WWII QUARTERLY

Curtis 07256

JOURNAL OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

82nd Airborne's Fight at Nijmegen

THE LAST NAZI HUNTER

U.S. Submarine's Duel with Japanese Fleet

Key to Okinawa Victory

BRITISH COMMANDO THRUST INTO GERMANY

DEADLY DOCTRINE
Precision Daylight Bombing

BREAKING THE JAPANESE CODES

WINTER 2011

$9.99

54

0 74470 07256 0

For military veterans exposed to asbestos, your battle is just beginning.

Military veterans represent over thirty percent of those with mesothelioma, a deadly form of cancer caused by asbestos exposure.

Asbestos was used by every branch of the military between 1930 and the late 1970s. And since symptoms may not emerge for decades, many U.S. veterans are only now being diagnosed.

Sokolove Law helps veterans like you pursue compensation from the companies that produced and sold harmful asbestos to our U.S. military.

You fought for our country. Now it's our time to fight for you.

Call **1-800-396-2331** or go to **www.asbestosvetlawyer.com** to receive a FREE, no-obligation legal consultation. Contact Sokolove Law today to learn more.

You may be entitled to compensation.

CALL NOW!

1-800-396-2331

www.asbestosvetlawyer.com

SOKOLOVE LAW

Visit our Website!

AIRBORNE LEATHERS

www.airborne-leathers.com

TO HONOR AND CELEBRATE THE ARMED FORCES OF AMERICA AIRBORNE LEATHERS Is Offering 60% OFF Its 60TH Anniversary A2 and G1 Bomber Jackets

In 1943 these jackets helped our men take Guadalcanal and Sicily.
In 1953 they helped our airmen rule the skies over Korea.
In 2003 our airmen followed in the footsteps of these men, protecting liberty over the skies of Afghanistan and Iraq.
Now you can be part of the glory with these beautiful Leather Bomber Jackets!

Your Choice $119

Pile Collar with Poly Cotton Lining

REG $249!
- Made of GENUINE GOATSKIN LEATHER

Poly/ Cotton Lining

7-10 Day Delivery

Call 9-5 EST Mon - Fri. TOLL FREE **1-800-247-9501**

30 Day Refund or Exchange!

CIRCLE YOUR STYLE, SIZE and COLOR, and MAIL TO:

AIRBORNE LEATHERS
20 CHARLES ST
NORTHVALE NJ. 07647

NAVY G-1	AIR FORCE A-2	CHEST SIZE	36-38	39-41	42-44	46-48	50-52	
Dark Brown	Dark Brown	REGULAR	S	M	L	XL	2XL	$119
		TALL Over 6'	—	MT	LT	XLT	2XLT	$119

S & H	Total Units	Total $
$11 per Jacket		
Grand Total		

NAME (Last, First)

Telephone (Include Area Code)

ADDRESS (No. and Street, Apt or Suite No.)

CITY

STATE

ZIP

❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard ❑ American Express ❑ Discover ❑ Check ❑ Money Order

Card Number:

Expiration: /

SC970

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WWII QUARTERLY

Page 12

Departments

Features

COVER: Gil Cohen's painting, *Mission to Regensburg,* captures the cramped quarters of a Boeing B-17. © Gil Cohen, Knightsbridge Press.

WWII Quarterly (ISSN 2151-3678) is published four times yearly by Sovereign Media, 6731 Whittier Avenue, Suite A-100, McLean, VA 22101-4554. (703) 964-0361. *WWII Quarterly,* Volume 2, Number 2 © 2010 by Sovereign Media Company, Inc., all rights reserved. Copyrights to stories and illustrations are the property of their creators. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without consent of the copyright owner. ***Subscription services, back issues, and information:*** (800) **219-1187** *or* write to *WWII Quarterly* **Circulation, WWII Quarterly, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.** Hardbound single copies: $19.99, plus $3 for postage. Yearly subscription in U.S.A.: $39.95; Canada and Overseas: $79.95 (U.S.). Editorial Office: Send editorial mail to *WWII Quarterly,* 6731 Whittier Avenue, Suite A-100, McLean, VA 22101-4554. *WWII Quarterly* welcomes editorial submissions but assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of unsolicited material. Material to be returned should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We suggest that you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a copy of our author's guidelines. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to WWII Quarterly, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.**

Brazil Expedition Uncovers Thousands of Carats of Exquisite Natural Emeralds

Brandish a whopping 50 carats of genuine South American emeralds in a handcrafted new necklace design for less than $200.....
and get a $100 Stauer Gift Coupon!

Halfway into our ambitious trek through the rain forest I had to remind myself that "Nothing good comes easy." These days it seems that every business trip to Brazil includes a sweltering hike through overgrown jungles, around cascading waterfalls and down steep rock cliffs. But our gem broker insisted it was worth the trouble. To tell you the truth, for the dazzling emeralds he delivered, I'd gladly go back to stomping through jaguar country.

Now our good fortune is your great reward. Don't miss this rare opportunity to own an impressive 50 carat strand of genuine South American emeralds for under $200. And for a limited time, we'll sweeten every necklace order with **a $100 Stauer Gift Coupon!**

Faced with this embarrassment of riches, our designer transformed this spectacular cache of large stones (each is over 8 carats average weight) into a stunning 50 ctw necklace of faceted emeralds set into .925 sterling silver. Each emerald is surrounded by delicate sterling silver rope work and filigree in the Bali-style. The 18" necklace dangles from a sterling silver chain that fastens with a secure double-sided shepherd's hook clasp.

What is the source of our emerald's timeless appeal?

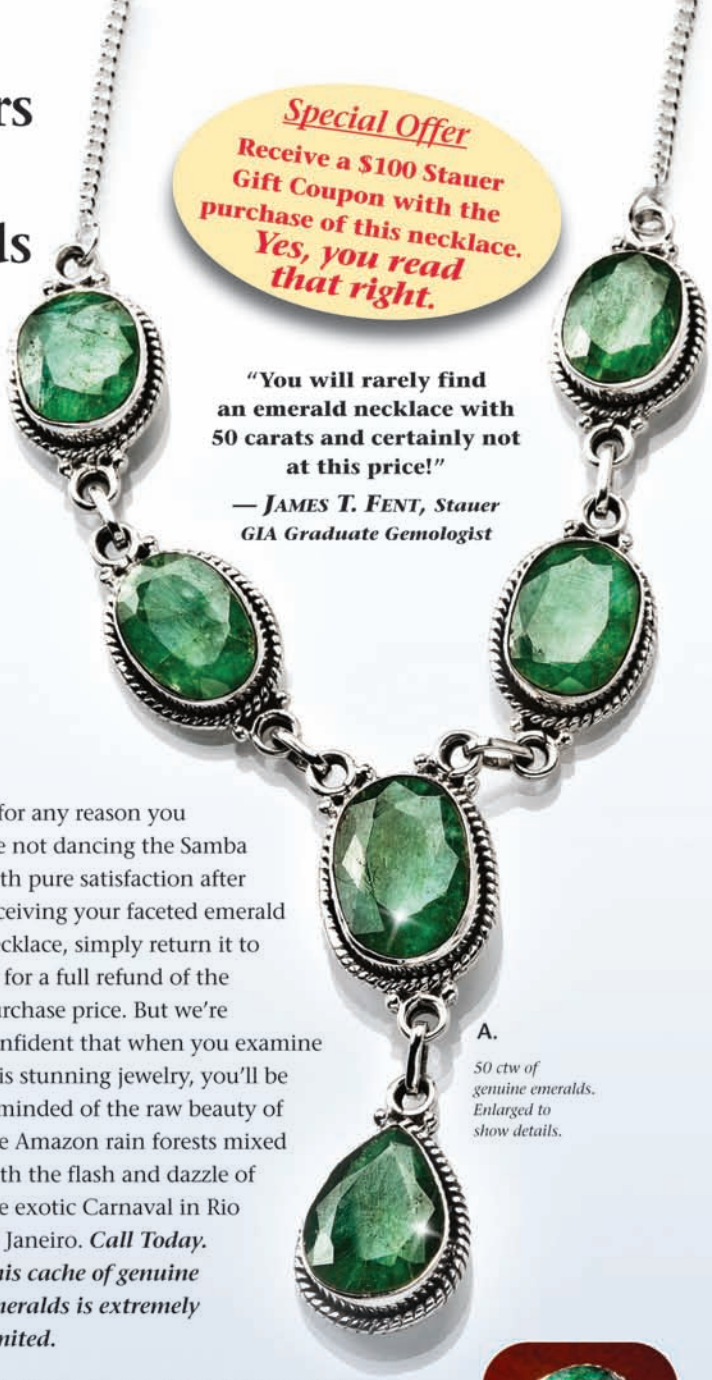
The enchanting color of the Stauer ***Carnaval*** **Faceted Emerald Necklace** comes from nature's chemistry. Our polished and faceted, well-formed natural emeralds are immediately recognized as something special. Indeed, when we evaluated these emeralds, color was the most important quality factor. Today, scientists tell us that the human eye is more sensitive to the color green than to any other. Perhaps that is why green is so soothing to the eye, and why the color green complements every other color in your wardrobe.

Emeralds are, by weight, the most valuable gemstone in the world

Now you can wear genuine emeralds and feel great about knowing that you were able to treat yourself to precious gems without paying a precious price. A 100+ carat emerald necklace found on Rodeo Drive or 5th Avenue could cost well over $250,000...but not from Stauer. Wear and admire the exquisite Stauer ***Carnaval*** **Faceted Emerald Necklace** for 30 days.

Special Offer
Receive a $100 Stauer Gift Coupon with the purchase of this necklace. *Yes, you read that right.*

"You will rarely find an emerald necklace with 50 carats and certainly not at this price!"
— *James T. Fent, Stauer GIA Graduate Gemologist*



A. *50 ctw of genuine emeralds. Enlarged to show details.*

If for any reason you are not dancing the Samba with pure satisfaction after receiving your faceted emerald necklace, simply return it to us for a full refund of the purchase price. But we're confident that when you examine this stunning jewelry, you'll be reminded of the raw beauty of the Amazon rain forests mixed with the flash and dazzle of the exotic Carnaval in Rio de Janeiro. ***Call Today. This cache of genuine emeralds is extremely limited.***

A. ***Carnaval*** **Necklace** (50 ctw) **$195** +S&P
B. ***Carnaval*** **Ring** (13 ctw) **$125** +S&P
C. ***Carnaval*** **Earrings** (20 ctw) **$125** +S&P
D. ***Carnaval*** **Bracelet** (50 ctw) **$175** +S&P
Carnaval **Collection** (83 ctw) ~~$445~~
Includes necklace, ring and earrings.
Now only **$295** +S&P ***Save $150!***
***Special Offer*—Receive a $100 Stauer Gift Coupon with the purchase of each individual *Carnaval*.**


B.


C.


D.

1-888-306-7179

Promotional Code FEN334-02
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer®
14101 Southcross Drive W.,
Dept. FEN334-02
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.stauer.com

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices

A Nation at War

IT HAS BECOME my nightly habit to take a half-hour walk around my Denver neighborhood, during which time I have come to notice a number of homes displaying the American flag. There aren't as many as there were following September 11, 2001, but there are still a quite a few. I also see a number of "Support Our Troops" bumper stickers, as well as some that express a less troop- or mission-friendly sentiment. That's America for you—where people can generally express differing sentiments without worrying about being blown up by some psychopath with a belt fashioned from C-4.

On these nightly walks, as I reflect upon the current war (not "wars," as some in the media portray the fight against the jihadists; I view it as one war, with several "theaters"), I try to picture the neighborhood as it might have appeared 65+ years ago when the world was engaged in another titanic struggle. If there were any pacifist sentiments back then, they were not displayed on bumper stickers or yard signs.

The nation back then was truly united, with no thought of bringing the troops home before victory had been achieved. Everyone served the national interest—whether it was in uniform, volunteering at a hospital, buying war bonds or stamps, working in a war plant or at a war-essential job (such as farming), or collecting scrap to be turned into war matériel. Young, seemingly healthy men who weren't in uniform could expect to be confronted on the street by persons inquiring about their draft status.

Yes, the nation was very personally invested in victory then. Members of Congress were committed to doing whatever was necessary to help the nation win the war, not squabbling among themselves like petulant schoolchildren. Our president did not announce a cut-off date at which time he would pull troops from the battlefront (and give the enemy hope that they could outlast us). The choice was between victory or defeat; there was no middle ground, no "politically correct" stance that some felt needed to be taken, no reason not to call the enemy the enemy. The "bad guys" were out to destroy us unless we destroyed them first.

It was everybody's war, and everybody had to sacrifice something because, if the Allies were victorious, we would all win something of great value. Conversely, if the Allies lost, the civilized world would be plunged into an abyss that would have made the Dark Ages look like the Renaissance.

Perhaps that is one reason why this magazine is so valuable. It is not only a history lesson but it is also a future lesson; ignore what has happened in the past and you're likely to see it repeated. Go to war without the will to fight it—and win it—and you will most certainly lose (or, in the case of Korea, have it end in a stalemate). Vietnam proved that adage to be true.

Every nation that fought in World War II did so expecting to win it. The will was there. The arms were there. The courage was there. So why did one side win and the other side lose? Manpower superiority? Technical superiority? Moral superiority? The answers are many, and varied. Everyone has his or her own theory.

But what about our current conflict? Is it just a localized conflict in some dusty, far-off corner of the world being fought by mercenaries and volunteers, tribesmen with improvised explosives versus the most technologically advanced army in history, people wearing explosive vests who want to die fighting against people with flak vests on who want to live? Is anyone but those who are doing the fighting—and their loved ones back home—doing any sacrificing in order to win it?

No doubt some of you reading this editorial didn't agree with former President Bush's decision to take on Saddam Hussein, Al Qaeda, and the Taliban extremists that has touched off the war in the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters of operation. As citizens of a free country, that is your prerogative. I won't go into all the reasons that I believed then (and still believe) it was the right decision.

Ernest Hemingway wrote, "Once we have a war there is only one thing to do. It must be won. For defeat brings worse things than any that can ever happen in a war…. We must win it at all costs and as soon as possible." He was writing about World War II. He might just as well be writing about our current struggle.

Nobody likes war (including people like your editor, who served in Vietnam), but war's power to change lives, empires, regimes, nations, and the course of history cannot by denied. Until humankind learns how to live in peace, we will need armies. And we will continue to need the soldiers and historians to tell their stories about war. As General George S. Patton, Jr., so eloquently put it, "Compared to war, all forms of human endeavor shrink to insignificance." Sad but true.

And now it's time for my nightly walk.

—Flint Whitlock, Editor

WWII History Quarterly

Volume 2 ■ Number 2

CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director, Founder

FLINT WHITLOCK
Editor
WWIIQuarterly@gmail.com

LAURA CLEVELAND
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DETULLEO
Art Director

KEVIN M. HYMEL
Research Director

CONTRIBUTORS:
Jan Bos, Pierre F. Comtois, John Domagalski, Robert F. Dorr, Paul Garson, Eric Hammel, Edward Holcombe, Peter Kross, Herb Kugel, Mark Simmons, James Verini

ADVERTISING OFFICE:

BEN BOYLES
Advertising Manager
(570) 322-7848, ext. 110
benjaminb@sovhomestead.com

MARK HINTZ
Vice President & Publisher

KATHY PAULHAMUS, MARY NOLAN, SANDRA HILLYARD
Subscription Customer Services

KEN FORNWALT
Data Processing Director

CURTIS CIRCULATION COMPANY
WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION

SOVEREIGN MEDIA COMPANY, INC.
453 Carlisle Drive, Herndon, VA 20170

SUBSCRIPTION CUSTOMER SERVICE AND BUSINESS OFFICE:

1000 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 300, Williamsport, PA 17701

(800) 219-1187

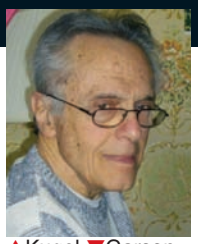
PRINTED IN THE USA.

CONTRIBUTORS

JAN BOS is a Dutch policeman and native of Nijmegen. He has spent much of his life researching the events of the battle that made his hometown famous. He is the 82nd Airborne Troop Carrier historian and the author of *Circle and the Fields of Little America,* a 1992 book about the 376th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion. He is a member of the Historical Section of the National Liberation Museum 1944/ 1945 at Groesbeek, Holland, as well as a member of the Groesbeek Airborne Friends and a tour guide for American veterans and family members.

ROBERT F. DORR is an author and retired senior American diplomat who has written 70 books and numerous articles on international affairs, military issues, and the Vietnam War. He writes the weekly "Back Talk" opinion column for the *Air Force Times* newspaper and the monthly "Washington Watch" feature of *Aerospace America*. He is also the technical editor of *Air Power History.* His latest book, *Mission to Berlin,* will be published by Zenith Press in March 2011. He lives in Virginia, near Washington, D.C.

PAUL GARSON is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles. The author of *Album of the Damned,* he is currently working on a new series of WWII-related books from which this article was excerpted. All photographs, images, and artifacts are from his personal collection.



▲Kugel ▼Garson

California-based **ERIC HAMMEL** is the author of 36 books. Portions of this article were adapted from his recent book, *How America Saved the World.*

PETER KROSS is the author of three books: *New Jersey History*; *Spies, Traitors and Moles: An Espionage and Intelligence Quiz Book*; and *The Encyclopedia of World War II Spies*. His articles have appeared in *Military Heritage, WWII History, World War II,* and *Vietnam* magazines. He lives in North Brunswick, New Jersey.

HERB KUGEL is the author of numerous articles on World War II. He writes from his home in Granville Ferry, Nova Scotia.

ERIC NIDEROST teaches history at Chabot Community College in California. He has 300 published magazine articles to his credit and has co-authored three books: *Civil War Firsts* (Stackpole, 2001), *A Nation Transformed* (Cumberland, 2007), and *Fighting Techniques of the Oriental World* (Amber, 2008). In 2005 he won the Army Historical Foundation's Distinguished Writing Award. He lives in Union City, California.

JAMES VERINI was a contributing editor at *Portfolio magazine,* where he was twice nominated for a National Magazine Award in the reporting category. He has also been a features writer and columnist at the *Los Angeles Times,* and before that a staff writer at the *New York Observer.* His work has also appeared *Vanity Fair, The New Republic,* the *New York Times* and *Times* magazine, *London Guardian, Slate, Salon, Washington Monthly, American Prospect, Men's Vogue, Fast Company,* and others. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Colonel Albert J. Shower was the 467th Bombardment Group's most hated hero.

ASK A MEMBER of the 467th Bombardment Group whom they hated most and the answer won't be Göring or Hitler. Ask a veteran of this B-24 Liberator group what they feared most and they won't say German flak or fighters.

"It was no contest," said former Staff Sgt. Vincent Re, an engineer gunner. "By a vote of 100 percent, the man we hated most was Colonel Albert J. Shower."

During the war, the U.S. Army Air Forces, or USAAF, fielded 243 combat groups, including 125 bombardment groups, of which 72 were "heavy" (four-engined) groups. Of the 243 groups, it appears that only one—the 467th—was formed, trained, taken overseas, taken into battle, led to victory, and brought home by a single commander from start to finish—Shower.

"We hated him," said Re.

As we shall see, the men's attitude toward ramrod-stiff, iron-disciplined Shower (West Point, 1932) changed over time. But the object of their greatest fear never changed.

Long after they confronted flak and fighters at altitude over the Third Reich, long after they fought abominable weather, freezing temperatures, and massed Messerschmitts, after they lost friends and won the war, B-24 Liberator veterans of the 467th Group said that nothing terrified them so much as taking off and assembling over East Anglia for the flight to the target.

"We saw planes collide in fog," said Re. "We saw guys go off the end of the runway and vanish in flames. At times, there were dozens of aircraft filling a very small space in the sky." Not surprisingly, about half of all aircraft losses during World War II were attributed to noncombat causes. The sky around any bomber base in England was Danger Central.

To increase their chances of survival during a takeoff or assembly mishap, all crewmembers, except the two pilots, strapped themselves down in the Liberator's waist position until the plane was at cruise altitude. "We huddled back there and we were scared," said Re.

Bomber Commander

The 467th Bombardment Group (Heavy) was nicknamed the "Rackheath Aggies" after their airfield near Norwich. Among the group's B-24s was one named "Witchcraft"—a plane so fondly remembered that a restored Liberator, today, is appearing at air shows wearing its markings.

From the moment the 467th Group was activated on August 1, 1943, at desolate Wendover Field, Utah, the atmosphere in the group was different. At other stateside bases, the Army Air Forces

U. S. Army/Vincent Re

Apparently trailing smoke from her number two engine, "Witchcraft," aka Ford B-24H-15-FO 42-52534, drops eight 1,000-pound bombs on a target in Germany.

We Can Only Find One

A rare chance to claim a unique piece of watchmaking history for under $100!

Eighty-six years ago, a watchmaker in Paris famous for building the magnificent clocks at Versailles created a legendary timepiece. He invented the first watch with an automatic mechanical drive. These innovative movements required no batteries and never needed to be manually wound. Only seven of these ultra-rare watches were ever made and we've studied the one surviving masterpiece in a watch history museum. Inspired by history, classic design and technology, our Stauer ***Meisterzeit*** has been painstakingly handcrafted to meet the demanding standards of vintage watch collectors.

Why the new "antique" is better than the original. The original timepiece was truly innovative, but, as we studied it closely, we realized that we could engineer ours with a much higher level of precision. The 27-ruby-jewel movement utilizes an automatic self-winding mechanism inspired by a patent from 1923, but built on $31 million in state-of-the-art Swiss-made machinery. With an exhibition back, you can see into the heart of the engineering and view the rotor spin—it's powered by the movement of your body.

This limited edition Stauer ***Meisterzeit*** allows you to wear a watch far more exclusive than most new "upscale" models. Here is your chance to claim a piece of watchmaking history in a rare design that is priced to wear everyday.

Elegant and accurate. This refined beauty has a fastidious side. Each movement and engine-turned rotor is tested for 15 days and then certified before it leaves the factory.

The best part is that with our special price, you can wear a superb classic historical reproduction watch and laugh all the way to the bank. Stauer specializes in classic timeless watches and jewelry that are made for the millionaires who want to keep their millions. This watch will quickly move to heirloom status in your household.

View the precision movement of the *Meisterzeit* through the rear exhibition port.

Try it for 30 days and if you are not thrilled with the beauty and construction of the ***Meisterzeit***, simply return it for a refund of the purchase price.

Extremely limited availability. Since it takes about 6 months to build each watch, the release is a limited edition, so please be sure to order yours soon.

WATCH SPECS:
- 14K Gold-clad case and bezel
- Precision 27-jeweled movement
- Interior dials display day and month
- Croc-embossed leather strap
- Fits 6 3/4"–8 1/4" wrist

76% OFF

Exclusively Through Stauer

Stauer Meisterzeit Watch—~~$395~~

Now **only $95** +S&P ***Save $300!***

Call now to take advantage of this limited offer.

1-888-324-4351

Promotional Code MZW342-02
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer®
14101 Southcross Drive W.,
Dept. MZW342-02
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.stauer.com

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices

U.S. Army/Vincent Re

Bomber bases were anything but orderly. At Royal Air Force Rackheath, the 467th Bombardment Group kept its B-24 Liberators on soft grass. The bombers in the foreground in this image, including B-24H 42-94910, belong to the group's 791st Bombardment Squadron.

(AAF) lived up to its reputation for a casual disregard for military practices and customs.

But in Colonel Albert J. Shower's outfit, young male adults learning to fly and fight in a 10-man, 32-ton, 215-mile-per-hour warplane bristling with bombs and guns felt they were being treated like boot-camp recruits.

"Here we were flying missions, working with bullets and bombs, and he was always on our backs," said former 1st Lieutenant Ralph Davis, a B-24 pilot. "When you were not out on a training mission, he would make you fly one. When the weather was bad, he would put you in a Link trainer. We trained and trained and trained."

Davis said a visiting general shook his head in disbelief at Shower's insistence on rulebook military procedure, every day, all day. There was little saluting elsewhere in the laid-back AAF, but at Wendover, said the general, "I wear out my goddamned arm saluting whenever I come to this base."

Here are the raw numbers on what Shower was preparing his B-24 crews for: The United States lost 10,000 bombers in World War II, most with 10 men aboard. The Army Air Forces lost 53,007 men killed in action during the war, more than the total (51,983) for the entire Navy (34,607) and Marine Corps (17,376) combined. Said Shower: "I figured that if being a little 'too military' would get one more man through the war alive, it was worth it."

As with any epiphany that comes to many men, none of the veterans of the 467th Group can pinpoint, exactly, the date and time when Shower went from ogre to idol. After shipping overseas and arriving at Rackheath on March 8, 1944, the "Aggies" flew their first mission on April 10, against a German aircraft assembly plant at Bourges, France.

Though there were no flak or fighters that day, the men noticed something: Shower's Liberator was leading the formation. The wisdom soon spread that, as Davis put it, "Shower wouldn't order you to do something unless he could do it himself, and more." Not every combat group had such a leader, but Shower believed in leading from the front.

As the Eighth Air Force grew and the American daylight bombing campaign broadened, Shower's B-24 crews began to understand that they were caught up in a new kind of fighting.

Re, Davis, Shower, and the others routinely waged war at altitudes three times higher than men had been in combat before, in a place where it was always cold, where the temperature could stay far below freezing for hours, and where the air outside the metal skin of their unpressurized aircraft was too thin for humans to breathe. Lose your oxygen and you could die. Lose the electrical connection to your light-blue ("blue bunny") F-2 four-piece heated flying suit and you could die. Simply do your job while everyone in the

Vincent Re

Still a lieutenant colonel here, Albert Shower wears the "Hap Arnold" shoulder patch, command pilot wings, and a Distinguished Flying Cross that has just been awarded to him. Troops called him a "virtuoso" on the flight deck of a B-24.

Third Reich seemed to be throwing metal at you and you could die. How cold was it up there? One crewman had to tear his penis loose after it stuck fast to the frost-coated relief tube.

How cold was it, really? After a request by Eighth Air Force commander Maj. Gen. (later, General) Carl A. "Tooey" Spaatz and endorsement from AAF chief General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, the War Department changed its regulations in September 1943 to define those wounds eligible for the award of the Purple Heart to include any "injury to any part of the body from an outside force, element, or agent sustained as the result of a hostile act of the enemy or while in action in the face of the

Vincent Re

Seen at a military reunion in 1991, Al Wheelock (left) was a pilot and Vincent Re an engineer-gunner on a B-24 Liberator of the 467th Bombardment Group. Re was also a talented photographer who recorded the activities of the "Rackheath Aggies" and their bomber crews. Both men are now deceased.

enemy." It was the only time in history that the Purple Heart was awarded for frostbite.

A great bomber general who was still a colonel when he introduced tactics over the Third Reich, Curtis E. LeMay, bristled with anger when his bomber missions were characterized as "raids." The word raid was inadequate, LeMay said. Men in B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberators were waging "full-scale battles, fought in the thin air, miles above the land." By the final months of the war, a typical mission launched 1,400 bombers escorted by 948 fighters.

Pilot Davis witnessed the enormity of these massive air battles firsthand but wasn't quite sure why he survived them until he bendt down and kissed U.S. soil upon his return from the crucible of the European air war. "Shower made us pilots handle a B-24 like it was a fighter," Davis said. "Our crews survived when some in other bomb groups didn't. When you got home [after the war], you began to realize what Colonel Shower had really done for you. Yes, he had been riding your ass constantly. Yes, he had been extremely demanding. But when you survived your tour of duty, you realized you owed your life to this great man."

Bombing the Reich

After their baptism of fire, Shower's "Rackheath Aggies" flew mission after mission, facing the cold, fighters, and flak. To a degree, it helped that the Luftwaffe, which was being supplied by German industry with more than enough fighter aircraft, was running desperately low on skilled pilots and struggling to find enough fuel. The really good Luftwaffe pilots, of whom there were far fewer as the war progressed—the Allies defeated the Luftwaffe not by inhibiting aircraft production, nor by shooting down planes, but by killing pilots—perfected a technique of attacking from straight ahead at an angle of 10 degrees above the path of the bomber. This was the location the Americans called "twelve o'clock, high" and its purpose was to kill the bomber pilots.

"But flak was scarier than a fighter," said waist gunner Sergeant Harold Moore. "You could be hit suddenly. You could be blown apart, or have it happen to someone next to you. One of our B-24 navigators, unscathed by a shattering flak blast, had a crewmate's severed head come flying into his lap." And always there was the cold, the bitter, freezing cold that seemed to affect every aspect of existence inside the noisy, trembling B-24. Aboard one bomber, every machine gun froze and was useless just when a swarm of Focke-Wulfs attacked.

Years later, Liberator crew members would resent (or, in some cases, dismiss with a smile) the fact that the B-17 Flying Fortress was world famous. A national poll showed the B-17 to be the "most recognized" aircraft of all time, ahead of the Douglas DC-3, Boeing 747, and Supermarine Spitfire. In contrast, the B-24 seemed almost never to have existed. After the war, few remembered that it was in some ways the better of the two heavy bombers used in Europe.

The B-17 could fly higher, and was easier to handle, more comfortable, more survivable (especially in a water ditching), and unquestionably better looking. But the B-24 was built in far greater numbers (18,325 vs. 12,731), was faster, had greater range, and could carry more bombs. A B-24 flying on three engines could overtake and pass a B-17 chugging along on all four. To be sure, B-17s outnumbered B-24s in the European campaign, but there were 17 combat groups of B-24s, most with four squadrons each, in the theater.

Other facts have been swallowed up in a world of myth and misconception. It simply is not true that the B-17 had an extra crew position for a publicity agent. Rube Goldberg, the 1940s cartoonist who created elaborate machines that didn't work, was not the designer of the B-24. The Germans in particular, and the Japanese to a lesser extent, made themselves familiar with the aircraft flown by their foes, but they never reached a consensus as to which bomber was easier to attack. Fighter pilots disliked guns on bombers and as the development process continued both the B-17 and B-24 bristled with guns. Neither, however, was regarded as significantly better defended than the other.

You could look in any reference book and get basic facts about the Liberator (first flight: December 28, 1939; power: typically four Pratt & Whitney R-1830-33 Wasp radial engines rated at 1,300 horsepower on takeoff driving a 11-foot, 7-inch, three-bladed Hamilton Standard "spider" propellers; gross weight: 68,500 pounds; maximum speed: 298 miles per hour). But only a 467th Bombardment Group veteran could describe the way the Liberator was transformed in the right hands. "With the right pilot, the plane could be smooth as silk in almost any maneuver," said Moore. "That was especially true if you had the good fortune to fly with the group

Continued on page 96

NIJMEGEN: *The* BRIDGES *to*

Two bridges over Holland's Waal River were the scene of

THE CITY OF NIJMEGEN, in the southeastern part of Holland and about six miles from the Dutch-German border, is believed to be Holland's oldest city, going back some 2,000 years. The Romans first established a military camp there, and the area has been permanently occupied ever since.

Nijmegen is situated on the south bank of the Waal River, a branch of the Rhine River, flowing northward from Switzerland. Barges carry goods on the Waal River from the harbor at Rotterdam in Holland to the Ruhr industrial area in Germany.

Because of its location along a major river trade route, Nijmegen became an important commercial center long ago. And, because of its importance, it was also fought over by various armies during a span of 20 centuries. The 20th century was no different, as its strategic location and modern bridges over the Waal made it an ideal objective for armies passing through from east to west and vice versa.

Nijmegen's strategic importance was recognized first by the Germans and then by the Americans and British. It was brought to worldwide public awareness by Cornelius Ryan's 1974 book, *A Bridge Too Far,* and even more so by the 1977 movie of the same name.

Until 1936 there was no fixed roadway connection with the north bank; vehicle traffic used the ferry between Nijmegen and Lent. The only bridge over the river was a three-span steel railroad bridge, which was opened in 1879.

In 1906, a government committee started to make plans for building a highway bridge across the mighty Waal River at Nijmegen, but the Great War of 1914-1918 intervened and put the construction of the bridge on hold. Although the Netherlands was neutral, all major civic-works projects were cancelled for fear that the war might spill over the border and drag Holland into the conflict. Instead of allocating Dutch guilders for the bridge project, the government used the money instead for building defenses and expanding the Dutch Army.

Soon after the Armistice of 1918, the committee met again and renewed the project. Blueprints for the bridge were drawn and, in 1927, final plans were made. Construction costs were estimated at 2,600,000 Dutch guilders. The Dutch government approved the plans and, on October 23, 1931, construction began. The Waal River bridge at Nijmegen became the largest single-span bridge in Europe.

It was a magnificent structure. The total length was 604 meters (1,982 feet) resting on four concrete and stone piers, with four lanes for automotive traffic and special paths on each side for pedestrians and bicycles. The highest point of the bow was 65 meters over the roadway. Building the bridge was not without risks. Three workers fell to their deaths and 10 others were injured in several accidents.

At 3:00 PM on June 16, 1936, the bridge was officially opened by Holland's Queen Wilhelmina as some 200,000 Dutchmen witnessed the ceremony. After the queen

NOWHERE

two important battles.

BY JAN BOS

Paratroopers from Colonel Reuben Tucker's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, are depicted capturing the Nijmegen highway bridge on September 20, 1944, in this painting by James Dietz.

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: Brigadier General James M. Gavin prepares to jump into Holland during Operation Market-Garden in September 1944. He was injured in the jump, but still retained command of the 82nd Airborne. RIGHT: German Field Marshal Walther Model visits a forward command post of a Volksgrenadier division on the Western Front, October 18, 1944.

had cut the ribbon, hundred of cars, buses, and trucks crossed the bridge. It was a glorious, prideful day for the Dutch (and especially the citizens of Nijmegen), but no one could have guessed that, within eight years, the beautiful bridge would be destroyed, rebuilt, and become one of the bloodiest battlegrounds in history's most devastating war.

Three years after the bridge's opening, dark clouds began gathering over Europe and Nijmegen when neighbor Germany began making belligerent noises and threatening war. In September 1939, the threat became real and Germany invaded Poland. The rest of Europe watched, waited, and worried. The Dutch government hoped that Holland could remain neutral, as it had in World War I, but the Germans were already making secret plans to invade France, Denmark, Belgium, and Holland under the code name Fall Gelb (Case Yellow). Hitler's Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop had made promises that Holland would remain neutral, but it was a ruse designed to lull the Dutch into inaction.

Nevertheless, the suspicious Dutch government called for a mobilization to strengthen the Army and Air Force. Warplanes were ordered from the Dutch Fokker factories, and extra anti-aircraft guns and howitzers were bought from foreign companies, while defenses were hastily built all over Holland. On the west side of the Maas-Waal Canal, the west bank of the Grave Bridge, and on the north bank of the Waal River, several concrete pillboxes were constructed. The same for the south bank in the Hunnerpark at Nijmegen, and well-equipped Dutch soldiers soon occupied the fortifications.

Dutch engineers installed so-called "road asparagus"—vertical steel pillars—in the roadway at both ends of the Waal River Bridge to impede any invading tanks and other military vehicles. Both the rail and traffic bridges were mined in case they needed to be blown in an emergency. Dutch Army forces at Nijmegen were prepared for whatever came their way.

It was early on Friday, May 10, 1940, when some 1,000 enemy airplanes flew over Holland in a westerly direction at the start of Germany's violent Blitzkrieg. Many of them were Junkers Ju-52 transport planes, carrying Fallschirmjäger (paratroopers) and towing gliders packed with infantrymen. The airborne troops' mission was to capture the main bridges and waterways in western Holland, seize and hold key airfields, and even capture the Dutch royal family in The Hague.

The Dutch Army fought back fiercely and the German Luftwaffe lost many planes that day; some 361 planes of all kinds were shot down or destroyed on the ground. Included in this number were 275 Ju-52 transport planes. It was the largest loss the Luftwaffe would suffer on a single day.

In an instant Holland was at war, and Nijmegen and its two bridges were a main objective of the German Army. Once taken and held, they could be used to shuttle tens of thousands of follow-on troops into Holland, Belgium, and northern France. A reinforced battalion, "Gruppe Nimwegen" of the 254th Infanterie Division, was detailed to capture the bridges, and several Dutch soldiers were killed trying to prevent such an outcome.

Despite all the time, money, and effort that had gone into building them, Dutch engineers mined Nijmegen's bridges with explosives in order to stop or slow down the enemy. As the enemy drew near, the charges were set off and, with a huge bang, both bridges dropped into the Waal. The effort hardly slowed the Germans, who crossed in assault boats and aboard the ferry that ran between Nijmegen and Lent; the city was soon occupied by Wehrmacht soldiers.

Elsewhere, the country was being overrun. After the Germans bombed the "open city" of Rotterdam, the Dutch commander surrendered. The battle for Holland was over almost as quickly as it had started, and a bitter period of occupation for Nijmegen began that would last for four years. Western Holland would be controlled by the Germans until May 1945.

On orders of the German authorities, Dutch engineers started to repair the bridges at Nijmegen. Pontoons with cranes were used to lift the bow from the river and a three-

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: Paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne strap on their gear before their flight from England to Holland. BELOW: The Waal River highway bridge and the ruins of Nijmegen, shown after the battle.

year reconstruction process began. Finally, in 1943, the rebuilt bridge was opened for traffic—German traffic. During the same time the railroad bridge was also repaired.

As the war went on, Allied bombers flew over Holland day and night on their way to Germany. No bombs were dropped on Nijmegen and/or its bridges, however. But suddenly, on February 22, 1944, a formation of American bombers dropped their load on the city. Was it an error? Did the navigators mistake Nijmegen for a German target? Were the bombs meant for the bridges?

No matter how or why the attack happened, the damage was done. Between 700 and 800 inhabitants of Nijmegen and several German soldiers were killed, with many wounded. The historic old buildings in the center of the city were heavily damaged or destroyed. The bridges, if they had been the target, were not hit.

Four months later, the liberation of Western Europe began. It was D-Day—June 6, 1944. American paratroopers and glider infantrymen of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions landed by parachute and glider in Normandy in advance of amphibious landings on the American Utah and Omaha invasion beaches. Also in the British sector (Gold, Juno, and Sword) British, Canadian, and other Allied amphibious troops came ashore after an early morning assault by British and Canadian airborne and glider forces to capture important targets.

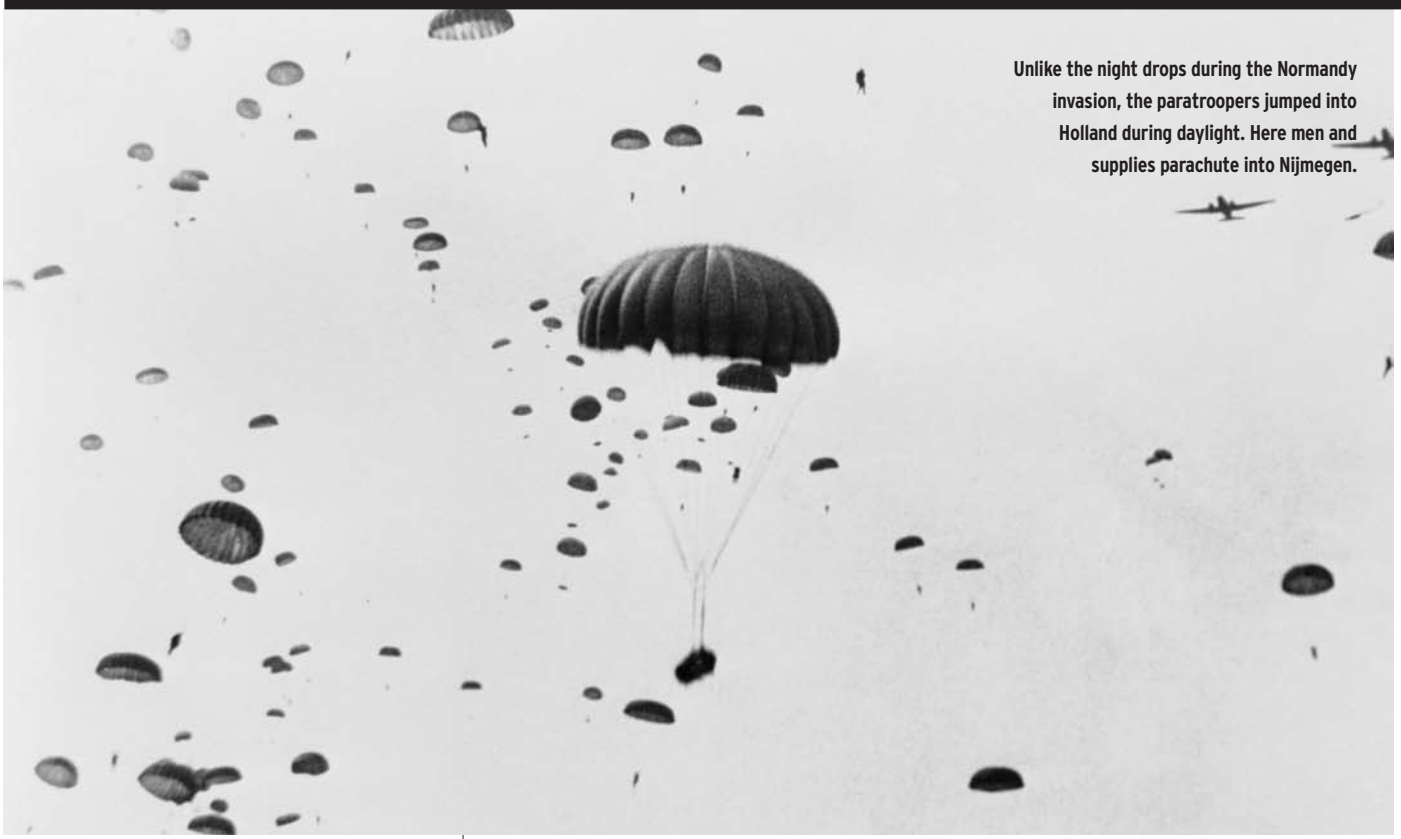
A month after the Normandy invasion, Allied forces conducted a rapid drive across northern France. The airborne divisions were alerted for several missions (Transfigure, Linnet, Linnet II, and Comet) but these operations were cancelled when ground forces overran the intended drop zones. By the end of summer, several bloody but successful battles were fought across France and Belgium, and finally the German Army was retreating in northerly and easterly directions toward the Fatherland. In Holland, the Germans were on the run as well.

It was Dolle Dinsdag (Mad Tuesday)—the Dutch name for Tuesday, September 5, 1944. On this day, rumors were flying across occupied Holland, saying that the long-awaited liberation by Allied forces was at hand. After all, the previous day, the Allies had liberated Antwerp, Belgium, so the liberation of Holland, according to the rumors, must be imminent.

In preparation for this day, the Dutch had made thousands of orange and national flags and were ready to cheer and shower the Allied liberators with flowers as they entered each city. As American and British planes began to fill the sky, and Allied paratroops and gliders descended to earth, it appeared that liberation day had indeed arrived. It was the vanguard of an operation called Market-Garden.

British Field Marshal Bernard Law

Imperial War Museum



Unlike the night drops during the Normandy invasion, the paratroopers jumped into Holland during daylight. Here men and supplies parachute into Nijmegen.

Montgomery, commanding the British 21st Army Group in the north, had conceived the daring operation in Holland that would bypass the formidable defenses of the Siegfried Line (Westwall) and allow for an attack into Germany's industrial Ruhr Valley. In order to do so, airborne troops would first have to capture a series of bridges over major waterways in eastern Holland and hold them until relieved by stronger forces coming over land. If the operation were successful, British forces would be in an excellent position the clear the Scheldt Islands in southwest Holland and open the port of Antwerp.

Such a move would also cut off German troops in western Holland. If everything went as planned, Monty believed the Allies could be in Berlin by Christmas 1944 and the war in Europe would at last be over. Montgomery and his staff put the complex plan together in just a couple of weeks and named it Operation Market-Garden.

Photographs of the bridges and planned landing zones were taken by fast, low-flying airplanes, but information from spies in the Dutch underground was ignored. The Dutch said that the 9th and 10th German SS Panzer Divisions were resting and refitting northwest of Arnhem and Oosterbeek—information that Montgomery disregarded. If they were recuperating, Monty thought, that meant that they probably were not combat ready and posed little danger to the operation.

On Sunday September 17, 1944, Operation Market-Garden began. It was a beautiful, warm, cloudless day. The "Market" portion was the Allies' first airborne daylight operation of the war and would involve the U.S. 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, the British 1st Airborne Division, and Polish 1st Independent Parachute Brigade—over 34,000 men. "Garden" was the follow-on portion that would be conducted by armor and infantry forces from the British XXX Corps, coming up from the Belgian-Dutch border. It would be the largest airborne operation ever mounted up to that point of the war (Operation Varsity, in March 1945, would be larger).

However, there were not enough transport planes to carry all the airborne and glider troops from England to Holland on one day, so plans were made to make one drop in Holland on the 17th, and another on Monday, September 18, 1944. It was also decided not to have two missions on the 17th as there would not be time enough to rest the aircrews and repair the battle damage to the planes. Through such decisions are battles and wars decided.

On the morning of the 17th, paratroops and glider troops began climbing into their aerial vehicles and the C-47 "Skytrains" took off from their English bases, heading east. Maxwell Taylor's 101st Airborne Division was carried by C-47s from the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing toward the drop zones near Eindhoven. James Gavin's 82nd Airborne was dropped from C-47s belonging to the 50th and 52nd Troop Carrier Groups to DZs around Groesbeek and Overasselt, while the British and Polish units would be dropped on the Hinkelse Heath, northwest of Arnhem, by transport planes from the 38th and 46th Transport Groups, as well as several other Troop Carrier Groups.

The first men in were two "sticks" of Pathfinders, who had landed on fields on

Imperial War Museum

National Archives

ABOVE: Soldiers of the 82nd Airborne unload their wrecked glider after a controlled crash in a Dutch field at the opening of Market-Garden. TOP:A C-47 burns in a Dutch field during Operation Market Garden. All aboard managed to escape safely.

the Schoonenburgseweg at Overasselt to mark the drop zone. As soon as the first C-47s carrying the 82nd Airborne Division passed the Dutch coast, German anti-aircraft guns opened fire on the low-flying, unarmed, and unarmored transports but, miraculously, only one was shot down: a C-47A named "Betty" from the 315th Troop Carrier Group, tail number 43-15308, and piloted by Captain Richard Bohannan. On board were 15 paratroopers who were all able to jump from the burning plane. The crew chief was also able to bail out but four others were killed on impact. Except for two paratroopers who escaped, the others were surrounded and, after a firefight, captured by the Germans. Allied fighter planes escorting the aerial convoy dived down and destroyed the anti-aircraft gun that had brought "Betty" down.

The sky continued to rain paratroopers. Men from Colonel Reuben H. Tucker's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne, were dropped onto DZ "O" at Overasselt. E Company, 504th, landed on the south bank of the Maas River and captured the large Maas River bridge at Grave in no time, and the villages of Overasselt, Grave, Nederasselt, and Heumen fell into 504th hands with hardly any fighting. The lock bridge over the Maas-Waal Canal was also captured intact. However, German opposition here was much stronger and Tucker's troops suffered several casualties. The Germans were able to blow the other bridges over the Maas-Waal Canal; at Malden, the bridge exploded practically in the faces of the company sent to capture it. The lock bridge at Heumen, although wired for demolition, was taken before it could be blown up, but the ones at Hatert and Neerbosch were gone before the troopers reached them. South of Nijmegen the paratroopers attacked Bridge #10 (Honinghutje Bridge) across the Maas-Wall Canal. The bridge was badly damaged and was not able to carry the heavy British tanks.

Meanwhile, the paratroopers from the 1st and 3rd Battalions of William Ekman's 505th PIR, plus the 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion and the 376th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion, descended upon DZ "N," southwest of Groesbeek. The 2nd Battalion of the 505th and the 508th PIR both landed on DZ "T" on the Wylerbaan, northeast of Groesbeek.

It was a shooting gallery; the northeastern edge of DZ "T" was almost on the Dutch-German border near Wyler, and several planes were shot down over the drop zone. The 2nd Battalion, 505th, was dropped here by mistake, got their bearings, and headed toward Groesbeek to join the rest of the regiment and meet up with the 504th at the Heumen Bridge.

The 505th sent out a strong fighting patrol into the German Reichswald, southeast of Nijmegen, where rumors told of 1,000 panzers hiding in the woods. The rumor was false and Groesbeek was taken without much opposition.

The operation seemed to be progressing nicely now, despite the failure to capture more bridges. Colonel Roy E. Lindquist's 508th PIR marched to Beek and Ubbergen and secured these villages; the high ground between Nijmegen, Beek, and Groesbeek was also secured by the 508th. Roadblocks were set up and the 376th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion emplaced their 11

75mm pack howitzers and were ready to fire on call (a 12th howitzer was destroyed during the jump due to parachute failure). Gavin's 82nd Airborne was successful in securing its initial objectives for the operation, and defensive positions were established in the event of a German counterattack. So far so good.

Nijmegen was a different story. The bridges there were lightly protected, and there were guards on both sides of the bridges, but these men were of inferior quality. As soon as the paratroopers from Colonel Roy Lindquist's 508th had landed on its Drop Zone "T" at Wylerbaan, 1st Battalion, 508th, marched in the direction of Nijmegen with orders to capture the Waal River bridge there. Lt. Col. Shields Warren, Jr., the battalion commander, directed Companies A and B to link up south of Nijmegen at 7:00 PM; a Dutch civilian would lead the battalion to the bridge. But Company B got lost en route and, after waiting for an hour, Company A, under Captain Jon Adams, pushed on toward the bridge.

Dutch civilians began to greet the paratroopers joyously as they moved into the town, but quickly disappeared when the Germans opened fire. Slowly and carefully the troopers went forward, but came too late into the center of Nijmegen; German troops from the 10th SS "Freundsberg" Panzer Division had just crossed the Waal River bridge before the 508th could get there, set up their defensive perimeter, and send a patrol into town. A deadly firefight broke out and, despite repeated attempts, the 508th, which had earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for its heroic actions during the invasion of Normandy, was unable to get close to the bridge.

Captain Adams was told by a civilian that the control mechanism for blowing the bridge was in the post office a few blocks north of the Keizer Karelplein, so Adams led a patrol that battled its way to the post office. After destroying what they believed was the mechanism, Adams and his men tried returning to their lines, only to find that they were surrounded by the enemy.

The Germans outgunned and outmanned the lightly armed paratroops. The feared 88s and heavy machine guns were positioned in hastily dug trenches in the Hunnerpark traffic circle on the southern approach, as well as in and around the houses, and a number of homes were burned down by the Germans to create better fields of fire.

Company G approached, only to be met by a torrent of rifle, machine-gun, and anti-aircraft weapons fire. Several paratroopers were killed by a machine gun on the Keizer Karelplein, their bodies left sprawled and bleeding on the pavement. A number of other paratroopers were wounded and were taken to a makeshift first-aid station set up in the houses on the Groesbeekseweg, close to the traffic circle. Company G was stopped only some 400 yards from the bridge; it could advance no farther.

The Germans started to reinforce their positions with regular infantry troops and Luftwaffe personnel. Unable to advance due to fierce German opposition, the 508th PIR received a message from General Gavin to "withdraw from close proximity to the bridge and reorganize."

Frustrated, the 508th could do nothing but pull out of Nijmegen, leaving the town in German hands. To make matters worse, the British airborne troops, battling for their lives in Arnhem, a mere 11 miles due north, were still cut off and no relief columns could reach them as long as Nijmegen remained under enemy control.

The 508th fell back to DZ "T," but by then Germans troops had overrun the American position and had taken over the drop zone; some 450 CG4A Waco gliders, carrying Gavin's artillery battalions, supplies, and vehicles were scheduled to arrive at this landing zone the next day.

Fortunately, Lindquist's 508th, thanks to the arrival of the companies that had pulled back from Nijmegen, managed to recapture the fields on the 18th—and just in time, otherwise casualties would have been devastating. Despite heavy fire from small arms and 16 20mm flak guns, Warren's battalion formed up and charged the enemy positions just as the first gliders started to land. One of the heroes of that day was 1st Sergeant Leonard A. Funk, Jr., who led elements of Company C in a fierce counterattack that cleared LZ "T" of German infantry and anti-aircraft artillery, and allowed the landing

Imperial War Museum

National Archives

ABOVE: An advancing American paratrooper narrowly escapes an exploding round from a German 88mm gun. OPPOSITE: A Sherman tank of the 47th/7th Dragoon Guards passes a knocked-out German PzKpfw III in Oosterhout near Nijmegen, September 27, 1944. Narrow roads such as this hampered Allied efforts to reinforce the bridgeheads.

of reinforcing glider-borne troops and artillery of the 319th, 320th, and 456th FA Battalions. For his actions, Sergeant Funk received the Distinguished Service Cross. A total of 50 Germans were killed in the battle for the DZ, another 149 captured, and all the 20mm guns were destroyed.

The 508th also seized, occupied, and defended the Berg-en-Dahl hill mass, which controlled the Groesbeek-Nijmegen area. The regiment cut Highway K, an act that prevented the enemy from bringing in reserves—or escaping destruction.

That afternoon, General Browning, fearing that the British XXX Corps in Arnhem could not hold out much longer, requested that Gavin try again to take the Nijmegen bridge. The Americans drew up a plan to seize the bridge in a night assault. Before the attack could be launched, however, Browning changed his mind and called it off, preferring that the 82nd hold the high ground south of Nijmegen for the time being.

Meanwhile, confusing and contradictory reports from Dutch civilians about the composition, size, and location of German units in and around Nijmegen and the Reichswald continued to filter in to Gavin's headquarters, to the point that no one really knew what or who they were facing.

The Dutch resistance fighters and ordinary citizens bravely did everything in their power to assist the Allies. Tom Horne of Company H, 508th PIR, remembered that he and other members of his company were digging foxholes near a church in Nijmegen when a priest and a tall young boy of about 15 in a Boy Scout uniform approached. Horne said, "The priest motioned for me to get out of the hole and give my entrenching tool to the young man. I did so and the boy dug a big, wide, deep hole for me. As I went to get into the hole, the priest motioned for me to wait and he sent the boy off on an errand. A few minutes later the boy came back with a small mattress which he put in the hole for me. By this time it was very late in the evening. After I was in the hole for a while, the priest came back pushing a wheelbarrow with a large pot in it. He came around to each trooper's hole and served hot beef stew. These people were showing their gratitude by serving us this hot food."

One of the Dutch resistance fighters was 22-year-old Jan van Hoof. On the night of September 18, he crept beneath the highway bridge's structure and with his knife cut the cables that were connected to the explosives on the bridge. By cutting the cables, van Hoof saved the bridge from destruction. He then went back and guided the Americans through the maze of city streets, avoiding the German positions. He would soon pay for his heroics with his life.

Led by van Hoof sitting on a Humber, a British scout car, American tanks and halftracks were creeping through the streets with paratroopers riding the tanks; soon the Shermans and armored cars came under fire from the feared 88s. The Humber raced toward the railroad bridge. In the scout car were an American paratrooper and the two-man British crew. A German antitank gun destroyed the car,

wounding van Hoof and killing the others. Several Germans approached the smoldering Humber and, seeing van Hoof still alive, shot him in the head.

During a lull in the fighting, the four men were buried by Dutch civilians in the garden of a house at the corner of Lange Hezelstraat-Kronenburgersingel Nijmegen—about 60 yards from the railroad bridge. (After the war, a statue honoring Jan van Hoof was erected on the traffic circle next to the Hunnerpark. An official investigation into van Hoof's role in saving the bridge was held. Both Dutch and American reports give Jan credit for his part in the capture of the bridge, although there were several doubters. By Royal Decree, Jan was posthumously awarded the Militaire Willemsorde, fourth class, the highest Dutch military award.)

Imperial War Museum

A German soldier surrenders to members of the British Guards Armored Division during the drive to relieve Arnhem.

On the morning of Tuesday, September 19, 1944, the first reconnaissance vehicles from the Household Cavalry arrived in the 82nd's perimeter at Nijmegen, soon to be followed by Sherman tanks, Bren carriers, half-tracks, and other armored vehicles. Because XXX Corps had to fight a series of ambushes and running gun battles along "Hell's Highway," as Route 69, the narrow road between Eindhoven and Arnhem, came to be called, and experienced a long delay at Son caused by a bridge demolition—they were more than 30 hours behind schedule.

General Gavin and General Brian Horrocks, commanding the British ground column, met in Malden to discuss plans for getting across the Waal River as soon as possible. Gavin said he intended to send Lt. Col. Ben Vandervoort's 2nd Battalion, 505th PIR, against the south end of the bridge while sending Tucker's 504th PIR across in boats the next day to capture the north end. The only problem was, Gavin had no boats. Fortunately, the British had collapsible wood-and-canvas boats in their engineer train many miles back and offered them to Gavin.

The British lorries carrying these boats were sent to Nijmegen with top priority. It was expected that they would arrive during the night of September 19/20, but the boats did not arrive in the 82nd's sector in time and the crossing had to be postponed. In addition, 2nd Platoon, B Company, 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion, under command of Lieutenant Adrian J. Finlayson, was ordered to collect any boats he could find on the Maas-Waal Canal. In several "sweeps," the platoon gathered some 27 rowboats of all kinds, but they were never used during the Waal River crossing.

While waiting for the British boats, Gavin ordered Vandervoort's men, supported by British armor, to attack the south end of the bridge. Repeated attempts resulted in repeated failures and mounting casualties. Intelligence reports estimated that some 500 SS men, backed by artillery, mortars, and anti-aircraft guns, controlled the highway bridge and the accesses toward it.

Reinforcements were needed. The weather in Holland was good. The weather in England, however, was bad, with low-hanging clouds and fog preventing the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment from taking off and reinforcing the 82nd. (The 325th would not arrive in Holland until September 23.) The Germans had no trouble reinforcing their positions, however, and soon the Reichswald was bulging with troops, armor, and artillery.

On the morning of September 20, 1944, General Gavin climbed into his jeep and drove off toward the power station when his jeep was suddenly fired upon by German soldiers. The driver quickly turned the jeep around, while General Gavin fired back with his M-1. The jeep raced back to the 504th positions in the Jonkerbosch area in southern Nijmegen. Exasperated with the delays (the British boats still hadn't arrived) and the stubborn German resistance, Gavin ordered Tucker to clear the area of enemy troops in preparation for the river crossing. H-hour was set for 3:00 PM.

The paratroopers of Major Julian Cook's 3rd Battalion, 504th, set off, escorted by British Sherman tanks from the Irish Guards that would provide cover for the crossing. The tanks of the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons took up positions behind a dike near the power plant and started to lay down a smoke screen; British artillery positioned in Malden would fire their 25-pounders to support the crossing. Eight British Typhoon fighters from 247 Squadron, 83 Group (2nd Tactical Air Force, RAF) flew over and strafed the north bank. The wind blew away the smoke screen.

Finally, at approximately 2:30 PM, the trucks carrying the boats arrived and were unloaded near the power station. The 307th Engineers from C Company, who were to pilot the boats across the river, were stunned. They had never seen boats like these, let

Imperial War Museum

An up-gunned Sherman "Firefly" tank of the Irish Guards rolls past three other tanks knocked out during Operation Market-Garden on September 17, 1944.

alone rowed anything like them. The boats—26 in all—were folding boats, 19 feet long, with plywood bottoms, canvas sides, and wooden struts to hold up the sides. There were hardly any oars, and there was no time to train in using them.

The Germans noticed the activity around the power station and started to rake the area with artillery fire. While under intense fire, the boats were carried over the dike and lowered into the river, but some of the boats—and men—got stuck in the mud. In spite of exploding shells, whizzing bullets, and flying shrapnel, the paratroopers had to get out of their boats and carry them farther into the river, which was approximately 460 feet wide at this point, with a swift current. The men had to paddle using their rifle butts as oars, ducking between strokes as the air was filled with small arms fire, heavy machine-gun fire, mortar, Nebelwerfer, and artillery fire.

The crossing was made in several waves. Each boat carried 13 paratroopers and a crew of three engineers. The first wave was launched at 2:57 PM and consisted of troopers from 3rd Battalion, 504th: Staff, H Company (Captain Carl W. Kappel), I Company (Captain T. Moffatt Burriss), and forward observer teams from the 376th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion whose guns were positioned on the west bank of the Maas-Waal Canal. Due to their heavy equipment, several 376th observers had to stand up, exposed, in the boats.

The men rowed as fast as they could but they couldn't out-row the sheets of deadly metal being flung at them. Men were wounded or killed, and boats were blown out of the water. The canvas sides offered no protection for the frantic men, and the punctured boats began to fill with water. Helmets were used for bailing and handkerchiefs were stuffed into bullet holes. Some of the men exited their sinking boats and swam the remainder of the way.

Exhausted, the survivors of Burriss's I Company reached the north bank, jumped out of the boats, took cover, and tried to catch their breath and gather their courage before pushing on. The men had to run across a 1,200-foot-wide field to reach the 20-foot-high dike. About halfway across the field was a shallow ditch, which gave some protection.

Ordering his men to fix bayonets, Burriss charged up the dike, showing no mercy. I Company threw hand grenades into the German positions and shot every German who came in sight. No prisoners were taken at first. The men then moved through the fields, some heading for the railroad bridge and others toward Hof van Holland, an old Dutch fortress with a moat around it and German machine guns and anti-aircraft guns in its towers.

While Burriss's men were battling their way northward, the second wave was preparing to cross. Only 11 boats were available for the second wave, the others having been destroyed or abandoned on the north bank when there were not enough engineers to return them. The remaining engineers rowed these 11 boats back to the Nijmegen side to pick up more paratroopers.

The 2nd wave started across at 3:15 PM with troopers from G Company (Captain Fred E. Thomas), 3rd Battalion, and 1st Battalion, 504th (Captain W.S. Burkholder). One boat consisted only of engineers under command of 1st Lieutenant John A. Holabird, Jr., whose task was to fulfill the engineer role: remove/lay mines, remove explosives and obstacles, etc., on the far side of the Waal.

American and British artillery and tank fire covered the crossing. Second Battalion, 504th, also tried to suppress the enemy with rifle and heavy machine-gun and mortar fire.

Although the boats continued to be hit by deadly fire, the diminishing number of engineers from C Company, 307th, never faltered, rowing time and again back and forth to pick up and deliver the remainder of Major Willard E. Harrison's 1st Battalion, 504th. Wounded paratroopers were returned to the south bank and received medical attention at an aid station set up in the power plant. With only nine boats still available, the sixth and final crossing took place at 7:00 PM.

One of those who risked his life to ferry the paratroopers across the Waal was Captain Wesley D. Harris, commander of Company C, 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion. For his heroism, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. The citation for the medal reads, in part: "Captain Harris, while under heavy enemy fire, personally directed the loading and movement of assault boats which enabled the 504th Parachute Infantry to successfully cross the Waal River and establish the vital Nijmegen bridgehead.

"Crossing the river in the face of heavy enemy machine gun, 20-mm, and artillery fire in one of the first assault boats of the initial assault wave, Captain Harris was painfully wounded in the back and arm but continued to supervise the movement and unloading of the boats. After returning to the south bank of the river he refused medical evacuation but effected rapid and thorough reorganization of the remaining boats and engineer personnel for the crossing of the second wave. While leading the second wave, a pontoon near his boat was hit by enemy fire and capsized, but Captain Harris plunged into the river and, despite his wounded condition, assisted three men to other boats. Captain Harris then returned to the south bank and while supervising loading of the third wave, fainted for the loss of blood."

The greater part of 3rd Battalion, 504th, on the north side of the river, bypassed the fortress and set their sights on the railroad bridge. Two pillboxes near the railroad tracks were destroyed, and the north end of the railroad bridge was captured and secured.

A German counterattack, supported by 20mm self-propelled guns, was beaten back by the paratroopers. Several prisoners were taken and locked inside a chamber of the railroad bridge, while the fortress was captured by a platoon from H Company.

Meanwhile, small groups from both H and I Companies were attacking the north end of the railroad bridge and spraying Browning Automatic Rifle fire while awaiting reinforcements. Elements from these two companies were also fighting their way toward the north end of the still-intact highway bridge.

Lieutenant Jack Dube, Company G, 508th PIR, had crept to within a few blocks of the bridge when his unit was stopped by heavy machine-gun and 88mm fire and fought back with a bazooka, 60mm mortar, and rifles. "We were soon pinned down and fragmented as an effective combat unit," he said. "I was kneeling behind shrubs in the yard of a structure I thought was a dental or medical office building. Several shell bursts near my location restricted my movement.

"A shell hit the building behind me and shrapnel from that explosion hit me in the back of the head, left shoulder, and left forearm. The shrapnel had penetrated through my helmet and helmet liner, leaving a jagged three-inch hole. A medic applied sulfa powder to my gaping and profusely bleeding head wound. Continued enemy shelling completely dispersed our small group, and I soon found myself alone with no weapon, and much confusion due to my injury. Weakness, dizziness, and disorientation convinced me to seek cover and medical assistance."

Dube was taken to a hospital, which he said was soon was hit by incendiaries and set on fire. He was then evacuated by members of the Dutch underground and carried to the basement of a private home where he remained for three or four days before being taken to a U.S. Army field hospital near Nijmegen.

At the south end of the span in Nijmegen, Vandervoort's battalion, reinforced by British tanks and infantrymen, was closing in on the structure. Several tanks were knocked out but paratroopers fought their way from house to house, from rooftop to rooftop, battling their way toward the highway bridge.

The SS troops in the park started to run for the bridge, leaving behind their dead and wounded. (In a later stage of the operation, the Germans were buried in mass graves in several Nijmegen cemeteries; some 123 dead Germans were buried in a special plot of the temporary American Molenhoek cemetery, south of Nijmegen.)

German resistance finally was overcome at the south/Nijmegen end of the bridge. Now, with both ends in Allied hands, Major Cook requested tanks. He sent a message that read, "Cook has the dike and the guns. Can you run a tank down the bridge to help them out?"

Four Shermans from the Guards Armoured Division, under command of Sergeant Peter Robinson, obliged. When the signal was given, the tanks raced across the bridge, blasting away with their machine guns and 75mm main guns. They managed to destroy an 88mm antitank gun north of the bridge; another 88 fired on one of the tanks, disabling it. When the tanks were midway across the bridge, the Germans tried to blow the structure. Nothing happened (perhaps thanks to Jan van Hoof's heroic activity?), and the tanks reached the paratroopers in Lent. There were still a few Germans on the bridge, but their resistance was soon overcome and the bridge was declared secure at 7:10 PM on September 20.

The price for the bridge was high; the 504th lost 24 men killed and some 70 seriously wounded in the river crossing and the attack on both bridges. In the battle for the railroad bridge, a total of 267 dead Germans were counted and a little more than 200 Germans were captured. Much of the city of Nijmegen was destroyed during the five days of fighting.

Gavin later wrote, "The [Dutch] underground played a major part in getting this done and they deserve a lion's share of the credit for saving the big bridge at Nijmegen." But the fighting was far from over.

An area of about a mile north of the bridge was cleared by the paratroopers, but the tankers refused to go on toward Arnhem to relieve the beleaguered British and Polish airborne troops; Dutch intelligence had sent a message with information that three Tiger tanks, several antitank guns, and supporting German infantry were on their way to Lent. The paratroopers and British tankers at Lent dug in for the night. During the night, the last wounded were evacuated from the north bank and taken to field hospitals in Nijmegen.

At the time of the river crossing, paratroopers of the other battalions of the 505th had a hard fight at Mook. General Gavin left the power station at Nijmegen, mounted his jeep, and raced to Mook, where he personally took command of the 505th's defense.

At Beek, about two miles southeast of Nijmegen, paratroopers from the 508th and D Company, 307th Engineers, succeeded in stopping several German attempts to take back the Waal River bridge. Heavy fighting took place in Wyler and Beek, the latter village changing hands several times.

Harry Roll, Company H, 508th PIR,was one of those fighting in Beek. Launching a night assault from Berg-en-Dahl, Company H was raked by machine-gun fire coming from the cupola of a house. "I dove for a ditch," said Roll, "and snuggled as low as I could. I took a shoulder hit that only skinned and burned, but to my surprise, Captain Toth, our CO, stood just above me in the middle of the road and called for Moon and Tucker to get that bazooka up front. Toth told them to hit the shutters on the cupola. A direct hit silenced that machine gun, allowing us to proceed down through the streets into Beek."

After the order to pull back was given, Roll went over to the foxhole of a buddy, Cecil Bledsoe, to give him the word, only to find Bledsoe shot through the head. "The sniper fire of the German was well placed despite the darkness," Roll said.

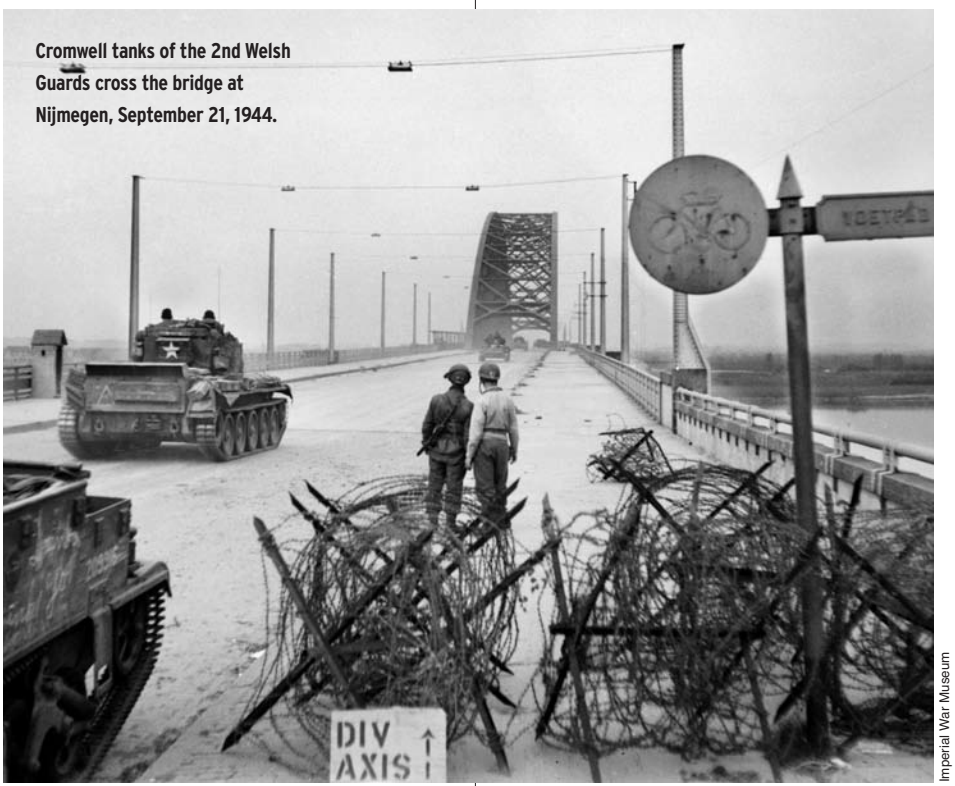
Tom Horne, Company H, said that his company was involved in a "heated skirmish" with the Germans in the streets of Beek. "They were throwing grenades and firing from everywhere. I was in a kneeling position firing my rifle at them when I got hit and knocked flat on my back. Harry Roll was behind me and he said I was hit in the mid-section because blood was coming out of my back. A few moments later I figured out that I was hit in the base of my neck. I'm pretty sure I was hit by a burst from a machine gun because the woodwork on my rifle was also busted up. This ended my tour in the Holland campaign. Hospital life was more to my liking."

Sergeant Ralph Busson was another Company H paratrooper at Beek. He remembered that it was so dark during the night attack, "we had to hold onto each other. All hell broke loose as we got into the center of town. After about 20 minutes of fighting, things quieted down. We pulled back out of town to the hill above it. The next morning we found out that the Germans were still there, so we called for an artillery barrage. H Company was to attack and take the town.

"As we were going down a small alley with eight men, a German machine gun opened up; the gunner got five out of the eight. Frank Shimko, R.J. Brown, and I managed to duck into a small building. About 100 yards down the street, I saw a German sticking his head out of a window. It took me one shot to get him. Throwing all of our grenades down the street, we must have gotten their machine gun, too, because it stopped firing. Then we got orders to withdraw. The next day H Company took the town without firing a shot."

Another Company H trooper, Ollie W. Griffin, recalled the loss of two buddies at Beek. When the company returned to the town on September 20 after pulling out the night before, they jumped into the same slit trenches they had dug on the 19th; the Germans were waiting for them. "There must have been several snipers looking right down on us," Griffin said. "Sergeant Curtis Sides was in a hole about 10 feet from mine. Bill Kurzawski was in another one about ten feet in front of Sides. The first shot hit Kurzawski in the head, killing him. The next shot hit Sides' rifle, ruining it.

"He turned to me and said he couldn't use his rifle. I said to get down but I should have said 'Let's move.' Almost immediately the next shot hit Sides in the head and killed him."



Cromwell tanks of the 2nd Welsh Guards cross the bridge at Nijmegen, September 21, 1944.

Imperial War Museum

Griffin got out of the killing zone as fast as he could with bullets following him, and ended up in a small woods. A few minutes later he was joined by Frank Bagdonas. "We found a place a little up the hill with a good view of Beek," Griffin said. "We were observing the closest house when out the door walked a tall German soldier. He acted like no one was within a hundred miles; I guess he thought we all took off for Berg-en-Dahl. Frank and I decided to aim, count to three, and both shoot. We did and he went down."

During the fierce fighting for Wyler and Beek, the 508th captured 483 prisoners, but the regiment suffered heavily: 139 killed,

Continued on page 96

KERAMA RETTO

BY PIERRE V. COMTOIS

CLOSE TO THE northern end of the island of Tokashiki, the largest member of a tiny group of islands called Kerama Retto, located 15 miles west of Okinawa and hardly 400 miles from the Japanese home islands, Corporal Alexander Roberts and the rest of the 306th Regimental Combat Team rested for the night beneath the starry skies of the northern Pacific. It was a welcome respite from the previous three days of tension-filled landings and clashes with resisting Japanese troops.

Suddenly, the eerie silence of the night was interrupted by a series of dull explosions and the subsequent screams and wails of the injured from farther inland. The next morning, Roberts and his fellows, in seeking out the source of the sounds, discovered a small valley filled with over 150 dead and dying Japanese civilians. As a result of official warnings of the barbarous practices of the invading Americans, fathers had throttled their families before disembowling themselves. In some places, three generations lay mangled together beside the bodies of their patriarchs who themselves had been torn apart by the self-inflicted blasts of hand grenades. As the American soldiers did what they could dispensing food and medical care, survivors who had killed their loved ones only hours before wept with the realization of the enormity of their error.

Such a scene was only the beginning of the tragedies to be visited upon the Japanese people already overburdened with the human cost of years of war. The toll in human lives would only escalate as the titanic struggle for the Pacific entered its final phase and the desperation of Japan's military leaders led them to envision a final stand involving

All photos: National Archives

every last member of their beleaguered nation.

By late 1944, the ring of steel thrown up around the crumbling Empire of Japan had begun to tighten to the point where regular bombing of the home islands and territories long held by the Japanese became the norm and future amphibious operations by the United States moved to targets considered by the enemy as its native soil.

Events began to move faster with the fall of the Philippines at the end of February 1945, and with the invasion and conquest of Iwo Jima by mid-March. Vast naval task forces roamed the waters off China and Japan while American warplanes ruled the skies and its submarines prowled beneath the seas.

As early as October 10, 1944, warplanes made the first fast-carrier raid on Okinawa, destroying Naha, its most important city. When the Philippines were invaded on January 8, 1945, Vice Admiral John S. McCain's Task Force 38 moved north to cover the operation, ranging far afield in the performance of its duties. During that time, TF 38 savaged the Ryukyus, struck Formosa, and laid waste the ports of the South China coast.

Finally, with the Philippines declared secure by an overly optimistic General Douglas MacArthur, McCain turned his ships back to Ulithi Atoll in the Palaus, where he and Admiral William H. Halsey turned over the Pacific Fleet's command to Admirals Raymond Spruance and Marc A. Mitscher. With the transfer of command, the Third Fleet became the Fifth, with Task Force 38 metamorphosing into the new Task Force 58 whose mission would now be to mount, launch, and support the coming strikes at the Ryukyu islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

On a half dozen forgotten islands, American soldiers encountered the human cost of war.

KEY TO VICTORY AT OKINAWA

Troops of the U.S. Army's 306th Regimental Combat Team, 77th Infantry Division, come ashore at tiny Geruma Shima, one of the Kerema Retto group of islands near Okinawa, during Operation Iceberg, March 26, 1945.

Operation Iceberg would be the culmination of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's island-hopping campaign that had taken the United States Navy and Marine Corps, in three years, all the way across the Central Pacific. Now, with Nimitz himself headquartered at Guam and the elements of what would become the greatest naval armada ever assembled being outfitted at their various staging areas from California to Australia, the Americans were poised to enter their end game with Japan.

After the reduction of Iwo Jima on March 14, 1945, square in the sights of this American juggernaut was the tiny island of Okinawa, the anchor at the end of a long chain of outer islands that led 400 miles back to Kyushu, the southernmost of the Japanese home islands.

Not unaware of Okinawa's exposed and strategic position, Tokyo had arranged for 100,000 men of the 32nd Japanese Imperial Army to welcome the advancing Americans with lead, steel, and fire. By this point in the war, the Japanese high command knew they had everything to lose; they knew with what implacability their enemy was coming for them.

The one straw to which they might grasp was the hope that by making each further step closer to the home islands as costly as possible, they might be able to negotiate an end to the war that would involve something less than unconditional surrender.

For their part, the Americans also realized the strategic importance of Okinawa as a base from which to launch air strikes at Japan and to prepare for its inevitable invasion. With their recent experience on Iwo Jima, the American commanders knew what kind of reception awaited them on Okinawa and planned accordingly. A landing force of 157,000 Marines would challenge the Japanese ashore while an awesome fleet composed of over 1,500 warships would lie off shore and range the wide western Pacific in their support. But, before this force was brought to bear upon its target, a small but necessary side show would first have to be performed.

As the battle for Iwo Jima progressed, the difficulties in resupply and reenforcement of the troops ashore became more and more acute. With the growing threat of kamikazes possibly forcing any naval covering force out to sea and away from direct support of the landward fighting, the advantages of establishing some kind of permanent supply base close to the invasion beaches in any future operation were evident.

As L-day for Operation Iceberg approached, Vice Admiral Kelly Turner, commander of the Joint Expeditionary Force designated TF 51, suggested the seizure of a tiny group of islands 15 miles west of Okinawa called Kerama Retto, the largest and most easterly of which could host a two-mile-long runway for seaplanes and a sheltered, deep water anchorage that could hold as many as 75 ships.

At first, Turner's suggestion was dismissed as unfeasible due to the islands' vulnerability to enemy air attack from at least five nearby air bases, but as time went on Turner won support for his idea. Planned to take place just six days prior to the invasion of Okinawa itself, Turner hoped that the fleet's covering fire throughout the Ryukyus would divert Japanese attention from Kerama Retto, enabling him to seize the islands with a relative handful of troops.

Chosen for that job was XXIV Corps' 77th Infantry Division. Veterans of the Philippines fighting, they were involved with the conquest of Leyte and were ramrodded by Major General Andrew D. Bruce. As the operation unfolded, the 77th would break up into four Battalion Landing Teams (BLTs) and assault each island in the Kerama group simultaneously. In addition, the 420th Artillery Group would land on tiny Keise Shima, about halfway between Kerama and Okinawa, where their guns would be within range to support the coming landings on the Hagushi beaches.

Of course, much of the plan relied upon the Japanese not expecting an attack from such an unlikely quarter and, in that expectation, the American planners were not disappointed. Lt. Gen. Mitsuru Ushijima, the commanding officer of the Japanese on Okinawa, was convinced that the Americans would not waste their strength or allow themselves to be distracted in taking Kerama Retto. So, in dire need of every fighting man he could get, Ushijima ordered the islands stripped of the 2,335 soldiers stationed there. That left behind a gaggle of 975 men from the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Sea Raiding Squadrons and Base Battalions, as well as Korean slave laborers of the 103rd Sea Duty Company.

Despite the weakness of the remaining force, Ushijima still had plans for the Kerama Islands, intending to use them as a base for 350 explosive-laden suicide boats that would be launched against the ships of the American landing force.

While the 77th Division assembled on Leyte in mid-March to begin practicing for the operation, its commanders were meeting to hammer out the final details of the plan, including study of last-minute air reconnaissance photos taken by Army planes from nearby Luzon, which showed a number of inviting beaches for the landing craft. The pictures also revealed the rather bleak terrain of the islands of Kerama Retto, which cov-

ered no more than an area of about 16 square sea miles. Rocky and uneven, the islands comprised narrow defiles and craggy cliffs covered in a desultory layer of scrub brush and gnarled trees. The narrow beaches of coral rock were squeezed at the end of steep valleys with low sea walls to protect them from the tide. The population of just over 6,000 people existed with a few pack-animal trails and no roads, making a living from the sea rather than from their steeply sloped plots of sweet potatoes on the islands' rocky hillsides.

From March 18-20, the 77th completed loading duties and embarked into its various landing craft. Slowly, inexorably, all the elements of TG 51.1 began coming together as Rear Admiral Ingolf N. Kiland took the Western Island Attack Group out to sea on March 21. From there, aboard his flagship *Mount McKinley,* Kiland could observe his entire command: a 19-ship transport squadron with their attendant destroyers and destroyer escorts, a tractor flotilla of 29 large landing craft, gunboats and patrol ships, a hospital ship, two repair ships, two Victory ships filled with ammunition, an antimine group with their nets and buoys, tankers, and a whole range of miscellaneous surface craft that included two tug boats. In short, Kiland had everything he needed to make a proper, self-contained island assault.

ABOVE: Amphibious tractors carrying the 1st Battalion, 305th Infantry, 77th Division, head for the beaches of Zamami Shima, March 26, 1945. OPPOSITE: An American officer takes a spin in one of the captured suicide boats. The speed of the boat has lifted the bow out of the water.

Protecting Kiland's group in the wider seas around him ranged the escort carriers and minesweepers of Rear Admiral William "Spike" Blandy's Task Force 52, which also included underwater demolitions teams. And beyond Blandy were the rest of Turner's Joint Expeditionary Force and Mitscher's Task Force 58.

In the meantime, offensive activity against the enemy had intensified all over the northern Pacific in preparation for the coming enterprise. American expectations were sanguine about the invasion of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. As a result, extensive softening-up operations were planned for.

As the new year began, Fast Carrier Task Forces swept the seas looking for targets of opportunity and brushed every enemy plane from the skies. One such group made an early raid on Okinawa, prompting an unnamed Japanese signalman there to write, "The ferocity of the bombing is terrific. It really makes me furious.... What the hell kind of bastards are they.... Bomb(ing) from 6 AM to 6 PM!"

It was only the beginning. The air strikes became heavier and more frequent. When the carrier planes retired, they were replaced by waves of B-29s that pounded the island with such constancy that the hapless Japanese referred to them as the "regular run." The relentless bombing of Okinawa was still going on in March when Marine flight leader Major D.C. Andre, flying over the island on a reconnaissance mission, marveled at the destruction. "I'd never seen so many planes over one target at the same time," he said.

Beneath the seas and above the waves, enemy shipping was nowhere safe. Taking a cue from German tactics in the Atlantic, American submarines formed their own wolf packs and hunted down Japanese naval units wherever they could while aircraft did the same above the surface. In the first three months of 1945, Americans sank more enemy craft than any other naval force in history. Desperately needed reinforcements and supplies bound for the Ryukyus found only watery graves along the sea lanes between the home islands and the war zone.

In addition, the air war intensified to levels undreamed of only four years before. Even as thousands of warplanes continued to arrive from the United States on outlying islands, thousands more dominated the skies over Japan. Carrier-based fighters shot down every plane that dared rise to challenge them and destroyed hundreds more on the ground.

From bases all around Japan, in China and India, the Philippines, and Palaus and the Marianas, endless waves of American heavy bombers sought out industrial targets throughout the enemy homeland. B-29 raids, numbering in the hundreds of planes, ruined the great cities of Japan. But the worst was yet to come. Dissatisfied with the performance of his bombers, General Curtis LeMay, commander of the 20th Bombardment Group, ordered 300 Superfortresses loaded with 2,000 tons of incendiary bombs and sent them over Tokyo on March 9. The resultant devastation could not be more complete, with over 16 square miles of the city reduced to ashes and almost 100,000 people killed.

Amtracks cross Keise Shima supported by infantry of the 77th Division.

As Kiland's attack group continued to make its way through heavy seas and its inexperienced landing-craft crews poured over illustrated copies of *The Coxswain's Guide to the Beaches,* elements of TF 58 kept the enemy at a distance. On March 23, the destroyer *Haggard* found a prowling Japanese submarine that Lt. Cmdr. V.J. Soballe immediately ordered depth charged. Forced to the surface by the subsea explosions, *RO-41* breached just in time to be rammed by *Haggard* and sent to the bottom again in pieces.

The next day, Admiral Mitscher sent 112 planes on a strike against a Japanese convoy 150 miles northwest of Okinawa, sinking all eight ships.

In expectation of the imminent arrival of TG 51.1, the ships of Blandy's Amphibious Support Force were already hard at work. By March 25, the 122-ship flotilla of destroyer minesweepers, motor minesweepers, tenders, and patrol boats had cleared a seven-mile-long corridor to Kerama from the south and another from the southwest. Although the Japanese never practiced extensive use of underwater mining except in Philippine waters, and what mines they did use were antiquated and inefficient, there were still plenty to give the U.S. Navy headaches.

Aboard his flagship *Terror,* Rear Admiral Alexander Sharp coordinated his fleet of minesweepers as they searched the approaches to the Kerama beaches for their dangerous prey, fighting off sniper fire from shore and the harassing kamikazes from the air. On the day of the Kerama landings, the destroyer *Halligan* struck a mine in unswept waters and had its entire bow blown off.

Early on the morning of March 25, after the surrounding waters had been cleared of mines, Rear Admiral C. Turner Joy left TF 54, the Gunfire and Covering Force, headed for Okinawa with two cruisers and three destroyers, and arrived off Kerama at 5:30 AM. Immediately, Joy's ships began a preliminary fire on the various islands, concentrating on the designated landing beaches and what strongpoints were judged to be of possible danger to the landing force. Joining him were other destroyers taking up positions around the islands for radar picket duty against the threat of enemy air strikes.

At 6:00 AM, the first Americans waded ashore at various beaches of the target islands, but they were not infantrymen—they were frogmen of Blandy's Amphibious Support Force. The underwater demolitions teams (UDTs) broke up into three units, each delivered to its proper beach by an LCVP that churned its way to the islands' outlying reefs, deposited its load of frogmen, and then turned back out to open water.

Dropped every 50 yards, the divers wore nothing but a pair of trunks, goggles, and flippers and carried only measuring lines and waterproof writing gear. In the gloom of early morning, they worked under an umbrella of gunfire from the destroyers offshore that helped keep enemy sniper fire to a minimum. Methodically working their way along the reefs, which sometimes came within inches of the surface of the water, the frogmen inspected the approaches to the beaches for underwater obstacles. At last, their inspection finished, they grabbed lines trailing from the stern of the returning LCVPs and were hauled aboard for the fast trip back to their command APDs and an analysis of their findings.

In the case of the Kerama operation, the news was not good, but hardly devastating to the operation. With the report from the UDTs of the impossibility of using LCVP landing boats on two of the target islands due to the unusually high coral formations, Kiland was forced to make a change in his invasion plans. Using LVTs, the islands of Zamami, Aka, Hokaji, and Geruma Shima would be assaulted by four battalions of the 77th as originally planned, but the attack on Yakabi and Kuba Shima would be delayed until the tractors used in the Aka landings could return to the flotilla. There, they would be reloaded with troops and diverted to the Yakabi and Kuba beaches.

As the day dawned bright and clear on March 26, Kiland confirmed 8:00 AM as M-hour for the invasion of Kerama Retto to begin. Already, two groups of LSTs had broken away from the main portion of TG 51.1, with the smaller group of four making its way two miles north of Yakabi Shima, the western most of the Kerama group, and the other group of 14 ships two miles south of Kuba Shima. By 6:40 AM, as a curtain of support fire from cruisers off shore and carrier planes overhead bombarded the tiny islands, amphtracs with their payload of anxious troops and amphibious tanks began their run

for the beaches. With Navy guide boats in the lead, the amphtracs and amphibious tanks divided into their separate battalions and headed for their designated landing areas.

Their approach was made more difficult than beach landings usually were by their having to invade so many closely situated islands at once. The northern group of LSTs had to make two dog-legs before hitting their beach on Zamami; the southern group, after splitting up into three groups, needed to wind their way past tiny, reef-guarded islets to reach their assigned objectives. But the fact that all groups hit their proper beaches on schedule was proof of the landing crafts' fast-learning crewmen.

As each assault wave neared its target, its accompanying support craft added their own firepower to that of the cruisers and strafing planes, with mortars coughing at 3,200 yards, rockets roaring at 1,100 yards, and automatic gunfire filling in the gaps. Gradually, as the troops neared shore, cruiser fire shifted away from their front to the flanks. At last, the support craft halted their approach to allow the landing craft through. At that point, they ceased their fire and retreated as the amphibious tanks took the lead and spearheaded the final dash to the beaches.

As it turned out, the operation took the enemy completely by surprise, with most of the landings being unopposed and the few Japanese defenders retreating inland to caves and tunnels, bringing the islands' terrorized native inhabitants with them. The soldiers, who had been ordered by Ushijima to offer minimum resistance to any enemy attack, had regaled the civilian population with stories of the horrible fate that awaited them at the hands of the barbaric Americans.

Just four minutes after M-hour, the 3rd BLT of the 305th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) were the first Americans ashore on Kerama as their LVTs ran up onto Beach Gold at Aka Shima to a reception of mortar and machine-gun fire delivered by the 200 Korean laborers and Japanese suicide boat operators defending the shore.

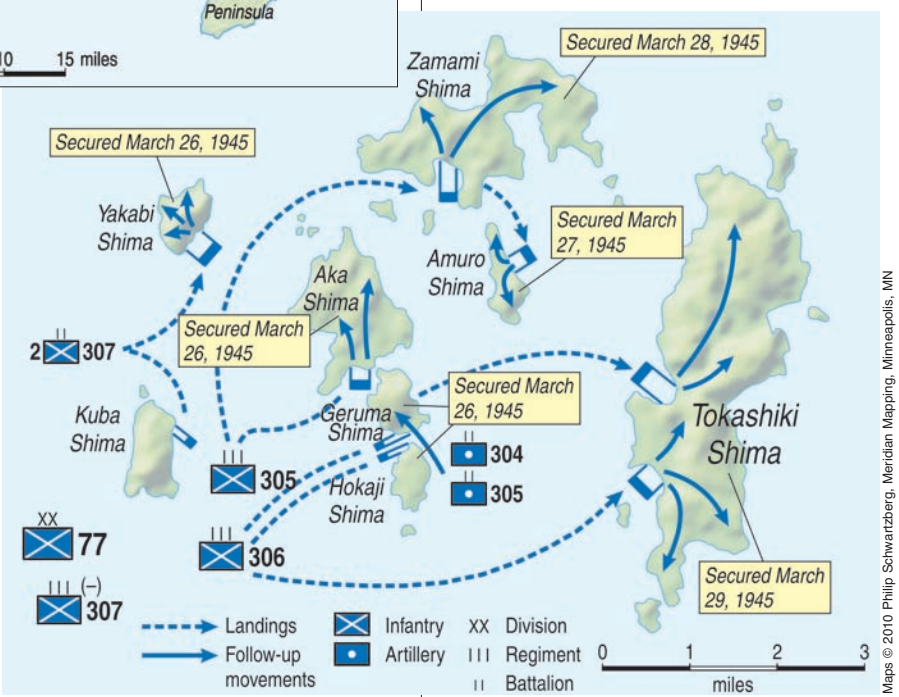
Situated in the center of the Kerama group, Aka, or "Happy Corner Island," was hardly 3,000 yards long and rose to about 600 feet at the summits of two small peaks, affording few hiding places for its defenders when they retreated without inflicting any harm on the Americans. Moving quickly, the GIs overran the tiny village of Aka and pressed inland where resistance increased. As the landscape rose higher, the Japanese offered greater and greater opposition. At one point, naval gunfire had to be called in to blast a platoon of enemy soldiers from the path of the advance.

In the afternoon, a total of 58 more Japanese were killed in a host of small-unit encounters, with every enemy soldier needing to be roused from caves and prepared positions almost man to man. By early evening, however, most of the island had been secured. Yet nearly 300 Japanese combatants and 400 civilians were still holed up in what remained.

South of Aka, the smaller island of Geruma Shima was invaded by elements of the 306th's 1st BLT coming ashore on Beach Yellow nearly a half hour after the 3rd landed on Aka. In contrast with Aka, however, this island was secured in a few hours, with the 304th and 305th Field Artillery Battalions' 105mm howitzers soon being unloaded for use in the next day's operations against Tokashiki.

The troops met some light sniper fire and found some abandoned pillboxes, but the handful of the island's defenders were lying dead by the end of the day—a situation that was not regretted by some of its surviving civilians who were found after they had strangled members of their own families out of fear of what they had been told

LEFT: The Kerama Retto island group, lies 15 miles west of Okinawa. BELOW: Within three days, the 77th Division had secured the major islands of Kerama Retto



about the Americans and discovered afterward to be lies. Fortunately, however, not all of the natives panicked. A great many—in company with Korean forced laborers who'd escaped their masters—gave themselves up.

After the third island, Hokaji, had been seized without opposition by the 306th's 2nd BLT, the balance of the 1st came ashore

at Beach Blue on Zamami Shima at 9:00 AM. The troopers landed against light resistance and, held up only long enough to find out that their supporting amphtracs could not negotiate the sea wall that bordered the beach, moved in quickly against some desultory mortar fire and seized Zamami town. At that point, the island's company of soldiers and 300 Korean laborers faded back into the low hills to the south, retreating so fast that the pursuing Americans were unable to come into contact with them.

In spite of the massive offensive, the enemy was still willing to fight. After nightfall, many of the defenders attacked the 2nd BLT's beach positions in an effort to break through their perimeter. It was a close-in duel using any weapon at hand—from pistols to swords—with the fanatical Japanese attacking again and again from different points, seeking out the Americans' weak spot. After a storm of mortar and machine-gun fire and a loss of over 100 men, the Japanese finally stopped looking for it and fell back into the hills, leaving only seven Americans killed in the protracted fighting.

With the multiple invasions going so smoothly, General Bruce decided to add another prize to the 77th's collection by ordering the 307th RCT's 2nd BLT's reserves to load up on the LVTs returned from Aka and hit Yakabi Shima a day ahead of schedule. The strike was duly carried out that afternoon and the island taken against light resistance.

By the end of March 26, the entire western portion of the Kerama group was securely in Kiland's hands, and the importance of its seizure had already become apparent. In their sweep of the islands, soldiers of the 77th discovered the shallow-draft "suicide boats" the Japanese intended to use to "attack ... transports, loaded with essential supplies and material and personnel ...[to be] carried out by concentrating maximum strength immediately upon the enemy's landing."

Made of plywood and powered by an 85 horsepower Chevrolet engine, the 18-foot-long boats were intended to emerge from their camouflaged hideouts carrying two depth charges each and guided by a Japanese officer right up to an unsuspecting American vessel to unload its deadly cargo. Presumably, the boat's pilot would have a chance of getting away as the depth charges had a five-second delayed fuse.

A couple of days after the islands had been declared secure, a Japanese boat battalion commander was captured after an abortive attempt to sink an LCVA. He produced a chart showing Ushijima's plan for the Sea Raiding Units' area of operation, which greatly facilitated defensive measures.

Unfortunately for Ushijima, the attack against Kerama Retto ruined his plans for the suiciders, prompting General Bruce to declare that their interdiction alone made the whole operation worth it.

In addition to the suicide boats, there were suicide planes overhead as well. A total of nine kamikazes tried to breach the radar screen around Kerama on the day of the initial landings but none made it. The next day, a few more Aichi "Val" dive-bombers swooped in with one managing to slam itself into the galley of the *Gilmer.* Another, through a series of impressive evasive maneuvers, crashed into a 44mm stern mount on the destroyer *Kimberly*, killing four men.

On March 27, the last islands in the Kerama group were invaded, with the garrisons on Amuro and Kuba Shima offering no resistance. At midmorning, units of the 1st BLT that had taken Geruma the day before landed at Beach Purple, just north of Hitachi Point on the west coast of Tokashiki, the largest of the Kerama islands. One sailor was killed when his LCI gunboat was hit by an enemy shore battery which was, in turn, quickly silenced as the charging troops steamrolled the light opposition gathered at the tree line.

The 2nd BLT came ashore at Aware on Beach Orange to the south in support of the 1st. Tokashiki is six miles long with its western side, called the Roadstead, offering the anchorages Kiland sought for the fleet; otherwise, its topography was much like its sister islands: rocky and scrubby with a few rough hills.

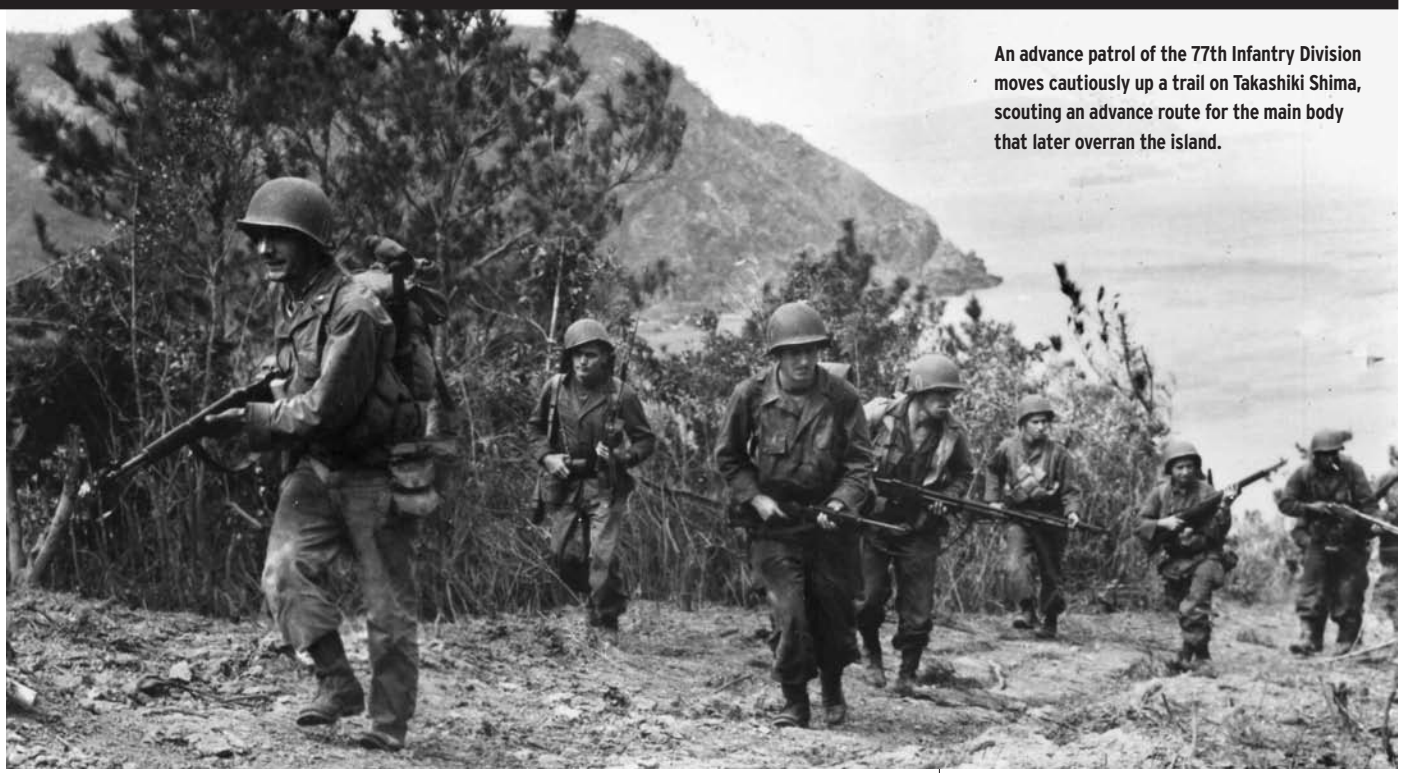
After meeting up with no more resistance than some scattered sniper fire, the two battalions linked up and began a sweep northward over the island's goat trails. At its southern tip, the 306th's reserve BLT, the 3rd, came ashore to secure the rear. That night, the 1st and 2nd rested just outside the town of Tokashiki in the extreme northeast, where they and Corporal Roberts later discovered the remnants of the island's civilian inhabitants.

Earlier in the day, the 3rd BLT had kept busy on Aka when they ran into stiff resistance on one of the island's many craggy ridges, where the Japanese defenders had holed up in prepared positions. Well supplied with mortars and machine guns, the 75 or so Japanese held the Americans at bay until air support was called in and they were bombed, strafed, and rocketed to pieces and driven from the ridge.

On Zamami, extensive patrolling unearthed small pockets of enemy troops hidden in caves. While the 3rd solved their resistance problem from the air, the 1st ended theirs on the ground with help from the unit's amphtracks, which blasted the Japanese from their holes with some direct fire.

On the third and final day of the operation, troops on Tokashiki waited as 500 rounds of artillery pounded the already-shattered remains of Tokashiki town and then moved in. Even though there were an estimated 300 Japanese soldiers still hiding out in the hills who would not surrender until the end of the war, the island was declared secure. Later, an uneasy truce developed as the island's enemy commander, recognizing the futility of further opposition, allowed the Americans undisturbed bathing privileges in the waters just below his gun emplacements. A hidden shore gun there was aimed straight at the scores of unsuspecting Navy ships lying in the Roadstead but was never used.

In the course of the three-day operation, the Americans lost 155 soldiers and sailors killed in 15 separate landings while the cost to the Japanese defenders was 530 killed. By March 29, the purpose for which Kerama Retto was seized in the first place was



An advance patrol of the 77th Infantry Division moves cautiously up a trail on Takashiki Shima, scouting an advance route for the main body that later overran the island.

already being fulfilled. On that day, 30 planes flew in to establish antisubmarine patrols, and combat-ship refueling operations had begun in the Roadstead, a boat pool and ammunition dump set up and nets raised and tended. All was in readiness for the invasion of Okinawa two days later.

In preparation for the invasion, the waters off Okinawa were to be covered by minesweepers protected by a fleet of destroyers, among them the USS *Newcomb,* which attracted the attention of swarms of kamikaze planes that filled the skies on the afternoon of April 6. That day, the ship was struck five times by suicidal flyers and forced out of action. Towed to an anchorage off Kerama Retto, its 75 remaining crewmen spent 10 harrowing days and nights protecting the floating hulk not only from continued kamikaze attacks, but also from the remnants of Japanese forces still holed up on the islands in the Kerama group who refused to call it quits.

"It was fairly quiet during the day, but at night it was different," recalled *Newcomb* quartermaster Nate Cook. "The Japanese were using most of their air power attacking the fleet near Okinawa. But every night they would carry out small air raids over Kerama Retto. To try to protect all of the defenseless ships in the harbor, the Navy used LCVPs with smoke-making gear to create a smoke screen cover. It was eerie; we could hear the planes but not see them. We didn't know whether they could see our masts. A couple times ships tried firing with 20mm guns through the smoke. Unfortunately the enemy could see the tracer shells and follow them down for a kamikaze crash, which they did.

"In addition to the planes, we had to worry about the Japanese still on the islands," said Cook. "They were harassing us in several ways. The extent wasn't clear but we knew that some had swum out at night, climbed a ship's anchor chain, and knifed some sailors. Other 'suicide swimmers' had explosives attached to their torso in such a way that they couldn't be removed without exploding." In addition, Cook described "suicide boats" used by the enemy: fast plywood boats about 16 feet long with 4-cylinder inboard engines tried to get close enough to a ship to drop a depth charge or other explosives over the side.

There is an epilogue to the story of the seizure of Kerama Retto. Back on March 31, a group of LSTs approached the tiny islet of Keise Shima that lay almost within sight of the landing beaches at Okinawa. From the transports emerged the 24 155mm artillery pieces of the 420th Field Artillery Group which were floated ashore and aimed at Naha on Okinawa and the Hagushi beaches only eight miles away.

Although plans were made by Ushijima to silence the big guns with intermittent shelling and raiding parties, that action never materialized. The 420th continued to fulfill its role throughout the Okinawa campaign.

Unfortunately, the recounting of a battle, no matter how insignificant, usually fails to consider its cost to noncombatants. The tragedy of the civilian population of Kerama Retto must be treated as intrinsic to the battle itself; otherwise, war threatens to become meaningless, an end in itself.

In World War II, life sometimes seemed the cheapest of all commodities. In all of the war's enormous cost in human suffering, the smaller tragedy of the Kerama suicides, like the small scale of the battle for the islands themselves, transcended its size to take its place as one part of the greater whole that would amount to the eventual Allied victory. □

Four years before Operation Barossa, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union duked it out at the Paris World Exposition.

IS PARIS TURNING?

BY PAUL GARSON

THE 1937 PARIS International Exposition once again centered world attention on the French capital that had previously been the stage for five world's fairs, including the famous 1889 Paris Exhibition and the raison d'être for the construction of the Eiffel Tower, at 984 feet then the tallest structure in the world.

Now, some 48 years after the 1889 Exhibition, the iconic tower was eclipsed by the appearance of two equally iconic structures, the German and Soviet Pavilions, facing off across a wide promenade. Their appearance and intent was in direct opposition to the avowed purpose of the 1937 Expo—to promote peaceful co-existence and cooperation among nations. The two buildings, in fact, presented the antithesis of that notion; they were cold, bellicose, and strident in design.

The unheeded words from the event's official program stated: "The objective is to be a meeting place for harmony and peace by not only striving to promote economic exchange between peoples but also the exchange of ideas and friendship. No advancement made in the fields of contemporary thought or science will be excluded. It welcomes all forms of activity in the spheres of industry and commerce.

"The 1937 International World Exposition therefore wishes to present a synthesis of all progress made by our generation. It will thus take stock of contemporary civilization. The outcome will educate all peoples, and highlight the areas where they should direct their efforts to maintain or improve their standing."

Tumultuous currents of world events and conflicting ideologies influenced the 1937 Paris Exposition during its eight years in the making (the French Chamber of Deputies gave the go-ahead for the fair in 1929), most of them contentious for numerous political and economic reasons. Organization for the mammoth undertaking was controlled by the 42 members of the Upper Exposition Council under the direction of its president, Joseph Caillaus. The chief architects brought into the project were Charles Letrosne, Jacques Gréber, and Robert Martzloff.

As with any exposition of such magnitude, major problems continually cropped up and the work proceeded slowly; the original opening year was pushed back from 1936 to 1937. As the grand opening date of May 25 relentlessly approached, the French government was embarrassed to see other nations finish their pavilions and exhibits while bureaucratic delays and labor strikes delayed the host's plans to complete the grounds.

Some of the other major developments that hampered the Expo's progress were beyond the organizers' control: a great, worldwide depression, the rise of fascist Italy and Nazi

Expo visitors are gathered in front of the monolithic German pavilion topped by a swastica and national eagle statue designed by Josef Thorak. OPPOSITE: The Eiffel Tower, built for the 1889 Paris Exposition, is flanked by the German and Russian pavilions of the 1937 Expo.

The Russian pavilion was crowned with a bronze statue of "Worker and Kolkhoz Woman," by Vera Mukhina.

Germany, the bloody purges and murderous reshaping of Russian society under Stalin, the Spanish Civil War, the Japanese invasion of China, and the Italian occupation of Ethiopia. During those same years, Einstein brought forth the Theory of Relativity, Ganhdi led passive resistance in India against British rule, and Aldous Huxley published his novel, *Brave New World*. The Paris Expo reflected that "Brave New World" in all its technical achievements as well as the book's predictions of populations controlled by the dictates of all-powerful states. It was indeed shades of things to come; World War II was set to ignite two-and-a-half years after the gates opened on the Exposition.

In France, growing anti-Semitism helped fuel pro-Nazi rhetoric. In April 1936, French conservatives attacked the future French premier Leon Blum because of his Jewish ancestry and his strong anti-Nazi stance. A popular slogan of the day was "Better Hitler than Blum." In France's bitterly contested 1936 spring elections, the Communists and Socialists gained seats in the legislature, thereby increasing political divisions and friction within the country. The Far Right in interwar France, however, never took root and thus French fascism failed to gain wide-scale support. This was most likely due to the flexibility of the Republic's parliamentarian system and its ability to forestall political polarization and the rise of fascistic tendencies, at least prior to the German occupation in 1940 and the resulting French collaboration.

Regarding its economic climate, the worldwide Depression did not affect France until 1931, when decreases in tourist revenues as well as a decline in demand for its exports (including perfumes and wine) caused a severe economic downturn. Unemployment bottomed out in 1935 at 15 percent, with production dropping 25 percent from 1929 levels. The French economy fell stagnant in 1932 and remained so into 1937. The Paris Expo was seen as one way out of its financial doldrums. For example, to buoy up the sagging condition of the city's artists, Paris commissioned 718 murals, in the process employing over 2,000 artists specifically to decorate the numerous pavilions.

Nazi Germany had just produced the 1936 Berlin Olympics and was riding its own wave of international attention. A major public relations and marketing success for the Third Reich, the German staging of the Winter and Summer Games had impressed many of the foreign officials and members of the media who were wined and dined at gala parties during which Reichsminister Hermann Göring and other Nazi potentates expended huge sums of Reichsmarks to out-impress each other and their guests. The

Germans were intent on a similar success in Paris.

Designed by the wunderkind Albert Speer, Hitler's favorite architect, the massive, imposing, and ominous German Pavilion was topped off by the national eagle and swastika as designed by approved Third Reich artist Kurt Schmid Ehmens, while the entrance was flanked by statuary created by Josef Thorack. As Arthur Chandler noted in a 1988 article in *World's Fair* magazine, "The German eagle, its talons clutching a wreath encircling a huge swastika, disdainfully turned its head and fanned out its wings. At the ground level, a massively naked Teutonic couple stare at the Russian monument with grim determination."

While Speer, always self-serving, later said he "stumbled by chance" upon the Soviet pavilion plans, the efficient German intelligence services apparently had supplied Speer with a description of the Soviet design. The report further interpreted the striding group of Russian hammer-and-sickle figures atop the structure as "symbolizing a Soviet invasion of Germany." Speer then apparently set forth to model the German "defensive" response with a representation of the classic Deutsche Haus, as he stated a "cubic mass shaped by massive pillars."

In their "monumentalism," both the German and the Soviet designs were created to present an aura of power and permanence. Both also used bronze surfacing over their main images or ideological "logos"—the swastika in the case of Germany and the hammer and sickle for Soviet Russia.

Both building designs were also windowless, with no light either entering or escaping, the visitors sealed within and subject to whatever sounds and sights awaited them. Both pavilions appeared sepulchral in form and atmosphere, although not so intended by their designers, at least consciously.

One can easily see the classic European cathedral in the floor plan of the German structure, a fact not lost on the leaders of National Socialism who sought to eliminate traditional religion, replacing it with "Religion of the State." While there were no gun towers or rifle slits, the echo of castle fortifications is easily identified, the Nazi state representing itself as a bastion of power—both a sanctuary and a bulwark against the wave of "Asiatic Bolshevism" that it faced off against in literal terms at the Expo. While expressions of fundamentally opposed ideologies, the similarities were equally apparent, with both structures extensions of the two individual megalomaniacal warlords, Hitler and Stalin.

The interior decor of the German Pavilion was the provenance of another approved Nazi designer, Waldemar Brinkman, who, perhaps taking his cue from Speer's use of 130 searchlights to create the famous 1937 Nuremberg rally "Cathedral of Light" spectacle, also utilized aura-enhancing lighting effects.

Upon entering the pavilion, one encountered 15-foot-high bronze doors by ascending an equally large-scaled staircase. The next effect was an elegant foyer, again dramatically lit, this time by chandeliers.

ABOVE: The windowless interior of the German pavilion reflected the powerful, large-scale construction projects of the Third Reich. TOP: The 1937 Paris Expo ran for 185 days and attracted more than 31 million visitors.

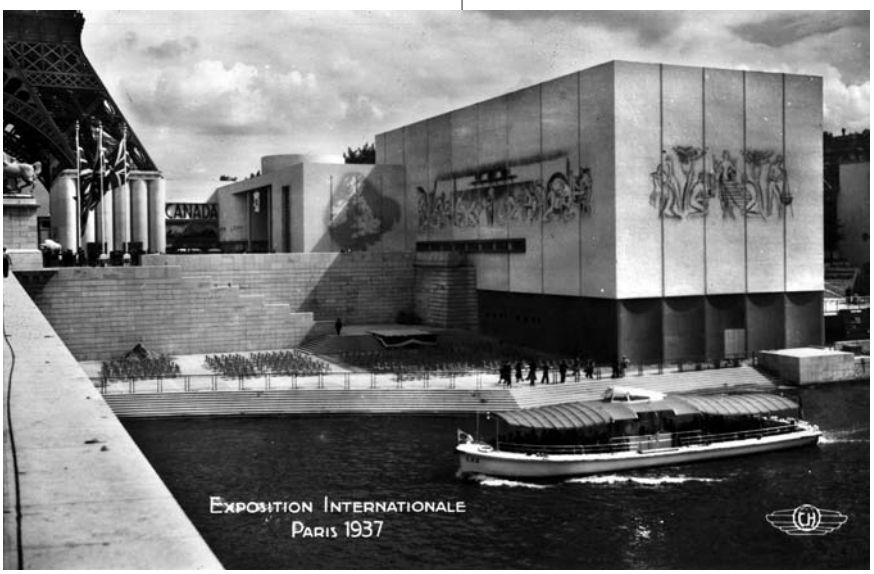
Set upon an altar-like platform were models of Third Reich construction projects, Herculean in scope, power, and impact.

Other rooms displayed German cinema, television, and radio innovations, all part of a mesmerizing multimedia assault on the senses. Other technological marvels included the Hollerith Machine Company's Dehomag D11 tabulating machine (a precursor of the computer the Nazis put to use recording data concerning the vast number of prisoners held in German concentration camps. Somewhat ironically, three weeks after the opening of the Paris Expo, the Buchenwald concentration camp back in Germany was opened).

Visitors upon entering found the displays of German technical, design, arts and manufacturing accomplishments set up in a deliberately "cozy" ambiance, in contrast to the cold technocratic design of the Soviet pavilion.

While Speer was given command of the German Pavilion design, that dubious honor for the Russian Pavilion was handed over to Boris Iofan, whose life literally depended on its outcome.

The structure's crowning 79-foot-tall figures, true to the Soviet mantra of Collectivism, a program that had condemned millions to death by starvation, were renderings of "cooperative farm maids and workers" as stated in the Stalinist parlance of the times.



ABOVE: The understated British pavilion was built right on the river near the Eiffel Tower. BELOW: The United States pavilion represented Roosevelt's New Deal and America's efforts to pull out of the Great Depression.

While Hitler and the Nazi Party had only four years earlier gained controlling power in Germany, one must remember that 1937 was a year of great significance for the Soviet Union as it marked the 20th anniversary of the October Revolution. Within the pavilion's natural-stone-clad walls, the "heroic achievements of the Revolution" were represented in large-scale panoramas depicting the colossal advances of socialism in the "Workers' Paradise."

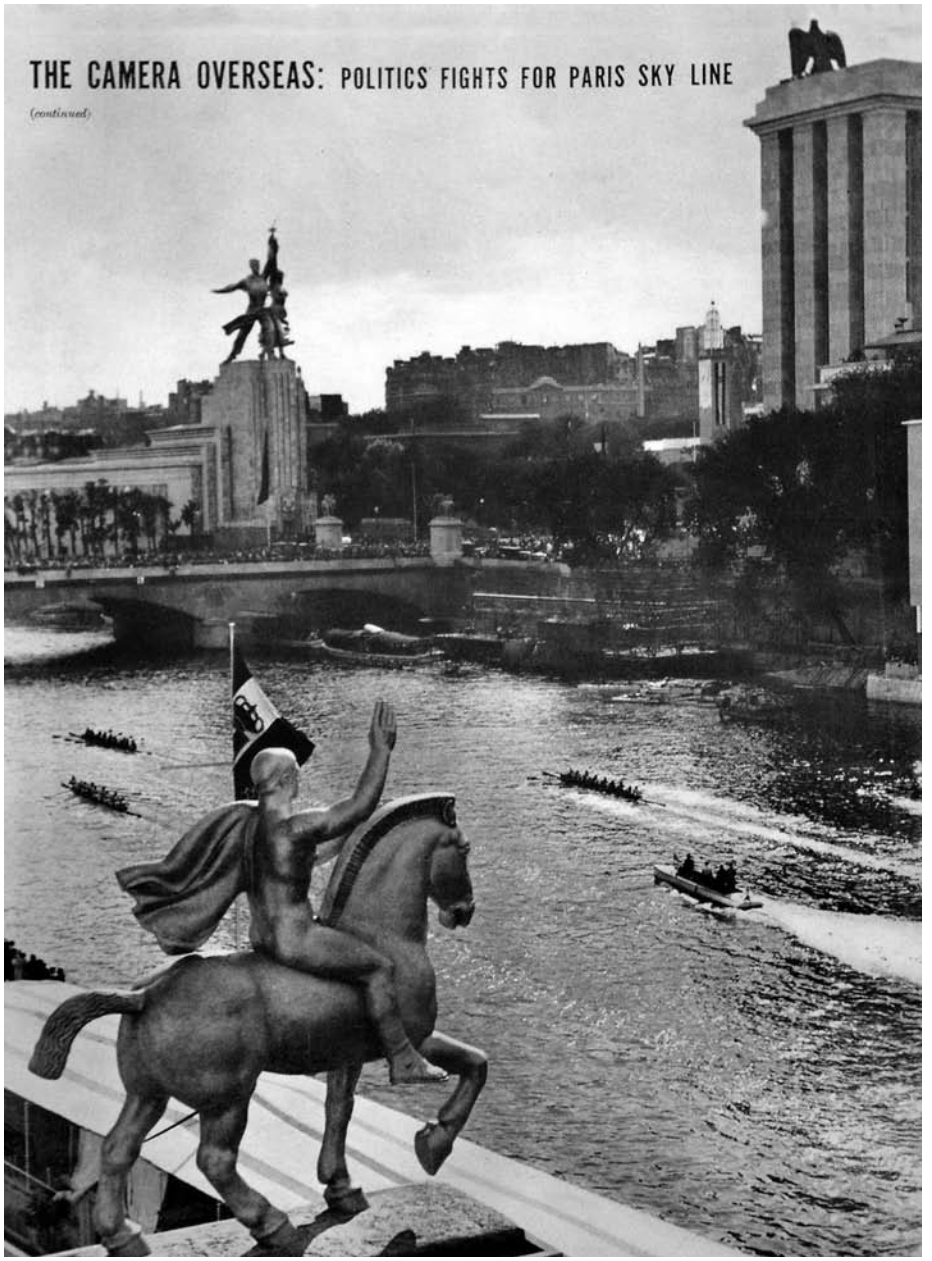
Inside, spectators found a large map of Russia comprised of gold, rubies, and other precious stones, certainly awe inspiring but almost czarist in its opulence. Highlighting the "great leap forward" to a modernized Russia, on display was a 1934 Ford manufactured in a Russian factory and also a copious amount of what a *Life* magazine correspondent described as "kindergarten communist propaganda."

Needless to say, the magnificence of the Soviet Pavilion pleased Stalin and architect Iofan kept his life—and went on to design many more Stalinist edifices until his death in 1976.

In addition to the German and Soviet presentations, other pavilions were commissioned by a total of 44 countries, including Argentina, Egypt, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Uruguay, Spain, Switzerland, and the Vatican, among others.

The United States pavilion, designed by 42-year-old German-born architect and urban planner Paul Lester Weiner, was a towering skyscraper that showcased the Roosevelt administration's New Deal and was filled with displays highlighting America's efforts to pull the nation out of depression.

Seemingly contrary to the ultra-modern aes-



The Soviet and German pavilions are imposing structures when viewed across the Seine.

thetic of the event, "peasant art" also figured prominently in more than 60 pavilions, representing contemporary national styles in the Hungarian, Romanian, Polish, and Portuguese pavilions, while the French displayed artwork from their various colonies (along with the patronizing pronouncement that they were bringing enlightenment to the inhabitants of those countries). In addition to the national pavilions, there were also Railroad Pavilions and Air Pavilions that showed off the latest transportation designs.

Two large, curved, modernist structures known as the Chaillot Palace, across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower, served as the Exposition's main art museum and replaced the Trocadero, a leftover from the 1878 fair.

In addition to art, the Expo also included a wealth of events and competitions as well as 600 congresses, motorboat races on the Seine, a dance festival, horse racing, colorfully lit water fountain displays, World Championship boxing matches, and 42 other international sporting competitions.

The variety of entertainments included a 243-foot-tall parachute jump tower for those visitors wishing to experience jumping out of an aircraft without actually doing so.

After it closed on November 25, the final tabulations as to the scope of the 1937 Paris Expo included some 11,000 exhibitors who found themselves inundated by more than 31 million visitors, each of whom were required to purchase a six Franc entry ticket (about 25 cents in U.S. currency). While the official French figures from 1937 indicate the Expo went considerably into the red, it also claimed that other collateral financial benefits occurred. For example, over four million more people attended theatrical and musical performances than did in 1936, and admissions to the Louvre and Versailles doubled; Paris' famous underground transport system, the Métro, collected 59 million more fares.

Revised financial data later published in 1940, with France under German domination, reported income from the Expo totaled nearly 1.66 billion Francs, while expenditures totaled some 1.5 billion Francs and showed a purported profit of about 218 million Francs, equaling a value then of $1.5 million U.S.

Although the Expo's organizers stated loftier goals ("Peace and Prosperity"), Arthur Chandler wrote, "The 1937 exposition marks the first time that an exposition is launched in order to shore up a sagging economy and to provide jobs for the unemployed."

The 1937 Paris Expo opened on May 25 and closed on November 25, 1937—a run of 185 days. A total of 16,704 medals went to the winners among the 44 exhibiting nations, including gold medals to both Speer and Iofan for their pavilion designs. Speer also was awarded a Gran Prix for his scale model of the Nuremberg Nazi Party rally grounds. The various representatives then applauded each other before leaving for home, wary of the darkening war clouds on the horizon. □

For years, the coded Japanese "Winds" messages hinted at controversy and official cover up. The reality may now be known.

BY PETER KROSS

TROUBLE *in the* WINDS

THE JAPANESE STRIKE on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941—a "Day of Infamy," as President Franklin D. Roosevelt described it—left the American Pacific Fleet in almost total ruin, plunged the United States into World War II, and set off a controversy regarding the events that led up to the attack that is still being hotly debated.

One of the most troublesome incidents in the pre-Pearl Harbor planning by the Japanese is the so-called "Winds Code" incident and what significance, if any, it had for the American code breakers who were monitoring Japanese diplomatic and military communications in the months leading up to the surprise attack.

Did the Navy cover up by not allowing the people who handled the Winds communication to testify before congressional committees after the war? And what happened to the Winds communications itself that was supposed to have been seen by different naval intelligence personnel in the days prior to the Pearl Harbor attack?

To understand the significance of the Winds message, we must trace the role of the U.S. military's efforts in breaking the Japanese codes before Pearl Harbor.

The Japanese used what they called a "Purple" machine to encode top-secret intelligence sent to their embassies around the world. The code word for American intercepts of Japanese diplomatic and military messages coming into the United States was "Magic." The United States designated all the information collected from Purple as "Magic"—the highest-classified intelligence collected by the United States during the war.

The success of Magic allowed the United States to follow Japan's route to war, keep-

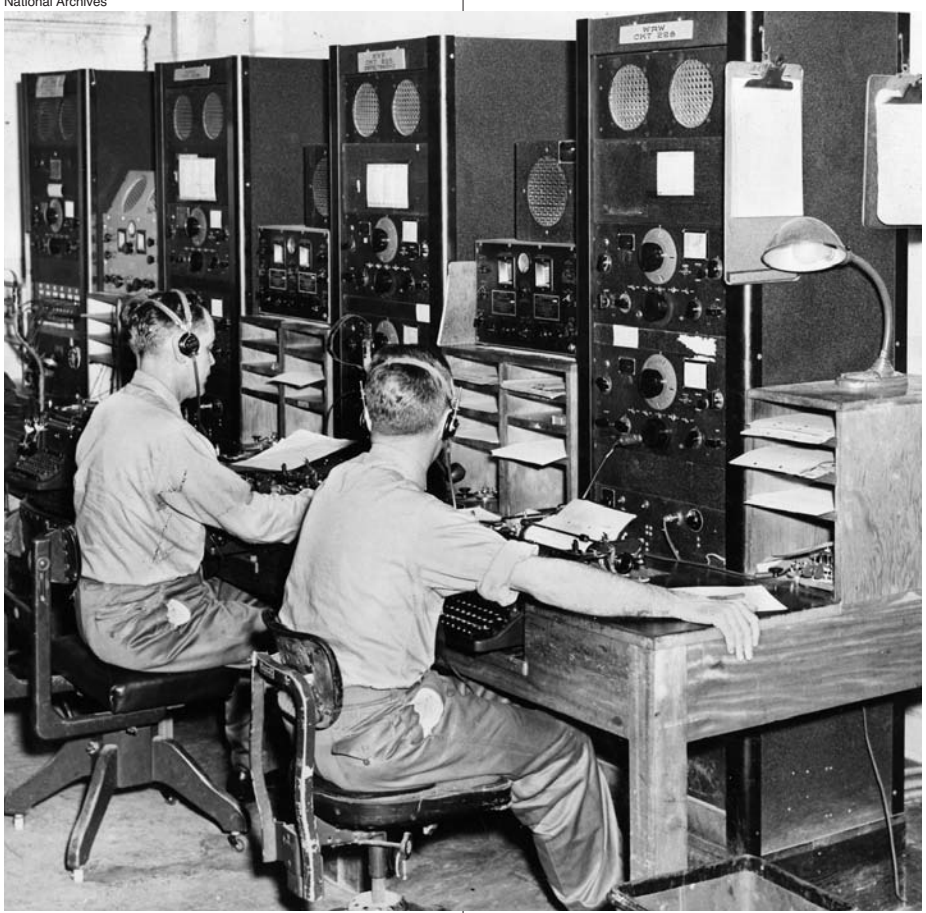
The burning battleship USS *Arizona* (BB-39) lists at Mooring F7 after the attack. The ship lost 1,177 men, including Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, who received the Medal of Honor, posthumously. OPPOSITE: A captured Japanese code device known as Purple.

Both: National Archives

ing a detailed record of their every move. During the summer of 1940, the United States began sharing intelligence with the British who had their own secret communications vis a vis Germany called "Enigma." In a move that would later prove disastrous in the pre-Pearl Harbor scenario, one of the Purple machines that went to the British was originally supposed to be given to the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor.

Another U.S. military organization doing cryptographic work that involved both Magic and the Winds communication was the Navy's code-breaking group called OP-20G, led by Commander Laurance Safford.

National Archives



JCAA Radio Communications receiving positions at NAS, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The Magic information collected by the Navy was sent to various top military and civilian leaders in the American government. Unfortunately, Magic was not shared with all of the top military commanders including, most importantly, Navy Admiral Husband Kimmel and Army General Walter Short, the two commanding officers at Pearl Harbor.

Another unfortunate side of Magic was that the men who were apprised of its content could not agree among themselves as to which information was relevant or not. It was this lack of communication that led to the controversy over what the Winds message really meant.

By the fall of 1941, U.S. code breakers had a pretty good idea as to what the Japanese government was thinking and planning regarding a potential conflict with the United States. Japan was still committed to its participation in the Tripartite Pact with Italy and Germany and refused to remove its troops from China. From the intercepts of Japanese communications that were picked up by U.S. code breakers, it was obvious that Japan was disinclined to tone down its harsh rhetoric regarding a possible war with either the United States or Great Britain.

More importantly, as far as the United States was concerned, a November 5, 1941, message from Tokyo to Washington setting a date of November 25, 1941, as a deadline for the completion of diplomatic negotiations with the United States, should have been a warning sign that trouble lay ahead.

Other intercepted communications from Tokyo gave instructions for the destruction of its code machines; a November 20 message from Tokyo stated that the current conditions would not "permit any further conciliation by us [Japan];" a November 22 note said if a diplomatic agreement was not reached by November 29 "that things are automatically going to happen." Also important to the prewar scenario was a November 27 war warning message broadcast from Tokyo, along with a November 19 message from Tokyo giving details of the "Winds Execute" message that would be added to the end of the Japanese news broadcasts in case war between the United States, England, and Russia was imminent, and a November 19 note giving further instructions for Japanese diplomats in Washington to listen for Winds messages that would be read five times at the beginning and end of each transmission.

On December 4, 1941, American listening posts in various parts of the world decoded two communications sent from Tokyo to its Washington embassy on November 19 that carried information on the so-called Winds message to which naval intelligence officials had been alerted.

The first message, Circular No. 2353, said: "Regarding the broadcast of a special message in an emergency. In case of emergency (danger of cutting off our diplomatic relations), and the cutting off of international communications, the following will be added in the middle of the daily Japanese language short wave news broadcast:

In case of a Japan-US relations in danger HIGASHI NO KAZEAME—East Wind Rain.

Japan-USSR relations: KITANOKAZE KUMORI—North Wind Cloudy.

Japan-British relations: NISHI NO KAZE HARE—West Wind Clear."

The second circular, No. 2354, came later:

"If it is Japan-US relations: HIGASHI.

Japan-Russia relations: KITA.

Japanese-British relations (including Thai, Malaya, and Netherlands East Indies): NISHI.

The above will be repeated five times and included at beginning and end. Relay to Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, San Francisco."

The Winds message was also picked up by a variety of Allied listening posts across the globe. The British Singapore station seized the message on November 28 and transmitted it to the U.S. Asiatic Fleet headquarters where Admiral Thomas Hart, the commander in chief, Asiatic Fleet, sent it to the headquarters commanders of both the 14th Naval District and the 16th Naval District. On December 4, the message was sent by Consul General Walter Foote at Batavia to the State Department in Washington. In his message regarding the broadcast, Consul General Foote said, "I attach little or no importance and view it with some suspicion. Such have been common since 1936."

The same low-key reaction to the Winds message came on December 3, when a top U.S. Army officer stationed in Java cabled the message to Brig. Gen. Sherman Miles, the acting ACS/Intelligence head, War Department. It was broadcast in a low-grade designation called "deferred," and was subsequently not decoded until 1:45 AM on December 5.

These two messages were sent from Tokyo on their J-19 diplomatic code, not the more significant Purple code that U.S. naval intelligence had been privy to for months. On the Navy's part, they alerted all their stations to be on the lookout for the next phase of the Winds code—the so called "Execute" stage of the plan.

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, USN, center, confers with his operations officer, Captain W.S. Stanley (left) and his chief of staff, Captain William W. Smith. LEFT: Along with Admiral Kimmel, Lieutenant General Walter C. Short, commander of the Hawaiian Department, was relieved of his command.

Subsequently, a full-court press inside the United States was ordered to listen for the "Execute" phase. Naval code-breaking stations in San Francisco and Fort Hunt in Virginia had Japanese-language translators sent in on an emergency basis. The Federal Communications Commission, one of whose jobs was the monitoring of Japanese weather broadcasts, was put on alert. If they picked up an "Execute" broadcast, they were to call Colonel Rufus Bratton, commander of the G-2 (Army Intelligence) Far Eastern Section.

In Hawaii, the Navy's top intelligence code breaker, Joseph Rochefort—head of the Combat Intelligence Unit of the 14th Naval District in Pearl Harbor and Station Hypo, a U.S. monitoring unit that watched Japanese naval movements—was alerted to the Winds message.

During this tense time, the FCC picked up a false message from Japan at 10 PM on December 4 which said, "Tokyo today north wind slightly stronger may become cloudy tonight. Tomorrow slightly cloudy and fine weather. Kanagawa Prefecture today north wind cloudy from afternoon more clouds. Chiba Prefecture today north wind clear, may become slightly cloudy. Ocean surface calm."

One of the U.S. listening posts that played a huge role in the Winds Affair was Station "M," located at Cheltenham, Maryland. Early on December 4, 1941, 27-year-old senior radio operator Ralph Briggs picked up a cryptic message in a weather forecast being broadcast from

Japan. Warned to listen for any unusual weather broadcasts attached to messages from Japan, Briggs heard the words he'd been alerted to. It was "East Wind Rain—HIGASHI NO KAZEAME [a possible disruption of Japan-U.S. relations]." It now seemed that the "smoking gun" from Tokyo had just been received.

Briggs began the process of transmitting his find to the other intelligence agencies and government officials. He sent one copy to the Army Signals Intelligence Unit and another to the White House. The Navy's OP-20G got their own copy by 9 AM on December 4.

The Winds message was then translated by Lt. Cmdr. Alvin Kramer, who was in command of the Translation Section of the Navy Department Communications Unit. According to extemporaneous accounts, Kramer, upon seeing the Winds message, said, "This is it." By noon on December 4, multiple copies of the Winds message had been circulated among the Army and Navy's intelligence divisions, their senior officers, the State Department, and the White House. As some conspiracy theorists believe regarding the significance of the Winds message, the Roosevelt administration had three days to read and digest its contents and prepare the country for war with Japan. Yet, nothing was done to alert the fleet at Pearl Harbor or any other branch of the military.

It is at this point in the debate where differences of opinion regarding the significance of the Winds message among its many participants come into play. In his extensive testimony before the Joint Congressional Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor attack, Navy Captain Laurance Safford, who was head of the Navy's OP-20G Code and Signal Section, told the attentive congressmen that in his opinion, the Winds message was a genuine "signal of execute" that war between the United States and Japan was imminent.

Safford pointed out that on December 4, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy changed its "Operations Code," which was picked up by Allied listening stations on Corregidor Island in Manila Bay and reported up the chain of command nine hours after it was decoded. Safford said that this change in Japan's code, as well as the "Execute" message, was the final step in Japan's preparations for war with the United States.

National Archives

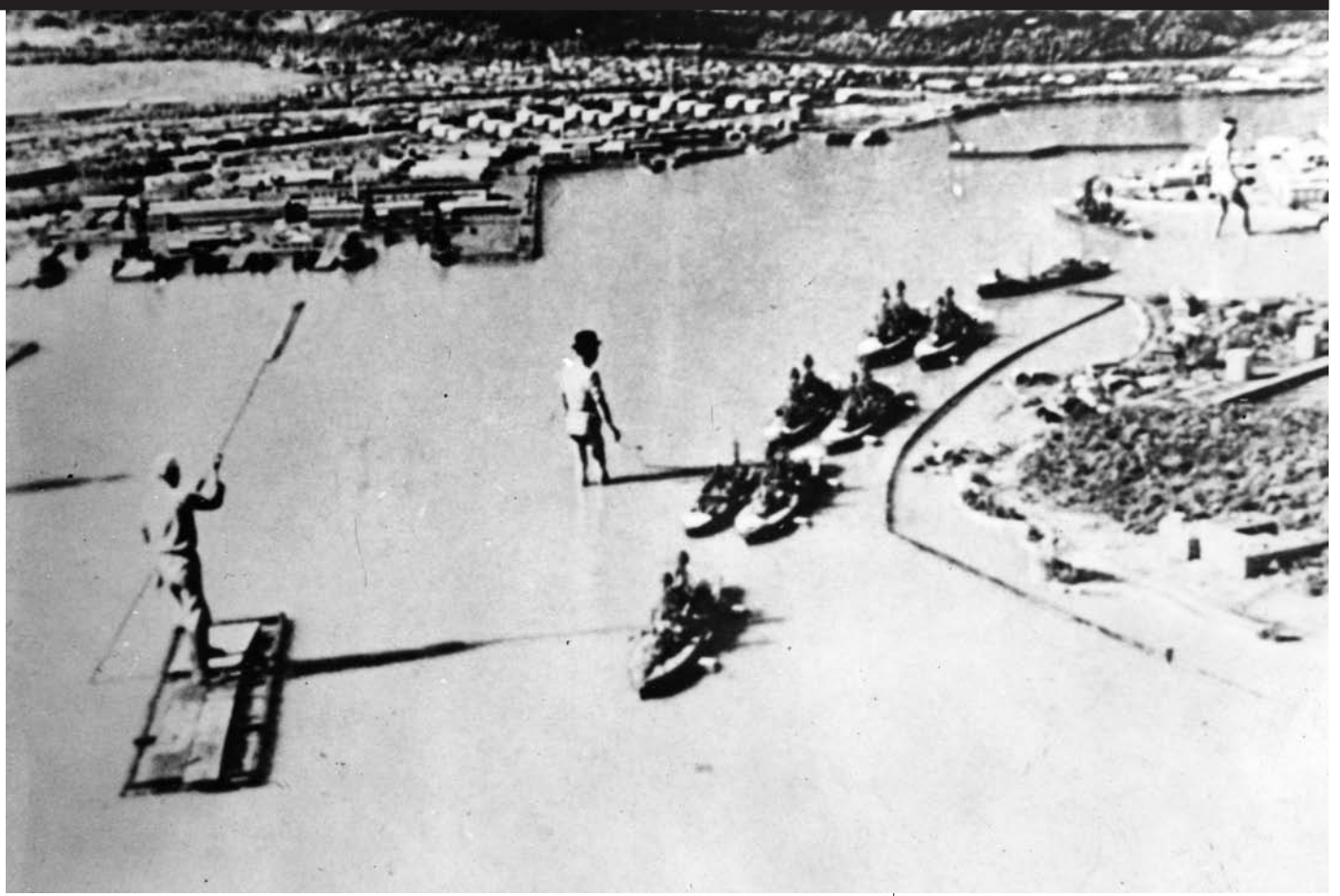
Japanese Ambassador Kichisaburo Nomura and Special Envoy Saburo Kurusu leave the White House after proposals they thought would avert the war were rejected. Little did they know that their mission was without hope.

Safford testified that it was his belief that the Navy had a three-day advance warning about an impending Japanese attack and did nothing to stop it. It is worth noting that despite Captain Safford's validation of the Winds message, there was no definite proof to back up his assertion that the intercepted message, "East Wind Rain," was anything more than part of the regular communications traffic that was intercepted on December 4, 1941.

Army chief of staff George Marshall discredited Captain Stafford's testimony regarding the Winds message, saying that he did not see the message in question. Also, Joseph Rochefort was adamant that he had seen no "Execute" message, despite assertions by others that he had. Another person who had a differing view of the Winds traffic was George Linn, a naval officer attached to OP-20G in 1941. In material provided by Linn, and released by the National Security Agency in November 1980, Linn, who was a good friend of Captain Safford, said that, "Safford's obsession with the idea that an 'Execute' had been received and suppressed had caused him [Safford], to go 'out on a limb, for there had been no "Execute." Linn summed up his testimony by saying, "I found nothing, and therefore concluded that an execute had not been received prior to 2400 hours on December 6."

Adding to the seemingly never-ending debate over the veracity of the Winds message is the fact that the original message had somehow disappeared from all official Navy files just when the Roberts Commission was conducting hearings into the whole Pearl Harbor matter shortly after the attack. What happened to the official Winds message paperwork is still a mystery and its loss has only deepened the skepticism of those who

National Archives



The Japanese created this mock-up of Ford Island and Battleship Row after the attack for use in a propaganda film.

believe that an official cover-up by the Navy or other government agencies took place.

After the war ended, various congressional committees were established to debate the Pearl Harbor attack and try to attach blame where possible. The testimony took on a national scope and many of the top newspapers of the day covered it, sending their best reporters to the hearings. The Winds Execute phase of the hearings took on a circus-like atmosphere with debate and counterdebate swirling like a prairie fire. In 1946, the *New York Times* said that the Winds message was a "bitter microcosm" of the investigation into American preparations leading up to the attack on December 7, 1941. The *Times* further noted that, "If there was such a message, the Washington military establishment would have been gravely at fault in not having passed it along to military commanders in Hawaii. If there was not, then the supporters of those commanders would have lost an important prop to their case."

In later testimony before the Army board regarding the missing Winds message, a number of people who were intimately involved in the affair gave their insights into what might have happened. Captain Safford said that the last time he saw the Winds message it was in the hands of OP-20G. He tasked a Captain Stone to see if he could locate the message but to no avail. When questioned by Maj. Gen. Henry Russell, Stafford said that the Winds message was filed in the Navy's 7001 file. The following exchange took place between Safford and General Russell:

General Russell: "Well, is JD 7000 in that file now?"

Captain Safford: "JD 7000 is there, and 7002."

Russell: "But 7001 just isn't there?"

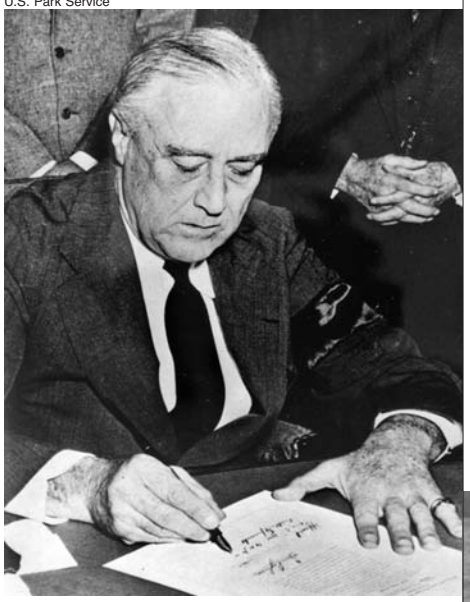
Safford: "The whole file for the month of December 1941 is present or accounted for except 7001."

Safford further said that when a thorough check of the 7000 series was made, "That is the only one that is missing or unaccounted for."

Years later, Ralph Briggs, the radioman at Station M who picked up the Winds message, broke his silence. In 1960, when Briggs was in charge of a unit that contained naval archives from World War II, he stated that, "All transmissions intercepted by me between 0500 thru 1300 on the above date [December 5, 1960] are missing from these files and these intercepts contained the Winds message warning code."

However, Briggs contradicted himself as to the date he intercepted the Winds execute message. He said that he intercepted it on the evening of December 4, while Safford said it came in at night on December 3. Nevertheless, to make matters more complicated, Briggs's log relat-

U.S. Park Service



National Archives

ABOVE: Roosevelt signs the declaration of war against Japan, December 8, 1941. RIGHT: A bluejacket killed during the Japanese attack lies on the beach at Kaneohoe.

ing to the Winds Execute message is dated December 2.

Lieutenant Commander Alvin Kramer gave yet another version of events relating to the Winds affair. He said that the "Execute" message was dated December 5, and that the message only had three lines of text. He testified that, in his estimation, the Winds message concerned a possible war between England and Japan. He further said that he thought the message was "a false alarm of this Winds system. It was, nevertheless, definitely my conception at the time that it was an authentic broadcast of that nature."

As the events of the Pearl Harbor attack faded into memory, it seemed that the controversy would finally end; however, that was not the case. The event had so many divergent players, each offering up their own different scenarios, that it would not melt away.

In 2009, two historians, Robert J. Hanyok and the late David P. Mowry of the National Security's Center for Cryptologic History, wrote a 327-page book called *West Wind Clear: Cryptology and the Winds Message Controversy.* This little-known book seemed to debunk the view that a clear warning was being monitored before the Pearl Harbor attack.

The institution that wrote the report, the super-secret National Security Agency (NSA) is an interesting place from which to issue such a narrative. Until a few years ago, the NSA's very existence was shrouded in secrecy. It was dubbed in the media as "No Such Agency" or "Never Say Anything," even though a public sign on the highway alerted visitors and employees that it, indeed, was there for all to see.

The NSA evolved out of the World War II Signals Intelligence Service and the Armed Forces Security Agency. The NSA was formally charted in October 1952 via a memorandum that was issued by President Harry Truman.

The main job of the NSA is to collect and analyze all signal intelligence (SIGINT), such as radio intercepts, telephone calls, electronic communications, and faxes coming in from around the world. The other job the agency performs is the cracking of other nation's secret codes that may contain information that might harm the security of the United States. The headquarters of the NSA is located at Fort George Mead, Maryland, halfway between Washington and Baltimore. From its headquarters, the analysts of the NSA use a number of high-tech platforms such as ships at sea and satellites hovering in space to monitor communications on a global basis.

The NSA has a checkered past, with its veil of secrecy paramount in all its work. The work of the NSA came crashing down in September 1960 when two of its cryptographers, William Martin and Bernon Mitchell, defected to Russia and held a press conference detailing their NSA affiliation. In later years, the agency was caught up in the Bush administration's war on terror. Some of its tactics—like the reading of American citizens e-mails and the tapping of phone calls, which the agency said it was searching for any links to foreign terrorists—brought a new call for the overhaul of the NSA.

The paper written by Hanyok and Mowry was given little publicity outside of the intelligence community and it has only recently been declassified. In their writing, both Hanyok and Mowry lay to rest any cry of conspiracy in the Winds message as it related to the Pearl Harbor attack. One of the authors told an interviewer, "Some conspiracy buffs might change their minds if they read my book."

Using previously classified documents relating to the Pearl Harbor attack, the two scholars note, "A Winds Execute message was sent on 7 December, 1941 [and] the weight of the evidence indicates that one coded phrase, 'West Wind Clear,' was broadcast according to previous instructions some six to seven hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor." They write that it is possible that a British listening post might have picked up the broadcast one to two hours after the attack, "but this only substantiates the anticlimactic nature of the broadcast."

Hanyok and Mowry note, "From a military standpoint, the Winds coded message contained no actionable intelligence either about the Japanese operations in Southeast Asia and absolutely nothing about Pearl Harbor. In reality, the Japanese broadcast the coded phrases long after hostilities began—useless, in fact, to all who might have heard it."

The authors cite the failures of the memories of so many people who were in the loop at the time for the possible misinterpretations of what they believed happened during

that hectic time prior to December 7, 1941.

Hanyok and Mowry are adamant when they assert, "There simply was not one shred of actionable intelligence in any of the messages or transmissions that pointed to the attack on Pearl Harbor."

They pin most of the blame on Captain Laurance Safford for the 50-plus-year misunderstanding of the Winds message. "Put to the test, though, Safford's narrative about the Execute message simply failed to stand up to cross-examination. The Joint Congressional Committee shredded Safford's story. The committee reduced it to the collection of unsubstantiated charges that all along had been its foundation. The documentary evidence [Safford] said was available simply did not, nor did it ever, exist. In truth, Safford produced nothing upon which any further investigation could proceed."

The two historians also take a shot at the various conspiracy writers and bloggers who believe in Safford and his faith that the Winds Execute message was a genuine war warning. Talking about the various conspiracy writers, they say that "the writers inverted the normal rules of evidentiary argument," stating that Safford's testimony has not been officially rebuffed by the government all these many years later.

"The scholars and researchers who championed Safford's version of the controversy abandoned the rigorous evidentiary requirements of the historical profession in order to advance their own thesis," they say. "Safford's case was built on mistaken deductions, reconstructed, nonexistent documents, a mutable version of events, as well as a cast of witnesses that Safford conjured up in his imagination."

Both: © Bettmann/CORBIS

ABOVE: The Pearl Harbor hearings opened in Washington, D.C., on November 15, 1945. LEFT: Captain L.F. Safford, chief of the Naval Intelligence section during the time of Pearl Harbor and a hearing witness, confers with Senator Homer Ferguson after a session.

Why the authors have put most of the blame on the shoulders of Laurance Safford, a distinguished Naval officer, a 1916 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, the officer who established the Navy's communications intelligence unit, is not known, but they must have their reasons.

In an interview with the *New York Times,* both Hanyok and Mowry say that when the naval officers who had a stake in the use of radio intelligence could not find a copy of the Winds message, they immediately charged a cover up by some people in the naval hierarchy. They also pointed out that when it was learned that the Japanese government began ordering their diplomats to begin destroying their code machines in early December 1941, they did so because it "was possible that they viewed the Japanese actions as ominous, but also contradictory and perhaps even confusing. More importantly, though, the binge of code destructions was occurring without the transmittal of the Winds execute message."

After reading both sides of the historical argument, it is nearly impossible, 65-plus years after the events that took place, to say who was right or wrong. It seems that the Winds Execute message will be debated as long as people have an interest in what took place before America was drawn into World War II. Neither the historical community nor the conspiracy buffs will be happy with the outcome, even with all the new information that has come into the public domain since the original investigations began in 1946.

What the historical record can attest to is that the Winds Execute message was so fraught with differing opinions, false leads, calls of a cover up on the part of the Navy for failing to locate the original documents (which might, or might not settle the matter once and for all), that any logical assumptions as to its authenticity is still in doubt, despite the passage of time. □

ashington Post/Getty Images

AFP/Getty Images

ABOVE: Convicted Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk, aka "Ivan the Terrible," listens to the Israeli Supreme Court read his aquittal in 1993, more than five years after he was sentenced to hang. TOP: Eli Rosenbaum, director of the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, walks down one of the corridors in his office building, this one lined with photos of John Demjanjuk.

THE LAST NAZI HUNTERS

Sixty-five years after the end of the war, the U.S. Department of Justice is still on the case. **BY JAMES VERINI**

CROWDED IN FRONT of the television in Eli Rosenbaum's office, his staff was taken with a giddy anticipation not often found in employees of the United States Department of Justice.

The mood was doubly odd because the footage they watched was pretty dull: a Gulfstream jet idled on a runway at Cleveland International Airport. Rosenbaum's eyes were glued to the screen too, but he wasn't giddy. He wore a skeptical frown. The coverage was broadcasting live on CNN, on May 11 of 2009, and yet Rosenbaum didn't believe the plane on the screen would lift off.

The director and chief prosecutor of the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations—the "Nazi-hunters" in local parlance—he had been waiting for most of his adult life to watch this particular flight and its 90-year-old passenger, John Demjanjuk, depart the United States for good. After a morbid odyssey of hearings and appeals, injunctions and stays, exonerations and recriminations, however, no disappointment would surprise him.

AFP/Getty Images

An airplane possibly carrying John Demjanjuk stands on the runway after landing in Munich, May 11, 2009.

Maybe the engines would shut down, Rosenbaum mused. Maybe the attorney general would call him with an 11th-hour reprieve? Maybe Demjanjuk, who was lying on an ambulance gurney in the plane's cabin, the only passenger who'd not be making the return trip from Germany—maybe he would have a heart attack. Or charge the cockpit—for all his claims of decrepitude, the Ukrainian-born Demjanjuk was still a physically menacing man, with hulking shoulders, a head like a cannon ball, and behind outsized bifocals a glower that only seemed to corroborate the charges against him—that he committed mass murder while he was a concentration camp guard serving in the Schutzstaffel, or SS, in Nazi-occupied Poland.

"This was the case in which anything that could have gone wrong had gone wrong," Rosenbaum recalls thinking, as he sat there in his office at 7:30 in the evening—he remembers the time exactly—watching the plane stalled on the tarmac. "Something's going to stop it. It isn't going to leave."

The case of Demjanjuk stretches so far back it precedes the existence of OSI, which was set up, 31 years ago, with one mandate: to track down former Nazis and collaborators who had immigrated to the United States without—or, more troublingly, with—Washington's knowledge, and to try to deport them.

A retired Ford engine mechanic and grandfather from the Cleveland suburb of Seven Hills, Ohio, Demjanjuk first came to the attention of the government when his SS I.D. card was accidentally recognized in a photo spread by survivors of the Treblinka concentration camp. Since then he had been convicted by an American court, in 1987, of entering the country illegally; extradited to Israel, where he was convicted on flimsy evidence that he was a notorious guard, known as Ivan the Terrible, at Treblinka, and sentenced to be hanged; exonerated by the same court, then sent back to the United States, where, in 2002, he was again tried and again found guilty of the original charges of having served at a series of camps (though not Treblinka), and again denaturalized; and finally deported, in May, to Germany.

The plane did indeed take off, after an hour on the runway. Demjanjuk now lives in a cell in Stadelheim prison, a young Adolf Hitler's home for a summer month, and spends his days in a Munich courtroom, facing charges of participating in the extermination of 27,900 people. The trial began in January 2010. His all but inevitable conviction may not come until this fall. That's if Demjanjuk, who is usually wheeled into court on a gurney, does not die first. (As this issue went to press, there was still no verdict.) And while it's true he was caught on camera in 2009 walking around and joking with ICE agents after claiming he was too ill to move, judging by his current appearance the latter possibility seems as likely as the former.

"Who would have thought at the end of World War II that 60-plus years later they'd still be prosecuting these cases?" Rosenbaum, who is 54, told me. "These are the ultimate cold cases. It's hard enough to prove a mugging that took place down the street a week ago." He said there are "a lot of misconceptions about this work, especially about how the investigations originate and how they're conducted. There's the Hollywood version of this. That just doesn't happen."

But in fact OSI is almost suspiciously

cinematic. It has tracked down not just SS functionaries, but murderous police chiefs, fascist martinets, mobile kill-squad leaders, an aide to Adolph Eichmann, a pogrom-inciting propagandist priest, and a V-2 rocket scientist. It's dug them up in Seven Hills and Long Beach, California, in Minneola, Long Island, and the south side of Chicago. OSI helped expose the Central Intelligence Agency's sordid history with

ABOVE: Born in the Ukraine in 1920, Demjanjuk served in the Red Army and was captured by the Germans in 1942. RIGHT: Demjanjuk's personnel certificate from the SS training camp at Trawniki, Poland. This certificate was a key piece of evidence at his 1987 trial in Jerusalem.

Klaus Barbie and the Nazi past of the late Austrian president and UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. It has identified Nazi-looted paintings—in the National Gallery in Washington. It's now going after perpetrators from Rwanda and the Balkans.

And the Demjanjuk case, to name just one, has inspired a small library's worth of government reports, op-ed rants, and legal digest articles, not to mention a good novel (Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock*), a little-seen musical (*The Trials of John Demjanjuk: A Holocaust Cabaret*), and, indeed, a movie, *Music Box,* which was up for the Best Picture Oscar in 1989. The film has one particularly commendable aspect lost on most viewers—it accurately portrays the methodical nature of OSI investigations, which rely not on sensational revelations, nor Buenos Aires street-corner captures, but on archives and researchers, maps, translators, and historical minutiae. The stuff of war historians.

Each case is a years-long "needle-in-the-haystack" process, Rosenbaum said, and Demjanjuk's case is not unique in its prolixity. OSI is by far the most successful Nazi-hunting organization in the world, having denaturalized, deported, or extradited 107 accused World War II war criminals from the United States thus far—a record neither the Simon Wiesenthal Center nor the Mossad approach—yet its work takes decades to complete. That's when it's completed at all: there are still any number of OSI defendants living in the United States who've had their citizenship stripped, but whom can't be removed, because no country will accept them. Demjanjuk is the first OSI defendant Germany has ever agreed to try. Israel has refused to try any since it exonerated him.

***Music Box* also features a hard-driving OSI chief who delivers this speech to the defendant's** daughter: "Do you really think I give a damn about punishing an old man? I don't have any vengeance in my heart. But I'll tell you what I do care about. I care about remembering. It's too late to change what happened, but it's never too late to remember what happened." Which, significantly, is precisely the complaint that OSI's critics make of it.

Rosenbaum and his team are not as interested in the enforcement of law, they say, as they are in making a historical point—in retribution.

"There was the putrid smell of righteousness about the whole matter. Everybody was so eager to right the Holocaust," said Gary Fleischmann, a defense attorney who represented Andrija Artukovi, whom OSI had extradited to the Soviet Union in 1987, where he was tried and convicted of treason and sentenced to death by firing squad. Artukovi , a high-ranking official in Nazi-allied Croatia during the war and a leader of the brutal Ustaše, died while awaiting execution.

OSI was able to dig up copies of long-forgotten decrees Artukovi had put his name to that persecuted Jews (for the sake, as one decree states, of the "protection of the Aryan blood and honor of the Croatian nation"). It found the decrees in a box in, of all places, the Library of Congress. Still, said Fleischmann, "There's no question Artukovi was an anti-Semite. But that's not a war crime."

Michael Tigar, a defense attorney and professor at Duke University School of Law who

represented Demjanjuk, said, "I think an office which is set up around a particular issue and is staffed by people who become true believers represents a danger." Tigar, unlike Rosenbaum known for his courtroom dramatics, quoted John Ruskin to me. "'No more dangerous snare is set by the fiends for human frailty than the belief that our own enemies are also the enemies of God.' When that snare takes hold of people they take the attitude they can do anything they want to win."

Unlike Tigar, though, most of the people whom Rosenbaum has faced in court would probably not say he's willing to do anything to win. "Eli's a decent guy, he's a straight shooter," Rad Artukovi, Andrija's son, told me—in the same breath that he accused OSI of committing fraud in his father's case, which was tried while Rosenbaum was not at OSI. Rosenbaum doesn't revel in deporting senior citizens, and he doesn't speak about his quarry with the contempt or trembling indignation that the subject of the Holocaust often elicits. He's unfailingly solicitous and polite to defendants, OSI transcripts show, even when he believes them to be mass murderers.

"I've always been more of an investigative guy than a prosecutor," Rosenbaum said. "In many respects what I like to do as a hobby at home is read my work."

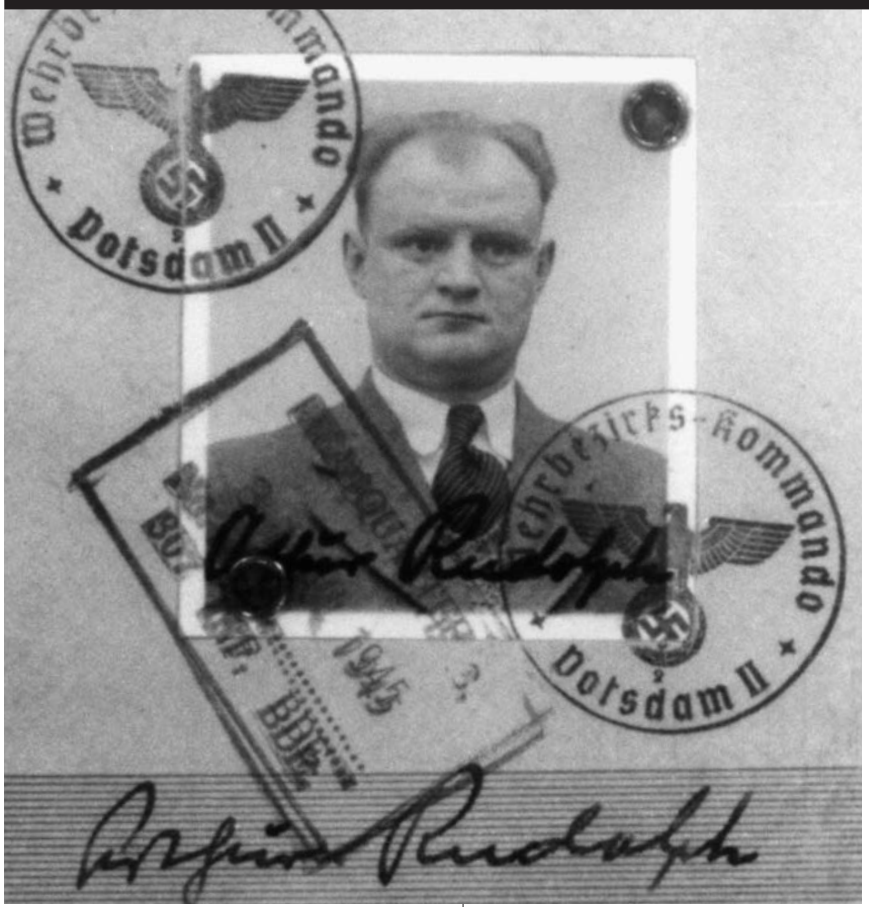
ABOVE: Tsherim Soobzokov, an accused SS officer with a death squad, was mysteriously killed by a bomb at his New Jersey home in 1985. LEFT: Andrija Artukovic, a high-ranking official in Nazi-allied Croatia during the war and a leader of the brutal Ustaše. TOP: Ustaše militia execute prisoners near the Jasenovac concentration camp.

We were sitting, on an afternoon last November, in a conference room in OSI's offices off New York Avenue in Washington, D.C. OSI consists of 11 attorneys, including Rosenbaum, four paralegals, and eight historians. Tall and trim, with small, intense blue eyes and a medium-thick mustache, Rosenbaum, a Long Island native, lives with his wife and two daughters in suburban Maryland. As we talked he sipped black coffee from a metal thermos and wore, hanging over a crisply pressed striped dress shirt, a DOJ I.D. card on a Yankees lanyard (the team was to face the Philadelphia Phillies in the first game of the World Series that night). On the walls by his desk hung, alongside a portrait of Babe Ruth, photos of Rosenbaum with Elie Wiesel, Bill Clinton, and Anne Frank's protector, Miep Gies.

The office hallway walls, meanwhile, are adorned with black and white blow-ups of OSI defendants, with a section given over to a three-foot-wide rendering of Demjanjuk's I.D. card from the SS training camp at Trawniki, Poland, still the central piece of documentary evidence against him. The same head and stare are there, but the young Demjanjuk looks perversely dashing, too. Near Rosenbaum in the conference room as we talked was mounted a more startling photograph, of Michael Kolnhofer, an alleged former camp guard who lived outside Kansas City. That is, until the day the photo was snapped in 1997.

It shows Kolnhofer propping open his screen door while opening fire with a pearl-handled Colt revolver upon police gathered outside his house. He really didn't appreciate OSI's investigation of him. He was shot by police on his doorstep, later dying of his wounds, a fate that echoed that of another OSI subject, Tsherim Soobzokov, who was killed after a pipe bomb was attached to his front door. Such episodes are rare, Rosenbaum emphasized. Most OSI defendants die natural deaths, often enough in the midst of litigation. "The big challenge for me is to build these cases. It's what fascinates me the most," he said.

OSI was created by the so-called Holtzman Amendment, passed by Congress in 1978. Amazingly, this was the first time federal law specified in so many words that Nazis and their collaborators ought



© Bettmann/CORBIS

not reside here. Émigrés who arrived in the United States in the immediate postwar years came in under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, which required little from applicants in the way of background information. Lying was routine. According to Allan Ryan, OSI's director from 1980 to 1984 and the author of *Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*, at least 10,000 World War II war criminals made it into the United States in those years. "I think it's a conservative number. It may well be higher," he said.

More amazingly, the government knew who some of them were. "While I was in Congress, someone came to me who was very familiar with the operation of the immigration service and told me the government had a list of Nazi war criminals living in the United States, and was doing nothing about it," former New York Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman, author of the Amendment, told me. "There was a hearing with the immigration commissioner and I asked him: Is it true that you have a list of alleged Nazi war criminals living in the United States? And he said yes. I almost fell out of my chair."

OSI began work the year after the Amendment passed. "The only way to make sure justice was done was to create a special unit with expertise and professional standing," Holtzman said. "It's going to go into the criminal division because they know how to get subpeonas and look for witnesses all over the world." OSI does not prosecute war crimes; it shows that such crimes likely took place and made a defendant's entry into America unlawful.

At the time, Rosenbaum was a student at Harvard Law School. A decade and a half after Adolph Eichmann's execution in Israel, there was a resurgence of interest in the fate of Nazi war criminals. In 1977, Howard Blum's breathless *Wanted! The Search for Nazis in America* was published. Rosenbaum read it and was "absolutely shocked," he said. He would later find that much of what Blum reported was inaccurate, but no matter—he was hooked. He read in the *Times* one evening about the Holtzman Amendment, and, not wanting to waste any time, called the Justice Department switchboard—at midnight. "I thought, oh yes, this is the summer job for me," said Rosenbaum, who was hired for an internship. ("It's a summer job gone awry.") After law school, Allan Ryan hired him as a full-time prosecutor. "Eli was one of the brightest, hardest working, most perceptive lawyers I'd ever worked with," Ryan said.

The office was understaffed and barely funded, and Rosenbaum was put to work straight away on the case of Archbishop Valerian Trifa, a leader of the Romanian fascists who'd moved to Detroit. The Justice Department believed Trifa had helped incite a murderous pogrom in Bucharest in 1941. Accounts of the episode are beyond imagining: according to a cable from the American ambassador, the fascists firebombed synagogues and hung Jews from meat-hooks, their throats slit, in travesty of kosher traditions, while at least 60 Jews were skinned, while alive, including a five year-old girl. When OSI caught up with him, Trifa was passing his middle age as the highest ranking Romanian Orthodox cleric in North America.

In 1955 he led a convocation prayer at the U.S. Senate, and avoided prosecution for almost four decades in part by being an informant for the FBI. So apparently grateful was he to J. Edgar Hoover—whose interest in chasing communists far surpassed any concern that fascists had emigrated en masse to the States—that in 1963, when it looked as though John F. Kennedy might retire the FBI chief, Trifa wrote to the president personally, declaring "the American people need men like J. Edgar Hoover."

In one of the investigation's most astounding developments, OSI lifted a latent fingerprint of Trifa's (with the help of a contrite FBI) from a postcard he'd written to

Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler. To this day, it is the oldest latent fingerprint ever detected by the Bureau. After Israel declined to try him, Trifa decamped to Portugal in 1984, though not before he told an interviewer that "all this talk by the Jews about the Holocaust is going to backfire."

It was thanks to another book Rosenbaum read, this one requiring no exclamation points in the title, that he built his own first breakthrough case. In a Cambridge used bookstore where Rosenbaum liked to browse, he happened upon French survivor Jean Michel's harrowing memoir *Dora,* about his time at Nordhausen, where the secret underground factory in which the Luftwaffe developed the V-2 rocket was located. At least 20,000 slave laborers died there, it is estimated, 100 of them a day by war's end, mostly due to starvation and exhaustion, but also thanks to mass hangings carried out not just by the SS guards but apparently also by some rocket scientists. (Only 11 of the roughly 3,000 SS officers who served there were ever arrested.)

One such scientist, Rosenbaum came to be convinced, was Arthur Rudolph, who by the 1980s, his past all but forgotten, was a venerated figure at NASA, known as the father of the Pershing Missile and the Saturn V Moon rocket and the recipient of NASA's Distinguished Service Medal. And yet he'd been not just a cog in Hitler's war machine, Rosenbaum's investigation suggested, but an early admirer of *Mein Kampf* and a Nazi Party stalwart.

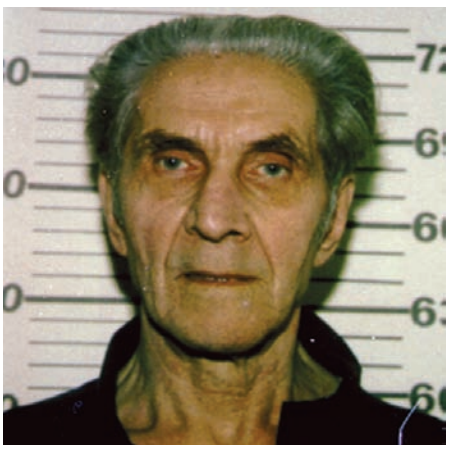
Allan Ryan recalled, "Here's a guy without whose efforts we probably wouldn't be on the moon. I asked Eli, Why should we send this guy out of the country? He said, This was not some desk jockey. This was a guy whose idea of motivating workers was to hang bodies on hooks and send them around the premises. And we had the goods on him."

Rudolph apparently agreed. After three interviews with OSI, he agreed to renounce his U.S. citizenship, and returned to Germany in 1984, despite outcries from assorted military brass and politicians, including Patrick Buchanan, then White House communications director, and, more disastrously, former Ohio congressman and sartorial innovator James Traficant, who organized a rally for Rudolph on the Canadian side of the Peace Bridge near Niagara Falls. The legislator and rocket scientist were joined by a phalanx of neo-Nazis, and then turned away at the border. Rudolph later claimed he was coerced by OSI into his renunciation. (When he was released from federal prison in September of last year, after serving a seven-year term for taking bribes and racketeering, Traficant gave an interview to Fox News decrying Demjanjuk's deportation, a showing that has probably not helped Demjanjuk's standing.)

Defense attorney Michael Tigar was right about Rosenbaum in at least one respect: he is a true believer. "What makes it satisfying is that the crimes involve so many victims, and they were committed at a place that is as close to hell on earth as has ever existed," he told me. So, too, is much of his staff. OSI "was not just a moral or professional attachment—it was a visceral attachment," Bruce Einhorn, a retired federal judge and OSI prosecutor in the 1980s, said, "It was the one job I've had when I woke up in the morning and looked in the mirror, I was proud of my client, and when I went to sleep at night I knew what I'd done that day was important."

Ronnie Edelman, a former OSI attorney who prosecuted Artukovic, said "The contrast between what he did and what he appeared as when we tried him was pretty extreme, but I never felt we shouldn't be doing it. Did I see him as a man, as an individual? Yes. But it didn't excuse what he did. It just seemed you couldn't ignore that. We tried him with all of the protections of our justice system, which was far more than his victims received. It was worth doing for the historical record and to give some element of justice to the victims."

Trifa's and Rudolph's were major cases. But then, by historical standards, all of OSI's cases could be called major. "If you want to dedicate yourself to law enforcement, most



ABOVE: Luidas Kairys's deportation photo. TOP: Luidas Kairys, who had served as a guard platoon leader at Treblinka. OPPOSITE TOP: Arthur Rudolph, not just a cog in Hitler's war machine, Rosenbaum's investigation suggested, but an early admirer of Adolf Hitler and a Nazi Party stalwart. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Archbishop Valerian Trifa, a leader of the Romanian fascists. The Justice Department believed Trifa had helped incite a murderous pogrom in Bucharest in 1941.

people want to work on cases involving the worst criminals," Rosenbaum said. "You'd be hard-pressed to find worse criminals than Nazi war criminals."

There was the case of Luidas Kairys, who'd served as a guard platoon leader at Treblinka. When OSI tracked him down, Kairys was working at a Cracker Jacks plant in Chicago.

There was Aleksandras Lileikis, chief of the Security Police in Vilnius, which sent thousands of Lithuanian Jews to their deaths at the hands of the Nazis. After the

Aleksandras Lileikis, chief of the Security Police in Vilnius, which sent thousands of Lithuanian Jews to their deaths at the hands of the Nazis.

war Lileikis took up a quiet life as a printer on a quiet street in Norwood, Massachusetts. For 10 years OSI investigated him without luck, until one morning one of its historians, sifting through papers at a prison in Vilnius, found a box of files of people arrested by Lileikis and later executed.

There was Helmut Oberlander, the wealthy German-American real estate developer who was at his winter apartment in Marco Island, Florida, when Rosenbaum (who left OSI in 1984 to work as a corporate litigator and then at the World Jewish Congress and returned in 1988, becoming its director in 1995) knocked on his door. Until that point Oberlander had managed to hide from his family and friends that he'd been an interpreter in a unit of Einsatzgruppe D, a mobile killing detachment whose sole job was to wipe out Jews, partisans, Gypsies, and others on the Eastern Front. Einsatzgruppe D is thought to have killed more than 90,000 Jews in Ukraine, mostly by machine-gunning them in mass graves. Oberlander fled to Canada, where he is now a wealthy retired real estate developer. In November 2009, a Canadian court again declined to deport him.

Other defendants and subjects of OSI investigations have fled to Costa Rica, Hungary, Paraguay, Estonia, Venezuela, even Germany. Some have taken other routes of escape. Elfriede Rinkel was a SS guard at Ravensbruck. While researching her whereabouts, Rosenbaum came upon an obituary for her husband. He couldn't believe what he read: the man had been Jewish, a refugee from Germany. When Rosenbaum interviewed Rinkel in her house in San Francisco, she showed him a photo of her husband's tombstone. An empty space next to his name awaited hers, and over it was chiseled a Star of David. Rinkel admitted she'd never told her husband what she'd really done during the war. "I was glad I didn't have to do that case at a time her husband was alive," Rosenbaum said. "That would have tormented me."

Interviewing survivors and convincing them to recount their stories is the more wrenching part of his job, Rosenbaum said. "Almost all of them have a point where they break down and cry. I see that coming and I'm pretty sure the next question I ask is going to send them over the edge—and I feel so guilty and so sad," he said. "In some cases they haven't recalled their experiences in this level of detail since the war's end."

"It was the most inspiring and eventually the most draining experience of my life," Bruce Einhorn said of interviewing survivors. "I would have to make these very good people not just recall but, let's face it, relive these experiences."

Perhaps the most grueling interrogation Rosenbaum has ever conducted, though, was of Jakob Reimer, a SS battalion commander who, it is now believed, directed executions during the liquidations of the Jewish ghettos in Warsaw, Lublin, and Czestochowa, Poland. After the war, he changed his name to Jack Reimer and immigrated to New York, where he worked his way up from a night janitor at a Schrafts restaurant in Times Square to its manager, and lived in a little house in Putnam County.

Reimer, who admitted to being SS when he came to the States, had already been interviewed twice by authorities and let go. He arrived at the interview with Rosenbaum without a lawyer, prepared to walk off again. But Rosenbaum suspected Reimer had a story to tell. And after two hours of questioning, Rosenbaum had Reimer describing a mass execution in which about 50 men were shot to death in a pit in the forest. But Reimer claimed he went out of his way not to kill anyone. "It was a battle of wits. He was trying to discern what I already knew, and I was trying to conceal it," Rosenbaum said. The interview transcript runs to 174 pages. By page 150, Rosenbaum had Reimer on the verge of admitting that he'd pulled his trigger. The back and forth arrives at this climax:

Rosenbaum: Weren't there some people who were still alive down there who had to be finished off?

Reimer: There was one—I don't know—was he half dead or whatever. He was pointing with a finger to his head.

Rosenbaum: He wanted to be shot?

Reimer: Yes. And I don't know who but he was shot. That is all I saw. That is the only one that I saw that was shot in my presence when one of them already in the grave pointed the finger to his head, begged for mercy, so to speak.

And then:

Rosenbaum: There's something about the man who pointed to his head that you haven't told me?

Reimer: Yes.

Rosenbaum: You finished him off.

Reimer: I'm afraid so. I don't know if I hit his head. I don't know that.

Rosenbaum: But he died?

Reimer: I just say that I had to make one effort at least while the German was looking at me where I was.

"We ended up in court having to make the grotesque analysis that even if Reimer's bullet didn't hit the man, that between the time he saw Reimer pointing a gun at him and the time he died, even if it's just a second, that's serious persecution. It was a very

LEFT: A member of Einsatzgruppe D executes a civilian. The unit, which followed behind German combat troops on the Eastern Front, was tasked with wiping out populations of Jews, Gypsies, partisans, and others. BELOW: Helmut Oberlander, a former member of Einsatzgruppe D and naturalized Canadian citizen, was returned to Canada from the United States in 1995.

awful situation to be in," Rosenbaum said.

Reimer's lawyer, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, told me he believes to this day what Reimer told him—that he intentionally shot over the heads of victims. "Reimer was an absolutely tragic case," Clark said. "He was a totally nonviolent person. What's he supposed to do, stand there and let the [German] sergeant shoot him?" Clark suggested that Rosenbaum may have committed entrapment by suggesting to Reimer he knew something he did not, an argument Clark did well not to raise in court: law enforcement personnel suggest foreknowledge to interview subjects all the time. It's part of the job. Clark also recounted that as he and Reimer sat eating in the courtroom cafeteria one day during the trial, a woman came over and spat in Reimer's face. "There's fanaticism behind OSI. It fuels hatred," he said.

But Reimer's fate was sealed when OSI tracked down, in a village north of the Ural Mountains, a man who'd served under him in the SS Battalion Streibel. In his testimony, the man recalled seeing Reimer and two co-commanders directing executions, using "their rifle butts to prod the victims, forcing these fear-crazed people to stand up from the ground in groups of five to seven people, including men, women, children, and old people, and marching them into the pit. Then, together with the German officers, they shot the Jews."

"Probably a million people died that way over the course of the war," Rosenbaum said. He added: "I remember thinking that if [Reimer] was a guy who I didn't know what he'd done, I'd feel perfectly fine letting him babysit my children."

For every Reimer, there are thousands who never turn up. OSI still maintains a watch list of 70,000 Nazi and Japanese war criminals—it includes the entirety of the 40,000-strong SS officer corps—that's kept on hand at all international airports and ports of entry in the United States.

Reimer claimed in his testimony that his way to the States may have been aided by a German girlfriend who'd worked for U.S. intelligence after the war. This may or may not have been true, but it's certainly plausible: Some of OSI's most odious defendants were recruited by the government.

Such was the case with Andrija Artukovi and Valerian Trifa, CIA and FBI assets, respectively, and with Arthur Rudolph, a beneficiary of Operation Paperclip, an Army Intelligence initiative to recruit Nazi scientists as part of what was known as the "intellectual reparations" agenda. It was summed up by Dwight Eisenhower when he pointed out that such minds as Rudolph's were "about the only material dividend we are likely to get from the war."

Even while the Allies hunted fugitive Nazis across Europe, they enlisted them. Morally questionable perhaps, this also proved fruitful beyond all expectations: the Axis was years ahead of the Allies in the development not just of missiles, but sonar, jet engines, swept-wing aircraft, synthetic minerals, and chemicals—some of the very things that would fuel the postwar economic and scientific booms in the United States.

Hideous though it is to contemplate, the knowledge gleaned from torturous pressure-chamber experiments carried out on prisoners at Nordhausen proved invaluable to the development of the aviation medicine needed for manned space flight. Indeed, it's no exaggeration to say that without Rudolph and his compatriots—most famously Werner von Braun, the father of NASA, whom OSI may well have prosecuted had he not died in 1977—there probably would be no American space program.

The CIA's answer to Paperclip was called (apparently with a straight face) Operation Public Interest, and among its recruits were OSI defendants Aleksandras Lileikis, Tsherim Soobzokov, and Vladimir Sokolov, the last a Nazi propagandist. By

ABOVE: The liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto saw over 300,000 Jews being sent to extermination centers. BELOW: SS I.D. photo (left) of Jakob Reimer, as SS battalion commander who, it is now believed, directed executions during the liquidations of the Jewish ghettos in Warsaw, Lublin, and Czestochowa, Poland. Post-war photo (right) of Jakob Reimer.

the point OSI tracked down Sokolov's writings—including an oath declaring, "I give my solemn pledge of Loyalty to Adolf Hitler, the Liberator of the Peoples of Russia, and the Unifier of New Europe"—he was a beloved professor of Russian literature at Yale.

William F. Buckley came to his aid, as did the cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and Pat Buchanan, who unsuccessfully tried to enlist Ronald Reagan to intercede on Sokolov's behalf. (Sokolov was later deported and died in a monastery in Canada.)

The same restraint was not shown by Reagan's predecessor. In 1987 Jimmy Carter wrote a letter to OSI on behalf of Martin Bartesch, a one-time guard at Mauthausen. In Germany the U.S. government had captured, and OSI had found, a document that came as close to a smoking gun as it gets in such cases—a log-book, with Bartesch's signature, in which he'd confirmed personally executing a Jewish prisoner. Nonetheless, the former president implored OSI, "I hope that, in cases like this, that special consideration can be given to affected families for humanitarian reasons. Jimmy Carter."

The most shameful case was that of Otto Von Bolschwing, a top-level CIA catch who parlayed his connections into a career as a technology consultant in Silicon Valley. On its website, the CIA calls von Bolschwing "one of the Agency's leading agents in Austria after World War II" and his case "perhaps the most important Nazi war criminal case involving a CIA asset." Not only a high-ranking SS officer, he also served as a tutor on Judaism to Adolph Eichmann, the architect of the Final Solution, whom he helped design the framework for expropriating Jewish property. The CIA routinely lied to immigration officials to get Nazis into the States. But the Agency claims it didn't learn the full extent of von Bolschwing's involvement until decades later. OSI denaturalized him in 1981.

When I asked Rosenbaum whether he sees OSI's job as in part righting some of the sins of the Cold War, he said, "One encounters in this work any number of incidents involving troubling conduct on the part of U.S. government personnel, and while one can't completely undo the consequences of those actions, I do think pursuing justice in those cases at least helps set the record straight and reveals the truth."

In fact, OSI was one of the few offices in Washington to have any contact with the Kremlin toward the end of the Cold War. "We turned the clock back to 1945. We were all going into court together against the Hitlerite criminals, and it had to get done," Ryan said.

OSI has come in for criticism on this score, its foes claiming that it has been duped by Soviet forgeries and coerced confessions. The prior argument has been roundly dismissed by judges at every level, and rightfully so: in the majority of investigations that have led OSI to Russian archives, the records have exonerated defendants or proved

insufficient to show guilt. Over its history OSI has initiated 1,500 investigations, but only brought 137 cases. But the latter argument has validity, or at least did prior to the demise of the USSR. Rosenbaum said cooperation with OSI "had practical value for the Soviets as a propaganda matter, I can't deny that. But that having been said, for a variety of reasons the evidence they provided was authentic and as reliable as evidence found elsewhere. Whenever we had good evidence, we used it."

Bertram Falbaum, a former OSI investigator, said, "I once asked a Soviet procurator, Why are you so cordial and accepting of us coming over? And he said, Listen, from your point of view, seven million Jews, Gypsies, clergy, and others were killed by the Nazis. From our perspective, 20 million Russians were killed. Why wouldn't we cooperate?"

Still, the majority of OSI cases have involved men, like Demjanjuk, who were low-ranking camp guards. "No one ever asks the most important question: Who is this man and why was he there?" said Joe McGinness, a defense attorney who's represented nine OSI defendants. According to McGinness, and to certain WWII historians, many camp guards were dragooned into service and had little or no choice where or how they served. "If you say I'm not going to do it: If you're lucky they send you back to the potato field. If you're not lucky they send you to a camp. If you're really not lucky, they shoot you on the spot," said John Broadley, a lawyer who represented Demjanjuk.

But former OSI historian Todd Huebner disagrees. "There is a lot of evidence that camp guards could have said no to entering training and going into SS service at these places. On the other hand, I don't know how much I'd trust things to be fine and dandy if I said no to [the Germans]." Though "they had no control over where they were sent," he said, "these people were under absolutely no compunction to come to the U.S. and lie about these things."

"None of these men were just present at these camps. Because of what a camp was, all of them took part in persecution, usually lethal persecution," Rosenbaum told me. "That's what the Supreme Court found, and it makes sense. The raison d'etre of a labor camp was persecution, and in many ways death, and if it was a death camp, it was flat-out murder. Do I recognize that are different levels of responsibility and culpability? Of course. But there is a standard for entry into the United States."

The Supreme Court decision Rosenbaum referred to involved Feodor Federenko, a Treblinka SS guard who was deported to the Soviet Union, where he was tried and convicted of treason, and sentenced to death in 1987. His lawyer, Brian Gildea, recalled being woken up by a phone call from Moscow at 2 AM. A voice on the other end informed him his client had just been shot to death by a firing squad.

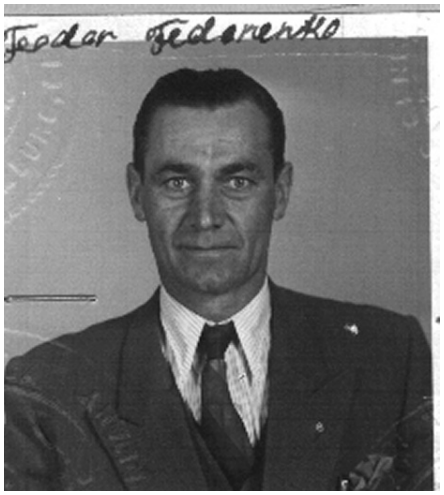
"I actually thought he was a decent man, and believed the things he told me about his presence in Treblinka. He said, I never, never hurt anybody. But [Allan] Ryan was convinced he beat people," Gildea, who's represented 10 OSI defendants, said. "Every single one of the cases I handled, there was speculation and vague testimony of violence, but there was never hard evidence in German or Russian archives that any of the people I represented committed a crime, murdered, or beat somebody at one of these camps."

"It seemed to me my client was deemed guilty even before we got into court," Gildea said. "There was absolutely no compassion at all for my clients. [OSI] were on a mission. They took it very personally."

Others took it more personally. During the Federenko litigation, Gildea received death threats. "My wife picked up the phone one day and a voice on the other end said 'Your husband is a fucking Nazi and we will kill him,'" he said. His car was checked by state troopers for bombs every morning before he could pull out of his driveway.

Jewish prisoners working as slave laborers in the deadly confines of the Mauthausen concentration camp quarry.

Artukovic's lawyer, Gary Fleischmann, who is Jewish, said the Jewish Defense League picketed his house for months. The group's leader barged into Fleischmann's law office in Beverly Hills one day and loosed a potbelly pig. (The JDL also took credit for the pipe bomb that killed Tsherim Soobzokov.) Because he elected to represent Artukovic, "My nephew didn't speak to me for six months," Fleischmann



ABOVE: Feodor Federenko, a Treblinka SS guard, was deported to the Soviet Union, where he was tried and convicted of treason, and sentenced to death in 1987. RIGHT: Taken in February 1982, this photo shows Rosenbaum (left) at the headquarters of the War Crimes Unit of the Israel National Police, in Jaffa, Israel. "For two weeks, the police brought five or six Holocaust survivors each day for each of us to interview. Almost every person I interviewed eventually broke down weeping, usually when speaking of the deaths of children or other family members." On the right is Sergeant Martin Kolar of the Israel Police War Crimes Unit.

said. "There are people who don't speak to me to this day."

Though what still bothers Fleischmann—and other defense attorneys—most is his suspicion that OSI suppressed potentially exculpatory evidence that might have lessened the case against Artukovic. Gildea made the same claim about Federenko. Their claims may have merit. There is no question that OSI lawyers had documents suggesting Demjanjuk was not Ivan the Terrible, which they didn't show to Israeli prosecutors.

"They had evidence in their files that should have been turned over—it was that simple. That's prosecutorial misconduct of the worst kind, especially if he's going to be tried in a foreign land for a capital offense and sentenced to death. I mean, that's egregious," said Gilbert Merritt, a judge on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, who ordered an investigation of OSI after Demjanjuk's exoneration in Israel.

Though OSI was officially cleared of wrongdoing by an independent investigator, and Merritt agreed that Demjanjuk had served as a camp guard and entered the United States illegally, he told me his "view of it was that Justice whitewashed OSI's failure to turn over to the court certain information."

Rosenbaum, who was absent from OSI for the first Demjanjuk trial and did not take it over until after the Israeli exoneration, speaks about the case with an audible tone of vicarious regret. He won't admit that OSI lawyers acted improperly, however.

The most common accusation leveled at Rosenbaum and OSI is that they are out for vengeance, not justice. This is a plausible accusation made less so by the people leveling it.

On the opposite side of the fray from the hotheads of the Jewish Defense League, OSI's cases have attracted a motley cast of amateur historians, activists, Holocaust-revisionists, or outright deniers. No less a whackadoo than Lyndon LaRouche has held anti-

OSI rallies at his Virginia home. There are those, like Ramsey Clark, who are concerned with hypocrisy. Clark told me, "My sense of a just society and what justice is—there has to be a time when you forgive, when you try to overcome the wrongs, and recognize that humans are fallible and these people were caught up in events beyond their control. We forget the horrors of WWII all around. Look at the [Allies'] firebombing of the German cities." He added, "The pursuit of these people has been an industry. These are not Eichmanns. [OSI is] a blemish to our law."

There are those like Joe McGinness who repeatedly put on the witness stand a travel agent and self-styled scholar who questioned basic elements of World War II history. McGinness, who called Rosenbaum "an impresario of fraud," could barely contain his contempt for what he sees as OSI's real mission. "They are in the business of educating people in this country about the Holocaust, and they need a body. They need someone to put at Mauthausen, or some place else," he told me. McGinness won one of the nine cases he's tried against OSI. "These people to the man were the nicest people I ever met in my life. I never had nicer clients," he said.

And, finally, there are those like Heinz Bartesch, the son of Martin Bartesch. OSI's goal, he told me, is "to keep the Holocaust on the minds of everybody. Like we need more. Here's an event that didn't take place in the U.S., but we have umpteen Holocaust museums across the U.S. Why do we have to make the Holocaust a national religion?" I was

not surprised to hear Bartesch say this, as he'd just informed me that it "wasn't Hitler's plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe." He posited that "these were internment camps, not death camps. They had huge kitchens, health care. They were set up to house people until such time as [the Nazis] could send them to Palestine."

With such ideas, it's not surprising that Bartesch was unable to prevent his father's deportation (even with Jimmy Carter's aid). But then the spectacle of watching one's parent investigated and tried for being a war criminal, and then deported, is unthinkable in its own way. It would be enough to drive anyone to distraction, or at least denial. OSI cases bedevil families for years and decades. They drive people into bankruptcy, or exile, or both. "There is no getting around the fact that other people suffer," historian Todd Huebner said. "Their wife didn't work at a camp, their kids didn't kill anyone." And how do you face accusations like these? How could even the most honest person come to believe his or her father is responsible for the murder of one person, let alone hundreds, or thousands? Most, of course, can't. Bartesch, like Demjanjuk's children and Rad Artukovic, will probably maintain their fathers' innocence to their own dying days, no matter how compelling the evidence against them, and accuse OSI of fraud in the bargain.

One child of an OSI defendant who went in the other direction, though, is Joe Eszterhas, the screenwriter of *Music Box*. In a coincidence so eerie as to seem almost biblical, several years after the film was released Eszterhas's father, Istvan, received a letter from Rosenbaum: he was being investigated for authoring anti-Semitic propaganda that led to the murder of Jews in wartime Hungary. When OSI brought the case, Rosenbaum said, he did not know Istvan was related to Joe, who'd gained fame as the writer of *Flashdance* and *Basic Instinct*. (Rosenbaum still has not seen *Music Box*.) Eszterhas would not speak for this article, but in his memoir *Hollywood Animal,* he describes the ordeal unflinchingly. "As the hearings continued, I felt like I was being buried in an avalanche of filth," he writes. Rosenbaum, whose professionalism and courtesy Eszterhas praises in the book, eventually decided not to prosecute—but not before Eszterhas became convinced of his father's guilt. Standing at Istvan's hospital bed, after the sickly, 85-year-old man has undergone heart surgery, he writes: "I wanted to say 'I forgive you' but I couldn't form the words."

The Demjanjuk case was a pyrrhic victory for Rosenbaum, and the old Ukrainian's defenders don't just question his guilt—they take his innocence for granted. That's how badly OSI fumbled the case the first time. In November, *Esquire* ran an article on the case whose teaser posed the question, 'Is this one last blow struck for justice for the Holocaust? Or is it a farce?'

"He has, for 30 years, endured harassment, persecution, and perjury which destroyed his life and that of his family," one of those defenders, Pat Buchanan, told me. Buchanan, who once said Demjanjuk's ordeal "may be an American Dreyfuss Affair," first took up his cause in the first Reagan administration. He said he "know(s) of no witness, living or dead, who has credibly testified he saw John Demjanjuk kill anyone. I regard John Demjanjuk as a victim of a monstrous injustice perpetrated by people so blinded with hatred they cannot see the evil they do."

OSI cases take an internal vengeance, too. Its lawyers and historians become consumed. John Horrigan, a former OSI investigator who worked on Demjanjuk's case in the 1980s, admitted that "prosecuting him, for all of us, became an obsession." Todd Huebner said, "My first gray hairs appeared while working on the Demjanjuk case," adding, "I didn't have a very upbeat view of human nature to begin with, and this job didn't give me a more upbeat view."

Rosenbaum said, "For a lot of people here, the nature of the work exacts a serious toll emotionally. It's very depressing work.… I worked here from 1980 to 1984, and at that point I'd seen as much devastation and murder as I could really handle, and I just needed to get away from it. The reason I've been able to survive the second go-around is I don't deal with the reality of these crimes on a daily basis. I'm an administrator now."

He will have to deal with the reality at least one last time: he's scheduled to fly to Munich to testify against Demjanjuk, who will most likely spend what little time he has left in life after the trial in a prison cell in Germany, which does not practice capital punishment. (Huebner said the current case is more or less airtight. "No case I worked on had as many and as useful documents as Demjanjuk," he said.) It will no doubt prove one of the world's last Nazi trials, not because OSI has a lack of active cases, but because of the "biological solution," as it's mordantly known around the office. Over 90 percent of its defendants have already died.

That's why the Justice Department has instructed Rosenbaum to begin concentrating on cases of modern war criminals—from Africa, the former Yugoslavia, South America, and Asia—who've immigrated to the States.

"We got a call from an African man who encountered his one-time torturer in his apartment building," Rosenbaum told me. "That experience is unlike anything the survivors of the Holocaust have had. There are no Nazis dressing up as Jews and going to synagogues."

In the spring of 2009 OSI brought its most significant modern-era case to date, against Lazare Kabaya Kobagaya, who lives in Topeka, Kansas. Kobagaya is accused of playing a major part in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. It will be a respite of a sort for Rosenbaum. But only of a sort. The unthinkable brutality of Rwanda in 1994 does bear some resemblance to the unthinkable brutality of Europe in 1943. Prosecuting horror means reconstructing it, and reconstructing it means, in some sense, living it.

"It's easy to burn out on this kind of work," Rosenbaum said. "You try to imagine what it was like to be there. And no sooner do you start, than you try to not imagine what it was like." □

River-Crossing

British Commandos did much to ensure the Allied victory during the thrust into Germany in early 1945. **BY MARK SIMMONS**

Men of No. 46 Commando, 4th Special Service Brigade, pass through the village of Douvres la Delivrande as French civilians look on, June 8, 1944.

"THE BIG DAY came and we moved off to our positions. Shortly a huge bombing raid commenced on the town of Wesel, followed by an artillery barrage which virtually shook the very ground under us. It was very difficult not to be anything other than nervous and almost shell-shocked as we were virtually sitting under the bombardment."

So recalls Fred Harris, a Royal Marine of 45 Commando, about the night crossing of the Rhine River at Wesel in March 1945—the Western Allies' first major offensive in 1945. Fred continues in a lighter note, "I remember, of all things, mail coming up, which for me was in the shape of a food parcel, a homemade cake.... This was duly cut into umpteen pieces and passed around. Our turn came, we clambered into the Buffaloes [an amphibious tracked vehicle] and we were on our way down the bank and into the river. Since nothing could be seen from these vehicles, only the night sky and tracers overhead, there was little to do except try not to think about being sunk."

Landing safely, Fred and his section moved rapidly into the town, taking up position in a factory that had been used to manufacture lavatory pans which lay shattered all around the building. They found the town a pitiful sight.

"It was one mass of craters and bombed buildings. God knows how anybody survived it, and how many troops and civilians were killed. American para-glider troops were also wandering around, no doubt dropped outside their zones. It was not unusual to hear 'Hey Mac, have you seen our outfit?' [These were troops from the U.S. 17th Airborne Division.]

"We were into Germany proper now, prisoners were more frequent and in fairly large numbers. It was noticeable how very young or very old the majority of them were...."

That March morning, B Troop of 46 Royal Marine Commando were the first British troops to set foot in Nazi Germany. Three months earlier, in January 1945, 1st Commando Brigade, including 45 and 46 Royal Marine Commandos and No. 3 and No. 6 Army Commandos, were in the U.K. having completed a period of training on the Sussex Downs and coast. One Marine then recalled, "If a morning exercise went well, the afternoon was free. If it went badly, we repeated it until we got it right, however long it took." The brigade had been withdrawn from France after 83 days of continuous active service, starting with D-Day.

Two Commando brigades had taken part in the D-Day operations and had made quite a reputation for themselves: 1st Commando Brigade under Brigadier Lord Lovat, which was made up of Numbers 3, 4, and 6 Army Commandos and 45 Royal Marine Commando; and 4th Commando Brigade under Brigadier B.W. "Jumbo" Leicester, consisting of 41, 46, 47, and 48 Royal Marine Commandos.

On June 6, 1944, Lovat's 1st Commando Brigade, landing on the left of the British Second Army, was to clear the town of Ouistreham at the mouth of the Orne, then push inland to link up with elements of the

Imperial War Museum

COMMANDOS

6th Airborne Division at Pegasus Bridge and secure the left flank of the invasion.

The 4th Brigade landed farther west in the area of Lion-Sur-Mer, seizing a number of coastal villages. No. 47 Commando operated far from the rest at the junction of the British and American armies where it would capture the harbor of Port-en-Bessin, during which it suffered severe casualties. No. 48 Commando lost half its strength within 24 hours but had captured the formidable strongpoint of Langrune.

On June 12, Lord Lovat was wounded and Derek Mills-Roberts was promoted to command 1st Commando Brigade. A former Irish Guards officer, Mills-Roberts had been with the Commandos since their formation in 1940, and had commanded a company in No. 4 Commando during the ill-fated Dieppe Raid in 1942. As a lieutenant colonel, he commanded No. 6 Commando in North Africa, helping to wrest the initiative from German forces after their victory at Kasserine Pass in Tunisia.

> "His complete contempt for all personal danger, and the magnificent example he set of cool courage and determination to continue his work, whatever the odds, was an inspiration to his comrades...."

Mauling two German battalions at what became known as the "Steamroller Farm Engagement," for which he was awarded the DSO, Mills-Roberts received a warm letter of thanks from General Dwight D. Eisenhower. He still commanded No. 6 Commando on D-Day, fighting from the beaches through to the paratroopers holding Pegasus Bridge. He would retain command of 1st Commando Brigade until the end of the war in Europe.

In September 1944, the 1st Brigade returned to England while the 4th Brigade advanced eastward along the French coast. In October, 46 Commando, which had been much reduced in numbers during heavy fighting against the panzer grenadiers of the 12th SS Division in the villages of Le Hamel and Rats, returned to England and changed places with No. 4 Commando.

After replacements had been absorbed, 1st Commando Brigade had expected to be shipped to the Far East. But the German Ardennes offensive in December changed all that and the Commandos were sent to Holland instead, their task to help defend Antwerp. However, by the time they arrived on the ground, the last great German attack had already run its course and failed. The Commandos' new role would now embrace spearheading the crossings of several rivers, including the Rhine, for the final drive into Germany.

On January 22, 1945, the brigade came under command of the 7th Armoured Division, which was in the process of conducting a probing action east of the River Maas in Holland, with the objective of driving the enemy back behind the River Roer and clearing the enemy forces between the two rivers.

At this time, the Germans were withdrawing to concentrate on the defense of the Fatherland, and it was not until the night of January 22/23 that No. 6 Commando crossed the Juliana Canal and occupied Maasbracht and 45 Commando took the village of St. Joostburg that contact with the enemy was made.

It was a bright, clear morning and bitterly cold, the landscape snow covered. By 10 AM, 45 Commando had taken the lead moving through and searching Brachterbeek,

A Brief History of Commando Forces

The Commando role was born of the decision to mount vigorous raiding operations against occupied Europe as British forces were withdrawing from France in 1940. Special forces would be needed for this role. Lt. Col. Dudley Clarke suggested they be called "Commandos" after the Boer irregulars who had operated behind British lines in the South African War (1899-1902).

In June 1940, Winston Churchill appointed Lt. Gen. Sir Alan Bourne, then adjutant general of the Royal Marines, to the post of Head of Combined Operations, including the Commando forces. However, he held the post for only a month and was replaced by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes of Zeebrugge fame.

Keyes had been the architect of the model Zeebrugge raid of World War I against German U-boat facilities. The irascible old admiral had vast experience but stepped down after just over a year, feeling frustrated by red tape in Whitehall.

Sadly, the admiral's son, Geoffrey Keyes, who served with No. 11 (Scottish) Commando, was killed during the November 1941 "Raid on Rommel"—an unsuccessful attempt to kill the famous field marshal. For his part in leading it, Lt. Col. Keyes was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross, the first VC awarded to a Commando soldier.

Initially, 10 Commando units of 500 men each were to be raised. Volunteers were asked for from the Army Infantry Battalions of Home Command. The response was overwhelming.

The Royal Marines who, by tradition, should have been the obvious force for this amphibious role, were then manning coastal defense batteries and mustering in Royal Marine divisions against the likely threat of German invasion. The first Royal Marine Commando units were raised in 1942.

The first major Commando raid went against the enemy occupied islands off Norway in March 1941. Commando forces took part in all the major actions of World War II in Europe--including the spectacular raid against the German-held St. Nazaire harbor--and many in the Far East, as well as many smaller specialist operations. Their training centered on

Imperial War Museum

No. 4 Commando engages in house-to-house fighting with the Germans at Riva Bella, near Ouistreham. Sherman DD tanks of B Squadron, 13/18th Royal Hussars are providing fire support and cover.

where the men were greeted by some jubilant Dutch civilians. A Troop then moved onto the next objective, St. Joostburg, passing through another small village and on toward the Montiforterbeek Dyke containing a frozen canal.

It was in this area that A Troop, the most advanced detachment, became heavily engaged in an exposed position and was unable to pull back until supported by other parts of the Commando. Here Lance-Corporal H.E. Harden would earn a posthumous Victoria Cross. Troop Sergeant Major H. Bennet spoke with Harden shortly before he was killed and he told him that the "casualties must be got in from the extreme cold to have a chance to survive." Harden was, said Bennet, "cool and calm in dealing with his patients, even though he had been hit on one of his journeys."

Part of Harden's Victoria Cross citation reads:

"....on 23 January 1945, the leading section of a Royal Marine Commando Troop was pinned to the ground by intense enemy machine-gun fire from well-concealed positions. As it was impossible to engage the

a high degree of physical fitness and the ability to operate behind enemy lines in small groups. Also raised were the Special Boat Section (SBS) Army, and the specialist Canoeists from the Royal Marines, who would later come under the umbrella of the Commando forces.

On October 27, 1941, Churchill appointed the dashing Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten, RN, to command Combined Operations. A much younger man than Keyes, he had the drive and diplomatic skills to push aside the Whitehall "Armchair Generals." In 1943, he broke up the old Royal Marine divisions and diverted their men to the Commandos and to crew the growing fleet of landing craft.

In 1943, Admiral Mountbatten moved on to become Supreme Commander South East Asia, where his skills were badly needed. (He would be assassinated by an Irish Republican Army bomb while sailing near his holiday home in County Sligo, Ireland, on August 27, 1979.)

Upon Mountbatten's departure, Maj. Gen. R.E. Laycock, an original Commando soldier who Mountbatten felt was "perhaps the greatest of them," took over Combined Operations. He had taken part in the Raid on Rommel and famously walked across the desert for 41 days to escape capture.

Laycock commanded No. 2 Commando Brigade in the Mediterranean Theater, taking part in the landings on Sicily and on the Italian mainland. He remained chief of Combined Operations until the end of the war.

The Commando raids were so successful that Adolf Hitler issued his infamous Commando Order on October 18, 1942, which partly reads, "From now on, all men operating against German Troops as so-called Commando raids in Europe or in Africa are to be annihilated to the last man.... Even if these individuals on discovery make obvious their intention of giving themselves up as prisoners, no pardon on any accord is to be given."

Britain disbanded the Army Commando Units in 1946. However, the Commandos live on to this day in the shape of 3 Commando Brigade, Royal Marines, which is still very much a combined-operations force with ranks serving in it from the Royal Marines, Royal Navy, and Army. □

enemy from the open owing to the lack of cover, the section was ordered to make for some nearby houses. This was accomplished, but one officer and three other ranks casualties were left lying in the open.

"The whole Troop position was under continuous heavy and accurate shell and mortar fire. L/Cpl Harden, the RAMC [Royal Army Medical Corps] orderly attached to the Troop, at once went forward a distance of 120 yards, into the open under a hail of enemy machine gun and rifle fire directed from four positions, all within three hundred yards, and with the greatest coolness and bravery remained in the open while he attended to the four casualties. After dressing the wounds of three of them, he carried one of them back to cover. L/Cpl Harden was then ordered not to go forward again and an attempt was made to bring in the other casualties with the aid of tanks, but this proved unsuccessful owing to the heavy and accurate fire of enemy anti-tank guns. A further attempt was then made to recover the casualties under a smoke screen, but this only increased the enemy fire in the vicinity of the casualties.

"L/Cpl Harden then insisted on going forward again with a volunteer stretcher party, and succeeded in bringing back another badly wounded man.

"L/Cpl Harden went out a third time, again with a stretcher party, and after starting the return journey with the wounded officer, under very heavy enemy small arms and mortar fire, he was killed.

"Throughout this long period L/Cpl Harden displayed superb devotion to duty and personal courage of the very highest order, and there is no doubt that it had a most steadying effect upon the other troops in the area at a most critical time. His action was directly responsible for saving the lives of the wounded brought in. His complete contempt for all personal danger, and the magnificent example he set of cool courage and determination to continue with his work, whatever the odds, was an inspiration to his comrades, and will never be forgotten by those who saw it."

It took most of 45 Commando, with the support of tanks and artillery, to gain a foothold on the Montiforterbeek Dyke. The next morning, No. 6 Commando cleared the dyke but found that all the bridges across the canal had been blown.

Meanwhile, No. 3 Commando had reached the outskirts of Linne, but spent an uncomfortable night huddled in small gullies on frozen, snow-covered ground. However, Royal Engineers had bridged the canal and some of the deeper gullies, and in the morning, with armored support from the 8th Hussars, the town soon fell.

On January 15, 45 Commando moved forward to Linne to assist No. 3 Commando and then farther forward to a position overlooking the River Maas. In the

National Archives

RIGHT: A British amphibious armored vehicle leaves the west bank of the Rhine, headed eastward. Another tank can be seen behind it on the bank. The photo was taken from a low-flying RAF plane on March 24, 1945.
BELOW: British Commandos in snow-camouflage uniforms on a reconnaissance mission before the Allied offensive toward Germany and the lower Roer River.

National Archives

center of the river opposite B and E Troops lay a small, bell-shaped island that was given the nickname "Belle Isle" by the Marines (after the island of the same name off Brittany that was captured by Royal Marines from the French in 1761).

Later that morning orders were received to gain information on enemy forces on the far bank of the Maas in the Merum area. Thus the plan devolved on capturing the small island and raiding Merum.

On the night of January 27/28, unfortunately with a bright, full moon, D and E Troops crossed the Maas onto Belle Isle; once it was taken, B Troop was ordered to pass through them for the far bank. It was a difficult task in assault boats propelled by paddles against

a current of six knots. Once ashore on Belle Isle, firing broke out. The element of surprise had been lost.

Captain J.E. Day of B Troop noted, "D Troop had a very bad time, clearly in serious trouble.... The B Troop raid was cancelled and I was told to reinforce the small bridgehead section and fix a line across the river so that a ferry service could be started." It proved extremely demanding to extract D Troop from the island without heavy casualties, especially the wounded, some of which had to haul themselves with the aid of a fit comrade through the swirling, freezing waters. D Troop lost 11 killed, 13 wounded, and six missing.

A thaw occurred during February and the tanks of the Hussars were soon bogged down. First Commando Brigade was pulled back to Venray and began training for the Rhine crossing, another task being to capture the city of Wesel.

For two weeks the men of 45 Commando stayed in billets with Dutch families in the Venray area, the luxuries of home living and cooking in complete contrast to the fighting they had recently experienced; many of the hosts and guests stayed in contact for years afterward. Groups of a dozen or so were fortunate to get 18 hours leave in Brussels. They left their unit in the front line dirty and tired and returned cleaner but even more tired.

Also, training got into full swing for the river crossings, the majority of which the planners rightly assumed would be fiercely opposed. Various types of craft were used—dories, storm boats, and the armored, swimming, troop-carrying Buffaloes.

Operation Plunder was the code name given to the British crossing of the Rhine, and Operation Widgeon was a subordinate operation by 1st Commando Brigade to capture and hold Wesel. The subordinate airborne and glider operation involving the 17th U.S. and 6th British Airborne Divisions was known as Operation Varsity.

On March 20, the 1st Commando Brigade left the Venray area and crossed into Germany. No. 46 Commando led, sending a patrol into the Well area and penetrating a few miles without opposition. The 1st Commando Brigade's task as part of Operation Widgeon was to spearhead the crossing of the Rhine by Montgomery's 21st Army Group between Rees and Wesel and drive on to capture Wesel after RAF Bomber Command had softened things up.

After heavy raids by Lancaster Bombers and an intense artillery bombardment, 46 Commando crossed the 300-yard-wide river in Buffaloes at 9:00 PM on March 23. One Buffalo was hit by friendly fire, but the bridgehead was secured. No. 6 Commando crossed in storm boats, coming under small-arms fire to which several men were lost.

Later, at 10:30 PM, 45 Commando crossed in Buffaloes. It was in one of these vehicles that Fred Harris sat, full of apprehension, in case a hit sank them. Captain Day of B Troop found that "the night was almost beyond description. To our right Wesel was being annihilated; to our front we could see the angry glow of the supporting barrage; to the left one Buffalo on

Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: Members of 1st Commando Brigade man two Vickers machine guns in the shattered outskirts of Wesel. The 1st Commandos spearheaded the British assault by making a surprise crossing in assault craft on the night of March 23-24, 1945. OPPOSITE: A staged photograph shows Germans surrendering to commandos from the 1st Special Service Brigade near Wesel, March 24, 1945.

the bank was ablaze; overhead we could hear the rushing wind of the long range shells, and at short intervals the bark of Bofors guns firing tracer to mark the flanks."

Meanwhile, No. 6 Commando reached their forming-up position on Grav Insel, a flat area a mile west of Wesel, just as the Pathfinders of Bomber Command flew over the doomed city, dropping brilliant red flares, and the RAF began discharging over a thousand tons of bombs. Major C.E.J. Leophard led 6 Troop into the devastated city, which he said resembled "the surface of the Moon."

The next day, hundreds of aircraft dropped the 6th and 17th Airborne Divisions on high ground west of Wesel. Shortly thereafter, a heavy German counterattack hit 45 Commando, which was holding a factory. The German infantry were beaten off but the tanks proved more difficult, causing several casualties in 45 Commando which had only light antitank weapons with which to defend themselves. However, artillery was soon again able to give fire support once all the paratroops were down, and a link-up with them was quickly made.

By the evening of March 25, the whole town of Wesel was in Allied hands and engineers had bridged the Rhine. The Commando Brigade had taken 850 prisoners and several hundred of the enemy had been killed, for the cost of 95 casualties to the brigade.

The Commando Brigade now took part in the advance to the Baltic. For this they had to cross the Weser, Aller, and Elbe Rivers. On April 3, now under command of 6th Airborne Division, they set out by road for their immediate objective: the ancient town of Osnabruck. It was attacked by night, the only serious fighting falling to 45 Commando. By 10:00 AM the next day, the town had been taken, along with 450 prisoners.

The next river crossing was the Weser—"deep and wide." The 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade had established a bridgehead in the town of Leese on the far bank, so 45 Commando was sent to reinforce them, crossing the river in nine assault boats. They were soon in a hot fight with the 12th SS Training Battalion, whose men, some merely boys, displayed fanatical courage even this late in the war. The Luftwaffe even made an appearance, attacking with a motley collection of about 30 aircraft and bombing the Engineers at the bridging site before attempting to fly along the river and strafe the Commandos and soldiers of the Rifle Brigade.

No. 45 Commando tried to break out from the bridgehead and capture the town of Leese. The fighting again was fierce, the Marines having to dig in to hold on. That night, April 6/7, they fell back to the bridgehead to cover the river crossing of the rest of the brigade. At 3:00 AM, just as the crossing was taking place, the Germans launched another attack. B Troop bore the brunt of the attack on the right flank, but the young SS recruits made little headway and left the ground strewn with their dead.

By daylight, No. 3 Commando had crossed and the day passed fairly quietly. That night the advance was renewed and by 7:00 AM the town had fallen, the enemy having abandoned it two hours before.

No. 3 Commando set out to capture a large factory in woods a mile or so to the north. In full view of the enemy, P.I. Bartholomew, the commanding officer just promoted to lieutenant colonel, leaped atop a tank and personally directed fire. When the factory fell to the Commandos, it was discovered that it was used to manufacture V-2 rockets. Inside, the Commandos captured a complete staff of scientists still in their white coats. Some of the 45-foot-long ballistic missiles were found fully armed on railway cars ready to be sent to the launching sites. The factory was well camouflaged from the air. (Some 3,000 V-2s, the world's first ballistic missile built largely with slave labor, were launched against Allied targets mostly in London and later Antwerp, resulting in over 7,000 deaths of civilians and military personnel. The last V-2 attack took place in March 1945.)

When the factory fell to the Commandos, it was discovered that it was used to manufacture V-2 rockets. Some of the 45-foot-long ballistic missiles were found fully armed on railway cars, ready to be sent to the launching sites.

Within two days of the fall of Leese, the Brigade was again called upon to lead the crossing of its third river in as many weeks. This time at the River Aller, on the night of April 10, they were to force a passage near the town of Essel for the 11th Armoured Division.

Brigadier Mills-Roberts decided to cross the Aller on the railway bridge a mile farther downstream rather than use the road bridge close to the town which the defenders would almost certainly blow. The whole brigade crossed the railway bridge, even though the first span had been blown, but this only ran across flat meadowland.

No. 3 Commando reached the road bridge and reported that it was held in strength. No. 6 Commando captured one end but the enemy sent in heavy counterattacks. The next day, 45 and 46 Commandos took the ground between the two bridges, thereby allowing engineers to build a Bailey bridge as the Commandos hung on; soon the tanks of 11th Armoured started crossing.

The 1st Commando Brigade now acted as mobile flank guard for the advance of VIII Corps to the River Elbe. By April 19, they had covered 60 miles, passing the concentration camp at Belsen, to reach the old, picturesque town of Lüneburg, which had been largely unaffected by the war.

The Commandos here got a well-earned rest for a week, and passed the time with variety shows and games of soccer. On April 28, they moved off again to cross the Elbe, the last river crossing of the war for the brigade.

The Commandos were ordered to capture the town of Lauenberg and bridges over the Elbe, which was as wide as the Rhine with steep ground on the far bank. The crossing took place two miles downstream in Buffaloes. No. 6 Commando would seize the bridgehead while 46 and 45 Commandos would take the town.

Fred Harris of 45 Commando, who had been with the unit since D-Day, remembers, "The end was in sight now. We moved to Lüneburg and had a short rest, then off towards the Elbe, which we crossed by Buffaloes. The many gun positions on the opposite bank were deserted, weapons and stick grenades being left intact."

Imperial War Museum

No. 6 Commando did come under some fire while crossing the river, but when 46 Commando and Brigade HQ crossed, resistance had been eliminated and B Troop of 46 Commando took more than 300 prisoners. Troop Sergeant-Major B.M Aylett caught one German soldier, blissfully unaware of what was happening, creeping across the courtyard of a house in order to wake the cook in time for breakfast.

A patrol of No. 6 Commando seized the main bridge over the Elbe-Trove Canal intact, taking prisoner a demolition party that was attempting to blow it up. Near here, Field Marshal Erhard Milch, Hermann Göring's deputy, surrendered his baton to Brigadier Mills-Roberts who, it is said, disgusted with the sights the brigade had uncovered at Belsen and elsewhere, broke the silver-knobbed baton over the field marshal's head, leaving him unconscious.

Bill Sadler, a corporal signaller with No. 6 Commando, takes up the story: "The brigade continued north unopposed to enter Lübeck and Neustadt, where they found the bodies of some 300 men, women, and children, all clad in pajama-type prison clothing, lying at the edge of the sea. All had been shot or drowned. The circumstances were never made clear. The brigadier ordered the burgomaster to provide a burial party from the most elderly citizens, and they were buried in one mass grave.

"Some years later I read an international paper that a mass grave had been discovered in the area. Apparently no one in the town had any knowledge of its existence or origin. A remarkable case of mass amnesia."

At the end of the war in Europe, 1st Commando Brigade stayed on in Germany for a while, helping to restore order during the early days of the Allied occupation. The brigade returned to Sussex in July 1945 and began to train for operations in the Far East; the Japanese surrender came before they were committed. In December 1945, 1st Commando Brigade was disbanded.

In London's Westminster Abbey stands a small memorial, a statue of a Commando soldier, symbolizing all the Army and Royal Marine Commandos who fought in World War II, with a simple inscription on it: "They performed whatsoever the King commanded." □

GEORGE C. MARSHALL
The Indispensable Man

Forget Eisenhower, forget Patton. The man most responsible for the Allies' victory was a quiet, desk-bound warrior. **BY ERIC HAMMEL**

GEORGE CATLETT MARSHALL was the greatest American military man of his age. If the United States Army had kicked off the 20th century with the specific intent of constructing a chief of staff to lead it to victory in World War II, it could not have done a better job than what chance provided in the triumphs and travails over the 40 years that molded George Marshall.

Born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, on December 31, 1880, Marshall entered the Virginia Military Institute with the class of 1901, with which he graduated as first captain. His first posting as an infantry lieutenant was to a unit in the Philippines a year after the insurrection there had been put down. Following a two-year tour in Oklahoma, Marshall was selected (at the urging of his mentor, Brig. Gen. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing) to study at one of the early service schools, the School of the Line, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He excelled academically, passed an exam for promotion to first lieutenant, and was assigned first as a student to the Army Staff College, then as an instructor for two more years.

In the remaining years before the Great War, Marshall undertook routine assignments. He took extended leave twice, first to watch the British Army train in the United Kingdom and later to tour Russo-Japanese War battlefields in Asia and discuss tactics with Japanese officers. He came away from these interactions with a list of things he wanted to see fixed in the U.S. Army, among them a paucity in night battle doctrine, a technique he drove home throughout his career. Well regarded by his peers and his superiors as a comer, but without any first-hand experience in war, Marshall was finally promoted to captain in mid-1916.

All photos: National Archives

With a temporary promotion to lieutenant colonel, Marshall arrived aboard the first American troop transport to reach France as an assistant operations officer with the 1st Infantry Division. The arrival was more symbolic than anything, for it became Marshall's job to train the division to take part in actual war. This he did with great success. Alas, Marshall was considered too valuable to command troops in battle; he ended the war as an unblooded temporary colonel serving as operations officer of the U.S. First Army.

Marshall's brilliant work in France brought him an assignment to his old mentor,

An official wartime portrait of General George C. Marshall. OPPOSITE: Cadet George C. Marshall, front row, third from left, at Virginia Military Institute in 1901.

General of the Armies John Pershing, whom he served as aide-de-camp for five years right after the war. This was as career-boosting a friendship as could befall any Regular Army officer.

From an office in Washington, Lt. Col. Marshall was transferred to an office in China, where he served as executive officer of an infantry regiment based in Tientsin. It was here that he rekindled a friendship with Major Joseph Stilwell, who had served with Marshall in France on the 1st Infantry Division staff. Marshall's relationship with the fiery but intellectual Stilwell is emblematic of the relationships, forged over a long career, that

Colonel George C. Marshall converses with Major General Henry T. Allen, commanding general of the 90th Infantry Division, in France, 1918.

served the World War II Army so well when Marshall was able to reach back, so to speak, to elevate officers who had made an especially good impression on him, whose work ethic and thought processes he particularly admired.

In 1927, Marshall was an instructor at the Army War College at Washington Barracks (now known as Fort Lesley J. McNair) in Washington, D.C.—a heady assignment he might have relished had it not coincided with the death of his beloved wife, Katherine. Seen by friends and interested superiors as a man who might need to bury his grief in hard work, Lt. Col. Marshall was reassigned as assistant commandant of The Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, which placed him in charge of the instructional staff and the curriculum. Marshall's posting to Benning was the assignment from which the United States Army derived its victory in World War II.

A listing of students and instructors at The Infantry School during Marshall's five-year tour as assistant commandant and then commandant is tantamount to a list of the best army, corps, and division commanders the U.S. Army—which is to say George Catlett Marshall—put into play during World War II. The comprehensive changes, the instructional innovation, and the sheer amount of training to think on their feet engineered by Marshall during his Benning tour set these younger officers up for the battlefield victories they would one day win.

Approximately 200 future generals transited Benning as students or instructors during Marshall's tenure, and he had a direct hand in elevating nearly every single one of them to flag. Among the most prominent were Lt. Col. Joseph Stilwell, Major Omar Bradley, Major Gilbert Cook, and Captain J. Lawton Collins. Also, Lt. Col. Courtney Hodges served on the Infantry Board with Marshall. A few of the more celebrated future generals who passed through the school as students during Marshall's tenure included Terry Allen, Clarence Huebner, James Van Fleet, Walter Bedell Smith, Matthew Ridgway (who had served with Marshall in China), Manton Eddy, and Norman Cota.

The Infantry School itself, which was dedicated to training mid-career officers who were ticketed to move up, underwent a renaissance under Marshall, who encouraged—in fact, demanded—original thinking and inspired experimentation. At Marshall's urging, basic infantry tactics, all the way to squad level, were stripped down, studied, rejiggered, and finally updated for the modern battlefield and its modern weapons. At The Infantry School, Marshall quite literally changed the way American infantrymen at all levels conducted war and, in so doing, he personally gave rise to the intellectual renaissance that swept the U.S. Army ground establishment in the lean 1930s.

Marshall built upon the work of his immediate predecessor, Colonel Frank Cocheau, who put into play a new teaching principle when he arrived at Benning in mid-1925: demonstration-explanation-performance. All of the students had to go through each lesson. First the instructor demonstrated to the students what they had to learn, usually by employing crack infantry units assigned to The Infantry School for that purpose. Next, the students were expected to explain the lesson to the instructor. Finally, the students had to prove to the school staff that they had learned the lesson.

This evolution revolutionized military training in the United States and it was significantly bolstered when Cocheau dispatched an instructor for a year at the University of Minnesota to study educational psychology. When this officer returned to Benning,

Marshall asked him to run a seminar for the school staff to enhance the overall approach to the mission of educating intelligent men years away from college and at the edge of a phase of life in which many adults literally close their minds.

When he arrived at Benning, Marshall's mission was not so much to remake The Infantry School, per se, as to remake The Infantry School in such a way as to eventually transform the entire Army by changing the way its officers thought about war. It was Marshall's observation from numerous field exercises and the experience of developing operational plans for an infantry division and ultimately a field army in France that planning a battle is an effort in controlling chaos: it couldn't be done. Marshall's key insight and innovation, which alone would have earned him a secure spot in military history, was that battlefield commanders could be systematically reconditioned to accept the chaos as inevitable and to factor it into both advance planning and the actual way they would undertake their quest to dominate any battlefield of any size.

In addition to training officers to be flexible thinkers, Marshall's new syllabus proved to be an excellent tool for weeding out officers who could not be weaned from an unbridgeable tendency to freeze up when their plans inevitably went awry.

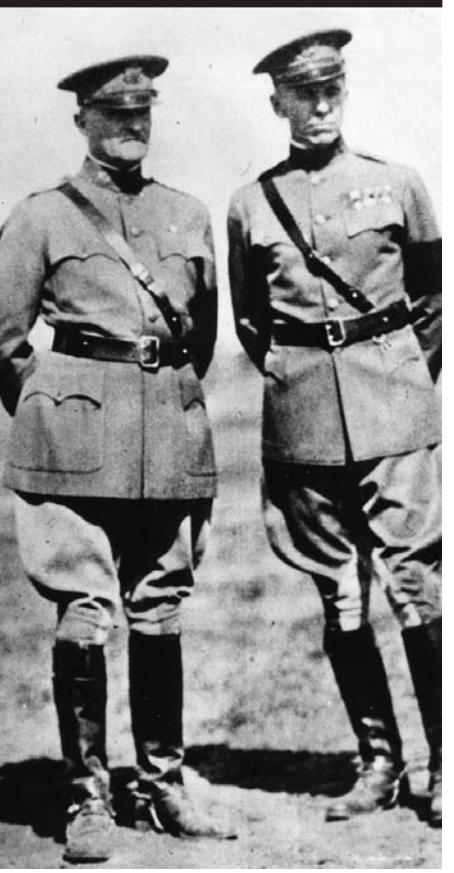
Marshall backed his theory with ample training examples: a last-minute change in objectives just as a fully briefed infantry force was about to set out; the appearance out of the blue of a flanking movement by enemy tanks that had never been briefed into the exercise; or orders for moves that did not match up to any maps any of the students had in hand. Marshall and his instructors were positively diabolical in the ways they screwed up the best-laid plans of their students, all with the intention of forcing them to rely on and hone their native ability to think on their feet under intense pressure.

Marshall also demonstrated in a hundred different ways how even the smartest students had not sufficiently honed their powers of observation. And he forced his students to think, and observe, and act as much in the dark of night as in the light of day, for the night attack, which was underappreciated and therefore underutilized by the U.S. Army, was a chaos-inducing tool embraced by many potential adversaries. Indeed, the night attack had become Marshall's favorite tool after he heard it extolled by Japanese officers during his tour of Russo-Japanese War battlefields before the Great War.

Another ironclad aid Marshall taught was economy of thought. He constantly harped on the instructors to tighten up their written and verbal lessons, and for the students to explain things in the fewest possible words, oral and written. He wanted the essence, the heart of the matter, to be delivered clearly in the least possible time. As with all of Marshall's practical lessons, this revolution in brevity eventually permeated the Army, for instructors and students alike were released back into the Army's many nooks and crannies when their time at Benning ended, all unabashedly enthusiastic to train their fellow soldiers.

Marshall's influence reached well beyond the classroom during his tour at Benning, for the Infantry School was as much a laboratory as it was an educational institution. By employing the demonstration infantry regiment resident at Benning, Marshall and the various geniuses he commanded played with the size and internal organization of the infantry battalion to find an optimal size and organization.

The battalion was the smallest organization in the Army that could conduct independent, self-contained operations. Mirroring the Army general staff set-up, the infantry battalion had a complete staff with slots for personnel and administration (S-1); intelligence and scouting (S-2); training, planning, and operations (S-3); and logistics and supply (S-4). The battalion comprised three infantry companies and a weapons company armed with mortars and machine guns. The questions Marshall posed were: How big could a battalion be if it was to be easily controlled in battle by its commander? And, what was the smallest it could be to accomplish its missions while freeing up troops and



General John J. Pershing (left) and his aide, Colonel Marshall, photographed in France, 1918.

officers to man a larger number of battalions? Where was the balance?

Working with battalions ranging in size from 300 to 3,000 men, Marshall's team arrived at 850 as being the optimal requirement for an infantry battalion of the day. This was so accurate an analysis that many of the world's armies field infantry battalions roughly 850-strong to the present day.

As soon as The Infantry School had designed the ideal infantry battalion, Marshall went to work to design the ideal infantry regiment and division—indeed, the ideal infantry squad, infantry platoon, and infantry company. He and his men made a lasting mark on all these levels except at the divisional level.

In a report Marshall had probably written over the signature of General Pershing, the chief of staff had attempted to make a case for a smaller infantry division than the four-regiment behemoth the Army fielded in France. Riding on his other successes at The Infantry School, Marshall attempted to get the generals to sign off on

a plan to triangularize the entire infantry, from platoon to division.

The seniors agreed to do so from platoon to regiment (three squads per platoon, three rifle platoons and a weapons platoon per company, three infantry companies and a weapons company per battalion, three infantry battalions and a heavy weapons company per regiment). But the attempt to change the shape of the infantry division (from four infantry regiments and an artillery regiment) was quashed. The division was, after all, the purview of generals.

Marshall and his acolytes proposed providing so much fire power to the smaller triangular division that it could throw

ABOVE: While commander of the 5th Brigade in Washington State, Marshall also oversaw the state's Civilian Conservation Corps, the Depression-era public-works program designed to help unemployed Americans. OPPOSITE: Marshall expanded the professionalism of the Army during the interwar years. Here a group of Army engineers attends a class in surveying.

twice its old weight in steel but tie up only half as many men. The generals quashed this recommendation as well, but Marshall and his subordinates filed it all away, certain that at least one of them would one day cast the deciding vote.

Once the infantry organization was triangularized from platoon to regiment, The Infantry School focused on the optimum tactic for it: the holding attack. Even at squad level, a fire element that included at least one automatic weapon could establish a base of fire and engage the enemy on his front—hold the enemy in place—while the rest of the unit attempted to skirt the beaten zone to deliver a flank or rear assault. One element holding the enemy under fire and a maneuver element delivering an attack from outside the ring of fire equals a holding attack. It takes fewer troops to hold than to attack.

Thus, one squad and perhaps an attached machine gun could establish and hold the base of fire while the other two squads in a platoon maneuvered to mount a flank attack. With the aid of light mortars and one or two machine guns, one platoon could hold and two platoons could attack. Even better, to hedge against inevitable chaos, one element could hold, one element could attack, and one element could be held in reserve to perhaps bolster the attack, reinforce a base of fire, exploit a breakthrough, or counter an enemy counterattack. Companies, battalions, regiments, divisions, corps, field armies, and even army groups could exploit the utter simplicity of the holding attack. And, of course, the holding attack Marshall favored was ideally served by a triangular organization.

In 1930, Captain J. Lawton Collins, a particular favorite of Marshall's, came up with a simplified scheme for close-order drill that finally took into account the fire-and-move small-unit tactics of every American battlefield since Gettysburg, or even First Bull Run.

The objective of drill prior to the Great War's trench warfare was to move an infantry unit across a battlefield in a solid, protective block that could put out massive coordinated volleys of fire as well as reload behind a protective screen of bullets or bayonets. Repeating rifles and machine guns, when they appeared, shredded the old battle formations and led to fire-and-move tactics, which allowed individuals and small groups of infantrymen to make use of cover and terrain as they advanced on the enemy in small rushes, putting out suppressive fire as they went or with suppressive support from a stationary base of fire.

The first real use of fire-and-move tactics was posited by Confederate General James Longstreet of the Army of Northern Virginia, around 1863—a response to rapid-fire, breech-loading rifles in the hands of Union common infantry. In any case, 1930 seemed about time to alter the very old close-order drill regulations, and Collins had a very simple drill all worked out. Marshall agreed; he endorsed it and sent it up the chain. It was dead on arrival.

Both the chief of the infantry branch and the chief of staff, General Charles Summerall, rejected it out of hand, claiming its very simplicity would hurt Army morale. This speaks volumes about the usefulness of the drill; it was no longer about battlefield evolutions; it was about the discipline many officers thought could be derived from mind-numbing, time-eating, make-work projects aimed solely at keeping idle hands and feet moving in some regimented way. The Collins drill endorsed by Marshall was aimed at building confidence, enhancing teamwork, and developing unit esprit. Marshall was unwilling to go to the mat with General Summerall, under whom he had served in the 1st Infantry Division in France, but he kept Collins and his modern drill in mind for some future opening.

Under Marshall's influence, The Infantry School professional library was massively built up, and everyone who passed through the school was expected to read voraciously—to make time to read within an impossibly busy schedule.

Even without the crucible of World War II, Marshall and the hundreds of officers he influenced during his tour at The Infantry School changed the U.S. Army forever. They learned and tested and nurtured truths about making war—and about teaching and learning and running organizations, about working cooperatively, and so on. Their efforts stood their nation in good stead for nearly as long as the youngest of them drew breath. They infected the Army and a nation of wartime soldiers with their virus for getting things done, with their patented American can-do spirit. And in doing so, they changed the world.

If George Catlett Marshall had accomplished in life only what he accomplished at Fort Benning between 1928 and the fall of 1932, he would have been accorded a place of honor in American military history. But there was more to come.

When the Benning tour ended, Marshall, who had remarried in 1930, was posted to Georgia to command a rag-tag battalion of infantry.The unit was so small and so poorly equipped that it could not realistically train. Morale was extremely low because the poorly paid troops could not buy enough food for their families, a problem Marshall fixed on the sly by selling the needy troops "leftovers" from the battalion kitchens for pennies on the dollar.

During his tour in Georgia—and from May 1933 as commanding officer of an infantry regiment in South Carolina—Marshall had his first experience with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), for which he oversaw the construction and administration of 34 camps staffed in part by Regular Army officers and noncommissioned and Organized Reserve officers. This experience, and a later one in the Pacific Northwest, gave Marshall a refresher course in dealing with the induction and training of masses of people who, to an Army officer, looked an awful lot like raw recruits. This is what he had done for the 1st Infantry Division in 1917 and part of 1918, and it helped prepare him for what he would have to do beginning again in 1940.

In October 1933, after only five months in command of his regiment, the crown jewel of many a career, Colonel Marshall was abruptly reassigned as senior instructor to the staff of the 33rd Infantry Division—the Illinois National Guard command based in Chicago. The move came as a blow to Marshall. Had he done something wrong? Was he being shown the door?

Not at all. The 33rd Division had been called out in 1932 to dampen the effects of forecasted labor unrest in an urban area facing 50 percent unemployment. The Guardsmen had performed less efficiently than expected. It was Marshall's brief to train the division to a level the Army required in the event the National Guard was called to war.

Yet again, a playwright could not have done a better job than chance did when it came to scripting the details of the career of the man who would be the nation's number one soldier when, indeed, the entire National Guard was called to the colors. It would be Marshall's lot to oversee the training and equipping, even the streamlining and a massive change in management for the entire Guard. The insights he gained into Guard methods, Guard shortcomings, and Guard politics while he served in Illinois, not to mention new ways to apply The Infantry School experience, were legion.

The promotion clock nearly ticked out on Marshall. If he didn't get a star soon, he would be mandatorily retired as a colonel. And even if he won one star, could he earn two before the unofficial cutoff, at age 61, after which tradition forbade generals from being considered for the post of chief of staff? It is true that by the mid-1930s, Marshall wanted to be chief of staff, and he even felt he had an outside chance to get there.

Several senior officers who knew Marshall well took it upon themselves to extol his merits as a means to getting him a star. Marshall, on the other hand, made only one request of only one man. General Pershing, who had been Marshall's best man at the second wedding, agreed to lay out Marshall's career in writing, via efficiency

reports dating back to 1915, to the secretary of war. Pershing, however, had a better card to play: he spoke in Marshall's behalf directly to Franklin Roosevelt. And Roosevelt, in May 1935, took care of the secretary of war in a brief note: "General Pershing asks very strongly that Colonel George C. Marshall (Infantry) be promoted to Brigadier. Can we put him on list of next promotions? He is 54 years old."

The 1935 promotion list was issued without reference to Marshall. Someone high up was willing to defy the president. But defy Pershing? Even in old age and long retirement, Black Jack would not take it. The old general of the armies went to work behind the scenes. Chief of Staff MacArthur was set to swing into action, but the other player whose wishes had been defied set another mechanism in motion. On October 2, 1935, the president announced that MacArthur was to nominally retire in order to travel to Manila to advise the new defense force of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, which was only a few years away from being granted independence as a sovereign nation. Named in MacArthur's place as chief of staff was Maj. Gen. Malin Craig, who was elevated to four stars.

Craig and Marshall were friends going back 30 years. The new chief backed Marshall's advancement, but he could not move the promotions board. Rather, the commanding general of VI Corps, who was based in Chicago, lived across the hall from the Marshalls, and was another of Marshall's old friends and admirers, arranged for Marshall to pay a visit to Secretary of War George Dern in April 1936. The colonel came away from the meeting with a verbal commitment that Dern would see to the promotion no later than September.

On October 1, 1936, Marshall was promoted to brigadier general and elevated to command the 3rd Division's 5th Brigade in Washington State. Ironically, all the political pull on the Marshall promotion got him his star only a matter of weeks before seniority alone would have done the job. But chalk up another lesson for the future chief of staff: mere seniority would not play a decisive role in moving good men ahead in an Army he might run.

In the Pacific Northwest, Marshall put in much of his time overseeing the regional CCC program and camps. He was particularly caught up in educating and training the young CCC men for work and life in the real economy. Marshall did his best, also, to nurture professional education for his officers, especially the young ones. The list he maintained of especially promising young men grew and grew.

Near the end of 1937, Marshall had a one-on-one conversation with President Roosevelt when the latter toured the Pacific Northwest. Nothing came of it; it was probably as forgettable to Roosevelt as a brief encounter the two had shared in 1928.

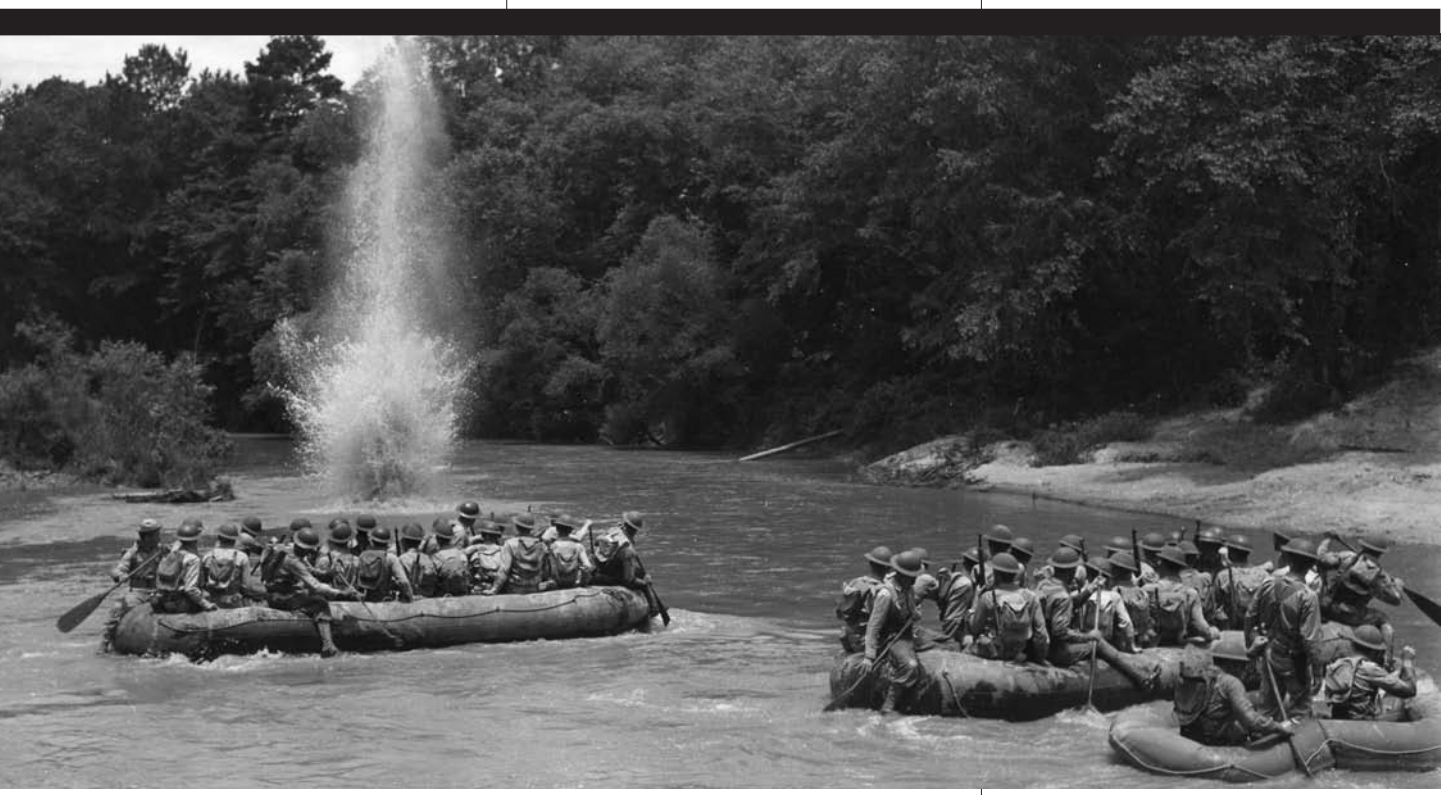
ABOVE: Major General Malin Craig, Army Chief of Staff, 1935-1939. TOP: Brigadier General Marshall studies a map while with the 3rd Division, 1936.

The call came in June 1938. Beginning on July 7, Brig. Gen. Marshall was to prepare himself to run the Army's War Plans Division, as soon as he could get up to speed in a place where reading material was yards thick. Chief of Staff Craig greeted him thusly: "Thank God, George, you have come to hold my trembling hands."

The War Plans job lasted only three months. As the true meaning of the Munich crisis and Germany's dismantling of Czechoslovakia settled upon the world, planning in Washington for a war in Europe broke down when Assistant Secretary of War Louis Johnson refused to attend a vital meeting called by General Craig on the excuse that a two-week-old vacancy of the deputy chief of staff had to be filled first, because the deputy oversaw the Army's budget process. On a personal level, Craig was all for filling the vacancy with Marshall, but Marshall was a very junior one-star general. What would that do to protocol and the morale of most of the Army's generals?

But Assistant Secretary Johnson, who was pretty much running the Department of War in place of a largely absent Secretary of War Harry Woodring, wanted Marshall for the job. To break the stalemate, Johnson issued Craig a direct order. This was the cover Craig needed; the deed was done during the third week of October 1938. Even though he would wear only one star, Marshall became the number two man in an army that appeared to be headed for war. It didn't hurt one bit that the voracious information-gathering vessel that was George Marshall had just undergone a three-month crash reading course on just about everything the Army needed and wanted to do to win a war almost anywhere in the world.

Weeks after he became Craig's deputy, Marshall finally made a lasting impression on President Roosevelt. At the November 14, 1938, aircraft meeting, as the assembled honorables listened mutely and nodded appreciatively at the president's ruminations on the



singular virtues of air power, only Marshall spoke up, but only after the president asked his opinion: "Don't you think so, George?" Marshall was not ready to be addressed so familiarly by a man he barely knew, not even this man. "Mr. President," Marshall responded in a rather chilly tone, "I am sorry, but I don't agree with that at all." And then Roosevelt ended the meeting.

ABOVE: Army troops on maneuvers, Fort Benning, Georgia. LEFT: Harry Hopkins, President Roosevelt's closest adviser and Marshall's supporter.

It didn't matter whether George Marshall agreed with the president; the planning Roosevelt set in motion on November 14, 1938, would move forward because Assistant Secretary Johnson and General Craig—not to mention Roosevelt himself—wanted it to. Marshall could content himself with simply overseeing the budget, or he could advance his case with Johnson and Craig while there was hope that the planning and spending would not so favor the Air Corps that the rest of the Army would shrivel up and blow away. Marshall was not against building airplanes but he could not fathom who would fly tens of thousands of them, nor how they might win a war—maybe two wars, simultaneously—without a little help from a ground army, or even a navy.

When Marshall spoke out at the aircraft meeting he instantly but unknowingly cemented his relationship with two men in the room whom he barely knew. One, Assistant Secretary of War Louis Johnson, had had the most to do with Marshall's appointment as deputy chief of staff, but the two had not done much to exchange views. Equipping and arming the entire Army was not just a job to Johnson, it was a mission. Johnson expected to be elevated to secretary of war when the president finally tired of having Harry Woodring, an uncooperative, moralizing isolationist, around. Thus Johnson's backing for Marshall's elevation was probably an omen that he was building up his own following within the War Department.

The surprise relationship was with Works Progress Administration (WPA) chief Harry Hopkins, a key personal advisor to the president, who, like Marshall, was unafraid to say "no" to the great man. So unafraid and so committed to rearmament was Hopkins that he had taken several blatantly illegal actions to benefit the Army. In the first instance, he had cunningly reallocated $2 million in funds earmarked for the WPA to purchase machine tools Army arsenals needed but could not get from the Congress, to manufacture small arms ammunition. In the second case, Hopkins saw to it that $250 million in Civilian Conservation Corps funding was used to build permanent housing and other facilities for CCC workers on Army posts. If the Army ever got around to expanding—and Hopkins was betting it would—a significant start in needed barracks and other buildings had been made.

Marshall knew Hopkins had engineered these windfalls, but he did not speak

ABOVE: The U.S. Chiefs of Staff, Admiral King, General Arnold, and General Marshall, leave the White House on June 6, 1944, after briefing the president on D-Day. OPPOSITE: Lieutenant General Omar Bradley greets Marshall in Normandy in June 1944.

directly with the man until the last week of 1938, when Hopkins phoned Marshall to set up a meeting at his Department of Commerce office. At that meeting the two spoke frankly of their shared views with regard to a balanced Army. This was the beginning of a great friendship and strategic partnership. When Hopkins urged Marshall to make his case for a balanced force directly to the president, Marshall said he felt his earlier candor might have made his opinions moot. Marshall then asked Hopkins to speak up, and Hopkins agreed to do so.

At the Oval Office followup to the aircraft meeting, which took place at the close of December 1938, Roosevelt complained that his November 14 request for airplanes had resulted in the Army's asking him for a few planes and everything else in the world it felt it needed in the near term. True to his word, Hopkins spoke first in an effort to realign the president's thinking. Then Assistant Secretary Johnson piled on. General Craig spoke up too, somewhat more diffidently than the civilians. And in the end Marshall quietly and methodically aired his views in some detail.

Speaking out twice in a row transformed Brig. Gen. Marshall into an inside player—not because of his titular power, but for the power of his character. Far from experiencing an ignominious transfer from his post, he virtually cemented himself in many powerful minds as the leading contender to replace Craig whenever Craig retired. As Douglas MacArthur had learned from his 1933 temper tantrum at his first meeting with the new president, Roosevelt favored one character trait above all others, and that was the courage of conviction that obligated a man to speak truth to power. In the harrowing years ahead, it was perhaps through his powerful trait of unflinching candor that Marshall best served his nation, and perhaps humanity as a whole.

Following their candid and friendly get-together in the immediate aftermath of the November 1938 aircraft meeting, Deputy Chief of Staff Marshall and WPA Administrator Hopkins met whenever they could during the first quarter of 1939. In the main, Marshall educated Hopkins on the ways and needs of the Army because Hopkins was the one person in the Roosevelt inner circle who felt the President urgently needed educating. Roosevelt favored the Navy to the extent of virtually ignoring the Army, and that, Hopkins and Marshall agreed, needed to be corrected.

So, as a deep and genuine friendship blossomed between men who were polar opposites in all things except their passion to build a balanced Army (which had become a catchphrase in Army circles), Marshall filled out Hopkins's feelings with facts and insights, and these typically found their way to the president's ear, which became increasingly willing to listen.

Overworked and in faltering health, General Craig gave notice to President Roosevelt

in March or April 1939 that he intended to go on terminal leave in late June and formally retire from the Army on August 31. Though Craig favored Marshall to replace him, this was entirely the president's call.

Marshall was junior to 33 other generals, but when age was factored in, only four could serve out a four-year term before the mandatory retirement age of 64. The competition was going to be fierce, but the front-runner from the Army's perspective was a little too ardent in his request for the taste of his fellow generals, and he quite possibly offended the president.

Marshall was extremely circumspect in spite of attracting many influential supporters, not least being old General Pershing. But the voice that swayed the president to a man he barely knew and had not yet fully sized up was that of Marshall's new friend, Harry Hopkins. On April 23, 1939, Marshall was called to the White House.

When they met in private, once the offer was made but before it was accepted, Marshall asked the president if he would be allowed to always speak his mind, even if his was an answer or issue Roosevelt didn't want to hear. The president said "yes," and then "yes" again when Marshall requested a confirmation. The deal was thus sealed.

George C. Marshall continued to work tirelessly as deputy chief of staff. He was elevated to four-star rank and sworn in as chief of staff on September 1, 1939—the day Germany invaded Poland.

From the very moment Marshall ascended to the head of the United States Army, his was the brain at the center of the orderly, measured growth that created the wartime field armies and all the organizations that supported them until the moment of final victory. His was the voice, second only to the president's, that reasoned with and brilliantly cajoled a tight-fisted, anti-war Congress toward making available all the resources it took to even begin the mind-boggling undertaking of laying the foundation for the organization that, by 1945, had trained, equipped, transported, and launched millions of Americans toward his own unbreakable goal of total victory.

Marshall had a hand in every aspect of the vital strategic planning that guided his armies across battlefields around the world. He personally approved the retention or elevation of every general officer who served in the wartime army he led, and of course he selected wisely from among the hundreds and hundreds of men he had commanded and taught all across his prewar career.

Less than three months after World War II ended, a grateful nation allowed Marshall to lay down the heavy pack he had carried with pride and honor since 1901. But Harry Truman, the new president, still needed him, first to mount a mission to China to attempt to end the civil war there. The effort failed, a rare defeat for Marshall.

Next, in January 1947, Marshall agreed to serve as secretary of state. Among his stellar diplomatic victories—accomplished in little more than a year of service—was what came to be called the Marshall Plan, the American contribution to pulling Europe up from the ashes of the victory Marshall had engineered. For good measure, he supported the building of a modern, democratic Japan on the ruins of the feudal nation his armies had defeated.

He retired again in early 1949, but was called to the colors one last time in September 1950, now to serve as interim secretary of defense at a time when the Korean War was going very badly for the forces of the United Nations. (He replaced his old mentor, Louis Johnson, who failed miserably to pull together a viable field army for Korea.) The six-month tour to which he had acceded stretched to a full year. Marshall retired once and for all on September 1, 1951—a few months over 50 years since taking his oath as a new second lieutenant, and 12 years to the day since being sworn in as Army chief of staff.

George Catlett Marshall, the warrior who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953, remained in retirement to the end of his days. He suffered a crippling stroke in early 1959 and passed away, aged 78, in October of that year at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The old general was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. But the memory of his life and legacy continues to burn brightly like an eternal flame. □

All photos: National Archives

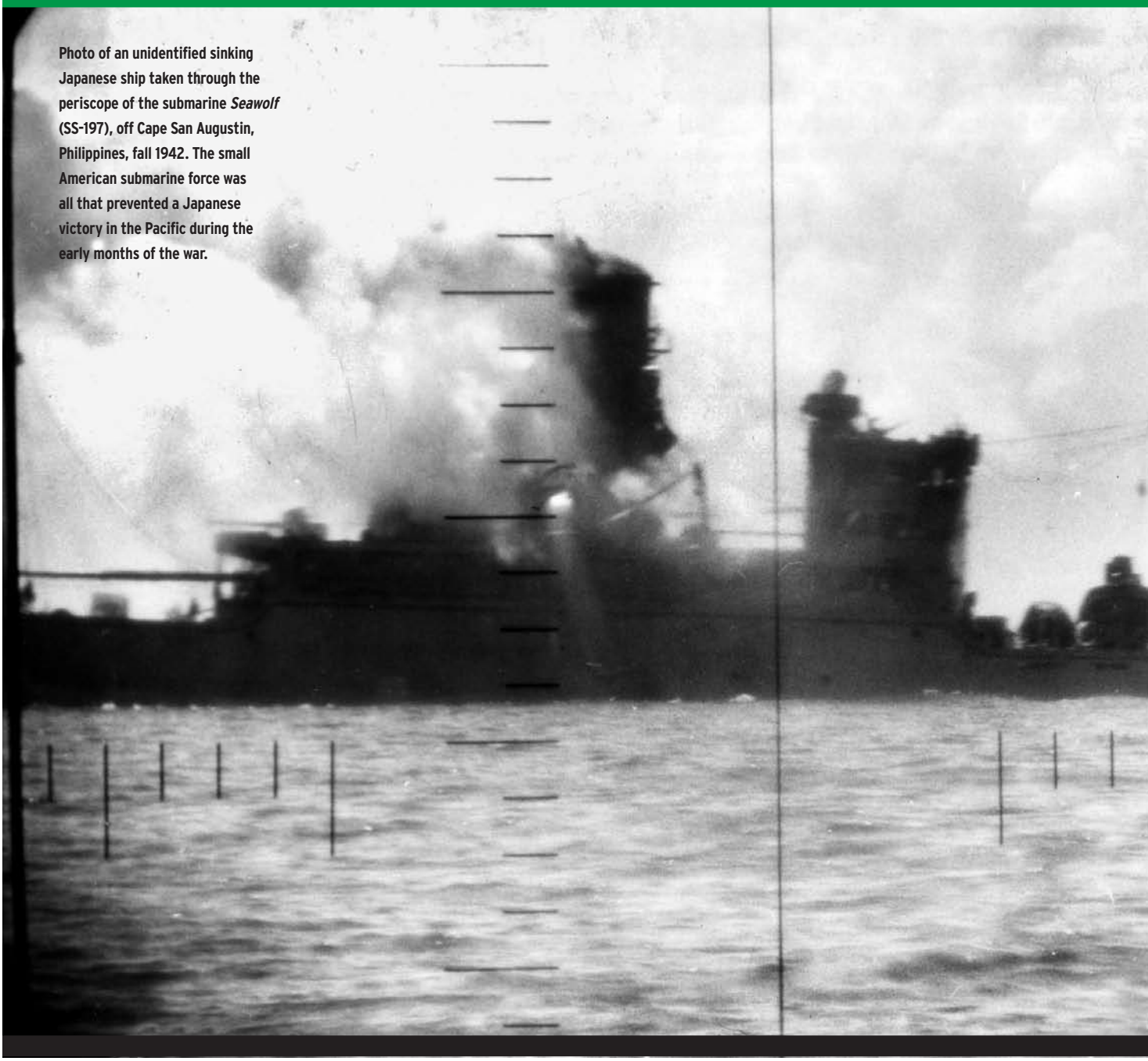


Photo of an unidentified sinking Japanese ship taken through the periscope of the submarine *Seawolf* (SS-197), off Cape San Augustin, Philippines, fall 1942. The small American submarine force was all that prevented a Japanese victory in the Pacific during the early months of the war.

UNDERWATER

The submarine *Seawolf* single-handedly tried to stop a Japanese invasion—and barely escaped to fight another day.

BY JOHN DOMAGALSKI

ORDEAL *at Christmas Island*

THE EARLY MONTHS of 1942 were dark days for the United States Asiatic Fleet. Much smaller than the Pacific Fleet, and equipped with mostly outdated surface ships, the fleet was in no way capable of winning a serious confrontation with the Imperial Japanese Navy.

Being based in the Philippines, however, meant that Admiral Thomas C. Hart's Asiatic Fleet stood directly in the path of Japan's southward expansion. Japanese bombers demolished the Cavite Navy Yard near Manila just days after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Much of America's land-based airpower that was to support the naval units had also been wiped out.

With the loss of the main operating facility and the Philippine defenses crumbling in the face of a Japanese invasion, most of Hart's surface units were able to escape south to the Netherlands East Indies. The ships, unfortunately, were to fare no better in Dutch waters.

In February, the beleaguered Allies decided to combine naval forces in Southeastern Asia. American, British, Dutch, and Australian (ABDA) warships formed into a hastily assembled fleet only to be soundly defeated in three battles—Flores Sea (February 4), Badoeng Strait (February 19/20), and Java Sea (February 27).

By March, most of the Allied surface forces had been swept aside, American land forces were backed into a small corner in the Philippines, and Singapore, the large British base in Malaya, was under a Japanese flag. Imperial forces were now streaming unchecked into the Netherlands East Indies.

During the first, difficult months of the Pacific conflict, American submarines represented the only formidable offensive weapon available to the Asiatic Fleet. Starting the war with 29 boats, the fleet was a mix of smaller, outdated vessels and newer fleet subs. The underwater craft were as prepared as could be for combat, having had trained under wartime conditions for several weeks prior to the start of hostilities.

With the loss of the Philippines, the submarines were forced to operate from meager facilities. Supplies and spare parts were limited, with many of the latter having been lost during the Cavite raid. Several submarine tenders provided a moving base that shifted among various locations, sometimes staying just ahead of the Japanese.

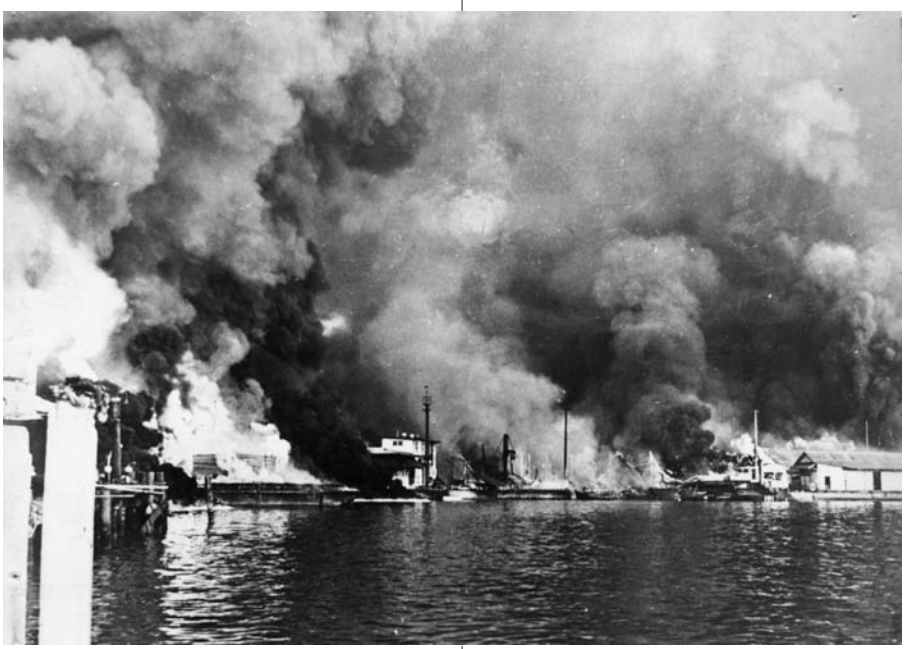
The U.S. submarine force in the Pacific was mostly deployed with the aim of stopping Japanese invasion fleets, and December 1941 found many of the subs roaming the waters around the Philippines. The force then shifted south, eventually setting up camp in Australia.

In early 1942, the boats conducted a variety of operations. Many were arrayed in the defense of the Netherlands East Indies, while some were called upon for special missions to the American fortress island of Corregidor near Manila Bay.

During these early operations, Asiatic submarines both sustained losses and sank some enemy shipping. In the first four months of hostilities, the *Sealion, Shark,* and *Perch* were lost to enemy action, while the *S-36* ran aground and was scuttled. During the same timeframe, the submarines were credited with sinking 10 Japanese ships.

Lieutenant Commander Fred Warder and his submarine *Seawolf* (*SS-197*) were in the thick of action from the start of the Pacific War. Warder had been with the boat since he put her into commission on December 1, 1939, at the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Navy Yard.

Displacing 2,350 tons, *Seawolf* was the last of the four Sargo-class vessels to be completed. Warder's boat had a crew of approximately 55 officers and enlisted men, stretched 311 feet, and could make 20 knots on the surface and just under nine submerged. She carried 24 torpedoes; four torpedo tubes pointed forward and an equal number were at the stern. After a workup in the Atlantic and Caribbean, the vessel reported to San Diego to become part of the Pacific Fleet. In the fall of 1940, *Seawolf* was assigned to the Asiatic Fleet and traveled west to Manila, where she was in port when the war started.



ABOVE: Just days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese air raids demolished much of the American naval facilities here at Cavite, Philippines. OPPOSITE: The 311-foot-long Sargo-class *Seawolf,* shown here running on the surface, had 14 war patrols before being lost in October 1944.

Warder hastily put to sea on December 8, leaving the harbor before Japanese planes plastered Cavite two days later. On his first war patrol, Warder took his boat into the waters off the northeast coast of the Philippines but came up empty after spending 18 days at sea, in spite of a daring attack on a Japanese ship in Aparri Harbor on the northern coast of Luzon.

Warder then left the Philippines on December 31 bound for Australia. Considered the submarine's second war patrol, no enemy ships were sighted during the voyage.

Seawolf's third war patrol was a special mission. She pulled out of Darwin on January 16 loaded with .50-caliber machine-gun ammunition bound for Corregidor. While en route she came across a Japanese convoy but could not gain a favorable firing position because of foul weather. She arrived at the embattled island on January 27 and promptly discharged her cargo. She took aboard 16 torpedoes, an assortment of submarine spare parts, and 25 passengers for the trip out. Warder was not going back to Australia but instead set a course for Surabaya, Java.

The mid-afternoon of February 15 found *Seawolf* once again underway. Slowly moving on the surface out of Surabaya, the submarine was joined by a patrol vessel that guided her through nearby minefields. By 5:00 PM, the submarine was proceeding alone in a northerly direction at 17 knots on her fourth war patrol.

Most of the voyage was spent in the waters around Java, where the American submarine fleet was again being called on to try to slow approaching Japanese invasion forces. On February 19, *Seawolf* crossed paths with Japanese ships near the island of Bali, directly east of Java. Warder maneuvered his boat to attack and fired torpedoes at two transports. He scored no hits, but underwent a harsh depth charging for his effort.

Seawolf again found Japanese ships near Bali on February 25 in the Badung Strait. Her skipper fired torpedoes at a transport and destroyer; he reported seeing one torpedo squarely hit the transport, and the sonar operator reported two explosions on the destroyer. Warder rigged for a depth charging, believing that he sank one or both enemy vessels. Postwar records, however, report no Japanese ships sunk during this encounter.

In spite of his skill and determination, Fred Warder so far had no results to show for his efforts.

The American submarine force's effort to forestall the Japanese invasion of Java had failed and, during the last days of February, Allied surface ships were defeated in the Battle of Java Sea. The Japanese began to land troops on the island almost immediately. Twelve American submarines remained in the area to do whatever damage possible to Japanese shipping. *Seawolf* and *Pike* (*SS-173*) were directed to patrol south of Java in search of Japanese carriers thought to be operating in the area. Neither submarine was able to find the enemy flattops.

By late March, Warder and *Seawolf* were nearing the end of their long patrol, and just in time, too, for the arduous voyage was beginning to take its toll on the crew. Many of the sailors had not seen topside for much of the patrol. Nerves were frayed and tempers stretched. With supplies of cigarettes running low, some of the men resorted to smoking coffee grounds wrapped in toilet paper.

Warder was to have one more encounter with the enemy. On March 14, 1942, Japanese Imperial General Headquarters issued orders for the occupation of Christmas Island. Situated almost 200 miles straight south of the west end of Java, the tiny landmass in

the Indian Ocean was under British control. The island was rich in phosphates, a much-needed material for the Japanese war machine.

In the last days of March, a small force of Japanese ships set sail from Bantam Bay, Java, on a course for Christmas Island. The fleet consisted of three light cruisers, eight destroyers, an oiler, and two transports. Embarked on the latter were the 850 troops of the occupation force. Flying his flag on the light cruiser *Naka,* Rear Admiral Shoji Nishimura was in command of the operation.

Another American submarine had picked up the Japanese invasion fleet and radioed a contact report while *Seawolf* was operating near Sunda Strait off the west end of Java. Late in the day on March 27, Warder received a coded message directing him to proceed to Christmas Island and then return to port in Australia.

Surfaced at the time for a nighttime battery recharge and running on diesel power, Warder increased speed to 14 knots and began the journey south. The submarine stayed on the surface for speed until just after 6:00 AM when she dove and ran at periscope depth for the balance of the day. During the journey, Warder studied his navigation charts of the area, plotting possible routes that the Japanese might use to close on the island.

Seawolf returned to the surface early in the evening. At exactly midnight, after traveling 190 miles that day, lookouts spotted Christmas Island 25 miles off the starboard bow. Fred Warder's submarine and Admiral Nishimura's ships were on a collision course.

Seawolf cautiously approached Christmas Island during the first hour of March 29. "Commenced steering various courses to round island to starboard at eight miles," Warder later wrote in his log. "Sky is overcast, but moon is providing excellent visibility." The skipper wanted to carefully look over the island to determine whether or not it was still in friendly hands and to check for possible Japanese landing sites.

At 6:18 AM, *Seawolf* dove to periscope depth near the northwest point of the island. The next area to be reconnoitered was Flying Fish Cove, a small inlet positioned on the north side of the island. It was here that Warder spotted a ship that appeared to be partially sunk. Peering through the periscope, he could make out a gray hull and yellow smoke stack on the vessel. He estimated the ship at 8,000 tons. Warder nosed the submarine closer, eventually closing to about three miles off the entrance of the cove. "No other shipping in cove," Warder noted. "No activity apparent in settlement or on dock." *Seawolf* pulled back and ventured to the southern part of the island.

At 2:15 PM on March 30, a large seaplane was sighted flying over the northern part of the island at an altitude of about 1,500 feet. Whether it was friend or foe was not known. The plane apparently did not see the submerged submarine. After spending the day submerged and carefully surveying the island, Warder brought his submarine to the surface just before 8:00 PM. There was no sign of the Japanese.

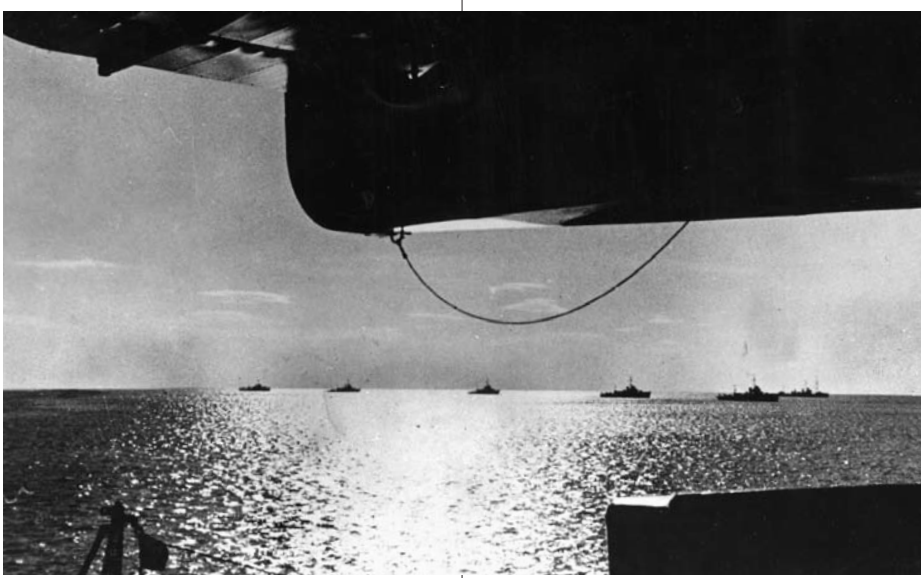
"I have now decided that [Flying Fish] Cove is only practical place for landing attempt," he concluded. "Other possibilities are impractical due to deep water close to shore, cliffs and rocks, wooded banks, heavy swells, and small landing areas." The skipper decided to patrol along an 11-mile-long line that was 6 1/2 miles off the entrance to the cove. Although an occasional light rain squall passed through the area, the night was mostly well illuminated by moonlight, providing good conditions for the lookouts. Warder felt it was a perfect position to intercept any Japanese ships that might be approaching the island. His hunch would soon be proven right.

Just after 6:00 AM on March 31, *Seawolf,* still on the surface from her evening battery charge, slowly came to a stop. Listening intently, the sonar man reported enemy ships pinging somewhere off the port side. Warder had just ordered *Seawolf* to submerge when a searchlight suddenly appeared off the starboard beam. The sonar man soon reported pinging in all directions and then the sound of a ship's screws approaching fast—a single Japanese destroyer was bearing down on the submarine from 3,000 yards away.

Warder commenced evasive maneuvers and ordered the vessel down to 200 feet; two depth charges exploded as the sub-

marine dove. A few minutes later, a determined string of 10 depth charges exploded with a thunderous roar. Thankfully, the underwater barrage was brief—only about half an hour. Just before 7:00 AM the next day, Warder ordered periscope depth so that he could take a look. He found the sea loaded with Japanese ships—a "target-rich" environment.

Scanning the area, Warder found a destroyer about 6,000 yards away, two transports about 8,000 yards off the port side, and a light cruiser 7,000 yards in the same direction. A second light cruiser was slightly farther away to starboard.



Destroyers of the Japanese fleet patrol the blockaded sea areas somewhere in the South Pacific, August 30, 1941.

As fast as Warder yelled out the bearing of each sighting, a young ensign worked hectically to write down all of the contact information. As the morning progressed, Warder eventually sighted all three of the Japanese light cruisers, four destroyers, and the two transports. Using the silhouettes in his identification book, Warder noted that two of the light cruisers were of the Natori type, while the other one looked to be of the Jintsu class. There was no question that the Japanese invasion was well under way.

Warder decided to head first for the cruiser on the port side. "These birds are all just milling around except the APs [transports] are headed for the cove and are too far west of me to get at them," he recalled. A short time later he changed course to see if he could catch one of the transports. "It doesn't look like we can get him," he quickly determined.

Focus then shifted back to the cruisers, which seemed to be patrolling off the entrance of the cove. Carefully studying the enemy vessels, Warder noted that all of their seaplane catapults were empty; the seaplanes were apparently off supporting the landing operation. He noted the long clipper bow with a chrysanthemum or flaming-sun figurehead on the Jintsu-class cruiser. Based on the number of messages that were being flashed to other ships, the vessel appeared to be the flagship. Warder's identification and assumptions were correct: the Jintsu-class cruiser was in fact Admiral Nishimura's flagship *Naka*.

When *Seawolf* increased speed to close on the cruiser, it turned away, so Warder decided to edge closer to the entrance of the cove. There were now four ships, two destroyers, and two light cruisers, all pinging at once; apparently the Japanese could not find the submarine.

"Surface of water is nicely rumpled, with occasional whitecaps," Warder wrote of the ideal conditions to hide his periscope. In the minutes before 8:00 AM, two distant explosions were heard and two seaplanes were spotted flying over the cove. Warder temporarily submerged to 120 feet to move closer to the cove before again coming up to periscope depth. Over the course of the next hour, *Seawolf* silently stalked the *Naka*, occasionally repositioning after the cruiser turned away from the submarine on several occasions.

Shortly before 9:00 AM, it was finally time for the *Seawolf* to attack. The speed of the submarine slowed to 2 1/2 knots as Warder made a final observation through the periscope. He noted that the target was 1,400 yards away and moving at a speed of 15 knots. It looked as if the *Naka* was slowly turning toward him, so Warder gave the order to open the outer torpedo doors.

Manning the firing controls, Henry Bringelman chimed up to say that everything was ready on his end. At exactly 8:48 AM, four torpedoes left the forward tubes of *Seawolf* in a firing sequence that lasted exactly one minute. Set to run at a depth of 10 feet, the fish were aimed at the cruiser's bow, stern, foremast, and mainmast.

Warder took one last look before going deep. "I can [sic] see smoke from torpedo tracks drifting across field of vision," he later wrote of the moment. "Observed men to be running and shouting on cruiser quarterdeck and measured range as 700 yards." *Seawolf* increased to full speed, turned sharply to the right, and began a plunge down to 120 feet.

All the submariners could now do was wait to hear the results of their attack and brace themselves for the enemy's response. "It seemed like a year to me," Warder wrote of the waiting. The commanding officer soon clearly heard an explosion. "A number of people insist there were two explosions. I only heard one." The propeller noises from the cruiser seemed to stop.

Seawolf's crew believed that they bagged a good target. However, postwar analysis does not support any Japanese ships being damaged or sunk in the area on that particular day. It is possible that the torpedoes may have malfunctioned or exploded prematurely.

Within a few minutes of diving, there was a string of eight nearby explosions thought to be depth charges, prompting Warder to take the boat down to 200 feet. As he descended the ladder from the conning tower into the control room, the hatch was closed and tightly sealed above him. But the dive did not go without problems.

ABOVE: Lieutenant Commander Frederick B. Warder. BOTTOM: Port-side view of the Australia-based *Seawolf*, which carried 24 torpedos and had a crew of approximately 55 officers and men.

"Couldn't open flood valve against sea pressure," he logged. Shifting to hand power, crewmen were able to open the valve, but blew a gasket in the process. It did not bode well for what was certain to be a determined Japanese counterattack. "We're going to have one helluva time," predicted Warder.

A ship moving at high speed was heard to approach the submarine from the starboard beam. At almost the same time the sonar operator reported a series of minor, distant explosions. Five more depth charges then went off some distance away. A minute later, seven more exploded much closer off the stern. The enemy was getting the range.

For the next 7½ hours, a cat-and-mouse game ensued. "Every time a pump runs, they come in on us," Warder lamented about the sub's inability to hide. "We pump until somebody starts for us; then we stop. Trim pump makes an awful racket, due to air-binding and high discharge pressure."

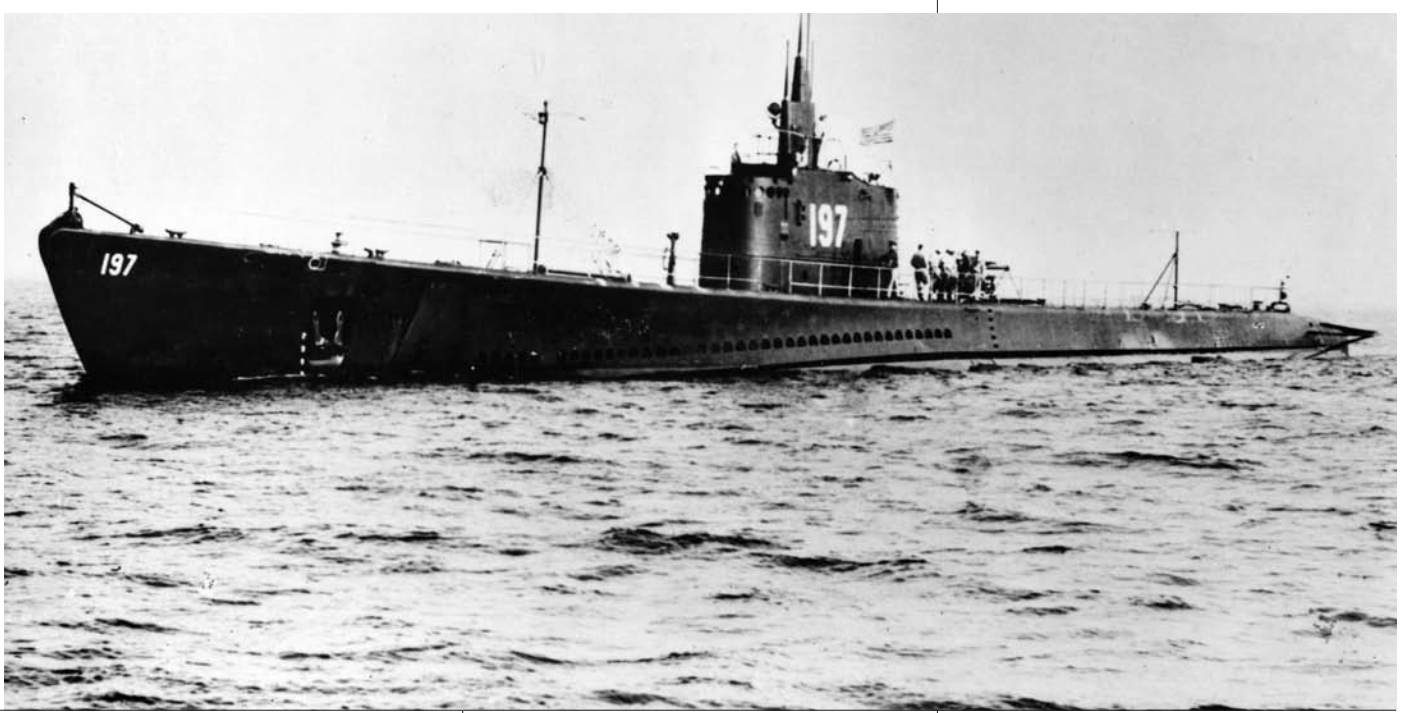
With each explosion, *Seawolf* shook and shuttered, sending cork and paint chips sailing through the stale interior air. Occasionally the lights dimmed. Chief Radioman Joseph Eckberg sat in the radio shack listening as the depth charges came closer and closer off the starboard side. He thought it was impossible that one would not be a direct hit. The heavy pounding totaled 25 depth charges. The submarine survived, but the depth charging started to take a toll on *Seawolf*.

Among the first problems was an engine lube oil cooler that went out. "Saltwater is slowly filling the engine sumps due to leaky overboard circulating water valves," Warder reported. "Two gyro repeaters went out; radio transmitter went haywire; value wheels flew around the engine rooms." Cable tubes in the conning tower were beginning to leak as did one of the stern torpedo tubes, and the crew worked hard to keep the damage from causing even further problems.

"Everybody ... carried bilge water to sanitary tanks to keep electrical machinery from being damaged," Warder recalled. The submarine slowly turned to the northwest, away from the ships above.

During the mid-afternoon hours, *Seawolf* appeared to have successfully slipped away from her Japanese hunters. Warder, however, remained very cautious. He alternated between staying deep and coming up to periscope depth for a quick look. A scan just after 3:00 PM found no Japanese ships in the immediate area. Rain was spotted forming to the west of Christmas Island and a squall or cloud of smoke seemed to be hovering over Flying Fish Cove.

At 7:49 PM, *Seawolf* surfaced to begin her nightly battery charge. Once topside, the crew found the deck shelter light burning. It was quickly disconnected and would remain so for the remainder of the voyage. The ship's bell was also found to be broken, perhaps a casualty of the depth charging. Warder, unsure if the Japanese were still in the area, transmitted a contact



report and then pointed the ship east to pass north of the island. He noted, "Decided to obtain a position ten miles east of Christmas by 5:00 AM so as to approach it in the moon's shadow and dive just behind Northeast Point about 6:00 AM for a look around in the cove."

Later that evening, *Seawolf* crash-dived when a lookout sighted two torpedo tracks approaching the starboard side. The sonar operator, however, was unable to pick up any accompanying noises, so it is probable that there were no actual torpedoes.

"I had observed similar phenomenons [sic] the night before in this general area; definite streaks of refuse material probably washed off the island by the spring tide and drifting to the northwest in the prevailing current," Warder concluded.

There was very little wasted space on a submarine. This view of the Narwhal-class *Nautilus*'s (SS-168) control room was similar to that of *Seawolf*.

About half an hour before midnight, *Seawolf* received a congratulatory radio message from headquarters for the good day's work. "It helped a lot," Warder recalled. "We were feeling pretty well beaten down, so we put it on the bulletin board." He attached a handwritten note personally thanking the crew for their hard work and devotion, also adding that he hoped to be with them on the next patrol.

The skipper had just drifted to sleep when the officer of the deck announced that a ship had been sighted about 10 miles away off the northern coast of the island. After intently studying the vessel through a powerful telescope, the officer of the deck concluded that it was an Asasio-type destroyer. *Seawolf* drifted to a halt as lookouts kept a careful eye on the enemy vessel that eventually turned away. A later sighting of a light cruiser convinced Warder to modify his original plan. He would now move 20 miles east of the island and attack the Japanese ships in the afternoon.

However, the submarine was running low on torpedoes. Only one torpedo remained forward, but it had an air leak that amounted to 500 pounds per day and had previously been taken out of the tube as a safety precaution. "We have five torpedoes remaining aft which are in good shape, we think," Warder noted, hopefully. With plenty of targets in the area, he would have to make his last shots count.

The plan for an afternoon attack was abandoned when *Seawolf* encountered the silhouette of a light cruiser at 3:35 AM. "Ship sighted is slowly circling," Warder wrote in the log. The Japanese warship appeared to be unaware of the surfaced submarine. About half an hour after the initial sighting, the vessel began a slow turn that put it on a heading directly toward *Seawolf*.

The range at the time of sighting was about 6,000 yards, but the ship was closing at a speed of about 11 knots. Warder took his boat to periscope depth and began maneuvering for a stern shot. He identified the target as a Natori-class light cruiser, making it either the *Natori* or *Nagara*.

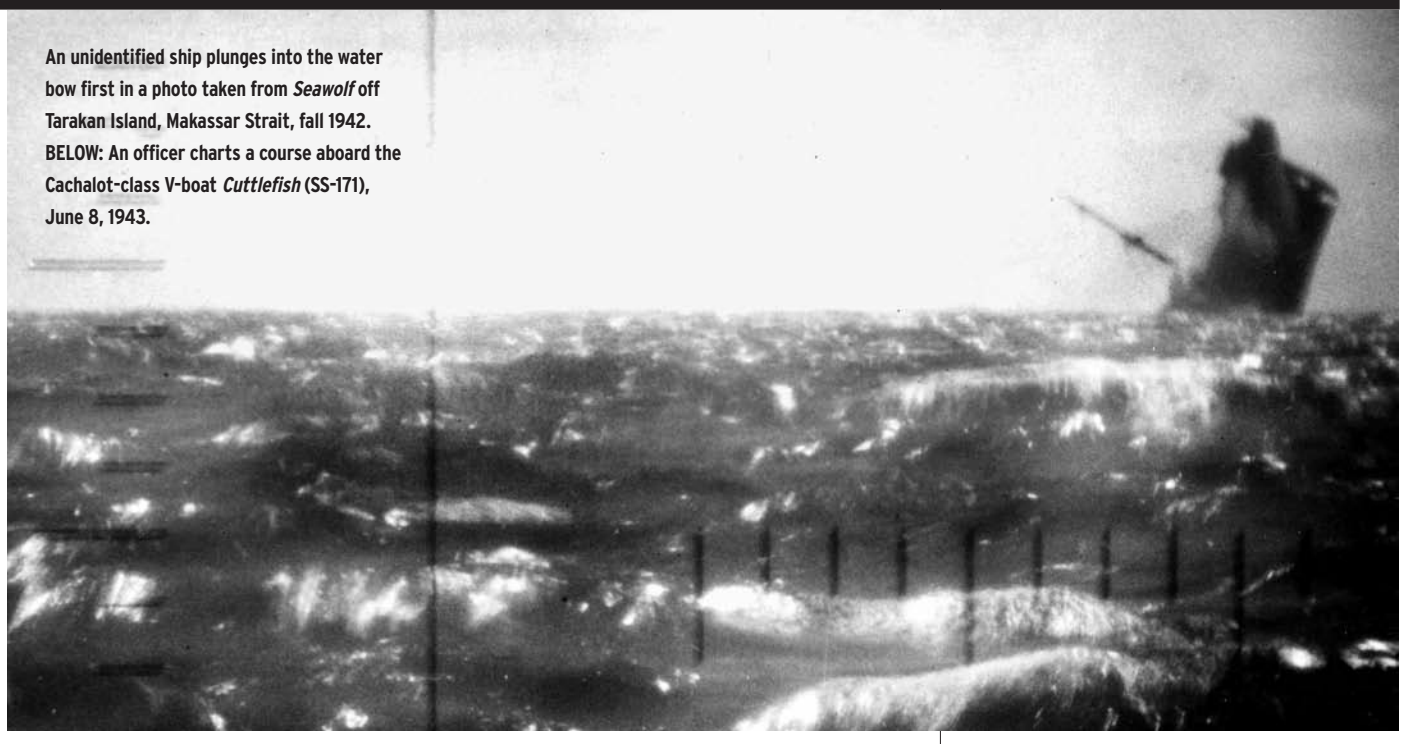
After more than half an hour of maneuvering, Warder was satisfied that he had a good firing set up. When the range to the target ship was down to about 1,700 yards, a spread of three torpedoes left *Seawolf*'s stern tubes. Set to run at a depth of 10 feet, the three underwater missiles streaked toward the unsuspecting cruiser. A terrific explosion shook the sub after only a minute. Staying at the periscope, Warder strained to the see the results of his attack in the dark. "Moon is obscured and observation becoming more difficult," he reported. "I did not see him use his searchlight, nor did I see flames."

He did, however, see what appeared to be heavy, black smoke. Warder believed *Seawolf* was making the Japanese invasion of Christmas Island a costly undertaking.

The speed of the light cruiser seemed to be slowing and her screws were thought to have stopped. At the same time that the warship disappeared from sight, sonar reported high-speed screws. Another light cruiser soon came into sight.

"This is other Natori, which has come out from Northeast Point," Warder concluded. The sonar man estimated her speed at 30 knots. Only one torpedo was loaded in the stern tubes; the other remaining torpedo aft was not able to be made ready to fire due to a problematic angle setter.

With the target zigzagging at high speed and unable to fire a spread, Warder decided not to attack. He ordered the boat down to 150 feet as four depth charges exploded at some distance. The sound man reported many screws and three ships pinging, but none



An unidentified ship plunges into the water bow first in a photo taken from *Seawolf* off Tarakan Island, Makassar Strait, fall 1942. BELOW: An officer charts a course aboard the Cachalot-class V-boat *Cuttlefish* (SS-171), June 8, 1943.

were close. The deep dive did not last long; Warder brought *Seawolf* back to periscope depth and caught a fleeting glimpse of the light cruiser disappearing over the horizon. No other ships were visible. The crew secured from battle stations just as the morning light began to show.

For a second time in two days, the crew of the *Seawolf* had executed a daring attack against an enemy warship, and Lt. Cmdr. Warder once again believed that he had seriously damaged or sunk a light cruiser. Postwar analysis, however, again did not record any Japanese ship being damaged or sunk at that time or place.

Seawolf spent the bulk of April 1 stalking various targets. Throughout the day Warder kept a careful eye on the two light cruisers and four destroyers that occasionally came into view, even noting the comings and goings of the cruisers' floatplanes. He was, however, unable to gain a favorable attack position for most of the daytime hours. "As we would close one of them for attack, they would move somewhere else," he recalled. "It was most maddening." Flying Fish Cove remained the center of enemy activity.

By late afternoon, it looked as though the Japanese were getting ready to leave the area; apparently the landings had been a success. The two transports were building up steam in the cove in preparation for departure and many of the Japanese warships were making wide sweeps of the area. Warder decided to focus on Nishimura's flagship, the *Naka*. He was convinced that he was attacking a different light cruiser than the one he had hit the day before.

To aid in his analysis, he pulled out and studied the 1939 edition of *Jane's Fighting Ships*. It noted that not all of the Jintsu-class cruisers had clipper bows. "When periscope went up for firing observation, I had the feeling there was something vastly different about the bow," Warder wrote. "At no time during approach did I comment on the figurehead which yesterday's Jintsu possessed; nor did it ever come to my observation. On the day preceding, this figurehead distracted me at every observation."

When four destroyers took up a rectangular formation around the light cruiser, *Seawolf*'s skipper knew it was time for an attack. All four destroyers were pinging, trying to locate any nearby enemy submarines, a final sweep before the departure of the transports.

Seawolf turned to bring her stern tubes to bear. At the same time the *Naka* made an

unexpected zig toward the submarine. "This is where he made his mistake," Warder said of the firing setup. At 5:02 PM, the last two aft torpedoes left the stern tubes of *Seawolf*. Given the four nearby destroyers, Warder was not taking any chances. He immediately ordered a turn to starboard to make a getaway and a depth of 200 feet.

A violent explosion was heard as the submarine started her descent, sounding as if one of the torpedoes had found its mark. "Sound did not hear this fellow's propellers again and I feel sure we got him," Warder concluded. "Judging by rapidity with which *Natori* sank this morning I do not think these [light cruisers] can take much."

Seawolf's efforts had finally paid off. An observer in a nearby Japanese destroyer

Continued on page 98

Dangerous DAYLIGHT DOCTRINE

The Eighth Air Force's unescorted daylight precision bombing campaign was a mixed bag of failure and success.

BY HERB KUGEL

THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE—the "Mighty Eighth"—became the stuff of U.S. Air Force legend when its fleets of unprotected Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortress" heavy bombers flew massive air raids against the heavily guarded German industrial heartland during the period between the end of January through the middle of October 1943.

This was the time of the Air Force's unescorted daylight precision bombing, and while this form of aerial assault was virtually a belief system to the Air Force officers who designed and implemented it, it was deeply flawed. These flaws led to results that its designers could never have imagined.

Unescorted daylight precision bombing was a concept developed in the 1930s at the Army Air Corps Tactical School (ACTS) at Maxwell Field, Alabama. It was a major concept change in that unescorted daylight precision bombing concentrated on specific targets of military significance rather than bombing broad areas more or less haphazardly.

The Air Force stood alone in accepting this strategy; they were the lone champion of daylight precision bombing. The Navy rejected it in favor of dive-bombing. When the British found they could

This painting by Gil Cohen (*Mission to Regensburg*) captures the cramped quarters in the nose of a Boeing B-17 shared by the navigator and bombardier, who also must operate the two .50-caliber "cheek" guns when under German fighter attack.


POINTS
OUTBOARD
© Gil Cohen
1994

All photos: National Archives

ABOVE: A tight formation of Eighth Air Force B-17s releases its bomb loads during a daylight raid over Betzdorf, Germany, March 12, 1945. OPPOSITE: A twin-engine Messerschmitt Bf 110 banks sharply to avoid a collision with a B-17 above Germany, June 21, 1944.

not hit targets with precision, they switched to night "area" bombing.

In addition to going it alone, the Air Force's long-range unescorted bombing missions would be flown with bombers about which there was grave concern. On August 16, 1942, Peter Masefield, a man respected in British aviation and the air correspondent to the *Sunday Times,* summed up the British and American worries when he wrote: "American heavy bombers—the latest Fortresses and Liberators—are ... not suited for bombing in Europe. Their bomb-loads are small, their armor and armament are not up to the standards now found necessary, and their speeds are low." He even went as far as suggesting that the American aircraft industry should drop the B-17 and instead begin building the four-engine British Avro Lancaster heavy bomber for night bombardment.

In spite of these concerns, the Air Force officers dedicated to unescorted daylight precision bombing were unmoved. They shared a virtually obsessive belief in a form of aerial warfare that was first put forth during World War I by Italian Army officer Giulio Douhet. He wrote, "A slower, heavily armed plane, able to clear its way with its own armament, can always get the best of a faster pursuit plane.... A unit ... of ... slower heavily armed planes is in a position to stand up to the fire of enemy pursuit planes and carry out its mission successfully."

This view was shared in the years after World War I by Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell, regarded by many as the founder of the U.S. Air Force, and it was a view firmly held by many of the officers who served under him. By the beginning of World War II, many of these officers were now generals in senior command positions. Regardless of the changes in military aviation and especially in fighter technology that had taken place in the 20 years between the two wars, many of these men remained rigidly committed to Douhet's and Mitchell's views on aerial warfare.

Because of their inflexible attitudes, there was a complete lack of any planning for long-range escort fighters to protect the "invincible" bombers. These officers felt that such bombers would never need protection. While these men had put dedicated and continuous efforts into campaigning for the building of long-range heavy bombers, their efforts on behalf of long-range escort fighters to protect these bombers was nonexistent. They believed escort fighters were not only unnecessary but also impossible to build.

In 1935, an Army Air Corps board determined an escort fighter would have to meet the following standards: (1) Construction safety factors would have to be as rigid as those required for interceptors; (2) Its top speed would have to be at least 25 percent greater than the bomber it would be protecting; (3) It needed a range at least as great as the bomber it was protecting; (4) Service ceilings would need to be as high as and preferably higher than the bomber's; (5) It needed a high rate of climb.

While much of this seems reasonable, the board then came to the extremely dubious conclusion that the escort fighter apparently would be larger than the bomber it would be protecting and would require three engines rather than the two generally installed on bombers during this period.

One study board went even further, stating that the need for escort fighters "has not

as yet been thoroughly demonstrated." Although additional Army Air Corps boards came to the same conclusions, there was certainly no consensus agreement. Meanwhile, the ACTS conducted "tests" that Captain Claire Chennault, then an ACTS instructor in pursuit tactics, claimed were "stacking the deck" in favor of bombers over fighters. The bottom line was that the Air Force went into World War II and unescorted daylight precision bombing without the semblance of a long-range escort fighter in its planning.

The controversy involving unescorted daylight precision bombing began with the Casablanca Conference, which commenced on January 14, 1943, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill, accompanied by their military staffs, met in Morocco to consider the future conduct of the war.

Churchill, unhappy with American daylight bombing efforts to date, arrived determined to convince Roosevelt to order the U.S. Air Force to join the Royal Air Force's night bombing raids, which had been striking into Germany and German-occupied Europe since 1940.

Churchill made certain his staff understood his position when, on January 4, 1943, he sent a message to his secretary of state for air in which he wrote pointedly, "I note that the Americans have not yet succeeded in dropping a single bomb on Germany."

The prime minister was correct. Beginning with the England-based Eighth Bomber Command's first strike into occupied territory on August 17, 1942, in an attack against the Rouen-Sotteville marshaling yards in France, through December 31, 1942, the Eighth Bomber Command's heavy bombers flew 27 missions. However, none of these were into Germany, which at this time was well beyond the range of any available American or British escort fighter.

Soon after the Casablanca Conference began, Maj. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, a World War I fighter pilot and commander of the Eighth Air Force, received a "panicked" message from the commanding general of the Army Air Forces, General Henry H. ("Hap") Arnold, ordering him to "get to Casablanca as soon as possible." Upon arriving, Eaker was warned that Churchill was on the verge of convincing Roosevelt to switch the American bombing effort away from daylight raiding and into joining with the RAF in their night bombing missions.

Eaker, a strong advocate for daylight precision bombing, was urgently directed to do everything possible to change Churchill's mind. Possessing a degree in journalism from the University of Southern California, Eaker enjoyed writing long memos to Arnold, but with Churchill he knew better. He met with Churchill and provided a succinct one-page memo outlining the case for continuing American daylight bombing.

The memo pointed out that the time and cost of retraining would greatly hamper the war effort, and the strategy change would maximize the probability of accidents with two great air fleets hovering in the same dark skies at the same time. However, the key element in Eaker's memo was the last sentence. He wrote elegantly, "If the RAF continues night bombing and we bomb by day, we shall bomb them round the clock and the devil shall get no rest." The erudite Churchill, delighting in this sentence, was won over and ceased his opposition to American daylight bombing.

Arnold was pleased as well as relieved. He was a firm supporter of daylight bombing and as early as 1940 had declared, "The Air Corps is committed to a strategy of high-altitude precision bombing of military objectives."

After the Casablanca Conference ended on January 24, the final resolutions were hurriedly written because Churchill wanted to cut short his attendance and rush away to paint the nearby Atlas Mountains. As a result, the wording of the Casablanca directive caused some misunderstanding. It stated that the purpose of a combined British and American air offensive against Germany was the "progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic systems and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened." Specifically, the American bombers were ordered to "attack Germany by day."

Eaker interpreted the phrase "attack Germany by day" to mean exactly what he wanted it to mean. It meant that the U.S. Air Force, particularly the Eighth Air Force Bomber Command, would be conducting unescorted daylight precision bombing raids into the German heartland.

On January 27, three days after the conference ended, Eaker ordered up the Eighth Bomber Command's Mission

A formation of Consolidated B-24s leaves behind the burning, German-controlled Ploesti, Romania, oil-production facilities, May 31, 1944.

Number 31 as the first unescorted American heavy bomber raid over Germany. However, in doing this, Eaker was introducing concepts and tactics based on World War I thinking and planning. In addition, he was relying on American weapons systems that had never been tested under combat conditions.

Ninety-one unprotected bombers were sent on this first raid, but, because of bad weather, just 53 planes reached their target—the U-boat yards at Wilhelmshaven. Fortunately, only three bombers were lost because the unexpected daylight raid caught the defenders off guard. Also, at that time, the elite Luftwaffe fighter squadrons were stationed in France or were fighting against Russia on the Eastern Front. But this would change during the next seven months as the Americans pushed their raids deeper into Germany.

The Germans realized these attacks, if uncurbed, would critically weaken their capacity to wage war. They proved grimly efficient in raising airplane production. In the first six months of 1943, the Luftwaffe day-fighter force in Germany and its occupied western countries rose from 635 to over 800 planes. Concurrently, American losses continued to climb as the Germans found their mark. For example, on Eighth Bomber Command Raid Number 52, an April 17 attack against the Port of Bremen, 16 out of the 106 bombers that succeeded in reaching their target were shot down; on Raid Number 63, a June 13 follow-up raid on Bremen, 26 out of the 102 bombers that succeeded in reaching their target were lost. Each B-17 carried a crew of 10 men.

Compounding the substantial losses suffered by the Eighth Bomber Command in the spring and early summer of 1943, there was no certainty that the Allies would win the war against Germany. When America went to war, German fighter plane production was 360 planes per month. By June 1943, German air minister Erhard Milch had pushed fighter plane production up to a 1,000 planes per month. Unless the Allies gained and maintained air superiority, they would not be able to mount a strategic bombing campaign against Germany and, should that happen, they might be unable to launch a successful invasion of France in 1944. D-Day, if it happened at all, could well turn out to be a disaster.

Because of this, on June 10, 1943, the Combined Chiefs of Staff issued the "Pointblank" directive. This directive, in actuality, pushed German air strength to the top of the Eighth Bomber Command's target list and ordered Bomber Command to demolish the Luftwaffe. Not only would American bombers have to go head-to-head against the German fighters, they would have to do it alone.

The best protection bombers could get from their "little friends," as the bomber crews called their escort fighters, was primarily from the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt. But, like the Spitfires, the Thunderbolts were very limited in range and always had to turn back for England by the time they reached the vicinity of the German border.

Thus, from the German border eastward, the B-17s were completely on their own and suddenly perilously vulnerable because the Luftwaffe had discovered, and was exploiting, a significant weakness in their armor.

The German fighters initially found themselves lacking firepower when taking on the well-armed heavy bombers. After the Luftwaffe examined crashed B-17s and B-24s,

they discovered that it took at least 20 hits with 20mm shells fired from the rear to bring down a bomber. Armament experts, after analyzing combat camera footage, learned that pilots of average ability hit the bombers with only about two percent of the rounds they fired. To obtain 20 hits, the average pilot had to aim 1,000 20mm rounds at the bomber. The best German fighter, the FW-190, carried only 500 rounds, so the pilot would probably only obtain 10 hits—not enough to shoot down his target unless he was extremely lucky.

The solution, they determined, was to attack the bombers head-on. When the bomber was hit from the front, there was nothing to stop the bullets and shells. Four or five 20mm hits were often enough to knock the plane out of the sky. Moreover, the bombers had fewer guns capable of firing forward. The high closing speed gave B-17 and B-24 gunners little chance to hit the small, rapidly moving target. The combined closing speed of nearly 500 mph allowed the German pilots time for only a half-second burst of fire, commencing at 500 yards. If it was accurate, though, it was deadly.

One bombardier recalled, "They came in from ten, twelve, two o'clock, guns winking, then, just a few feet away would break below, some of the hot-shots actually doing a roll as they went. You could feel the shells hitting the ship, but you were holding formation, and apart from a quick burst from the forward guns, there wasn't a damn thing you could do about it."

The first series of American attacks deeper into Germany and the occupied countries began in late July 1943. Brig. Gen. Frederick L. Anderson, Jr., was given command of the Eighth Bomber Command, serving under the Eighth Air Force's CG, Eaker.

Anderson unleashed "Blitz Week"—a series of raids during the period of July 24-30, 1943. While Blitz Week produced mixed results, the fact remained that 88 B-17s were shot down and many more were damaged beyond repair. German industry's fighter output in July, meanwhile, exceeded 1,200 planes. Although the Blitz Week losses clearly demonstrated the B-17's vulnerability without a powerful fighter escort, the Air Force felt something had to be done *without delay* to stop the Luftwaffe's growth. What they tried led to disaster.

The forward half of a B-17 plunges to earth after colliding with another bomber. There were no survivors.

On August 17, 1943, Eighth Bomber Command staged Mission Number 84, its first deep-penetration strike into the German industrial heartland. The bombers would be totally unprotected over Germany as they attacked both the Messerschmitt factory at Regensburg and the ball-bearing production center at Schweinfurt, both cities located in Bavaria. A total of 376 bombers were dispatched; 146 of them were to strike Regensburg and the other 230 were to attack Schweinfurt.

Under the initial plan, the two raiding forces, flying southeast from their bases in England, were to merge and then make their initial penetration deep into Germany as one powerful force. Then, south of Frankfurt, which is 76 miles from Schweinfurt, the Schweinfurt strike force was to veer northeast to attack the ball-bearing factories. At the same time, the Regensburg force would continue southeast to hit the Messerschmitt factories, but then, instead of turning northwest to return to England as the Germans would expect, the force would swerve south over Austria and Italy and continue across the Mediterranean to North Africa. Once over North Africa, it would land at the American bases there.

The heart of the initial plan was for the Regensburg force to strike first. Flying just 15 minutes behind, the Schweinfurt force would then move in to attack the ball-bearing factories. As Schweinfurt and Regensburg are only 109 miles apart, the time and the takeoff interval between the two forces was absolutely critical. The plan assumed the Regensburg strike force, by turning unexpectedly toward North Africa, would mislead the German fighter pilots.

During this critical period of hoped-for Luftwaffe confusion, and shortly thereafter, while the German fighters were on the ground refueling after wasting crucial fruitless moments searching for the Regensburg flight, the Schweinfurt raiders would attack the ball-bearing plants that should be, at least for a few moments, without air protection.

The all-important factor in making this plan succeed was the takeoff times of both the Schweinfurt and Regensburg air fleets—times that fell victim to Mother Nature. Because of bad weather, the

Regensburg force was delayed by one-and-a-half hours before take-off and the Schweinfurt force was delayed five hours before going into the air.

These changes in takeoff times totally destroyed any chance for surprise and, worse yet, created two separate and unrelated bombing raids instead of a single, powerful, critically timed attack.

In allowing what was, in essence, two separate missions to proceed, Anderson presented the Luftwaffe with an abundance of time to get ready and attack each force separately, something they did as soon as the short-range P-47 Thunderbolt fighter escorts turned back at the German border. Ferocious and bloody air battles ensued.

The German fighters attacked en masse, hitting the bomber formations head-on, exploiting the known weakness in the B-17s' nose armament. The B-17Es and B-17Fs were equipped with one .30-caliber nose gun and two .30-caliber cheek guns, manned by the navigator and bombardier—hardly the most skilled gunners. Lieutenant Edwin Frost, who was in the nose of a B-17 and firing a cheek gun, recalled: "It was just pandemonium. It seemed that every gun was firing at once and the noise was terrific…. Most [German fighters] were coming straight through, tearing right through us…."

In addition to the moments of terror brought about German fighters slashing through the bomber formations, and the black puffs of deadly flak exploding all around, the surviving crewmembers remembered the numbing cold at high altitudes and the frightening sight of their fellow bombers being shot out of the sky in great numbers.

Lieutenant Colonel Beirne Lay, Jr., one of Eaker's staff officers, flew as an observer on the Regensburg raid. In his November 6, 1943, article in *The Saturday Evening Post,* "I Saw Regensburg Destroyed," he described the carnage: "On we flew through the cluttered wake of a desperate air battle, where disintegrating air craft were commonplace and the white dots of sixty parachutes in the air at one time were hardly worth a second look. The spectacle on my eyes became so fantastic that my brain turned numb

Late in the war, P-51 long-range escort fighters—known as "Little Friends"—allowed the Americans to make deeper penetrations into German air space with fewer losses. Shown here is a P-51 with B-17s from the 381st Bomb Group, based at Ridgwell, England.

to the actuality of the death and destruction all around us. Had it not been for the squeezing in my stomach, which was trying to purge, I might have easily been watching an animated cartoon in a movie theater."

John Comer, a flight engineer serving in the top turret of a 381st Bomb Group B-17, reported, "At times it looked like the entire Luftwaffe was lined up at twelve o'clock high." A navigator in the Schweinfurt wave, looking down, wondered why so many haystacks were burning. He discovered they were not haystacks; they were the wrecks of flaming B-17s.

Elmer Bendiner, a navigator fortunate enough to have survived the raid on Schweinfurt, recalled what he thought and felt when he came back. Bendiner, later awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with three clusters, and a Purple Heart, poured his memories into his 1980 book, *The Fall of Fortresses*:

"We had been in the air for eight hours and forty minutes. We had been in incessant combat for close to six hours. It had been fourteen hours since we had risen in the predawn. In that time sixty B-17s had been shot down, six hundred men were missing. The first major strategic air battle of the war had been fought. Did we win? Did we lose? Did we really see those planes burning on the ground? Did we see this one fall and that one fart black smoke from his engine? Whose chute opened? Whose did not? Questions turned in the hollow mind bereft of thought, like an awl in wormwood, biting into nothingness, the nothingness of spent men at last asleep."

The American losses were devastating; 60 bombers were lost, 36 from the Schweinfurt flight and 24 from the Regensburg flight. In addition, 87 bombers were damaged beyond repair, or were forced to be left behind in North Africa because of inadequate repair facilities. This led to a total loss to the Eighth Air Force of 147 B-17s.

While many of the B-17s left behind in North Africa were eventually repaired and assigned to the Africa-based Twelfth Air Force, the fact remained that of the 376 B-17s dispatched on this raid, the loss of 147 bombers amounted to a staggering 39 percent of the dispatched force.

The air generals struggled to put a good face on the raid with claims of success, but they could not hide the fact that the losses made it impossible for Anderson to mount an immediate follow-up raid. A second raid soon after the first raid might have crippled Luftwaffe production, something the first raid did not do. There would be a second raid on Schweinfurt within two months, but then, as with the first raid, the results would prove insignificant. However, this fact would only become known when the war was over.

Emerson reports,"After the war, German experts estimated that even if the bearings industry had been wholly destroyed ... it could have been rebuilt absolutely from scratch in about four months time.... [But] ... on the basis of available allied intelligence in 1943, Schweinfurt appeared to be a target of the first importance."

After the Schweinfurt-Regensburg raids, there were fewer long-range bomber attacks into Germany as the Eighth Bomber Command licked its wounds and replaced its losses. It did not resume the heavy bombing of Germany until September 6 with Mission Number 91, when 338 bombers were dispatched to attack Stuttgart.

The Luftwaffe again fought viciously and, as the bombers' primary targets were clouded over by bad weather, the Fortresses attacked "targets of opportunity" on their way home. Two hundred and sixty-two of the dispatched bombers reached their targets, but 45 of them were shot down.

Losses continued to mount as 106 bombers were knocked out of the sky during the first 10 days of October. One reason for the heavy losses was the Luftwaffe's 20mm cannon.

Perret reports that Lieutenant Paul Perceful, a copilot with the 95th Bomb Group, saw a B-17 "cut in two by the concentrated cannon fire of a German fighter.... It appeared to happen in slow motion. The Fortress was struck and slowly came apart at the radio room. From the front half of the fuselage, wings, still functioning engines and the cockpit, seemed to slowly rise upwards, completely separate from the rear fuselage and tail unit. Then both halves twisted and tumbled down and away...."

On Thursday, October 14, 1943, with Mission Number 115, the still-unescorted and vulnerable B-17s were again ordered to attack the German ball-bearing facto-

ries at Schweinfurt. Two hundred and ninety-one bombers were dispatched, with about 2,910 airmen. Initially, the bombers were to be protected by twin-engine Lockheed P-38 Lightning fighters equipped with drop tanks. However, the P-38s were not ready in time and once again the bombers were on their own.

The crews learned about their destination with deep gloom. There were boos and groans from the officers when the mission was announced. Perret reported, "The flight engineers and gunners waiting outside listened with dismay." At one briefing, the commanding officer of the 385th Bomb Group, Colonel Elliot Vandevanter, concluded a pep-talk with, "It's a tough job, but I know you can do it. Good luck, good hunting and good bombing." At this, someone in the rear of the briefing hut added, "And good-bye."

Not surprisingly, the raid was a disaster. The Luftwaffe was ready and attacked the 291 B-17s at points just south of Aachen when lack of fuel forced the bombers' "Little Friends" to turn for home. Hundreds of German planes of various types swarmed into the bombers' formations on their way to and from their target.

Of the 291 bombers dispatched, 257 were able to penetrate into German airspace, and, of these, 229 bombers managed to reach Schweinfurt and drop their bombs. Sixty were shot down—slightly less than 21 percent of the total force. Thus, 197 of the 257 bombers that had penetrated German airspace managed to return to England. Of these, five crashed on landing while 17 more managed to land but were damaged beyond repair. The total number of B-17s lost was therefore 82 (60+5+17) of the 291 dispatched bombers.

In addition, 142 of the remaining 175 planes (197-5-17) that had returned to England were damaged. Therefore, a mere 33 of the 291 dispatched bombers returned unscathed—a little more than 11 percent of the force. Five complete air crews were reported killed in action, 10 were seriously wounded, and 33 lightly wounded; 594 men were missing in action, many of them dead. In total, there were 642 casualties—22 percent of the 2,910 men who took to the air.

The Air Force called October 14th "Black Thursday," and for good reason. It signaled the end of unescorted daylight precision bombing, although some air generals refused to accept this.

Even after Black Thursday's horrific loses, General Arnold, evidently still a strong supporter of unescorted daylight precision bombing, said during an interview shortly after the raid: "We did it in daylight with precision, aiming our explosives with the care and accuracy of a marksman firing a rifle."

Whether Arnold believed what he told the newspaper, magazine, and radio reporters, his words were simply not true. Mark Arnold-Forster in his 1973 book, *The World at War,* succinctly explained: "When the war began, both the British and Americans were convinced that their bombing would be accurate. In fact, it never was. The Americans devoutly believed in the efficiency of their Norden bombsight, which, they contended, enabled them to hit a 'pickle barrel' from a vast height in daylight. But ... as long as the defenses were strong, the bombers were unable to bomb with accuracy because they could not fly straight and level for long enough to take aim."

The loss percentages were grim for the entire month of October 1943. William Emerson reports: "214 heavy bombers had been lost ... almost 10% of the number dispatched. The damage rate was 42% for both major and minor damage. Losses and damages added together totaled to more than half of the credit sorties flown during the month. At this rate, an entirely new bomber force would have to be created almost every three months in order to sustain the level of the current bomber offensive."

It was obvious that the Air Force could not do this, and it was equally certain that the bomber generals' belief in unescorted daylight precision bombing—a belief to which they had been faithfully dedicated for virtually their entire military careers—was a complete disaster, a military dogma destroyed by the burning B-17s over Schweinfurt on Black Thursday.

Indeed, unescorted daylight precision bombing died hard. On October 22, eight days after Black Thursday, General Anderson, at a meeting of the Eighth Bomber Command wing and group commanders, canceled the daylight heavy bomber offensive against Germany. "We can afford to come up," he said, "only when we have our fighters with us." One of the bomber crewmen had been more blunt at his post-raid debriefing: "'Any comments?' the debriefing officer asked. 'Yeah,' the crewman replied. 'Jesus Christ, give us fighters for escort!'"

The fighters eventually came. But, in the meantime, deep penetration raids into Germany were suspended until February 1944.

It was a tragic irony that a long-range escort fighter had been readily available for about two years. The plane was the North American P-51 Mustang, a fighter first flown in October 1940 but seriously underpowered at altitudes above 15,000 feet. However, the plane "grew mighty indeed" when it became the P-51B after its American Allison engine was replaced by the Packard supercharged version of the British Rolls Royce Merlin engine in late 1942. Both the P-51B and P-51C went into production at the same time; the only real difference between the two models was that the "B" was manufactured in Inglewood, California, while the "C" was built in Dallas, Texas.

The first P-51B/C fighters entered service in England in December 1943, but relatively few planes were involved. The P-51D was a different story. It was a significant upgrade from the P-51B/C. It possessed a combat range of 950 miles and, with drop tanks, an operational range of 1,300 miles. It was capable of a top speed of 437 miles per hour and carried six, rather than four, .50 caliber machine guns.

No one escaped from this flaming B-17 shot down over the rail yards at Nis, Yugoslavia, April 25, 1944.

The reprieve that the German heartland had enjoyed from American daylight bombing ended in February 1944 as hundreds of P-51Ds began arriving in England. These new "Little Friends" began to race across the German skies protecting their "Big Friends," the "heavies."

When reports of the first dogfights over Germany reached Nazi Air Minister Hermann Göring, he refused to believe them. He knew of no Allied fighter that had the range to reach so far into Germany. However, when he was finally convinced the dogfights did indeed take place, he was reported to have muttered, "We have lost the war."

While Göring was right, the Mustang did not win the air war over Germany on its own. All operating P-47 Thunderbolts and the Lockheed P-38 Lightnings, which had returned to England in force by September 1943, had their ranges extended through the addition of new external tanks. These planes, too, played a significant role in the death of the Luftwaffe.

What unescorted daylight precision bombing accomplished can only be judged in retrospect. Sir Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, writing in *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany,* noted, "The achievement [and] the subsequent attack on the aircraft industry was to reduce not the production of aircraft but the fighting capacity of the Luftwaffe. The attack on the aircraft industry was, in fact, another example of the failure of selective bombing. This combat was provoked by the American heavy bombers which carried the threat of the bomb to the heart of Germany by reaching out to targets of deep penetration and leaving the German fighters with no alternative other than to defend them. But the combat was primarily fought and certainly won by long-range fighters of VIII Fighter Command…."

This was certainly not what the American "bomber generals" envisioned would happen. The failure in their unescorted daylight precision-bombing planning was in rejecting any potential need for long-range escort fighters and, instead, concentrating all their efforts on "invincible" heavy bombers.

The "success" of unescorted daylight precision bombing came about when, unexpectedly, the "heavies" so desperately needed the protection of long-range escort fighters, which in the end led to the Mustang. The resulting dogfights between the American and German fighters and the Luftwaffe's hemorrhaging losses as it was sucked into the meat grinder of air battle after air battle against a constantly growing number of American escort fighters became a primal factor in the Luftwaffe's destruction—a destruction, which in turn, allowed D-Day to proceed and succeed.

On D-Day, General Dwight Eisenhower assured his troops that, "If you see fighter aircraft over you, they will be ours." He was right, and both unescorted daylight precision bombing and the Luftwaffe moved into the pages of history. □

The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force is the largest aviation museum in the world.

WRIGHT-PATTERSON Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, is home to the National Museum of the United States Air Force—the oldest and largest aviation museum in the world. The museum has grown in size and stature over the years, from its humble beginnings in a small corner of one hangar in 1923 to today's modern, handicapped-accessible facility covering 400 acres.

During the past 87 years, the museum has acquired over 69,000 artifacts, and more than 6,000 of them are on public display. With the exception of a few planes on view outdoors, almost everything is prominently displayed inside air-conditioned hangars, including 400 or more aircraft and missiles, personal memorabilia, and items of great historical significance.

All photos: U.S. Air Force

TOP: The museum's Air Power Gallery captures pivotal moments, campaigns, and people of the U.S. Army Air Forces' air power in both the Pacific and European Theaters. BOTTOM: An aerial view of the museum.

Visitors are greeted at the entrance to each of the galleries by one of the museum's very helpful and knowledgeable volunteers. Many of these gentlemen, all of them veterans, have flown or served as crew members on the aircraft that are displayed. Feel free to ask them any questions about the planes and even about their service.

Of primary interest to World War II buffs, of course, is the "World War II" gallery. Walking among the assembled warbirds is a humbling experience, and one wishes that each plane could talk. Exhibits start with Pearl Harbor in 1941 and go all the way through the release of atomic bombs in the skies over Japan. Featured in the countless displays are such famed groups as the Flying Tigers, Tuskegee Airmen, and the Doolittle Raiders preparing for their historic strike against Japan in 1942, along with the personal medals of America's two top aces, Major Richard I. Bong and Major Thomas B. Maguire Jr.

Other WWII aircraft on display include a B-24 Liberator, P-47 Thunderbolt, P-38 Lightning, and a very rare Messerschmitt 262—the world's first production jet fighter to see combat. The gallery ends with the sobering B-29 "Bock's Car"—the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki in 1945 and brought a swift end to the war.

For visitors whose interest in aviation goes beyond World War II, there is even more to see. In "The Early Years" gallery, the roots of aviation are on display—from 18th century balloons to rudimentary examples of powered flight. Restored examples of World War I aircraft such as Spad, DeHavilland, and Fokker are also on view. Be sure to examine the incredible Caproni Ca.36 bomber, the first of many bombers in the museum's vast collection.

Don't miss the "Between the War Years"

TOP: Restoration begins on the B-17F "Memphis Belle." LEFT BELOW: The Dawn Patrol, a World War I Fly-In, takes place every other year. RIGHT BELOW: A Mitsubishi A62M Zero is a popular exhibit in the Air Power Gallery.

gallery, where displays explain such topics as the first attempts at air-to-air refueling, long-distance flights, and General "Billy" Mitchell's controversial, pioneering efforts to convince the War Department that airplanes could sink battleships at sea. Sleek 1930s racing planes that look like they are still trying to set the next record are also found in this gallery.

There are whole hangars that showcase the use of air power during the Korean and Vietnam Wars and the Cold War. America's leadership in space exploration, too, is on display (plus a collection of Titan I and II, Thor and Jupiter ballistic missiles). Historic presidential aircraft, a tribute to Bob Hope, and a concentration camp memorial are also found on the grounds.

An IMAX theater, café, and well-stocked souvenir shop round out the amenities. Obviously, a collection of this magnitude cannot adequately be seen and appreciated in a couple of hours or even a full day. It is recommended that visitors with more than a casual interest in aviation devote at least two days to fully grasp the scope of the collection. □

USAF Museum

1100 Spaatz St.
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433

(**Directions:** From I-75, take Exit 61A to I-70E, then take Exit 44A to I-675S, then take Exit 15 and follow signs to the Museum)

(937) 255-3286

Website: www.nationalmuseum.af.mil

Hours: Open daily 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM. (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day)

Admission: Free

Continued from page 11

commander, Colonel Shower. On the ground, we viewed him as a tough taskmaster. Over a target in Germany, he suddenly handled our plane like magic."

Rackheath Record

Shower's bomb group, its morale high from the moment it arrived in the combat zone, bombed Adolf Hitler's Reich from April 1944 until the end of the European bombing campaign three weeks before the May 8, 1945, surrender. On April 15, the "Aggies'" final mission to Point de Grave set a record for bombing accuracy, with 24 Liberators dropping 2,000-pounders squarely on a German installation from 21,000 feet.

The Rackheath Aggies' best-known bomber was "Witchcraft" (B-24H-15-FO 42-52534), which flew 130 sorties without an abort, due in part to hard work by crew chief Sergeant Joe Ramirez. Like so many mechanical veterans of the war, it was not saved after the war ended. However, the Collings Foundation's Liberator (B-24J-85-CF 44-44052), which has previously worn the colors of two other wartime B-24s, is painted today to represent "Witchcraft."

Altogether, B-24 Liberator crews of the 467th Group flew 212 missions and logged 5,538 sorties. When all bomb groups were tallied up, Liberators flew 226,775 sorties and dropped 462,508 tons of bombs in Europe.

All of the quotes in this article are from veterans of the 467th Bombardment Group who were interviewed numerous times and who provided documents, photos, and other materials. As we look back at the Rackheath Aggies and their B-24s from the vantage point of the year 2010, the youngest living veterans of World War II are beginning the ninth decade of their lives. Sadly, two who helped most with this article, retired Colonel Albert Shower and former Staff Sergeant Vincent Re, are no longer with us. But as long as Americans can see, hear, touch, and smell a B-24 Liberator, they will live on in our heritage and our hearts. □

Continued from page 23

479 wounded, and 178 missing.

On the morning of September 21, German tanks approached the American lines in the western part of the Waal bridgehead. Bazooka gunner Private John Towle, C Company, 504th, managed to disable the panzers on the Oosterhoutsedijk. The remaining tanks were pulled back and the German attack was stopped, but Towle was wounded by shrapnel from enemy mortar fire and died on the spot. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

His citation reads, "The rifle company in which Private Towle served as rocket launcher gunner was occupying a defensive position in the west sector of the recently established Nijmegen bridgehead when a strong enemy force of approximately 100 infantry, supported by two tanks and a half-track, formed for a counterattack.

"With full knowledge of the disastrous consequences resulting not only to his company but to the entire bridgehead by an enemy breakthrough, Private Towle immediately and without orders left his foxhole and moved 200 yards in the face of intense small-arms fire to a position on an exposed dike roadbed.

"From this precarious position Private Towle fired his rocket launcher at and hit both tanks to his immediate front. Armored skirting on both tanks prevented penetration by the projectiles, but both vehicles withdrew, slightly damaged. Still under intense fire and fully exposed to the enemy, Private Towle then engaged a nearby house which nine Germans had entered and were using as a strongpoint and with one round killed all nine.

"Hurriedly replenishing his supply of ammunition, Private Towle, motivated only by his high conception of duty which called for the destruction of the enemy at any cost, then rushed approximately 125 yards through grazing enemy fire to an exposed position from which he could engage the enemy half-track with his rocket launcher.

"While in a kneeling position preparatory to firing on the enemy vehicle, Private

Towle was mortally wounded by a mortar shell. By his heroic tenacity, at the price of his life, Private Towle saved the lives of many of his comrades and was directly instrumental in breaking up the enemy counterattack."

Of such men was Tucker's regiment made. His battered 504th PIR was relieved by the British 43rd Infantry Division on the 21st and marched back across the bridge toward Nijmegen. There they boarded DUWKS and were taken to positions halfway between Nijmegen and Groesbeek to briefly rest and recuperate.

Some men of the 504th had been unhappy that the regiment had been left out of the Operation Overlord fighting in Normandy; the battle for Nijmegen more than made up for it.

Although the fight for Nijmegen and the effort to capture the bridges intact was successfully concluded, the same cannot be said for the rest of Operation Market-Garden. Allied forces were never able to reach the elements of the British 1st Airborne Division surrounded in Arnhem, and so the entire operation stalled. Eighty-one British paras died trying to take the city and its vital bridge, and hundreds more were captured.

The toll for Market-Garden was high. From September 17 to the 25th, the British Airborne Corps lost 7,212 men killed, wounded, and missing. The 82nd lost a total of 1,432 and the 101st Airborne had 2,110 casualties. The 1st Polish Parachute Brigade, which took part in the battle of Driel, lost 378. Among the aerial forces, 122 American glider pilots were killed, wounded, or missing, while the American and British air transports lost 596 crewmen and 144 planes. British XXX Corps lost 1,420 men, as well as 70 tanks.

In the end, it was Field Marshal Montgomery on whose shoulders must rest the responsibility for the conception—and ultimate failure—of Market-Garden. The failure of the operation, which Monty blamed on bad weather, not only caused the loss of so many brave troops but delayed the Allies' major thrust into Germany that Market-Garden was supposed to have facilitated and thus prolonged the war. □

Continued from page 83

saw a torpedo track racing toward the *Naka*. He then saw the light cruiser make a sharp turn, but it was too late. A single torpedo slammed into the starboard side of the flagship.

The Japanese were not going to take the attack lightly. Some secondary explosions, presumably from the torpedo hits, were heard as the submarine tried to silently escape to the west. The men of the *Seawolf* were in for a long evening. "They gave us hell until near midnight," Warder later wrote of the night. The depth charging started with three explosions, at a safe distance, that occurred at the same time the torpedoes were heard to hit the *Naka*.

Trapped together in the *Seawolf*'s seven compartments, crewmen braced for the worst. The air was stale and foul. When the air conditioning was turned off to reduce noise, the heat and humidity became almost unbearable. Crewmen and machinery alike dripped with sweat. Many sailors could do nothing more than sprawl out on their bunks and wait. The nauseating stench was only getting worse. People seemed to be moving in slow motion. Chief Pharmacists Mate Frank Loaiza passed out saline tablets, but they did not seem to help. Finally, the misery ended.

With the last depth charge having fallen an hour earlier, Warder believed that he had given the Japanese the slip and ordered periscope depth at 7:00 PM. But something went terribly wrong during the ascent. The forward trim tank had been incorrectly adjusted and, instead of a gentle rise, the submarine suddenly started shooting up to the surface. The top of the submarine's conning tower broke the surface, creating a very visible spray of water; *Seawolf* was broaching. Warder immediately ordered an emergency dive and the boat began to descend, but not before attracting the enemy's attention.

The Japanese seemed to be right on top of the sub. The first of a string of depth charges detonated at 7:33 PM. The explosions were close—too close for comfort. With *Seawolf* rapidly plunging to 200 feet, most of the remaining 18 depth charges were ineffective. However, battery power started to run dangerously low, so the submarine had to get away from her pursuers—and fast.

"We stopped everything except the gyro and an IC motor generator early in the evening," Warder remembered. "What walking was done was done quietly; talking was only in whispers." If the submarine could not make it to the surface for charging soon, the crew might never see the light of day again.

It sounded as if the main body of the Japanese fleet had moved out of the area, leaving one destroyer behind to keep the submarine down. "A sleeper stayed right over us, whom we couldn't even hear in our sound gear, but he was listening to us. Every now and then he would drop one to four [depth charges] from a Y gun, putting on no speed whatsoever."

Moving at a low rate of speed, *Seawolf* slipped away from her stalker. "There was not enough battery left for any more use of speed so we can only thank God for getting away. Good management on my part had nothing to do with it," Warder confessed.

The sound of a ship pinging somewhere off the starboard quarter could still be heard when *Seawolf* went to periscope depth just after 10:00 PM. A scan of the area, however, showed no ships.

Out of functioning torpedoes and with his crew near exhaustion, Lt. Cmdr. Warder set a course for Fremantle, Australia. At half past midnight, *Seawolf* surfaced and headed west at full speed, making the much-needed battery recharge along the way.

The Battle of Christmas Island was over. The Japanese invasion was unopposed on land as the small garrison made up of mostly Indian soldiers surrendered almost immediately. A U.S. Navy communiqué issued on April 4, 1942, told of an American submarine sinking a Japanese light cruiser near the island and most likely sending a second one to the bottom.

Although hit by only one torpedo, the flagship *Naka* sustained serious damage. She was towed by the *Natori* back to Java before proceeding under her own power to Singapore for temporary repairs. The light cruiser eventually traveled back to Japan for permanent repairs before returning to the war zone in 1943, only to be sunk by American carrier-based aircraft near Truk on February 18, 1944. Although he survived *Seawolf*'s attack on *Naka,* Admiral Nishimura would die during the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

The fact that a larger score eluded Fred Warder and his men off Christmas Island was not due to a lack of daring leadership and hard work. Perhaps a victim of faulty torpedoes—a chronic problem during the early years of the war—Warder went on to complete seven war patrols with the *Seawolf* before being sent to command the U.S. Navy's submarine school in New London, Connecticut. He earned the reputation of being a skilled and courageous submariner. Postwar records credit him with sinking six Japanese warships. He eventually attained the rank of admiral.

Seawolf was not so lucky. She completed 14 war patrols, sinking 27 and damaging 13 enemy ships, accounting for a total of 108,600 tons sunk and 69,600 tons of ships damaged. But, on September 21, 1944, with Lt. Cmdr. A.L. Bontier in command, she left Brisbane, Australia, on her 15th war patrol, making a brief stop at Manus Island to pick up supplies and Army personnel for delivery to Samar. On October 3, *Seawolf* exchanged signals with the submarine *Narwhal* and was never heard from again.

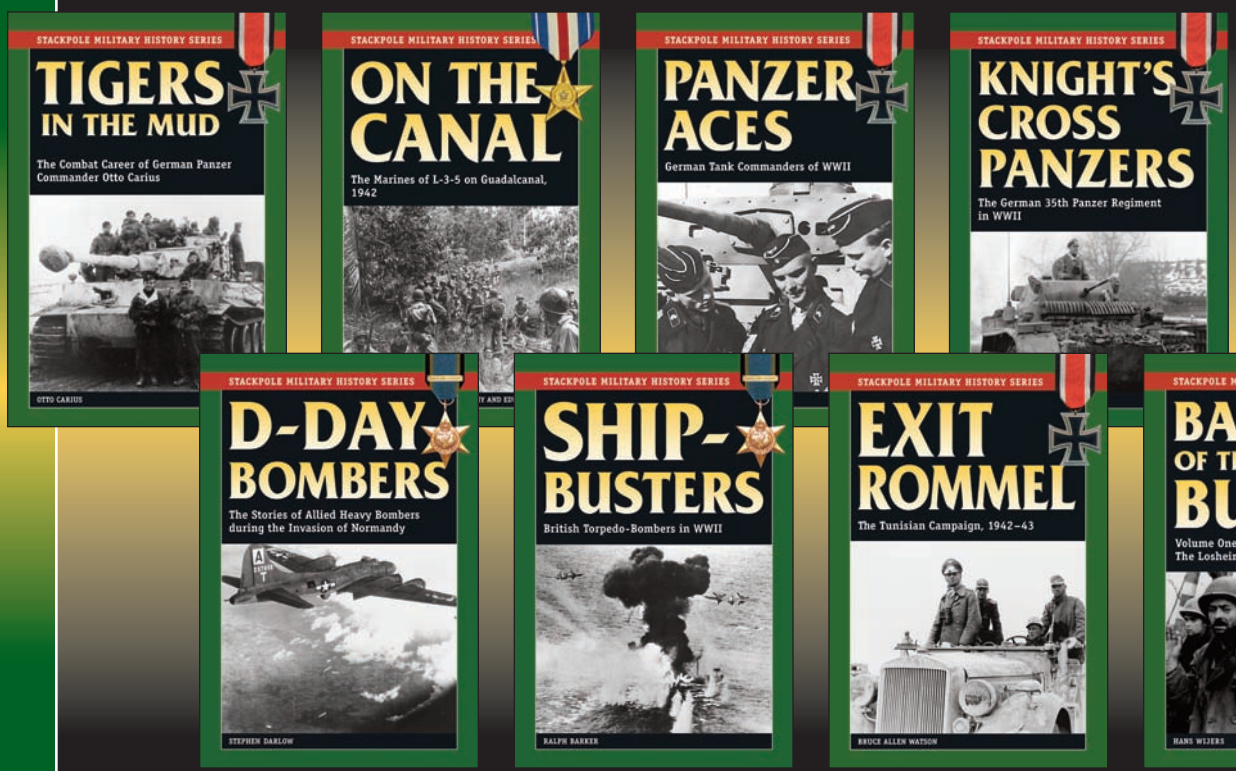
It is probable that *Seawolf* was mistakenly sunk near Morotai Island on October 3 by an American destroyer escort and aircraft that were hunting for a Japanese submarine thought to be in the area. The entire crew of 79, and the 17 Army personnel, were lost with the boat.

As the Navy's Silent Service tribute says, *Seawolf* "remains at sea on eternal patrol." The heroism of the brave men who served aboard her—and the more than 3,300 submariners who perished during the war—is untarnished by the passage of time. □

REAL BATTLES. REAL SOLDIERS. REAL STORIES.

STACKPOLE MILITARY HISTORY SERIES

Over 100 titles to choose from!



Available in bookstores, online, or from Stackpole Books

www.stackpolebooks.com • (800) 732-3669

BAND OF BROTHERS | D-DAY TO THE RHINE | IWO JIMA: WAR IN THE PACIFIC | ITALIAN CAMPAIGN | WWII IN POLAND AND GERMANY

Our historians are experts in their field of history and have spent years extensively researching and interviewing hundreds of World War II veterans on the very battlefields on which they fought. To hear them tell these harrowing tales of bravery and courage of America's heroes at the very places where they occurred is the experience of a lifetime.

Visit StephenAmbroseTours.com or call 1.888.903.3329