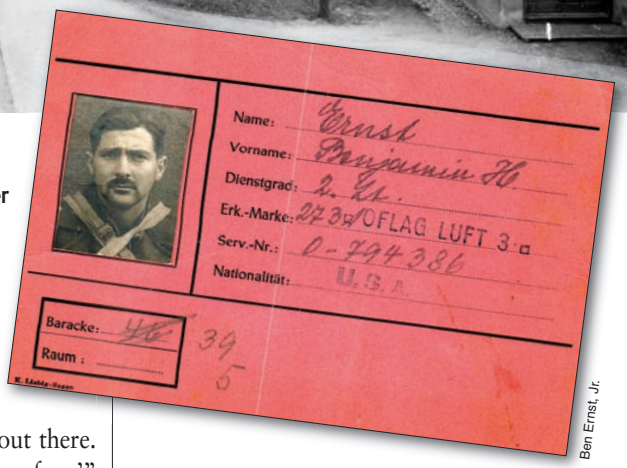

Ben Ernst, Jr.

ABOVE: Nearly a year after the "great escape," from Stalag Luft III, Ben Ernst and many of the other prisoners were moved to the larger—but overcrowded—Stalag VII-A, near Munich. It held over 100,000 prisoners at one point. RIGHT: Every POW had an identification card on file at the camp; this was Ernst's. OPPOSITE: German guards patrol the wire fence around Stalag Luft III at Sagan, Poland—the POW camp for aviators made famous by the 1963 movie, *The Great Escape*. Ben Ernst helped create the camp's library.

The day after the escape, the remaining prisoners were assembled for roll call and an announcement was made: 50 of the 76 escapees "were killed" during the mass breakout. According to Ben, "Everyone was wondering why we were out there. And I made a smart remark. I said that 'they were going to shoot every tenth one of us.'" Thankfully, he was wrong. The repercussions were still dire, however.

Fifty men were taken, two at a time, out of the camp and shot. The bodies of the dead escapees were cremated and the urns containing their ashes returned to the camp. The British prisoners built an impressive monument to their memory in the Stalag Luft III cemetery, which remains to this day; the small cemetery continues to be maintained by the local Polish people. The British investigated the killings after the war and a 1947 military tribunal found 18 Nazi guards guilty of war crimes—13 were executed.

Of those escapees who were recaptured, most were sent to a more secure prison, or as Ben explained, "The men were sent to a bad boys camp to spend the rest of their days in captivity."

The only change made at the camp was in the leadership. The Gestapo was put in charge of running Stalag Luft III and the German commandant, Colonel von Lindeiner, who was previously in command, feigned mental illness to avoid being imprisoned for having the massive breakout take place on his watch. (He was wounded by the Soviets during the defense of Berlin and spent two years as a British POW. The German higher command was also replaced, but the day-to-day treatment of the prisoners did not change.)

After the "great escape," breaking out became more difficult and dangerous but attempts continued. In the confusion spreading across Germany as the end of the war approached, the kriegies at Stalag Luft III were moved to Stalag VII-A, near Moosburg, northeast of Munich, on January 27, 1945. First on foot, and later hauled by boxcars through three wintry nights and days, hoping to avoid being bombed and strafed by Allied aircraft, the 11,000 frozen and starved POWs finally arrived at their new home.

But Stalag VII-A was no resort. It was Germany's largest POW camp. More than 100,000 prisoners representing all nationalities (there were 27,000 U.S. and British POWs) were crammed into vermin-infested barracks; 500 men were stuffed into buildings that had been overcrowded with 200. Unknown numbers of escape plans were still being secretly discussed among the prisoners.

When it became obvious that the end of the war was near, even the most ardent advocates of escaping decided to wait it out. On April 28, 1945, Maj. Gen. Charles H. Karlstad's Combat Command A of the 14th Armored Division (the same division that had liberated the POW camp at Hammelburg three weeks earlier) had advanced 50 miles and was approaching Moosburg when a small party was seen approaching in a car displaying a white flag.

The party included a British and an Amer-

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American POWs at Stalag VII-A react with joy at their liberation on April 29, 1945, by elements of the 14th U.S. Armored Division. General Patton soon arrived and saluted Ben Ernst as he walked through the liberated camp; Ernst never forgot the gesture.

ican officer and a representative of the Swiss Red Cross, along with an SS major carrying a written proposal for surrender of the camp. Until that moment, U.S. forces had not even known that a POW camp was in the vicinity. They were escorted to meet with Karlstad and a discussion about the proposal ensued between the SS major and Karlstad.

Karlstad radioed the division commander, Maj. Gen. Albert C. Smith, about the situation and asked for instructions. Instead of negotiating an armistice, Smith told Karlstad to tell the SS major that the only answer was immediate and unconditional surrender. When that was not forthcoming, Karlstad's men went into action.

Meanwhile, the two officer prisoners who had accompanied the party to CCA headquarters returned to the camp to inform the POWs that an armored unit was coming to their rescue and to take cover in case fighting broke out.

CCA began its attack on German troops in the Moosburg vicinity, with its primary mission the capture of the bridge over the Isar River. The SS put up a stubborn fight for the bridge to the east of the town, even destroying it with demolition charges before the Americans could cross.

The fight did not last long, and soon the overmatched SS were giving up their positions. CCA men reached the POW compound on April 29. An official account of the event said, "Scenes of the wildest rejoicing accompanied the tanks as they crashed through the double 10-foot wire fences of the prison camps. There were Norwegians, Brazilians, French, Poles, Dutch, Greeks, Rumanians, Bulgars. There were Americans, Russians, Serbs, Italians, New Zealanders, South Africans, Australians, British, Canadians—men from every nation fighting the Nazis. There were officers and men. Twenty-seven Russian generals, sons of four American generals.... There were men of every rank and every branch of service, there were war correspondents and radio men."

General Patton, along with a crowd of ranked officers, entered the camp later that day in order to assure the POWs of their safety and freedom. Luckily, Ben and a couple of buddies knew where General Patton and his men were headed inside the camp, and ran to where the general would be. As Patton walked by, he stopped and saluted each man as he passed. Ben still remembers when Patton saluted him personally and how proud he felt at that moment. Right then, Ben knew he was finally safe and would soon be going home.

However, the men in the camp were not immediately released. Since the various armies had to make arrangements to evacuate their soldiers, the men were kept in the camp for a few more weeks. When the war in Europe finally ended on May 8, 1945, Ben was still at Stalag Luft VII-A. Two weeks after liberation, Ben was finally sent to France and then shipped back to the States.

After returning home, Ben stayed in the Air Force until 1950, leaving only two months before the outbreak of the Korean Conflict. Once retired from the military, he worked for his father a short time before building his own mortgage company, and later spent a spell working for the government.

In 1948 Ben married Dorothy "Dot" Sanders from Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Ben and Dot lived quite happily and in 1956, they had a son, Benjamin Jr., who enjoyed an incredibly close relationship with his father all of his life.

Ben's experiences as a POW taught him a great deal. Ben said, "After the war, I never truly got upset." He had always been an easy-going kid growing up, but his time as a prisoner taught him to be thankful for every day he was alive and safe. He also learned incredible patience from his experience.

Ben Enrst passed away on September 10, 2015, at age 97. He survived bailing out of his plane and 23 months as a prisoner, enduring the blistering cold winters and severe food shortages. But he was still able to make the best of his situation, holding on to hope, even in the worst of times. Since his return from the war, he always held the firm belief that nothing could be bad after his time as a prisoner. □

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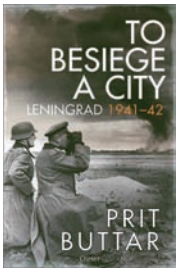
People of Leningrad, Russia, clearing ice and snow from the streets. Able-bodied citizens also helped dig trenches and erect barricades during the German's 872-day siege. An estimated 1.5 million died in the city during that time.

Wikimedia

The Siege of Leningrad was one of the epic sagas of the War of the Eastern Front.

The terrain around Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, in the Soviet Union proved difficult for the attacking German armies in August and September 1941. Swampy and heavily forested, the approaches often lacked decent roads and some villages in the area were only accessible by rail. The Soviet high command threw thousands of troops against the advancing Wehrmacht, but the Germans kept coming, destroying or sweeping aside any who stood in their path, though they took losses doing so. As the Germans neared the city, the Soviets formed new divisions from worker's militias and used them to prepare new defenses, known as the Luga Line.

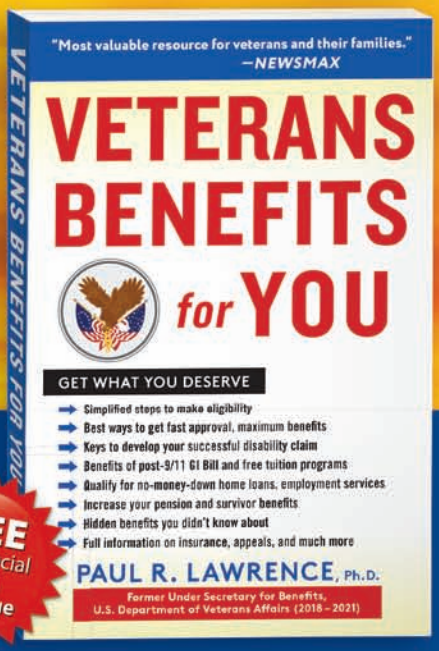


The Soviet 2nd Division built trenches near the German-held village of Ivanovskoye, emplacing mortars to bombard it. The next day German scout planes appeared overhead, seeking the mortar positions. Soon after bombers appeared, their ordnance fell across the landscape. Right after the aircraft departed the Germans unleashed several short but heavy artillery barrages, again pelting the Soviet lines, but the Soviets had dispersed their mortar tubes to minimize losses. Desperate for information, the Soviets sent militiamen out to capture prisoners for interrogation. The dour militiamen referred to such prisoners as "tongues," since they would be made to talk.

Bardin and Shubin, two former factory workers now turned soldiers, silently went forward. They attempted to ambush a car, but the three occupants all died when the car crashed. The Germans dropped leaflets encouraging the Soviets to desert, but few did. Some of the leaflets were signed by Stalin's illegitimate son, Yakov Dzhugashvili. The militiamen refused to believe such a man could have been captured and dismissed the signature. In fact, he had been captured in July near Smolensk.

Bardin recalled discussing it with his fellow militiamen in very patriotic terms: "We? We are Leningraders! And Leningraders—how could I say this? People of a special temperament, of a special mood, Soviet Power was born in our city. The Socialist Revolution began its march from here. Is it possible to surrender such a city? No. This won't happen. We will not surrender Leningrad!" Bardin was sure the Soviet armies would quickly go on the offensive and that reinforcements from the Red Army would soon arrive to relieve the militia units. While his beliefs seem naïve, they were heartfelt.

Soon the reality set in for these untrained and poorly equipped Soviet troops. One attack from the 2nd Division went in after the



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soldiers lay on the ground in front of the German lines all night. Lacking any real training, the men went forward shouting "Urrah!" They could not see the Germans but began shooting, and soon return fire swept across their ranks. Many of the Soviets took cover on one side of a road. A Soviet machine gunner saw one of his comrades wounded by a burst from a German submachine gun. The Soviet set up his own weapon and fired at a German motorcyclist, who disappeared before the Soviet could tell if he hit his target. In a few minutes he ran out of ammunition and a company commander came along and told him to take cover in some nearby woods. A group of Soviet infantry had gathered there, all of them completely out of ammunition. No one seemed to know what they were doing.

The Soviets took fearful casualties as the Germans approached Leningrad, and soon the city sat surrounded by German forces. Those Germans dug in prepared to starve and blast the defenders out of their home, but this was just the beginning of a years-long effort which would ultimately fail. The beginning of this terrible ordeal is expertly recounted in ***To Besiege a City: Leningrad 1941-42*** (Prit Buttar, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 2023, 464 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $40, hardcover).

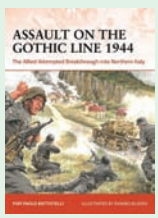
The author is an acknowledged expert on the Eastern Front in both world wars, and this latest volume joins over a dozen other equally well-written books. The level of detail in this work reveals the depth of research which went into its creation. It is an engaging and informative work, compelling the reader to continue turning the pages. The narrative skillfully moves between the actions and decisions of high-ranking generals and the battlefield experiences of private soldiers struggling to survive the next fight. The maps are detailed but easy to follow and the narrative is logical and absorbing.

New and Noteworthy

Allied Tanks at El Alamein 1942 (William E. Heistand, Osprey Books, 2023, $20, SC) A rejuvenated British Eighth Army used more than 1,000 tanks to attack El Alamein in October 1942. This new book reveals the history and build up to the offensive.

Soviet Tanks in Manchuria 1945 (William E. Heistand, Osprey Books, 2023, $20, SC) The Soviet armored offensive against Japan occurred in the final few weeks of the war. It devastated Japanese forces.

South China Sea 1945: Task Force 38's Bold Carrier Rampage in Formosa, Luzon, and Indochina (Mark Lardas, Osprey Books, 2023, $25, SC) An early 1945 U.S. Navy raid in the South China Sea destroyed more than 300,000 tons of Japanese shipping and cut a crucial supply line.

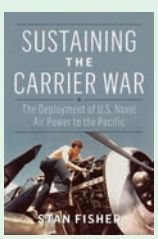


Assault on the Gothic Line 1944: The Allied Attempted Breakthrough into Northern Italy (Pier Paolo Battistelli, Osprey Books, 2023, $25, SC) The Anglo-American offensive against the German Gothic Line is a relatively unknown part of the war. This book examines it in detail.

Panzer Reconnaissance (Thomas Anderson, Osprey Books, 2023, $50,SC) An acknowledged expert on German armor examines the scouting forces of the motorized and panzer units.

Okinawa: The Last Naval Battle of WW2: The Official Admiralty Account of Operation Iceberg (John Grehan, Frontline Books, 2023, $56.95, HC) Based on the now-declassified secret British report of the action at the Battle for Okinawa.

The First Enigma Codebreaker: The Untold Story of Marian Rejewski who Passed the Baton to Alan Turing (Robert Gawlowski, Pen and Sword Books, 2023, $42.95, HC) Rejewski's work and importance to Allied codebreaking examined.



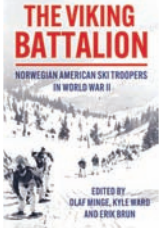
Sustaining the Carrier War: The Deployment of U.S. Naval Air Power to the Pacific (Stan Fisher, Naval Institute Press, 2023, $32.95, HC) This story of the crews who kept American carrier forces fighting throughout the conflict.

Death and Life in the Big Red One: A Soldier's World War II Journey from North Africa to Germany (Joseph P. Olexa, edited by James R. Smother, University of North Texas Press, Denton, TX, 2023, 400 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $34.95, hardcover)

Joe Olexa figured that if a war was coming, he wanted to be ready for it, so he joined the army in December 1940. Assigned to L Company, 26th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division, he spent the next four years serving in it. By the time the division sailed to England in 1942, Joe was a sergeant. When it went to North Africa as part of Operation Torch, Joe's battalion fought an intense fight at the Battle of El Guettar. At Sicily in 1943, Joe acted as a "Sea Scout," going ashore the night before the landings to guide the landing craft to the beach at Gela. He landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day and fought until wounded in late June. Returning to his company in mid-September, Joe took part in the Battle of Aachen and later fought through Belgium and Germany until the war ended.

Joe originally wrote this memoir in the 1970s, and it has been skillfully edited to give the reader a clear impression of what the author experienced during the war. It is one of the most in-depth and detailed memoirs of an infantryman in the Big Red One, particularly an enlisted soldier. The book is enjoyable and informative.

The Viking Battalion: Norwegian American Ski Troopers in World War II (Olaf Minge, Kyle Ward and Erik Brun, Casemate Books, Havertown, PA, 2023, 378 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, bibliography, index, $39.95, hardcover)



With Norway occupied by the Third Reich, thousands of Norwegians abroad were without a home and many more who had immigrated

to the United States wanted to see their homeland liberated. After initial hesitation the US Army began to form separate infantry battalions for possible service in occupied nations. The 99th Separate Infantry Battalion was activated at Camp Ripley, Minnesota, in July 1942. It also trained at Camp Hale, Colorado, alongside the 10th Mountain Division before shipping to England in September 1943. The battalion entered combat on June 22, 1944, landing at Omaha Beach. It fought through France, the Ardennes, and Germany before the war ended, never getting the chance to fight in Norway but serving bravely against its occupiers elsewhere.

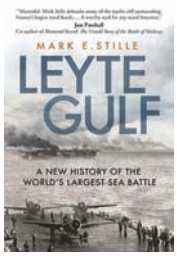
This book provides a thorough history of the 99th through the words of its veterans. Some of its members served in the 1st Special Service Force and the OSS. It is a relatively unknown unit, formed in the same spirit as the Japanese American 100th Infantry Battalion. This book brings the unit well-deserved recognition. It is liberally illustrated with images donated by members of the unit.

The Panzers of Prokhorovka: The Myth of Hitler's Greatest Armoured Defeat (Ben Wheatley, Osprey Books, Oxford UK, 2023, 316 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $35, hardcover)

Part of the summer 1943 Battle of Kursk in the Soviet Union, Prokhorovka stands out as a fearsome clash of opposing tanks and a turning point on the Eastern Front. For a long time, it was seen as a horrible defeat for Nazi Germany, in which it lost 300 to 400 of its precious, irreplaceable panzers, dealing them a blow from which the Wehrmacht could not truly recover. Indeed, the battle was a great Soviet victory, revered in Russia even today. However, new evidence has become known which, while not disputing the Soviet success, indicates German tank losses were exceptionally low, perhaps as little as three tanks, based on Luftwaffe air reconnaissance photos taken soon after the battle and discovered in an American archive.

The author of this new work has spent many years studying the Battle of Prokhorovka and conducted exhaustive research on the units and events of the engagement. In this book he sheds new lights

on the action, presenting a new assessment which is in stark contrast to long-accepted narratives of the battle. The book's assertions are well-supported by the evidence presented, and there are many photographs and aerial views of the battlefield to back the author's claims. Even if the reader disagrees, the work presents further details and information.



Leyte Gulf: A New History of the World's Largest Sea Battle (Mark E. Stille, Osprey Books, Oxford UK, 2023, 320 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, $30, hardcover)

In addition to being history's biggest naval battle, Leyte Gulf was also the last battle to take place between fleets. The Japanese Navy sent 69 ships and 375 planes; all it had left after the painful defeats of the previous two years. Opposing them was the United States Navy, with 235 ships and 1,500 aircraft. The battle consisted of four major actions and several minor ones, occurring over the course of several days. The American goal was the invasion and occupation of the Philippine Islands, possession of which would sever the sea lines of communication between the Japanese home islands and the resource areas it held. Their loss meant Japan would no longer be able to sustain its war effort, so it had no choice but to commit everything it could to defeating the US offensive. The battle had many significant occurrences, including the last combats between carriers and battleships, the only instance of a surface force attacking a carrier force while under air attack, and the first preplanned use of suicide attacks.

The writer is a noted authority on the Pacific War and the author of many prior books on the subject. He is recognized for insightful and fresh analysis of well-known battles, and he brings that perspective to Leyte Gulf in this new work. Not only does the book present innovative ideas, but also clarifies some of the myths surrounding the battle and its major leaders and events. It is an excellent source for a single-volume account of a large and complex battle.

Solomons Air War Volume 1: Guadalcanal August-September 1942 (Michael Claringbould and Peter Ingman, Avonmore Books, Kent Town, Australia, 2023, 248 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, $48.95, softcover)

At 1 p.m. on August 7, 1942, Lieutenant (jg) Gordon Firebaugh took off from the carrier USS *Enterprise* leading six Grumman F4F Wildcat fighters. Their mission

Simulation Gaming

BY JOSEPH LUSTER

FINNISH TROOPS TAKE ON IMPOSSIBLE ODDS IN THE LATEST ADDITION TO THE STRATEGIC MIND SERIES.

STRATEGIC MIND: SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

PUBLISHER HYPERSTRANGE • **GENRE** STRATEGY • **SYSTEM** PC

The events that occurred during the Winter War and the Continuation War that followed were truly monumental, and a new game aims to harness those stories to great effect. *Strategic Mind: Spirit of Liberty* puts players in the role of a commander in charge of a scarce assortment of Finnish troops in an attempt to defend their homeland from annihilation at the hands of invading Soviet soldiers. Following up on the *Prologue 1939* release earlier this year, this is the latest in a series of games from Ukrainian development studio Starni Games, and it's now available to dive into on PC.

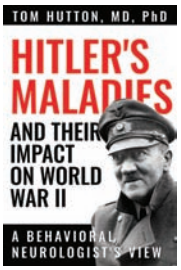
The *Strategic Mind* series first kicked off in 2019 with *Strategic Mind: The Pacific*, which, as its title implies, takes players through the conflict between the United States and Japan. *Strategic Mind: Blitzkrieg* followed in May 2020, with a focus on fighting from the perspective of the German Armed Forces. Then we had *Strategic Mind: Spectre of Communism* in November 2020, pulling the same duties with the USSR Armed Forces as they attempted to stage the world Communist revolution. Throw in 2021's *Strategic Mind: Fight for Freedom*—which handles said fight from the Allied side—and you have a humble collection of games that cover a lot of ground in a relatively short amount of time.

Spirit of Liberty continues the tradition with both historical and alternate history campaigns. The former covers the 1939-1945 timeline, spanning the Winter War, Continuation War and Lapland War. The operations in this campaign are on a slightly smaller scale, but the stakes are high as players get the opportunity to virtually experience these crucial conflicts. And then there are the alternate history missions, which make up a shorter campaign with larger operations. The "what if" events within have players helping the Germans take Leningrad and cut off allied aid shipments to the USSR, among other situations. Cinematics help expand and emphasize the story before and after each operation, and there are a bunch of primary and secondary objectives to attend to along the way, complete with narration by various historical characters.

As one would expect from a campaign focused on recreating historical battles, the units within are as true to reality as possible. The Finns may have been short on tanks and other essential equipment in 1939, but you'll be able to command ski troops and capture Soviet vehicles to help your cause. These

was to function as the combat air patrol for the transports landing troops at Guadalcanal. They soon spotted a force of Japanese Betty-type bombers and gave chase. They caught up to the bombers after pursuing for 80 miles. Firebaugh saw only three escorting enemy Zeroes, so he ordered an attack. As he went after the lead Zero, it soon became apparent he had missed the other 13 enemy fighters which now attacked his smaller group. Firebaugh's wingman took heavy fire and was quickly shot down. Machine-gun bullets peppered Firebaugh's Wildcat as he maneuvered wildly. As he flew for his life, an enemy fighter appeared in his sights, and he shot it down. This brought the attention of other Japanese pilots, and Firebaugh's Wildcat was soon aflame. Severely burned, the American managed to bail out and swim to nearby Santa Isabel Island. There, a coastwatcher named Geoffrey Kuper helped him, and he returned to Tulagi on August 16.

This new volume cements the author's reputations as two of Australia's leading authorities on the air war in the South Pacific. This work is beautifully illustrated, and the narrative is well-detailed with battle stories and information on both the tactical and operational levels of the aerial combat around Guadalcanal.



Hitler's Maladies and Their Impact on World War II: A Behavioral Neurologist's View (Tom Hutton, MD, PhD, Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock TX, 2023, 234 pp., photographs, bibliography, index, $27.95, hardcover)

By April 1945, Hitler suffered from several mental and physical ailments. These included an advanced case of Parkinson's Disease, heart disease, and gastrointestinal disorders along with other minor illnesses. Mentally, Hitler was never well, but stress and paranoia only worsened his state of mind. In addition, in an attempt to keep him functioning Hitler's doctor administered a dangerous concoction of medications, including Eukodal, today known as oxycodone, a powerful and addictive opioid, and cocaine. Many who saw Hitler in his final weeks commented on what a pitiful and pathetic figure he had become, confused and unable to control the shaking in his left arm.

Hitler's failing health and drug addictions are commonly mentioned in accounts of the war and Nazi Germany's downfall. This book takes this often-cursory detail and delves into the underlying effects and meaning of Hitler's health problems and how they could have affected his outlook and decision making. The work is an interesting and well-researched look at how the physical and psychological health of the Third Reich's infamous leader affected not only him, but also the fate of millions of human beings. □

include BT-7, T-34 and KV tanks, and your army can also purchase German Pz-IV tanks and other units and weapons beyond those captured. At historically accurate points, new and updated models will become available for a much-needed upgrade, so you'll want to keep your forces primed at any given opportunity.

There are many nuances to the campaign in *Strategic Mind: Spirit of Liberty*, including directing the progress of your headquarters staff so new skills can be learned, conferring with other high-ranking officers for helpful advice and choosing when and where to apply both lethal and nonlethal damage to your enemies. Everything from the direct combat to the complex reconnaissance system is available to tinker with and make your own, opening up a bunch of strategic possibilities. There's also a heroes system that gives you a chance to generate a heroic historical personality—deadly World War II sniper Simo Häyhä, AKA The White Death, for instance—after meeting certain requirements.

The *Strategic Mind* series has proven itself to be an interesting one so far, taking hints from the likes of Strategic Simulations' *Panzer General* series. If you've been keeping up with the games so far, this is likely already on your PC as you read this. For everyone else, the unique point of view depicted alone may be reason enough to give *Strategic Mind: Spirit of Liberty* a shot.

COMPANY OF HEROES COLLECTION

PUBLISHER FERAL INTERACTIVE • **GENRE** STRATEGY

SYSTEM Nintendo Switch

Relic Entertainment's *Company of Heroes* first brought its real-time strategizing to PC back in 2006 before eventually being ported to iOS and Android devices. It went on to spawn sequels and kick off its own series, and now the first entry is touching down on Nintendo Switch along with its expansions in the aptly titled *Company of Heroes Collection*.

The first thing any RTS fans want to know when it comes to porting to consoles has to do with user interface and controls. Feral Interactive announced

that, as one might expect, *Company of Heroes Collection* sports an all-new control scheme on Switch. Combined with the Switch's touchscreen, this will hopefully abate some of the awkwardness often inherent to translating something like real-time strategy to consoles with limited interfaces.

In addition to the base *Company of Heroes* game, the collection packs in a pair of expansions in *Company of Heroes: Opposing Fronts* and *Company of Heroes: Tales of Valor*. These are typically all available bundled together on storefronts like Steam for rock-bottom prices, but if your primary means of gaming is Nintendo Switch, or you just want to go portable without investing in a Steam Deck, you'd do well to give these RTS outings a spin. As long as their UI updates stick the landing, *Company of Heroes Collection* should lead the charge in genre representation on Nintendo's console. ■

80TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Continued from page 47

on January 8, 1945; 1st Lt. Edgar H. Lloyd (E/319th) for action near Pompey, France (KIA, September 14, 1944); 2nd Lt. Harry J. Michael (L/318th) for action at Neiderzerf, Germany (KIA, March 14, 1945); and Private Paul J. Wiedorfer (G/318th) for action near Chaumont, Belgium on December 25, 1944. □

Clearwater, Florida, resident ***Andy Adkins*** *is a U.S. Navy veteran ('73-77) and the author of several books, including* You Can't Get Much Closer Than This: Combat with the 80th "Blue Ridge" Division in World War II Europe, *published by Casemate Publishers (2005) and selected as the Book of the Month for the Military Book Club. His newest novel,* NEVER FORGET, *is the story of A Vietnam Veteran's Journey for Redemption & Forgiveness.* NEVER FORGET *is offered as a free (PDF, eBook format) download. Adkins also writes a weekly blog, "A Veteran's Journey." Visit www.azadkinsiii.com for more information.* ***Madeline Hanson*** *is a high school history teacher with a Master's in History, focused on Holocaust and Genocide history. Her master's thesis, "Memories of War: The Stories of the 319th Regiment of the 80th Division during World War Two," covers how the men of the regiment remember their time in war. This is the regiment and division in which her grandfather, Richard F. Mangan, served during the war.*

MANILA

Continued from page 75

Infantry attacked from the west side and was driven back. After eight days of brutal shellfire and close combat, the GIs took the shattered pile of debris.

The surviving Japanese didn't wait to be killed or captured, withdrawing behind Intramuros City's massive walls for a last stand. Griswold and Krueger again asked MacArthur to use air power against the enemy, but MacArthur refused.

There were too many civilians trapped in the fortress, whose walls were 40 feet thick at the base and 20 feet at the top, honeycombed with internal passages. Dungeons, churches, and embrasures had been turned into strongpoints.

Griswold was enraged, noting that major cities across the world were being destroyed. "Why not here?" he wrote. "War is never pretty. I am frank to say that I would sacrifice Filipino lives under such circumstances to save the lives of my men."

Griswold built up a huge array of M-10 tank destroyers with 3-inch guns, 105mm, 155mm, and 8-inch field artillery, anti-tank guns, and bazookas to bombard the fortress. While preparing his bombardment, Griswold pleaded with the Japanese to release the Filipinos they held hostage or prisoner. The Japanese ignored his pleas. Several Japanese troops surrendered on their own.

The American bombardment of Intramuros began on February 17, and continued until February 23, when the ground attack began promptly at 7:30 a.m. The 145th Infantry Regiment stormed past the battered Quezon Gate, fighting Japanese soldiers and sailors hand to hand. The Japanese survivors retreated into Fort Santiago, where they were finally wiped out.

The fall of Fort Santiago was critical to breaking Intramuros. Under immense American shelling, the Japanese could not hang on much longer. Iwabuchi and a collection of diehards held out in the Legislative, Agriculture, and Finance Buildings, all unintentional fortresses.

The 129th Infantry stormed across the Pasig River in assault boats, reaching the shore by 8:40 a.m. Within minutes, the 129th had connected with the 145th attacking from the east and stormed their way in. The Japanese released 5,000 hostages from the San Agustin Church and Delmonico Hotel but continued to shoot men, regarding them as guerrillas. That included imprisoned neutral Spanish and Irish priests. Iwabuchi radioed Tokyo one last time, telling the Imperial General Headquarters that his men would fight to the death.

On February 25, Iwabuchi committed seppuku, and the last Manila defenders died fighting or fled the city. The Finance Building fell on March 3, ending the battle. Weary GIs raised Old Glory over the rubble and shared their food with starving Filipinos.

There were plenty of them, but about 100,000 Manilenos had died in the fighting, mostly of them victims of ghastly atrocities. The Japanese had lost 16,665 men in the battle, virtually their entire force. The Americans took 6,575 casualties, 1,010 of them killed.

It was a terrible victory all around. Manila had been destroyed, including the great Intramuros fortress and the massive American-made buildings. The biggest victors in the struggle were likely the Allied internees and POWs, who were liberated with far less difficulty than the city itself.

The Americans put Yamashita on trial in a court-martial, charging him with the Manila horrors. He was found guilty at Bilibid Prison on December 7, 1945—Pearl Harbor Day—and hanged on February 26, 1946.

MacArthur got his big moment in Manila, even though it came after January 26. On February 27, while fighting still raged in Intramuros, MacArthur strode into the Malacanang Palace, which was intact, with Filipino President Sergio Osmena and restored the capital and political power to the Philippine Commonwealth.

MacArthur's voice broke as he addressed the gathering. Unable to continue, he simply asked everyone present to join him in the Lord's Prayerthe Philippines until his rescue in late 1944. □

Author David Lippman resides in New Jersey and writes frequently on a variety of topics for WWII History.

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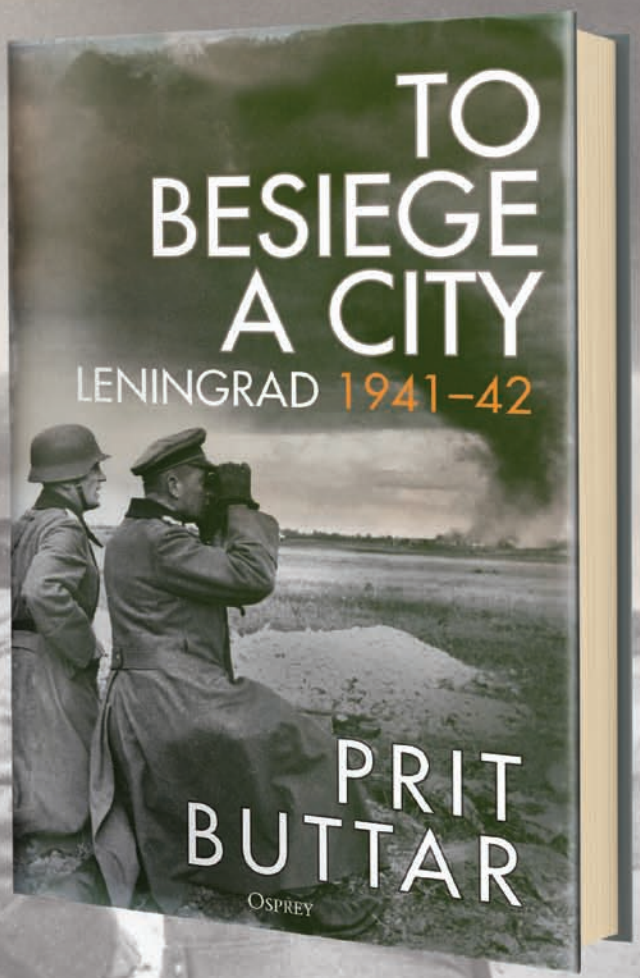

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