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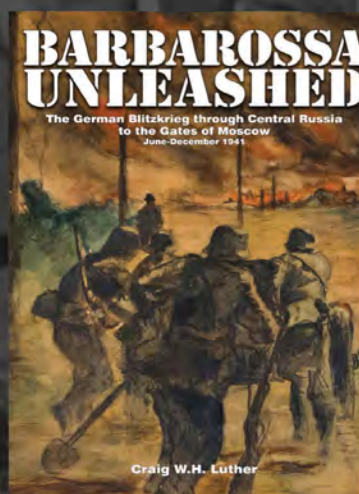
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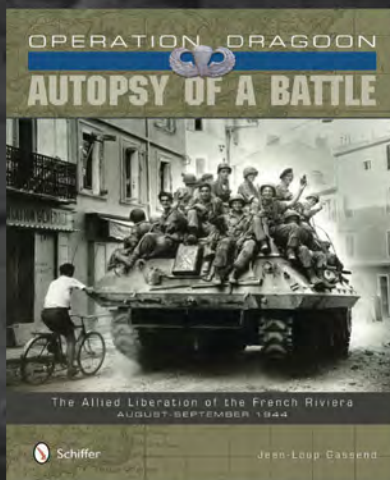


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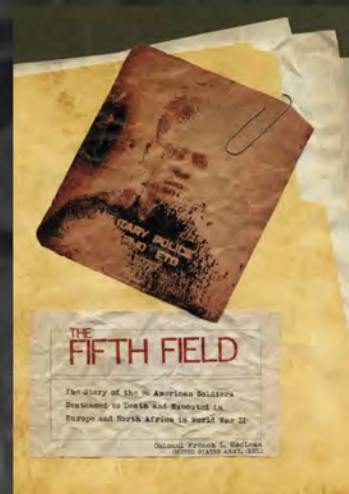
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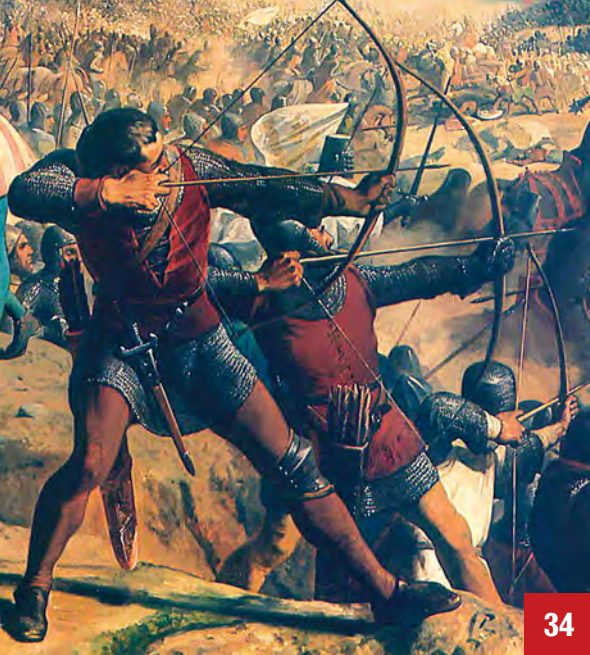
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COVER: British soldiers go over the top at night near Mory, France, during World War I. When American forces joined the fighting, AEF commander General "Black Jack" Pershing strived for aggressive, open warfare. See story page 26. Photo: akg-images



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# Is It the Fountain of Youth for Aging Minds? Pharmacist of the Year Makes Memory Discovery of a Lifetime

‘America’s Pharmacist,’ Dr. Gene Steiner, finds what he and his patients have been looking for – a real memory pill!



For years, pharmacists told disappointed patients that memory loss was inevitable. A new, drug-free cognitive formula may help improve mind, mood, and memory in as little as 30 days.

TAMPA, Florida —

If Pharmacist of the Year, Dr. Gene Steiner, had a nickel for every time someone leaned over the counter and whispered, “Do you have anything that can improve my memory,” he would be a rich man today.

It’s a question he’s heard countless times in his 45-year career. He has seen families torn apart by the anguish of memory loss and mental decline, a serious concern that threatens the independent lifestyle that seniors hold so dearly.



Pharmacist of the Year, Dr. Gene Steiner, PharmD, was so impressed with his newfound memory powers that he recommended the patented, prescription-free memory formula to his pharmacy patients with great success.

In his years-long search for a drug or nutrient that could slow mental decline, he finally found the answer, a natural, drug-free compound that helps aging brains ‘think and react,’ younger.

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“It helps tired, forgetful brains to ‘snap awake,’” says Dr. Steiner.

Before Dr. Steiner recommended it to customers, he tried it first. “Within a few weeks, I can tell you without reservation that my memory became crystal clear!”

“Speaking for pharmacists everywhere, we finally have something that we can recommend that is safe and effective. And you don’t need a prescription either!”

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“It helped me speak out more than I used to. I am growing more confident every day.”

Carey S.\* reports, “I feel so much more focused. I’m now ready to tackle the things I’ve been putting off for years!”

Elizabeth K.\* of Rochester, New York experienced a night-and-day difference in her mind and memory. At the age of 54, her memory was declining at an “alarming rate.” “I was about to seek help when I read a newspaper article about it.”

“It took about a month for the memory benefit to kick in. Six months later, even my husband was impressed with my improved memory. And I am very happy with my renewed mental clarity and focus!”

“I highly recommend it,” says Dr. Steiner. “This drug-free compound is the perfect supplement for increasing one’s brain power. If it worked for me, it can work for you!”

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# D-DAY

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None hesitated. These brave unselfish men jumped into the cold Atlantic waters. Two thirds of them died soon after, so that we could live in freedom.

This historic photograph shows American soldiers from Company E, 16th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division exiting their LCVP landing craft under heavy German machine gun fire on Omaha Beach. The photo was taken by Coast Guard Chief Photographer's Mate Robert F. Sergeant.

Company E landed on Easy Red Beach at 0645 in the face of murderous fire. Those few who survived kept wading right into everything the enemy had and took their objective, which provided the only exit from the beach that the entire Fifth Corps had for two days. Company "E," perhaps by strength of will and courage alone, helped keep the entire landing force from being thrown back into the sea. For a month afterwards, those who survived remained almost in a daze.

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## editorial

### Brother-knights held vast power.

AT THE HEIGHT OF THEIR POWER, THE LEVANTINE military-religious orders were a political and military force to be reckoned with not only in the Latin East where they were founded, but also in the Latin West where they had vast estates that funneled manpower and supplies east for the fight against the foes of Christendom.

"It is not easy for anyone to gain an idea of the power and wealth of the Templars," wrote Theoderich of Wurzburg, a Christian pilgrim to the Holy Land in 1172. "For they and the Hospitallers have taken possession of almost all of the cities and villages of which Judea was once enriched ... and have built castles everywhere and filled them with garrisons, besides the very many, and indeed numberless, estates which they are known to possess."

Theoderich's words contained much truth, but they failed to capture the problems that accompanied such vast power. From the outset of their conversion to religious-military orders in the early 12th century, the Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller were pilloried for the contradiction of being monks who killed people. What is more, clergy and kings alike resented them for the privileges they enjoyed and allegedly abused.

The heyday of the Levantine Orders lasted for 162 years from the point that the Knights Templar became a sanctioned military-religious order as a result of canonical law at the Council of Troyes in 1129 to the abandonment of the last outpost of the crusader state—the Templar fortress at Atlit—on August 14, 1291, just three months after the fall of Acre to the Bahriyya Mamluks. (Although established as a religious order before the Templars, the Hospitallers became militarized after the Templars.)

Once they received papal permission to integrate their religious function with military activity, the Levantine Orders eagerly embraced their military role and became essentially a permanent force defending the crusader states in present-day Israel, Palestine, and Syria. From that forward, the Levantine Orders fought in every major battle during that time period. They shared credit for the great victories, such as Ascalon 1153, Acre 1191, Arsuf 1191, and Jaffa 1192, and also received equal shares of blame for the disastrous defeats, such as Hattin 1187, La Forbie 1244, Al

Mansurah 1250, and Acre 1291.

The brother-knights of the Levantine Orders, like fellow monks, took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller were eager to give their lives in battle. Their courage and discipline, which stemmed from the vow of obedience, made them crack troops who would fight to the death.

The Levantine Orders answered only to Rome and were exempt from the intercession of diocesan bishops, as well as free from interference by Christian sovereigns in whose lands they served or where they had estates. In the Latin East, their numbers were slight; for example, at the height of their power there were only about 300 brother-knights (not counting brother-sergeants) of each of the two Levantine Orders available for battle at any given time. When the crusader armies were destroyed in battle, as was the case at Hattin and La Forbie, the Templar and Hospitaller contingents had to be replenished with new brother-knights from the Latin West.

On the march, the Templars constituted the vanguard and the Hospitallers the rear guard. In battle, the Levantine Orders were, for the most part, reliable and capable of restoring order when the crusader army was on the defensive or near rout.

With the fall of Acre in 1291, the Levantine Orders suffered a decline in significance. The great days of crusading had come to a close.

The decline in the case of the Templars was precipitous. With their primary purpose of protecting the Latin East gone, the Levantine Orders were at their most vulnerable. Seething with jealousy and hatred for the Templars, French King Philip IV began an all-out persecution of them over a seven-year period ending in 1314.

Their cross-bearing cloaks—the red Greek Cross worn on a white surcoat for the Templars, and the white cross on a black surcoat for the Hospitallers—remain iconic images of the Crusader armies. They also recall an unusual, but nonetheless inspiring military tradition.

—William Welsh



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**CARL A. GNAM, JR.**

*Editorial Director, Founder*

**WILLIAM E. WELSH**

*Editor*

editor@militaryheritagemagazine.com

**LAURA CLEVELAND**

*Managing Editor*

**SAMANTHA DeTULLEO**

*Art Director*

---

## Contributors:

George Davenport, Jr., Jon Diamond,  
Robert F. Dorr, Robert Heege,  
Joseph Luster, Chuck Lyons, Christopher  
Miskimon, William Stroock, Allyn  
Vannoy, John Walker, Robert L. Willett

---

## ADVERTISING OFFICE:

**BEN BOYLES**

*Advertising Manager*

benjaminb@sovhomestead.com

(570) 322-7848, ext. 130

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**MARK HINTZ**

*Chief Executive Officer*

**JANINE MILLER**

*Subscription Customer Services*

sovereign@publishersserviceassociates.com

**KEN FORNWALT**

*Data Processing Director*

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By Ludwig Heinrich Dyck

## Tacfarinas led the tribes of northwest Africa in a revolt against the Roman Empire. Avoiding pitched battles, he harassed his adversaries for eight long years.

Tacfarinas of the Musulamii and his fellow tribesmen went into battle with shields made of hide and broad-blade javelins. He strengthened his rebel army by giving it Roman-style elite detachments that enabled it to stand up to the Romans in battle.

**T**ACFARINAS, A FORMER SOLDIER OF ROME'S NUMIDIAN CAVALRY, reined in his steed at the edge of the cliff with the ease of one born in the saddle. In the prime of his life, the scars of Tacfarinas' muscled bare limbs and the arms of battle he carried marked him as a man of war. Tacfarinas surveyed the cultivated lands that sprawled from the base of the rocky slope. The winter winds had blown

from the Atlantic Ocean, bringing life giving water to northwest Africa. It was the spring of AD 17, and all along the fertile coastal plains Numidian farmers reaped the harvest. Like the Numidians, Tacfarinas was a Berber, a name for the tribal people of North Africa derived from the Roman word for barbarian.

Tacfarinas knew that a lot of the Numidian grain was used by the local Roman III Augusta Legion. Stationed at the town of Ammaedara (Haidra),

the III Augusta Legion needed nearly 2,000 tons per year. Even more was shipped to Rome. Tacfarinas knew the Romans well. Underneath the leopard skin draped over his shoulder, he wore a shirt of Roman mail, and a Roman spatha cavalry sword dangled at his side. The Romans had been in northwest Africa for generations of Tacfarinas' family. The Romans had gained a permanent foothold in 146 BC, when they destroyed the city of Carthage, thus

ending its Punic empire forever. From her province by the Gulf of Tunis, through war and diplomacy, Rome extended her sway over the neighboring Berber kingdom of Numidia.

Roman rule stimulated the growth of towns, agriculture, and trade. Olive, date, palm, and grape thrived on Roman suburban estates. Roman Africa, alongside Egypt, replaced Sicily as the empire's main wheat basket. The Numidians abandoned their traditional nomadic ways and settled down to farm life. Even the roar of the lion became rare hunted and trapped, alongside other wild beasts, to die in Roman circuses.

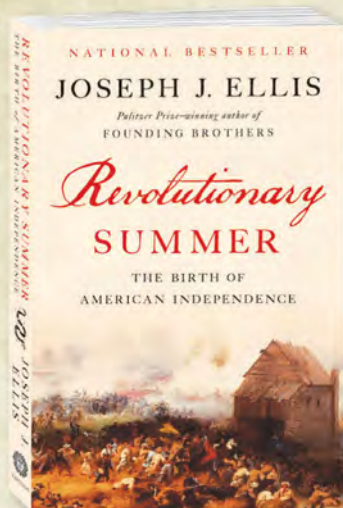
Not everywhere, reflected Tacfarinas proudly, did the will of Rome hold sway. Away from the coastal plains, there rise the Aures Mountains, the eastern extension of the Atlas Mountains. Upon the high plateaus, Berber tribes carried on a pastoral life inherited from Eurasian horsemen, who had settled among older cultures thousands of years earlier. Their herds were plentiful; Greek historian Polybius wrote that he had seen more sheep, goats, cows, and horses in Africa than anywhere else.

The Berbers of the Aures were Tacfarinas' tribe, the Musulamii. Among villages of kindred mountain clans, the herders traded milk, meat, wool, and leather for grain. Likewise, in times of peace, trade occurred with the larger coastal communities. Even then, however, Musu-





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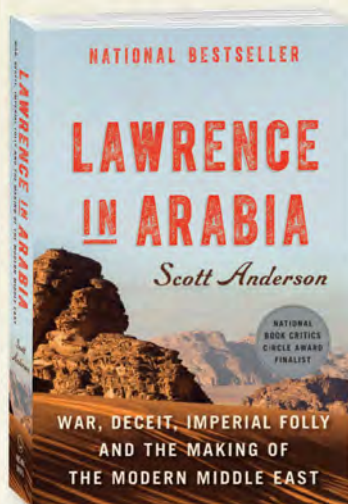
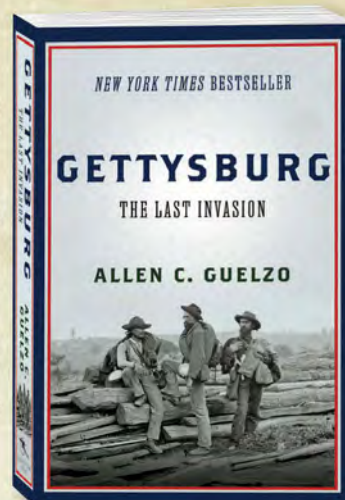
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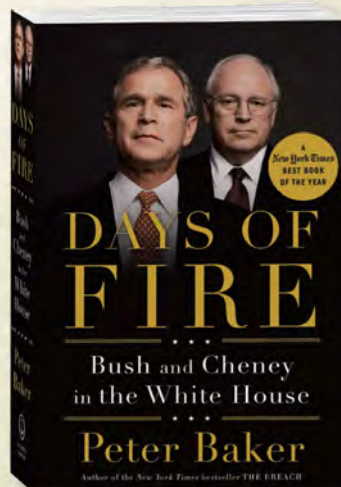


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lamii herds could trample and devour Numidian crops. It was the age old conflict between farmer and herder. When mountain valleys became cauldrons of heat and streams ran dry, the Berber flocks needed to find fresh growth elsewhere. The sheep of the mountain villagers were driven up to cooler higher slopes. The large herds of horses and cattle migrated toward the grazing land of the milder Mediterranean coast.

Now, where once grew wild grasses, the Musulamii came across fields of cultivated wheat. Fences, to keep out the nomads' flocks, cut across the land. The final straw was a new Roman road from Tacape (Gabes) on the coast to Ammaedara in Musulamii territory, right across the seasonal migration routes. From Ammaedara, Rome sought to monitor the movement of the nomadic tribes. Roman patrols surveyed tribal lands to be allotted to settler farmers. Musulamii pleas for land grants that respected their traditional grazing grounds fell on deaf Roman ears.

It was Tacfarinas who, like a fire on the steppes, ignited the Musulamii discontent into a full-fledged uprising. Tacfarinas was torn between serving Rome and the plight of his own Musulamii people. He deserted, forsaking his chance of obtaining citizenship and a desirable life within the empire. Long ago, the mountain tribes had formed a barrier to the extension of the Carthaginian Empire. Perhaps they could do the same with the Roman Empire.

At first Tacfarinas led no more than "vagabonds and marauders," wrote Roman historian Publius Cornelius Tacitus. But Tacfarinas trained his men in Roman discipline and employed them in guerrilla attacks. Some of his men, such as his personal guard, he equipped like Roman soldiers. Tacfarinas eventually became chief of the Musulamii. His daring exploits won over more tribes. From south of Numidia, nearest to the desert, came the Gaetulians, old allies of the Musulamii, and from the coast, near Gigthis, a large tribe of like-minded Cinithii.

Most welcome by Tacfarinas were the Mauri (i.e., Moors) from neighboring Mauretania, the vast tribal kingdom that for 200 years encompassed western Algeria and all of Morocco. Mazippa, leader of the Mauri, revolted against his own king, Juba II, who was loyal to Rome. When Rome annexed the Kingdom of Numidia into its African province in 25 BC, Juba II was handed the heirless, Roman-allied Kingdom of Mauretania in compensation. Like the Romans, Juba encouraged agriculture and trade. With their pastures lands transformed to farms, the plight of Mauri nomads was the

Both: Library of Congress



**ABOVE:** Juba II, King of Mauretania, was a loyal supporter of Rome. As Roman presence in northwest Africa grew, rebellious mountain tribes became a menace to peace in the region. **BELOW:** Ptolemy of Mauretania helped the Romans suppress the rebellious tribes. When he offended Caligula he was put to death.



same as that of the Musulamii. At that point, the Mauri sought vengeance through raiding.

The governor of Africa Proconsularis, Proconsul Marcus Furius Camillus, prepared to lead the III Augusta Legion and auxiliaries, approximately 10,000 troops, against the rebels. Camillus hailed from a prestigious family, the Furi. Roman tradition alleged that in the days of Rome's infancy, Camillus' namesake liberated Rome from the Gauls. Since

then, martial fame passed to other prominent families. Nevertheless, Camillus knew well enough to crush the rebellion before it grew even larger. Neither could he underestimate the enemy. The fate of Proconsul Cornelius Lentulus, who was slain before the last great tribal uprising when he marched too deep into the desert in 3 AD, served as a grim reminder.

In the looming battle, Camillus counted on his legionaries' loyalty, élan, and the experience of his centurions, some of whom spent their entire career fighting the hill tribes. Originally recruited from Latinized Celts of Roman Gaul and from Italians, the 60-year-old III Augusta Legion had since received replacements from all over the empire. The culturally diverse legionaries found solidarity in their coveted Roman citizenship and in the Latin tongue, in which they all could converse.

Camillus may well have mulled over Rome's long association with the Berbers. The nomadic Berbers traditionally provided a source of light cavalry recruits, having fought beside the legions for hundreds of years. However, as Roman presence in Africa grew, the nomads increasingly became a menace to peace in the region. There were African campaigns and Roman triumphal awards in 34, 33, 28, 21, and 19 BC. During the border strife in AD 5-6 that followed Lentulus' death, the Musulamii revolted in support of the Gaetulians. That tribal coalition met defeat at the hands of King Juba II and Roman troops.

Clad in sheepskins and simple tunics, armed with small shields of hide and broad-bladed javelins, the Musulamii excelled at skirmishes, but they had little chance in a set-piece battle against legionaries armed to the teeth. Tacfarinas felt otherwise. His larger army, approximately 20,000 strong, with Roman-style elite detachments, was ready to confront the Romans.

Somewhere on the steppes, the two armies met. Camillus deployed the III Augusta Legion in the center with his auxiliaries on the wings. The auxiliary light infantry cohorts, Iberians and Thracians, and the light cavalry squadron of Numidians, were easily routed by the weight of Musulamii numbers. The legionaries held their ground; their javelin barrages ripped into the lightly armed ranks of assaulting Berbers.

Behind their wall of large body shields and tortoise formations, the Romans weathered any enemy javelin barrage fairly unscathed. Attempts to break the Roman ranks by cavalry charge floundered. Neither Berbers nor their horses would hurl themselves onto an unflinching shield wall. Tacfarinas' Roman-style troops must have been too few to make a difference and despite his best efforts would not have been



able to equal the legionaries in discipline. With the bulk of Tacfarinas' infantry remaining hopelessly outmatched against legionaries in mail hauberks, iron-bound shields, and bronze helmets, the Berbers reverted to hurling javelins, shouting taunts, and abortive charges. This left Tacfarinas no choice but to withdraw, leaving Camillus victorious.

Emperor Tiberius Claudius Nero was delighted by the renown the victory restored to Camillus' lineage. Tiberius awarded Camillus a laureled statue and the ornaments of a triumph. The immense prestige of an actual triumph was reserved for members of the imperial family. The emperor's optimism proved unfounded. As early as the next year, AD 18, Lucius Apronius, Camillus' replacement, again found Roman Africa beset by Tacfarinas' guerilla raids. Tacfarinas initially concentrated his forays around Ammaedara and the surrounding Aures. Of Mazippa's Mauri, there is no more mention, apparently leaving Tacfarinas and his Musulamii to fight on alone.

By the River Pagyda, Tacfarinas encircled a fortified marching camp held by a legion cohort. Considering it disgraceful to be besieged by the Berbers, the fort's veteran commander, Decrius, boldly deployed his cohort outside the ramparts. Unfortunately, he misjudged the steadfastness of his soldiers, who broke before the Musulamii onslaught. Decrius flung himself into the hail of enemy javelins, hoping to gain time for some of his men to escape. Decrius cursed the standard bearers, who turned their backs on Tacfarinas' irregulars. Bleeding from a wound to his body, with blood oozing from a pierced eye, Decrius fought until overcome by his foes.

More shocked by the Roman dishonor than he was worried about Tacfarinas' success, Lucius Apronius revived an ancient and rarely used punishment known as decimation. The survivors of the disgraced cohort drew lots; every 10th legionary was flogged to death in front of his comrades.

Tacfarinas next assaulted the fort at Thala, 16 miles northeast of Ammaedara. The legion vexillation (detachment) at Thala was past its youthful prime, but its 500 legionaries were battle-hardened veterans, who repulsed the Musulamii attack. During the battle, one of the soldiers, Helvius Rufus, saved the life of a Roman civilian. Apronius rewarded Rufus with an honorific chain and spear. Tiberius added the highest military decoration, the citizen's oak wreath, and admonished Apronius for not adding this reward himself.

His demoralized men lacking the patience for siege warfare, Tacfarinas resumed his raiding,



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descending from the Aures to attack the richer coastline. By AD 20, the sheer amount of loot forced him to establish a semi-stationary base.

Tacfarinas' hostilities had become such a serious threat that Roman Africa had been reinforced with a second legion, the veteran IX Hispana Legion transferred from Pannonia. Nevertheless, the Roman governor's son, Lucius Apronius Caesianus, still needed his cavalry, auxiliary light infantry, and swiftest Roman legionaries to engage the Berbers and win a victory.

Tacfarinas and his Musulamii retreated into the mountains that served as their base. In that setting, they were able to rest and plan future

health, young children, and marriageable daughter. The senators thought that Lepidus was only bowing to the inevitable favorite Blaesus. Blaesus was the uncle of Lucius Aelius Sejanus, who was the influential Prefect of the Praetorian Guard. Enjoying the flattery from senators wishing to curry Sejanus' favor, Blaesus pretended not to be interested before giving in to accept the appointment.

Backed by reinforcements from the interior of northern Africa, Tacfarinas felt strong enough to parley with Rome. The Musulamii envoys traveled to Rome where they demanded land in exchange for peace. If this was not

given, then there would be endless war. The Musulamii appeals were in vain. "No personal or national slur" ever provoked Tiberius more than Tacfarinas, who "behaved like a hostile sovereign," wrote Tacitus. Not even Spartacus was granted conditions for his surrender.

To undermine Tacfarinas' popularity, Blaesus received permission to pardon surrendering rebels. Only their leader was to be captured by any means available. Publius Cornelius Lentulus Scipio, who commanded the IX Hispana Legion, was to guard the approaches to the coastal trading city of Leptis Magna in Tripolitania, the eastern portion of

Africa Proconsularis. The city's riches, derived from the export of olive oil, already had suffered from Tacfarinas' raiders, who received shelter from the Saharan Garamantes. Westward, Blaesus' son was ready to protect Cirta and her outlying settlements, where merchants from Italy and Greece long ago settled to trade for Numidian grain. Between Blaesus' son and Scipio, Blaesus led the offensive with selected detachments of the III Augusta Legion in the Aures.

Blaesus split up his forces with battle-proven company commanders holding key positions, such as mountain passes that gave access to water. Continuing the offensive into the winter, Blaesus built a new chain of forts closer to the desert frontier from Ammaedara westward into the Aures. Cavalry patrols attuned to the desert hounded Musulamii raiders and undoubtedly plundered and massacred civilians of hostile villages. Those not slain felt the clasp of Roman shackles, including Tacfarinas' brother. Only

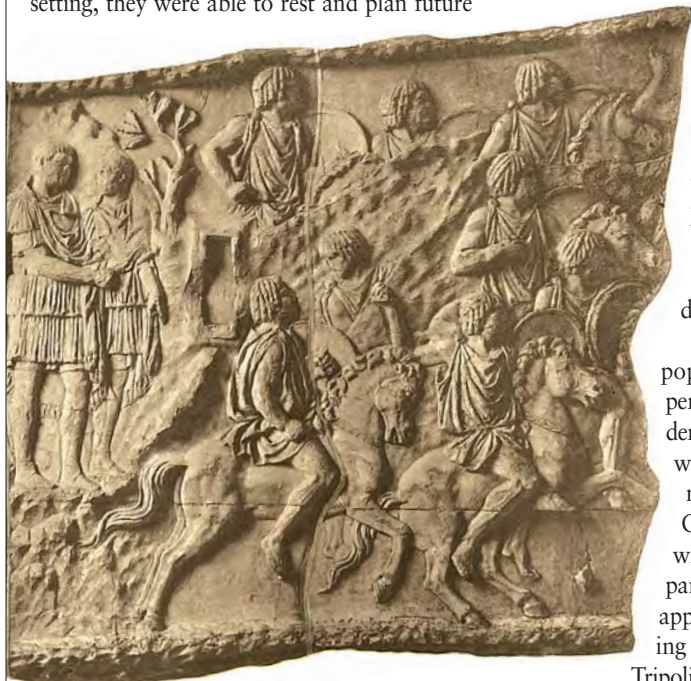
the Sahara Desert loomed as a last refuge when the Roman incursions suddenly stopped. In AD 23, judging the Musulamii subdued, Blaesus inexplicably called a halt to his operations and withdrew.

Among townsfolk and villagers friendly to the Romans, the news of Blaesus' departure was ill received. Tacfarinas and all too many of his raiders remained at large. Tiberius, in contrast, once more considered the war concluded. He even removed the IX Hispana Legion from Roman Africa. Blaesus' replacement, Governor Publius Cornelius Dolabella, dared not object for fear of the emperor's wrath. Tiberius allowed the soldiers to hail Blaesus as victor, an honor that had been granted on certain occasions by Augustus, and rewarded him with triumphal ornaments and a laureled statue.

The tribes saw in the departure of the IX Hispana Legion a show of Roman weakness. Even from Roman Africa brigands flocked to Tacfarinas' army. Tacfarinas quickly recovered his losses, and in AD 24 he returned to plunder villages and trade routes. Tacfarinas' army was further strengthened by new Mauri reinforcements. Juba II, who died in AD 23, had passed his kingdom to his son, Ptolemy. Ptolemy, who was 25 years old, was deemed "too young for responsibility," according to Tacitus. Ptolemy's household and kingdom fell under the influence of ex-slaves, whose tyranny caused numerous Mauri to join Tacfarinas' army.

With the departure of the IX Hispana Legion from Leptis Magna, the Garamantes also made common cause with Tacfarinas. Although rumors exaggerated their numbers and their king declined to join his desert raiders in battle, their fortified capital at the oasis of Garama (Germa) provided a safe haven for Tacfarinas. Tacfarinas spread the rumor that other peoples also were breaking free and that Rome was gradually evacuating Africa. The remaining garrisons could be surrounded and taken, that is, if all fought together.

Flames roared, engulfing the crumbling walls of the fort of Auzea, which fell to Tacfarinas. Emboldened, Tacfarinas placed the town of Thubuscum under siege. With all available troops Dolabella hastened to Thubuscum's aid. When Tacfarinas' raiders fled at the first Roman advance, Dolabella grasped the initiative. He set up strongpoints and ruthlessly executed any Musulamii chiefs who were contemplating rebelling. Roman generals led four legionary columns, from which Ptolemy's Mauri officers led antipartisan raids. Dolabella personally directed his field commanders and received any news of Tacfarinas' whereabouts on the spot. Before long, patrols reported that



**Numidian cavalymen are depicted on a relief copy of Trajan's column. Infuriated by Tacfarinas' audacity, Roman Emperor Tiberius deployed more troops to northwest Africa. In the end, Tacfarinas' rebel army was no match for the vast resources of Rome.**

raids. They took shelter in clay brick huts and caves, where terraced fields were interspersed with meadows and forests of oak and pine.

In AD 21, the Roman Senate met within its sacred hall to hear a letter from the emperor. Only the previous year, more triumphal ornaments and another laureled statue had been awarded to Apronius for his son's victory against Tacfarinas. The emperor wrote that Tacfarinas wreaked havoc in Africa. To Tiberius' displeasure, the Senate deferred upon him the task of choosing an experienced and physically fit governor to deal with Tacfarinas.

Tiberius bid them to pick between Marcus Aemilius Lepidus and Quintus Junius Blaesus. Lepidus ardently pleaded excuses of his ill



Tacfarinas was encamped at Auzea. Thick and extensive woods surrounded the area. Dolabella wasted no time sending light infantry and cavalry against the rebels, although he kept their goal secret from others.

The rising sun flared red above the ruined walls of Auzea. Silence lay over the fort, broken only by the occasional stomp and snort of Berber horses. Abruptly, the din of trumpets shattered the calm. Sleepy-eyed tribesmen, startled and shocked, awoke to find Romans and hostile Mauri overrunning the encampment. Roman infantry in close order descended upon the camp. Cavalry galloped around the flanks. The Musulamii were completely overwhelmed and caught unarmed. They offered little resistance and fled in disorder. The Romans, frustrated by long fruitless chases, indulged their thirst for vengeance.

His way to freedom barred, Tacfarinas did not cower. The Romans killed all of Tacfarinas' bodyguards, and they took his son prisoner. Tacfarinas' capture also seemed assured. The Roman infantry surrounded him and pressed closer. A wall of shields faced him, bristling with spears, but Tacfarinas had no wish to feel Roman shackles on his wrists and to be thrown into some dank dungeon and then paraded and

executed before a cheering mob. Like a cornered lion of the desert, Tacfarinas hurled himself onto the Roman spearheads. His death "had cost the Romans dearly," wrote Tacitus.

Tacfarinas' death induced the Garamantes to send a peace delegation to Rome. The tribesmen were an anomaly in the imperial city, but more of a stir was caused by Tiberius' refusal to honor Dolabella's request for triumphal honors. Tacitus blamed Tiberius' pandering to Sejanus, accusing the emperor of not wanting to belittle Blaesus' achievements. The slight had the opposite effect, putting Blaesus in a poor light while Dolabella's reputation grew.

Ptolemy's help was not forgotten. The young Mauretanian king received a visit from a Roman senator, who presented ceremonial gifts and proclaimed Ptolemy as king and friend of Rome. Sixteen years later, in AD 40, Ptolemy visited Rome and its new emperor, who was also Ptolemy's cousin, Gaius Caligula Germanicus. Caligula gave Rome's old ally a lavish welcome but was outraged over Ptolemy's stunning entrance at a gladiatorial show, sporting a purple cloak that "attracted universal admiration," according to historian Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus.

The megalomaniac Caligula ordered Ptolemy's

execution and thereafter annexed Mauretania into the empire. It took Caligula's successor, Claudius, several years to put down the subsequent tribal revolt. Only heatstroke and thirst suffered in the red gravel sands of the Sahara forced the Romans to call off their pursuit of rebellious Mauri. It was the last great revolt for two centuries.

At the beginning of the 2nd century AD, even the Musulamii, given generous land grants, settled down and abandoned their pastoral ways. During the reign of Septimius Severus (AD 193-211), Roman territory in North Africa reached its greatest extent, brought to a halt only by the Sahara. The III Augusta Legion remained the sole permanent legion stationed in North Africa until the beginning of the empire's collapse in the 4th century AD.

The nomadic Berbers probably never had any realistic chance of avoiding Roman domination. Remnants of the classical Berber culture nonetheless outlasted the empire. Even today, Berber children excitedly greet Westerners who visit their hill villages with the cry of "Arrumi," meaning "Roman." Two thousand years ago, for eight long years, Tacfarinas led their ancestors to defy and at times even defeat Rome's renowned legionaries. □

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By Robert L. Willett

## When the *Admiral Graf Spee* was cornered in a South American estuary after a battle with three British warships, its captain saw only one way out.

**W**HEN THE FIRST SHELL HIT IN THE DIMLY LIT INTERIOR OF THE German ship, a subdued chorus came from the 29 ships' officers held prisoner on board. There were oaths and shouts, but no Germans appeared to undo the hatches that held the prisoners hostage. They were seasoned sailors, these

captains and mates of the nine British ships captured and sunk by the pocket battleship *Admiral Graf Spee*, and not happy to be pounded by British gunfire.

A second shell landed near their prison, and more alarm was heard from the stalwart sailors. "Let us out. Please, God. Let us Out!" they cried as a third, and then a fourth shell hit, and then the room went silent.

The year 1939 pitted the Axis forces, pushing for war, against the Allied forces of France, Great Britain, and the Low Countries, which were trying desperately to avoid conflict.

In spite of the 20-year-old Treaty of Versailles, Germany had successfully built a massive military machine for land and sea. One of the

new and innovative ships was the *Admiral Graf Spee*.

In the early weeks of World War II, the South Atlantic was a hunting ground for German raiders. At first light on December 13, 1939, the *Graf Spee's* lookout shouted the alert—two masts were sighted on the dimly lit horizon. Soon another appeared. The first mast was identified as the larger ship, the heavy cruiser HMS *Exeter*, with 8-inch guns. The two vessels with *Exeter* were thought to be protecting destroyers. German Captain Hans Langsdorff believed that the *Exeter* and the destroyers were protecting a convoy. However, it was soon discovered that the two destroyers were actually two light cruisers: the British HMS *Ajax* and the New Zealander HMNZS *Achilles*, each with 6-inch main armament.

The Germans and the British were steaming straight toward each other. But the massive German 11-inch guns could far outshoot the biggest guns the British carried.

British Commodore Henry Harwood had decided to have *Ajax* and *Achilles* act as one unit and the *Exeter* as another. Harwood was on the *Ajax* and would direct from there. As the two larger ships raced toward each other, the advantage held by *Graf Spee* with its larger guns was fast disappearing, as she was rapidly coming within *Exeter's* range. At 6:14 AM, the *Admiral Graf Spee* fired the first shots of the day, straddling the *Ajax* and the

On December 17, 1939, just four days after the Battle of the River Plate, the crew of the *Admiral Graf Spee* set off explosives they had planted aboard the ship scuttling it in the mouth of the river.



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The *Graf Spee* sank the merchant ship *Trevarion* on October 22, 1939. Adhering to his own code of honor, Langsdorff allowed its crew to evacuate the vessel before it was destroyed.

*Exeter*. From then on it was a thunderous cacophony of sound as these great guns belched.

It was soon obvious that the *Exeter* was taking a pounding with the 11-inch guns accurately trained on her. She was getting in her hits, too, but her guns were slowly being silenced by the shells of *Graf Spee*, only six miles away. The devastation on the *Exeter* was impressive. Her bridge was gone with all its communication networks. Captain Frederick Bell conned the ship from the aft conning position, and communicated his course changes by a chain of wounded and unwounded men forming a line down to the steering section. Bell was slightly wounded in the face, but he managed to continue to fight the Germans with accurate 8-inch fire from his one remaining turret.

Heroic deeds were being performed routinely as the battered *Exeter* steamed steadily on, but her fighting capacity was rapidly being shot away with *Graf Spee* intent on finishing the old cruiser. Splinters from near misses were almost as lethal as the direct hits, causing many of the casualties and ripping open the light armor of deck installations and tower fixtures. In spite of the shrapnel filling the air, deck crews managed to fire the torpedoes still in their compressed air tubes, but they missed their target, which disappeared in a thick smoke screen.

By 7 AM, *Exeter's* turrets A and B were silent; Y turret was firing, but only by local control. A fire raged in the chief petty officer's quarters and Marines' mess, there were no telephone connections, only one 4-inch gun could be fired, both aircraft had been jettisoned, and

wireless communications had completely broken down. However, the engine room was virtually untouched, and the ship could still attain top speed.

The *Graf Spee* had disappeared into her smoke screen, which gave *Exeter* a chance to attempt to patch her damaged areas, but she really was not fit to stay in the fight. At that point, the battle was down to two light British cruisers with their 6-inch guns against the six 11-inch guns of the *Admiral Graf Spee*.

Early in the fight, the pilot of *Ajax's* Seafox scout plane, Lieutenant Edgar Lewin, asked permission to take off to direct the ship's fire. Captain Charles Woodhouse agreed but warned Lewin that turrets X and Y were only a few feet from the catapult and he would not slacken their rate of fire. So Lewin took off between the thunderous blasts of the 6-inch guns.

As the *Exeter* withdrew, *Graf Spee*, not knowing the extent of *Exeter's* damage, continued to focus on her, trying to sink her.

The two light cruisers, seeing the *Exeter's* distress, sped to draw the German fire away from the badly battered cruiser. Harwood gave the order, "Proceed at utmost speed!" to draw closer to *Graf Spee*. As they raced toward the German ship, still firing their broadsides with good effect, they scored hits that stung the Germans. Their tactic succeeded; the two light cruisers drew the main German fire as the *Exeter* escaped south.

Then it seemed as if the three separated British targets confused *Graf Spee's* gunners. Their firing slowed, and the secondary batter-

ies were silent. The two smaller ships had been virtually ignored until then, but the *Graf Spee* recovered her firing capacity and the two light cruisers began to suffer the same fate as the *Exeter*.

As the *Exeter* slipped away from the fracas in the cloud of a self-generated smoke screen, Harwood made the decision to break off the fight and hope that it could be resumed after nightfall. It was believed that *Graf Spee* had suffered little damage. Harwood commented, "We might just as well be bombarding her with a lot of bloody snowballs." About that time, it was coming to light that the British cruisers' ammunition was running low. Those two factors made his decision for him. At 7:40 AM he signaled the *Achilles* to make smoke and move away from *Graf Spee*.

The German ship had taken more hits than the British commander knew. Damage inflicted by the three cruisers was not really dangerous to the immediate life of the ship; however, a return to Germany across the brutal wintry Atlantic was in jeopardy without repairs. As Harwood was making his decision to break off, Langsdorff was deciding to run to a neutral port for some hurried maintenance to make his ship fully seaworthy again.

Since virtually all ports in the South Atlantic were neutral or British controlled, the rules of neutrality were of great importance. Simply put, a ship from a warring nation entering a neutral port had 24 hours before being required to leave. There was an exception in the rule from the Hague Convention of 1907 that allowed more time if a ship required repairs to make it seaworthy, but its crew could not add to its fighting efficiency. Much of that exception would be determined by the authorities in the neutral country involved. An added provision stated that a merchant ship from a warring nation located in a neutral port, could not be pursued by an opposing nation's warship in that same port for 24 hours.

Langsdorff had selected Montevideo, Uruguay, as his port even though Buenos Aires, Argentina, across the large bay, was friendlier to Germany. The Bay of La Plata was so shallow it would have been hazardous to take the huge ship into its channels.

As *Ajax* and *Achilles* emerged from the smoke screen they had used to hide from the *Graf Spee*, the crews were amazed to see the enemy fleeing to the west. Captain W. E. Parry of the *Achilles* said, "When the action was broken off my own feelings were that the enemy could do anything he wanted to. He showed no sign of being damaged, his main armament was still firing accurately, the *Exeter* was evidently



out of it, and so he only had two small cruisers to prevent him attacking the very valuable River Plate trade.”

As *Graf Spee* led the three vessels toward Montevideo, the *Ajax* scout plane, no longer spotting the shell fire of the cruisers, was asked to find the *Exeter*, which had sailed out of sight.

Harwood hoped to have her rejoin his division. When Lewin in the *Seafox* did find the heavy cruiser, he saw the damage that 11-inch shells had caused. He wrote later, “I have never seen such a shambles, anyway in a ship which survived.” Finally, some hours later, Harwood released the gallant old ship and ordered her to the Falklands Islands to be made whole again.

As the three combatants maintained their positions on the way to Uruguay, *Ajax* on the port side of *Graf Spee*, *Achilles* on the starboard side, they all were cleaning up their damage. On the departed *Exeter*, funeral services were held for four officers and 47 ratings with the burial at sea service. One officer and one rating were still missing but presumed dead.

On the *Ajax* at 9:15 PM, the scout plane was being hoisted back aboard, which turned out to be a larger task than anticipated. After Lewin made a difficult landing on choppy seas, the plane was finally brought aboard with great difficulty.

On the *Achilles*, breakfast was being passed around, and stories of valor and humor mixed together in the telling. One such tale involved a stoker who was upset about the first call to quarters by the gunnery officer. As he emerged from below decks he was sputtering, “Flicking gunnery shoots so flicking early in the flicking morning and why couldn’t the flicking Gunnery Jack (officer) wait till after breakfast?” At that moment three of the huge 11-inch shells from *Graf Spee* raised three giant columns of water from their near misses in full view of the stoker. His reaction was immediate as he bolted for the hatch saying, “Cor, this ain’t no flicking place for me!”

In the noisy battle and chase that lasted roughly 10 hours, the officers of the ships previously sunk by *Graf Spee* were imprisoned on board the German pocket battleship. They had no communication with anyone to keep track of the battle. If the *Graf Spee* were sunk, they had no chance of survival, so their interest in the battle’s progress was intense. Several shell splinters holed the armor, allowing brief

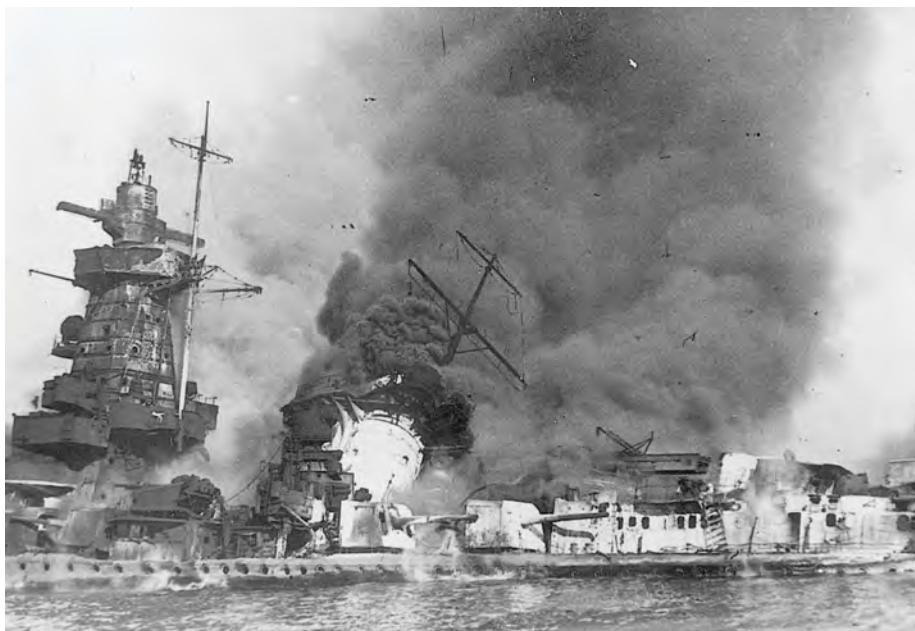


glimpses of events just within their limited sight, and descriptions of those brief peeks were interpreted in many ways. Those were anxious minutes, which to them seemed to be an eternity.

It became clear by late afternoon that the *Graf Spee* was headed for the Bay of La Plata. The officials of Uruguay, Germany, Britain, and France began to establish their diplomatic and military positions. In Montevideo, Captain H.W.

The British were playing other games to fool the Germans, broadcasting that several capital warships would be joining Harwood’s flotilla in the coming hours. At the time there were no French or British ships available that could reach the River Plate area within five days. Only the *Cumberland* was on its way. The British bluff was effective, as Langsdorff began to believe that a run for the sea, with all the gathering British forces outside the bay, was suicidal. Little did Langsdorff realize that on the night of December 13 only the two small cruisers carried the burden of stopping any exit attempt.

This was all happening as the *Graf Spee* eased slowly into the Bay of La Plata, com-



**TOP: Captain Hans Langsdorff. BOTTOM: The *Graf Spee* rests in the shallow waters of the Plate estuary after its crew scuttled the vessel. Since the ship would be only partially submerged, all instruments and equipment that might have aided the Allies were removed first.**

McCall, British naval attaché, was ordered to establish lookout points across the 120 miles of sea entrance to the bay, which he accomplished with tugs and aircraft. As *Graf Spee* neared the bay entrance, she fired several salvos at *Ajax* and then *Achilles*, both of which replied, but none of the shells hit their mark. Those few shells marked the end of the actual hostilities.

However, the German ship could break out from any of several channels. The little cruisers, still the only British ships around, stayed on full alert with their captains never leaving the bridge. Harwood had radioed the heavy cruiser HMS *Cumberland*, and any other nearby British ships, to proceed to La Plata “with utmost speed.” Meanwhile, in the Uruguayan capital a decision was made that if the Germans asked for an exception to the 24-hour rule, the Uruguayans would allow only 72 hours.

pletely darkened, offering only a silhouette to the thousands already gathered on the banks, the roads, and the buildings lining the harbor. Just after midnight, she dropped anchor and swung gently to the water’s movement, silent, deadly, and menacing.

On the morning of December 14, spectators lining the port’s banks and buildings witnessed feverish activity aboard *Graf Spee*, although the captain was off consulting with the new characters entering his circle. On board his ship, he was in command, but here in port his world was affected by many others: German Ambassador Otto Langmann, McCall, Uruguayan Foreign Minister Alberto Guani, and British Minister in Uruguay Eugen Millington-Drake. What is more, Langsdorff also had to take into consideration the desires of Adolf Hitler him-

*Continued on page 69*



## The Confederate Secret Service had a heavy hand in John Wilkes Booth's assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

**T**HE NIGHT OF APRIL 14, 1865, WAS ONE OF CELEBRATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C. Just a few days earlier, on April 9, Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia to Union Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at the small crossroads town of Appomattox, Virginia. The event effectively ended the American Civil War, which had torn the country asunder for nearly five years.

John Wilkes Booth is shown assassinating President

Abraham Lincoln at Ford's

Theater on April 14, 1865,

in a Currier and Ives litho-

graph. Evidence suggests

that secret agents working for

the Confederate government

aided Booth before and after

the assassination.

The bloodiest war in American history had finally come to an end, and the Union had been preserved.

On that fateful April 14, John Wilkes Booth, the son of one of the most famous theatrical families in the nation and an accomplished actor in his own right, walked into a tavern next to Ford's Theater in Washington. Booth made small talk with the bar owner, discussing the end of the war. Booth, an ardent Southern sympathizer, was a small-time agent for the Confederacy, tak-

ing medicine and other goods from the North to the South without anyone being the wiser.

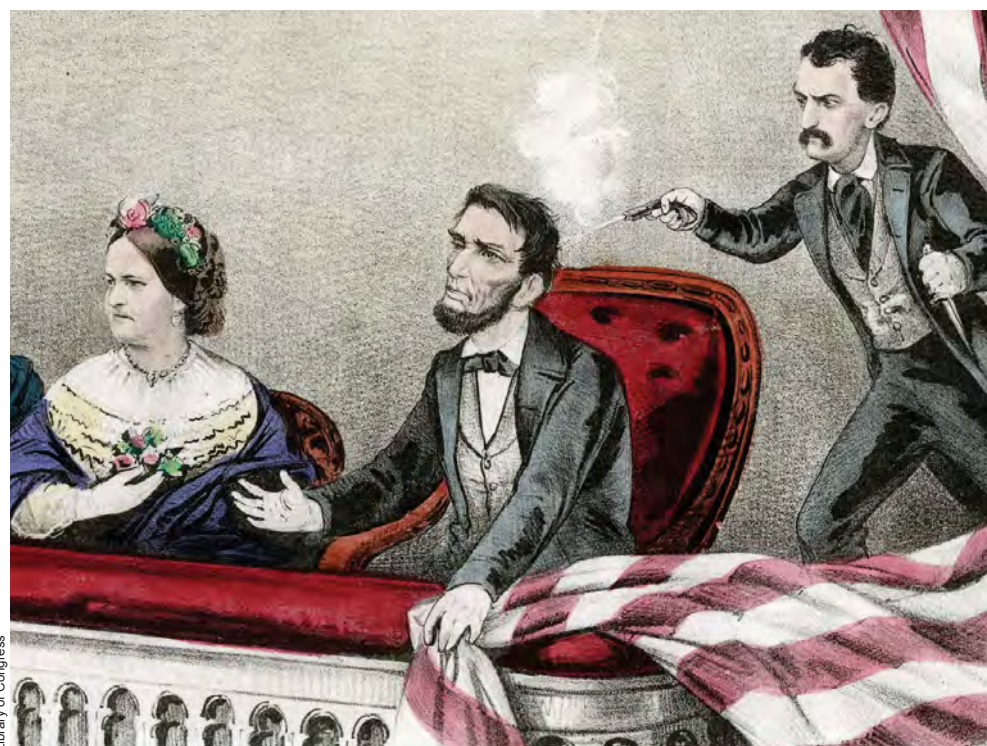
After leaving the tavern, Booth made his way to Ford's Theater where a play called *Our American Cousin* was being performed. Booth knew the layout of the theater well, having performed many times at the establishment owned by John Ford. Having spied the layout and seating of the theater beforehand, Booth quietly slipped into the box where President Abraham Lincoln, first lady

Mary Todd Lincoln, and their guests were watching the play. Booth silently opened the unguarded door and in a moment's horror shot Lincoln in the back of the head, mortally wounding him.

In the chaos that followed, Booth and accomplice David Herold made their way into Maryland, winding up at the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd, a local physician. Mudd, who had previously met Booth on two occasions, treated his leg, famously broken when Booth jumped from Lincoln's box to the stage below. The next day, both men left Mudd's home and began their 12-day flight from the massive manhunt that was in progress. Booth was later shot and killed by federal troops at the farm of Richard Garrett.

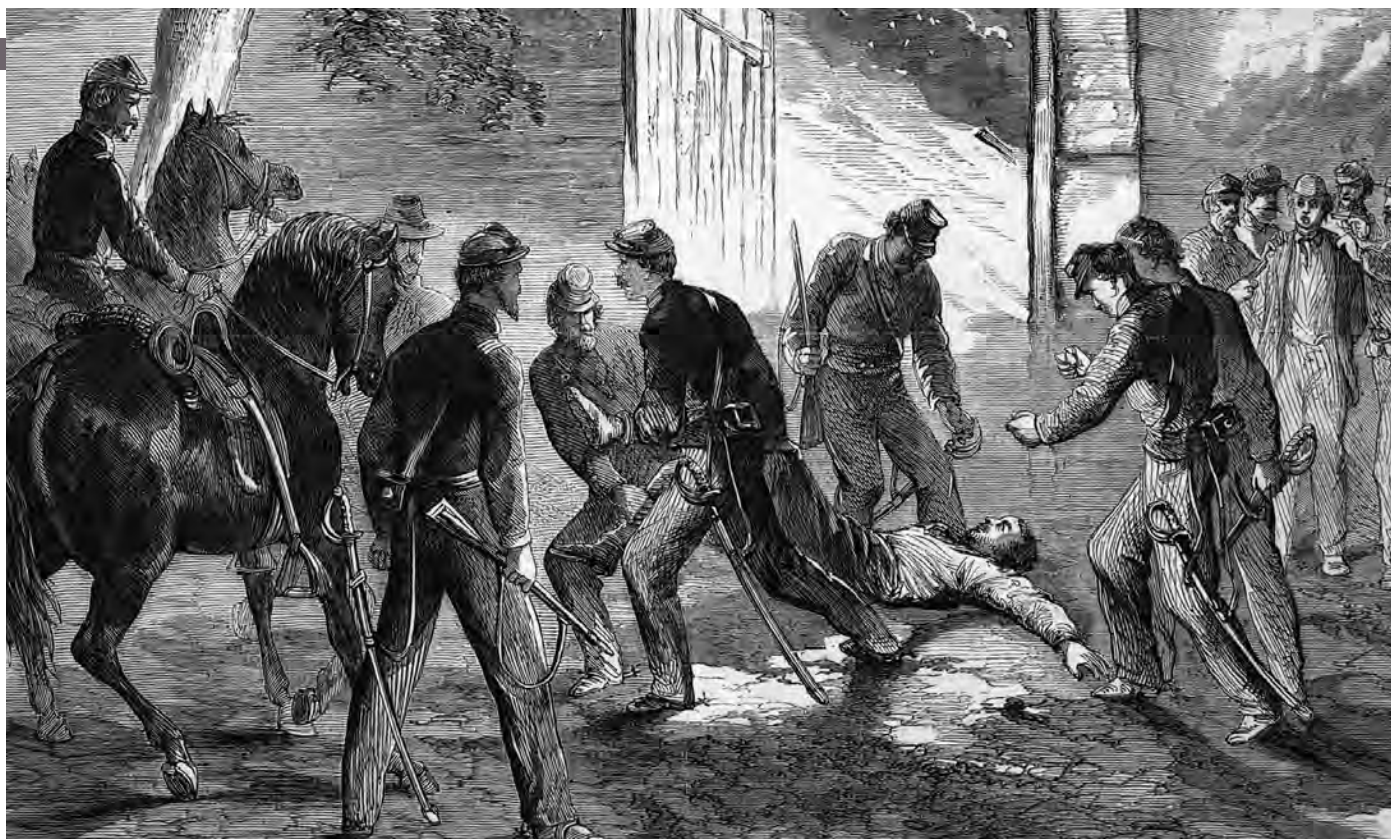
It is not widely known that Booth was associated with many people who belonged, in one way or another, to the Confederate Secret Service and the Confederate government in Richmond, Virginia, headed by President Jefferson Davis. New information unearthed in recent years paints an elaborate picture of just how far the Confederate government went to ensure Booth's escape from Washington after the assassination of Lincoln.

As the trial of the Booth conspirators began in Washington, a military tribunal set out to prove that the assassination of the president was funded and carried out by the Con-



Library of Congress





federate government in Richmond. The crime was one so monstrous that it could not have been carried out solely by Booth and his band of lowly miscreants. The military tribunal wanted desperately to connect the deed to anyone behind Booth, and the government in Richmond was the perfect foil.

One of the first prosecution witnesses was Charles Dunham, who went by the aliases Sanford Conover and James Watson. Dunham said that he had concrete information that the assassination had been ordered by Davis and the plot had been hatched in Canada. Dunham coerced two other witnesses, Richard Montgomery and James Merritt, to back up his absurd claims. All of them said that they saw Booth and fellow conspirator John Surratt in Canada talking with Jacob Thompson, the head of the Confederate Secret Service, who was operating openly north of the border.

Dunham's testimony was headline news, but soon it began to fall apart. Seeing the writing on the wall, Dunham recanted his story, but the damage had been done.

Not all of what Conover said was false regarding Booth and his association with the Richmond government. Booth had contact with various individuals who were linked with the Confederate Secret Service, although that fact was not brought out in the trial of the conspirators.

Booth was an ardent Southern sympathizer,

but did not join the Confederate Army once the war started. He decided to use his fame as one of the nation's premier actors to further the Confederate cause in his own way. During the war, Booth was a low-level courier for the Confederates and smuggled medicine to the South, doing a little spying along the way. Booth's sister, Asia Booth Clarke, in a book that she wrote titled *The Unlocked Book*, said, "I now knew that my hero was a spy, a blockade-runner, a rebel! I set these terrible words before my eyes, and knew that each one meant death."

During the war, Booth traveled to such places as Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Montreal, Canada, meeting with Confederate agents. Booth confided to his actor friend Samuel Chester in New York that he was planning to kidnap or kill Lincoln and asked Chester if he would like to join in, but he refused. Booth further told Chester that he had at least 50 persons allied with him.

Another link connecting Booth to the Confederate government is his trip to Montreal on October 18, 1864. In the spring of 1864, the Confederate government decided to send agents to Canada, where they would plot against the Union. Davis chose Thompson of Mississippi to head the operation and sent Clement Clay as Thompson's assistant. One million dollars in gold was authorized to fund the operation. It was drawn from a special Secret Service account authorized by Davis and Confederate

**When Booth was shot by Federal cavalry at the Garrett Farm in Virginia, soldiers found a Canadian bill of exchange on his body linking the presidential assassin to the covert activities of the Confederate Secret Service.**

Secretary of State Judah Benjamin.

Benjamin was one of the few Jews to rise to prominence in the United States at that time. He was born on August 6, 1811, in St. Croix, which at the time was part of the Danish West Indies occupied by the British crown. In 1813, his parents immigrated to the United States. The family resided at first in Wilmington, North Carolina, but eventually moved to Charleston, South Carolina. After briefly attending Yale University, Benjamin moved to New Orleans in 1832 and became a lawyer.

Benjamin served in the Louisiana state legislature, and in 1852 he became the second Jew to be elected to the U.S. Senate. He was an ardent Southern sympathizer, and during the war he served as the Confederate States' attorney general, secretary of war, and secretary of state. Benjamin was responsible for the distribution of money from the Secret Service fund, and he handed some over to one of Booth's accomplices in the plot to kidnap or kill Lincoln. John Surratt's mother, Mary, owned a home in Washington, where the Booth conspirators met to plan the president's abduction or assassination.

The conspirators set up shop in Toronto, as



well as other cities in Canada. The man in charge of the Montreal office was Patrick Martin, who gave Booth letters of introduction to Mudd in Bryantown, Maryland. Another person who aided the Confederates in Canada was George Sanders, an advocate of political assassination and a Lincoln hater.

Among the plots hatched in Montreal were plans to raid Union towns in New York and New England, free prisoners held in Union jails across the border, poison the water supply in New York City, and spread yellow fever in certain Union states to cause panic among the population.

Booth arrived in Canada on October 18, 1864, and registered at the St. Lawrence Hall Hotel, a hotbed of Confederate operations in Canada. For the next 10 days, Booth had various meetings with Martin and Sanders, and it is possible that the Confederate plot to either abduct or kill the president was discussed.

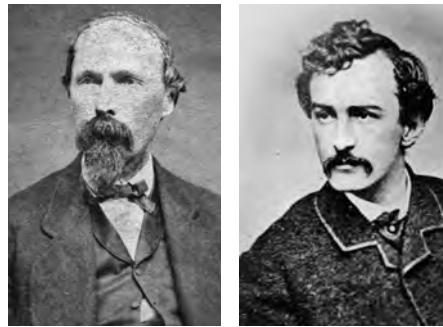
Another link to the Confederate government in Canada was an Episcopal minister by the name of Reverend Doctor Kensey Johns Stewart, who traveled from Canada to the Southern states around the same time that Booth was in Canada. In October 1864, Stewart arrived in southern Maryland and wound up in the place where Lincoln was to be taken if the abduction plot had succeeded.

Stewart eventually arrived in northern Virginia at a secret Confederate Signal Service unit that was headed by Lieutenant Charles Cawood. In September 1864, both Cawood and Confederate Colonel John Singleton Mosby were given orders by Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon to help Captain Thomas Nelson Conrad, who was given the job of abducting Lincoln and taking him to Richmond. Stewart went to Richmond, where he conferred with Davis and then returned to Canada with \$20,000 supplied by the Confederate Secret Service. It is not known if Stewart met with Booth while they were both in Canada, but Stewart was involved in some way with the plot to kidnap Lincoln.

While in Montreal, Booth was able to use money deposited for him in the Ontario Bank in the amount of \$455 Canadian. This money was most likely supplied to him by Confederate commissioners then living in the city. Immediately after leaving Canada, Booth came to Washington and made deposits in a bank owned by Jay Cooke.

A check \$100 was written on November 16, 1864, on the account of Jay Cooke and Company, at a bank in Washington. It was payable to a Matthew Canning, a long-time friend and theatrical agent of Booth. A total of seven checks

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Dr. Samuel Mudd (left) and John Wilkes Booth



Jacob Thompson (left) and Judah Benjamin.

were drawn on the account, including the \$100 from Canning, a \$150 check cashed by Booth on January 7, 1865, and another one for \$25 also cashed by Booth on March 16, 1865. Booth made these deposits in Cooke's bank just after he made his covert trip to Montreal.

When Booth was killed at Garrett's Farm, soldiers found a Canadian bill of exchange on his body. This paper trail is just one of many things that tie Booth to the covert activities of the Confederate Secret Service and its relationship to the assassination of the president. When federal detectives searched the room of George Atzerodt (he was supposed to have killed Vice President Andrew Johnson but lost his nerve), after the assassination, they found Booth's bank book with the \$455 amount duly noted.

One year after his Canadian sojourn, Booth and his accomplices devised their plan to kidnap Lincoln when he was to attend a performance at the Campbell Military Hospital about two miles from the U.S. Capitol. The date set for the abduction was March 17, 1865, and the performance was moved to the Soldiers Home. The purpose of the show was to benefit wounded Union soldiers.

Booth and his men waited on the road from the hospital. Their plan was to capture Lincoln, spirit him south, and then use Lincoln to ransom the thousands of Confederate troops languishing in Federal prisons. Much to their disappointment, Lincoln's plans changed, and the opportunity was gone.

Booth's plan to capture Lincoln mirrors

exactly one concocted by the highest officials in the Richmond government in 1864. In that plan, Conrad was to carry out the abduction. Conrad, who had previously served in the Confederate cavalry, had by that time transferred to the Confederate Secret Service and was directed by Benjamin.

Years later, Conrad wrote that he was given letters from Davis to Seddon and Benjamin transferring him to the Confederate Secret Service and was provided funds for the mission. Others involved in the planning were Lieutenant Charles Cawood of the Signal Service and Mosby, who were to provide aid to the fleeing Conrad. Conrad went to Washington and followed Lincoln's movement for a few days.

After watching Lincoln, Conrad told his superiors that the president was too heavily guarded to make any attempt to capture him, and the plot was terminated. Conrad later wrote, "[Had] Lincoln fallen into the meshes of the silken net we had spread for him, he would never have been the victim of the assassin's heartless, bloody crime." The Conrad plot had been approved by the top men of the Confederate government: Davis, Benjamin, and Seddon.

The question that historians have asked is, Did the Confederate government in Richmond actively play a role in the plots to kidnap or assassinate Lincoln? The circumstantial evidence gathered in the past 150 years dictates that it did.

Once Booth fled Washington after the assassination, he was aided and abetted by a number of people who had direct ties or indirect contact with him before and after the assassination. Following is a short list of the people who helped Booth and their roles in the Lincoln assassination plot.

**Dr. Samuel Mudd.** He set Booth's broken leg at his farm, had at least three previous meetings with Booth in Washington and at his home, and knew a number of people in the plot to kill the president, including Surratt, Cox, and Harbin.

**John Surratt.** He was the son of Mary Surratt, who owned the boarding house in Washington where the conspirators met, as well as a tavern in Surrattsville, Maryland, which was a way station for Confederate agents and smugglers. He was well acquainted with Booth and was part of the kidnap plot against Lincoln. He was in contact with Roderick Watson, a member of the Confederate spy network in Charles County, Maryland.

In New York, Watson used a mail drop at 178 1/2 Water Street. Booth frequently was in New York plotting strategy, and on March 19, 1865, Watson sent a letter to Surratt asking him



to come to New York on urgent business. Surratt was a dispatch rider between Richmond and Confederate agents in Canada. Mary Surratt also had frequent contact with Booth and was with him on the morning of the assassination, taking arms and ammunition to her tavern in Surrattsville.

**Thomas Harney.** He was a member of the Confederate Torpedo Bureau in Richmond and was an expert in the use of mines and explosives. On April 1, 1865, Harney was sent to join Mosby's cavalry battalion in Virginia. On April 8, Harney's unit was captured by Union troops. When Richmond fell on April 3, 1865, Union Colonel Edward Ripley was in the city. He was visited by a Confederate soldier named William Snyder. Snyder said that there was a Confederate plot to blow up the White House during a meeting of the president's cabinet. Booth's co-conspirator George Atzerodt stated, "Booth said that he met a party in New York who would get the president certain. They were going to mine the end of the White House next to the War Department."

**Thomas Harbin.** Harbin was a Confederate agent who lived in Charles County, Maryland. He was once the postmaster at Bryantown, Maryland, the home of Mudd. When Booth paid a visit to Bryantown to see Mudd, the doc-

tor introduced Harbin to Booth. It was during this meeting, which took place on December 18, 1864, that Booth recruited Harbin into his scheme to kidnap Lincoln. Harbin's base of operations was on the Virginia side of the Potomac River, and he took his orders directly from Richmond. Harbin in turn enlisted Atzerodt into the kidnap plans. During the 12 days on the run, Harbin procured horses for Booth and Herold.

**Thomas Jones.** Jones was one of the most important Confederate agents in the region of Charles County and was also with the Confederate Signal Service. He played a pivotal role in the escape of Booth and Herold after the assassination. He was helped by Cox, at whose home Herold and Booth were staying.

Jones brought the pair newspapers, food, and blankets and did everything in his power to see to their safety. Jones moved Booth and Herold to the banks of the Potomac River, where a boat was waiting for them. Jones gave them a compass and candle for navigation assistance. The men got lost and wound up back on the same side of the river where they originally started. The Union authorities never realized how important a role Jones played in the escape of Booth and Herold.

**Samuel Cox.** Cox was a well-known South-

ern landowner and sympathizer, as well as a low-level Confederate agent. Following their stay at Mudd's home, Booth and Herold arrived at Cox's Rich Hill home. Cox gave them shelter and food until he could make further travel arrangements for them. Cox's son went to Jones' home, and a hurried meeting was held between Jones and Cox. The elder Cox agreed to help the two fugitives, and soon Booth and Herold arrived at his home. Cox had his overseer, Franklin Roby, escort the fugitives to the safety of a pine thicket, where they were hidden for the next few days. Cox then passed Booth and Herold to Jones for their trip south.

Cox was arrested but soon released. Again, the Union authorities had no idea just how much Cox had helped Booth and Herold. But he was just one more piece in the puzzle connecting members of the Confederate Secret Service to Booth's escape. Like many in the drama, Cox was never charged for his role in the assassination plot.

Although there is no smoking gun that links the assassination to the top leaders of the Confederate government, the paper trail linking Booth to the numerous Confederate agents who aided him and were ready to help him escape from Washington after the assassination is undeniable. □

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## The 22nd Annual Show of Shows featured hard-to-find uniforms, medals, and guns and a chance to meet distinguished veterans.

**T**HE OHIO VALLEY MILITARY SOCIETY'S SHOW OF SHOWS (SOS) REMAINS the biggest military collectibles event in North America. More than just a place to browse, sell, and buy, the show has truly become a gathering for those with an interest in military history. The 22nd annual show, held in Louisville, Kentucky, drew dealers and collectors from around the world, with attendees coming from

such countries as Russia, Germany, France, China, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and, of course, from the United States and Canada. The hobby of militaria collecting would not be the same without SOS, and this year was no exception.

The 2014 SOS featured approximately 2,000 tables and more than 700 dealers offering military collectibles from all eras. Although a majority of the focus in military collectibles remains World Wars I and II, this year's SOS included items not only from those conflicts, but also notably from the British empire, the Iraq War, and medieval Japan, making this an event with truly something for everyone. The multiday show began on February 26, when dealers began setting up their exhibits, and continued through March 2.

SOS has always offered the finest sampling of militaria in a single room, and the show has grown in recent years to the point that it now takes up one of the largest halls in the Kentucky Exposition Center.

The Ohio Valley Military Society, which was first incorporated in 1966, sponsors the annual collectibles show. The society boasts about 2,000 members, while promoting the study and collecting of historic military artifacts. The society is one of the oldest militaria collectors' clubs in the world. SOS is just one of three shows that the

A summer dress uniform  
from the 1920s of the British  
Yeoman Warders known  
informally as Beefeaters.

BELOW: A rare pickelhaube  
helmet from the American  
Civil War based on an 1842  
Prussian design proudly  
displays an American eagle.





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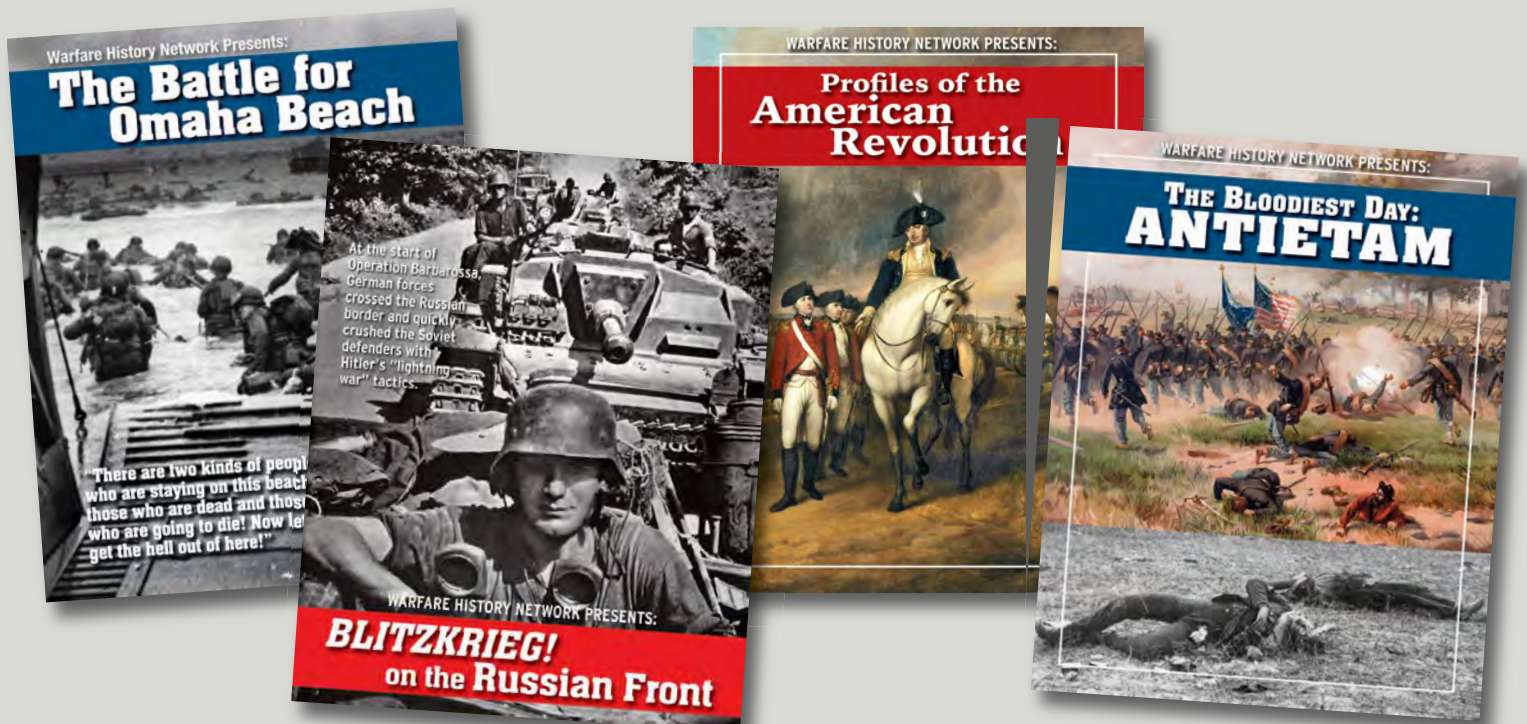
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**ABOVE:** A Brown Bess rifle features a 36-inch, spear-style bayonet for use against cavalry. **RIGHT:** A complete set of Japanese Samurai armor from the late Edo period.

group sponsors, but the show also has become the largest of its kind in the world, attracting international dealers and collectors alike.

While SOS is the largest collectibles show in the world, it is just one of several large shows. However, it was not always that way. Until recent years there were few events that were even close to mega-show status. In the early 1980s, there were only a few regional events anywhere in the country devoted entirely to militaria, and most of these were 200 or 300 table shows. The largest was the annual Cincinnati, Ohio, show sponsored by the Ohio Valley Military Society, which had about 400 tables. Over time the hobby grew, and with it some notable shows developed. In the early 1990s, the Ohio Valley Military Society looked to create a show that would be unlike others, and SOS was born.

In the early days it was possible for dealers to head to town and get a table without a reservation. Now, even with nearly 2,000 tables, the show sells out early and has a massive waiting list. Dealers who are on the waiting list can still attend, and there is also the option to set up at the Great Eastern Gun Show, which is held the same weekend as SOS in a neighboring hall at the Kentucky Exposition Center.

With more than 2,000 additional tables and an emphasis on firearms of all eras, the Great Eastern Gun Show is now the largest gun show east of the Mississippi River. Together, it makes for literally miles of walking, so attendees are advised to bring comfortable shoes.

The 2014 SOS was a standout. As noted, SOS is akin to a temporary museum, and several items were truly those that most will just look at due to rarity and price. Some items were so notable that they were not even the sort of thing one would likely find in a museum.

Among the most compelling items at the show was an early "SA style" uniform that was once owned by Adolf Hitler, which has a colorful history beyond its actual association with the infamous German dictator. This particular grouping, which is being offered for sale by Craig Gottlieb of Craig Gottlieb Militaria, includes a brown shirt, hat, Blood Order medal, and belt. This uniform was liberated by U.S. Lieutenant



Phillip Ben Lieber from the Fuhrerbau in Munich at the end of World War II.

The uniform had been stolen from Lieber and later obtained by Mohawk Arms. After a lawsuit that involved opinions related to Louisiana State Law, New York State Law, U.S. Federal Law, U.S. Army Law, and even the laws of Germany before 1944, it was determined that Lieber was the rightful owner. Mohawk Arms' owners Raymond and Joseph Zyla then made an undisclosed offer for the collection, and now more than 40 years later the grouping is again being offered for sale.

Although the uniform of Hitler is likely out of the price range of even the most advanced collector, it is also not the sort of thing that will appeal to everyone. Nevertheless, William Gasser, museum curator and director of the American Armored Foundation Tank Museum, had several uniform groupings for sale at the show that belonged to a number of general officers, including U.S. Brig. Gen. Cullen U. Gulko, Brig. Gen. William B. Kunzig, and Polish Brig. Gen. Warchalski, whose first name researchers have not uncovered.

Gasser, who is now also looking to sell or even donate his tank museum, has amassed a large collection of general officer uniforms, and at SOS

also offered a uniform that belonged to Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, one of the most prominent commanders of the German Wehrmacht in World War II. After the war, Manstein was a military advisor to the government of West Germany, and he helped reestablish the nation's armed forces.

"That is a standout piece for tank collectors," said Gasser, noting that Manstein was a brilliant panzer general.

Although militaria is often thought of in various shades of khaki and gray, SOS can be a colorful event as noted by the offerings of dealers such as Phillip Bentley, who has been a regular fixture for years. Bentley offers a range of British militaria. The centerpiece of his offerings this year was a 1920s era Yeomen Warders uniform.

Known also as Beefeaters, the Yeoman Warders of Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress the Tower of London, and Members of the Sovereign's Body Guard of the Yeoman Guard Extraordinary, are part of the ceremonial fixture of the Tower of London. They are responsible for looking after any prisoners of the tower and for safeguarding the British crown jewels. The Yeoman Warders also serve as tour guides, and they are a tourist attraction in their own right.

While the uniform has not changed much in appearance—beyond the fact that the crown on the chest, which changed from a King's Crown (1901-1952) to the Queen's Crown (1952-present)—the quality shows that this is truly of the Downton Abbey era.

"This is a summer dress version of the Beefeaters uniform and was used in the 1920s," said Bentley. "The truth is that this uniform shouldn't have ever left the country. It was acquired from an old English gentleman and has been in the states for years."

Just a few tables over from Bentley lay another beautiful piece from halfway around the world. It was a set of late 18th century/early 19th century Edo Period Japanese samurai armor, complete with matching black lacquered iron helmet, cuirass, shin guards, arm guards, thigh guards, shoulder guards, and face protector. The kabuto helmet featured an original liner along with gilt copper fittings and a neck guard bearing the crest embracing incense leaves, which matched the family crest on the armor sleeves.

One item of typical khaki had a far more colorful history. It was a simple World War II raincoat, but was owned by writer Ernie Pyle, who served as a war correspondent and won a Pulitzer Prize for his dispatches from the field. Offered by Bob Chatt of Vintage Productions,



the coat was recently acquired from a soldier who had owned it since being left in the soldier's care shortly before Pyle's death.

This particular coat was given to the soldier for safekeeping just days before Pyle was killed by Japanese machine-gun fire while visiting Ie Shima, a small island near Okinawa. Inside the coat is Pyle's name, written in his own hand. Underneath are the words "war correspondent," which reportedly were added after Pyle's death so that people would not forget what he had done.

With just three full days to see everything, SOS can be a race against the clock, but anyone passing the tables belonging to Jeff Shrader and Advance Guard Militaria might just have stopped to check out what could be the largest piece of trench art offered at the show—a World War I grandfather clock made of brass cartridges, German helmet spikes, and various badges.

"That thing is huge," said Shrader. "It is made up of dozens of brass shells, and someone clearly spent time on this."

Whether it could be considered true "trench art" is debatable as it was likely a postwar creation. Even in the lull in fighting it is doubtful that a platoon of skilled men would have had the time to create such an intricate piece of art, but it was the sort of piece that could dominate a room today.

Although the armies of the American Civil War were known for their blue and gray uniforms, black was also used as noted by an extremely rare spike helmet that was offered by Colonel Joe Robinson, U.S. Army (Ret.), a noted author of Imperial German militaria. Robinson has been a lifetime collector of German pickelhaubes (spiked helmets) and offered an example featuring an 1821 style American eagle.

"The helmet is clearly based on the Russian or Prussian model 1842 spiked helmet," said Robinson. "I've only seen something similar to this example offered in Civil War-era supply catalogs. I don't know if this was for militia use or was a helmet intended to be a private purchase item for an officer. I've never seen another one like it."

Robinson pointed out too that this pointy helmet is unique in that the trim is not brass, as would be seen on a Russian or Prussian helmet, but was painted, possibly as a way to save on materials. It could also be a so-called salesman copy, an item that was used to sell production versions if it proved popular.

"That spike on it is also right out of the Wizard of Oz," said Robinson. "It is something we'll likely never know the whole history of, but these



**TOP: An SA-style uniform owned by German leader Adolf Hitler. ABOVE: Iraqi helmets offer an affordable alternative to higher priced World War II helmets.**

objects can't exactly tell us their history."

It is impossible not to see case after case of medals at SOS, but sadly much of the associated history to these is lost. In many cases little, if anything, is known about the events that resulted in their being awarded to an individual. While still very collectible and desirable in many cases, they cannot be tied to an individual or specific event.

This is not the case with the medals offered by Collect Russia's Igor Moiseyev. While Moiseyev always has plenty of colorful Imperial Russian and Soviet-era items offered for sale, at SOS he had a grouping of medals, papers, and documentation on Junior Lieutenant Mikhail Naumovich Korogodsky, who served in World

War II as a fire platoon commander of the battery attached to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Guards Motorized Rifle Battalion.

The diversity of offerings at SOS is enormous. This is evident by the experimental Brown Bess rifle that could be transformed into a specialized anticavalry weapon with the addition of a long spear attachment.

"This was for receiving cavalry," said seller Christian Cranmer, president of International Military Antiques. "This is a basic third model Brown Bess from the Waterloo era. It was modified in the Tower [of London] and features a 36-inch-long spear bayonet that could be attached to the end of the rifle."

Far newer militaria—not to mention far more affordable—was offered by Ian Marotto, who was selling items related to the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. This included a number of uniforms used by Iraqi as well as coalition forces. While such items are not especially desirable, at least not yet, Marotto, said it is a good way to get in on the ground floor of collecting.

"You can't touch an original German helmet today if you are a young collector," said Marotto. "Even American World War II helmets are a couple of hundred dollars. But these were used by Saddam Hussein's forces, and they're the real deal. You can get a whole uniform, and the great thing about the Iraqi stuff is that there is so much to choose from. Hussein really went all out when it came to equipping his forces."

One downside to militaria is that the objects cannot tell their history. However, every year at SOS there are those honored veteran guests who can share their stories. For 2014, the Ohio Valley Military Society invited several guests. Several dealers, including Bill Shea, Jim McDuff, Bob Landies, Phil Stebbins, and Peter Kabluczenko, donated funds to help host the true heroes.

These included World War II Army veteran Bob Bearden, author of the book *To D-Day and Back: Adventures with the 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment and Life as a World War II POW: A Memoir*. Bearden was captured on D+2 and only freed by the Soviet Red Army at the end of the war. He said that Soviet tank crews were more bent on exacting vengeance on the Germans than safeguarding Allied prisoners of war. He had to walk along sandy, snow-covered roads through Germany, Poland, and then to Moscow before finally making it home to Dallas, Texas. For attendees of SOS it was an honor to meet these heroes. Their presence truly helped make it a most memorable show. □



In their first major battles of World War I, American Expeditionary Force troops helped blunt multiple offensives launched by the German Army in the spring of 1918.





# DOUGHBOYS' BLOODY BAPTISM

BY WILLIAM STROOCK



National Archives

**ABOVE:** General John J. Pershing led the American Expeditionary Force in Europe. He kept the American troops unified under his command. **LEFT:** An American machine gunner is depicted in the heat of battle on the Western Front in a U.S. war bonds poster. The German Spring Offensives were an attempt by German commander Erich Ludendorff to win the war before American men and materials gave the Allies a clear advantage.

**A**S THE FATEFUL DAY DREW TO A CLOSE, THE EXHAUSTED SOLDIERS OF the German 25th and 82nd Reserve Divisions huddled in their trenches. It was May 30, 1918, and for the past two days the Germans had battled elements of the American 1st Division for control of the small village of Cantigny and its environs. Before them the virgin ground had been churned, the town shot up, and its cemetery turned into a ghoulish battlefield of broken headstones and protruding coffins.

While the Americans had given ground, they had not broken, and they had repulsed every assault the experienced Germans mounted. Over the course of the battle, the Americans had whittled the 82nd Reserve Division down to 2,500 effective personnel. The Battle of Cantigny, the first major assault of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) on the Western Front in World War I, proved that Americans “would both fight and stick,” said Maj. Gen. Robert Lee Bullard, commander of the 1st Division.

The drubbing had been delivered by the 28th Infantry, later reinforced by elements of the 18th Infantry. The Battle of Cantigny began at 4:45 AM on May 28. After a 90-minute artillery barrage, the Yanks advanced with three battalions arrayed along a front of 1½ kilometers. Machine-gun companies protected each flank. The Americans overran most German forward positions within the first 10 minutes, although the fighting in Cantigny itself came down to flamethrowers, hand grenades, and bayonets. By 8 AM the Yanks were digging in, with the 2nd Battalion occupying Cantigny and the 3rd Battalion deployed to the south.

“The success of this phase of the operation was so complete, and the list of casualties so small, that everyone was enthusiastic and delighted,” wrote Colonel George Marshall, who planned the attack. “[However], trouble was coming thick and fast.”

That afternoon, the French withdrew their supporting artillery to deal with a new German offensive. At the same time, German 210mm guns pounded the American positions and tore up the communications wires carefully laid by the 28th Infantry’s engineers. The German counter-attack began in the evening and continued into the next morning. The German commander in chief, General Erich Ludendorff, had ordered that the American positions around Cantigny be utterly destroyed for the same reason AEF commander General John J. Pershing ordered that it be held at all costs. “For the 1st Division to lose its first objective was unthinkable and would have had a most depressing effect on the morale of our entire Army, as well as those of our Allies,” wrote Marshall.

The Germans pushed the 2nd Battalion out of its forward positions and into Cantigny proper. To the south, the 3rd Battalion held firm, delivering deadly rifle and machine-gun fire into the attacking Germans. American artillery also seriously disrupted the German attack. However, German artillery, which had survived due to ineffective American counterbattery fire, inflicted heavy losses on the Americans. As a result, the 28th Infantry’s commander, Colonel Hanson E.



Ely, was forced to bring his only two reserve companies forward. The Germans launched a second counterattack on the morning of May 29, but this was broken up once more by American rifle and machine-gun fire. German commanders realized that the Americans were probably advancing no farther and halted the attacks, content to harass instead. When the 28th Infantry was pulled off the line on May 30, it left more than 1,000 of its number on the battlefield.

The assault had been of the utmost importance to Pershing. Days before the attack, the men of the 18th Infantry had been withdrawn to the rear area. They meticulously planned and rehearsed the assault against an exact replica of the German defenses in and around Cantigny. In these maneuvers, Pershing's idea of open warfare was emphasized as was staff work and above all maintaining communications between the front and headquarters. This extensive planning and preparation were typical of Pershing.

When America entered the conflict, Pershing's first task was to prepare the AEF for modern war. The Americans desperately needed training and organization. The U.S. Army had spent the last two generations fighting imperial wars. In 1917, most of the U.S. Army was stationed on the Rio Grande. Pershing, of course, had become famous for his chase of Poncho Villa in Mexico and before that, for fighting the Moros in the Philippines. America's occupation of the islands in 1898 had led to a four-year insurgency. Before the war with Spain, the small American army had spent a generation subduing Indians in the American West. Bullard had ridden in the Geronimo campaign.

The U.S. Army had a deep institutional memory of the American Civil War. Bullard grew up in Alabama hearing stories from veterans of the siege of Vicksburg. Lt. Gen. Hunter Liggett, who would eventually command 500,000 men in the American First Army, in 1907 went on a staff ride in Virginia with a former Confederate cavalry general. Pershing himself harkened back to the American Civil War when considering the means by which the AEF would be raised. In his memoirs he made reference to "the evils of the volunteer system in the Civil War, with appointment of politicians to high command" and noted that because of battles such as Vicksburg and Petersburg "Americans were no strangers to trenches."

To build the AEF, Pershing established an operation and training staff and personally oversaw its direction. The staff developed a school system on the British model, which had impressed Pershing. A general staff college with a three-month curriculum was founded as were schools to teach the use of new weapons developed over the course of the war. These included schools for machine guns, mortars, flamethrowers, and hand grenades.

Pershing also approved of the British method of trench warfare. "They taught their men to be aggressive and undertook to perfect them in hand-to-hand fighting with the bayonet, grenade, and

dagger," he wrote. British and French officers lectured at the American schools. Despite the advent of these modern weapons, Pershing insisted that an infantryman was, at his core, a rifleman.

"My view was that the rifle and bayonet remained essential weapons of the infantry," he wrote. Intense rifle training fit into Pershing's view of aggressive, offensive warfare. An AEF training pamphlet declared in part, "All instruction must contemplate the assumption of a vigorous offensive. This purpose will be emphasized in every phase of training until it becomes a settled habit of thought." Pershing believed that in three years of trench warfare Allied troops had become too defensive and abandoned offensive warfare.

Pershing was determined that the AEF would not fall into the same trap of relying upon around-the-clock artillery bombardment and modern specialty weapons. Rather, Pershing preached open warfare. In Pershing's style of war, American divisions would force their way through German positions into the open areas in their rear. From there the Doughboys would fight a battle of maneuver aimed at outflanking and destroying German formations. Pershing insisted that, "Instruction in this kind of warfare was based upon individual and group initiative, resourcefulness, and tactical judgment." Although the AEF troops would learn the art of trench warfare, Pershing was adamant that they strive for open warfare. To this end, the Dough-

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**American riflemen advance during the well-executed attack at Cantigny on May 28, 1918. This was the first offensive for the Americans.**





boys were to learn combat skills that they would need to participate in offensive operations. In Pershing's thinking, the war would be won by American riflemen.

Despite Pershing's emphasis on open warfare, AEF divisions would still have to puncture German defenses. To punch through, Pershing formed American divisions into behemoths with four infantry regiments, an artillery brigade of three regiments, an engineering brigade, and an independent machine-gun battalion. In all, American divisions numbered 28,000 men, roughly the size of an Allied corps. An American brigade—two infantry regiments and a machine-gun battalion—numbered 8,500 men, which by that point in the war was larger than most Allied and German divisions. American rifle companies were tactical mammoths numbering 250 officers and men divided into four platoons. In Pershing's plans, the AEF would eventually number three million men in 80 divisions. He envisioned the AEF gradually taking on the burden and bearing the brunt of the war. To that end, Pershing planned for an AEF attack into Alsace-Lorraine with the goal of pushing into Germany and destroying German industrial capacity in the Rhine and Saar valleys.

When America entered the Great War, both the French and the British proposed schemes that would see American troops integrated into their armies. One French memo, quoted by Pershing, actually called for Americans to enlist in the French Army. The British proposed the same system in a memo to Pershing: "If you ask me how your force could most quickly make itself felt in Europe, I would say by sending 500,000 untrained men at once to our depots in England to be trained there and drafted into our armies in France."

A furious row ensued in which Pershing simply refused to accede to the Supreme War Council's wishes. Foch insisted, in Pershing's words, that "the war might be over before we were ready." To which Lloyd George added, "Can't you see that the war will be lost unless we get this support?" Pershing held out and won. While the Abbeville Agreement, as it was named, called for more American infantry to be shipped across the Atlantic, it also stated, "It is the opinion of the Supreme War Council that, in order to carry the war to a successful conclusion, an American army should be formed as early as possible under its own commander and under its own flag."

Throughout the winter of 1917-1918, Ludendorff had worked hard to prepare German forces to defeat the Allies before the full strength of the American military might be brought to bear on the Western Front. He

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection



French and American troops cautiously advance through Chateau-Thierry on July 18, 1918, in a drawing by Lucien Jonas. Pershing sent two divisions to assist the French when they became hard pressed during the Second Battle of the Marne.

shifted and retrained German forces, some of whom would serve as shock troops spearheading new attacks. Ludendorff did not envision one grand offensive, but rather a number of offensives designed to wear down the Allies and take advantage of the conflicting priorities of the British and French commands.

The German Somme and Lys offensives were launched in March and April, respectively. The Aisne Offensive, the third that the Germans unleashed against the Allies that spring, would include pivotal battles involving the AEF, such as Cantigny, Chateau-Thierry, and Belleau Wood. The Aisne Offensive began on May 27 and lasted until June 17. The Germans followed their first three offensives with two more, launching the Noyon-Montdidier Offensive on June 9 and the Champagne-Marne Offensive on July 15. The Second Battle of the Marne in mid-July saw the Germans establish bridgeheads across the Marne River, but it also saw the tide turn against the Germans.

Ludendorff pushed 30 German divisions across the Marne, overwhelming the seven Allied divisions there and creating a salient threatening Paris. At that point in the war, Pershing had eight divisions which he described as complete and ready to join the fighting. Of these, the U.S. 1st Division was already at Cantigny, while three more—the 2nd, 26th, and 42nd—were in line along a quiet sector. On May 30, Pétain called on Pershing to send what American troops he could to stem the German tide. Pershing immediately rushed the 2nd and 3rd Divisions to Chateau-Thierry at the southern tip of the German salient.

The first American unit to arrive was the 3rd Division's 7th Machine Gun Battalion. All such battalions comprised two-machine gun companies, each armed with 16 French-made Hotchkiss machine guns. The Hotchkiss was fed by a 30-round magazine, could fire 600 rounds per minute, and had a range of 3,800 yards. Each company was in turn divided into three machine-gun pla-



toons of four guns each and a headquarters platoon. American doctrine called for machine-gun battalions to be deployed several hundred yards behind the line to provide fire support for both defensive and offensive needs. Division machine-gun battalions were completely motorized.

As French soldiers of the shattered 10th Colonial Division fled south across the Marne, the 7th Machine Gun Battalion arrived opposite the town of Chateau-Thierry. A squad with two Hotchkiss guns was immediately sent across the river into the village. The rest of the battalion deployed on the south bank of the Marne, with eight guns covering a small wagon bridge that linked the town to the south bank and the other nine covering a railway bridge some 500 yards downstream. These troops traded fire with the Germans while the rest of 3rd Division rushed north to positions on the south bank of the Marne. For the next three days, the French and 7th Machine Gun Battalion held the Germans on the north bank. The report of the French commander of the 10th Colonial Division reads in part, "Immediately the American reinforced the entire bridge, especially at the approaches of the bridge. Their courage and skill as marksmen evoked the admiration of all." He also noted, "Here again the courage of the Americans was beyond all praise. The

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**U.S. Marines suffered heavy losses assaulting German defensive positions in protracted fighting at Belleau Wood in June 1918. Although the Marines exhibited impressive bravery in fighting at point-blank range, their inexperience was apparent when compared to that of the veteran Germans.**

Colonials themselves, though accustomed to acts of bravery, were struck by the wonderful morale in the face of fire, the impossibility and the extraordinary sangfroid of their allies."

While elements of the 3rd Division were going into line southeast of the salient, the 2nd Division was taking up positions on the salient's southwest side. This division was a hybrid containing the 3rd Brigade, U.S. Army, and the 4th Brigade, U.S. Marines. The division had been training near Chaumont after spending a month in a quiet sector near Toulon. The 2nd Division went into the trenches near Chateau-Thierry on the night of June 3-4 as French troops streamed passed them toward Paris. Captain William O. Corbin of the 5th Marines was accosted by a fleeing French officer who advised the Americans to retreat. When Corbin relayed the message to Major Lloyd Williams, his commanding officer, Williams said, "Retreat? Hell, we just got here!"

The next day the Germans advanced through unspoiled fields against the Marines of the 4th Brigade. They were met by machine-gun and concentrated rifle fire. Here, Pershing's ideas on marksmanship were tested on the battlefield. Up and down the line the Marines held and forced the Germans to break off the attack. Colonel Albertus Catlin, who commanded the 5th Marines, described the scene; "Then, under that deadly fire and the barrage of rifle and machine gun fire, the Boche stopped. It was too much for any man. They buried in or broke to the cover of the woods and you could follow them by the ripples of the green wheat as they raced for cover."

By June 5, two American divisions, the 2nd and the 3rd, totaling nearly 60,000 men, were on the Marne Salient. These were at the disposal of the French XXI Corps commanded by General

Jean Degoutte, who believed the time was right for limited, local counterattacks. In this Degoutte had Pershing's complete support. As such, he ordered the 2nd Division to attack German positions at the southwestern edge of the salient at Belleau Wood.

Belleau Wood was untouched by the ravages of war in 1918. Running north to south, it was about two miles long and a half mile wide. In the words of the 2nd Division historians, "The Forest of Belleau was in full leaf and in a state of nature." The village of Bouresches bracketed the wood in the northeast, while the town of Torcy lay to the northwest. The 4th Brigade was deployed in the Lucy-le-Bocage to the south and the Champillon Wood to the immediate west. The brigade was commanded by Army Lt. Gen. James Harbord, a West Point graduate who had fought in Cuba, the Philippines, and the Poncho Villa campaign. Harbord had been Pershing's chief of staff for a time before Pershing placed him in charge of the freshly organized 4th Marine Brigade.

Harbord's plan called for the 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines to advance into the wood from the south. From there the 3rd Battalion was to push on through the southern end of its sector and take the village of Bouresches, while the 2nd Battalion advanced through the northern end to take the town of Torcy. At the same time, the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines would advance in the center from the west. The 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines guarded the southern flank and connected the 4th Brigade with the 3rd Brigade. On the left, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines would advance against German positions atop Hill 142.

French intelligence officers believed Belleau Wood to be lightly defended; however, this was not the case. Occupying the wood were elements of the German 197th and 237th Divisions. The American attack would fall on the dividing line between the two forces, hitting two battalions of the German 197th Division on the left of the wood and one of the German 237th on the right in the wood proper. These divisions had spearheaded the German assault in the direction of Rheims, and their ranks had been thinned by several days of fighting.

The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines began the Battle of Belleau Wood at 3:45 AM on June 6 with its assault on Hill 142. The attack got off to a bad start. Two infantry companies and the machine-gun company were late getting to their start positions. The battalion commander elected to attack on schedule anyway. Despite being understrength, the 1/5 Marines made good progress, and some elements even got to the outskirts of Torcy, although these were dri-



ven back. The Marines suffered more than 400 casualties in the fighting.

The main attack by the 6th Marines got underway at 9 PM with a short, badly coordinated artillery barrage that had little effect on the Germans in the wood. Harbord's rationale for the barrage was that a lengthy effort would alert the Germans. The 3/6 Marines and the 2/6 Marines climbed out of their trenches and began the trek across the largely unscathed ground before the wood. They advanced in four skirmish lines, easy targets for the Germans, who inflicted frightful casualties upon the Marines.

The 3rd Battalion managed to get into Belleau Wood but was unable to push on to its second objective. Instead, it became bogged down at the wood's edge and fought dogged German defenders at point-blank range and in hand-to-hand combat. At the same time on the right, the 2nd Battalion advanced north against light resistance. One company took the town of Bouresches north of the wood. The Germans brought the town under fire but did not attack. A Marine company at that location was reinforced by two other companies, and by midnight the town was safely in American hands. The main attack, however, had failed. As it was taking heavy fire, the 3/6 Marines pulled back to its jump-off points.

On Harbord's orders, the Marines stood pat throughout the next day. On June 8, the 3/6 Marines did try to work its way into the wood's southern tip, but this effort was easily repulsed by the Germans and the battered battalion retreated once again. The first phase of the attack on Belleau Wood had been disastrous. The lack of proper artillery preparation was partly to blame, but the most important factor in the American failure was their poor tactics. The three Marine battalions advanced through clear ground in open order. "It was a beautiful deployment, lines all dressed and guiding true," wrote Marine Captain John Thomason.

Captain George Hamilton, who commanded a company in the 3rd Battalion, wrote of passing through a field and into the wood only to have to traverse another open field. "Further on we came to an open field—a wheatfield full of red poppies—and here we caught hell. Again it was a case of rushing across the open and getting into the woods." The Marines were not practicing open warfare. They were replicating tactics their grandfathers used more than a half century earlier and getting slaughtered.

After the first day of the assault on Belleau Wood, Harbord took stock of the disappointing results. He concluded his report to Bundy as follows: "The Brigade can hold its present

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Members of the U.S. 315th Machine Gun Battalion in action during the Meuse-Argonne offensive.

position but is not able to advance." Indeed, the attack had cost more than 1,000 casualties, and the Marines were exhausted. Battalion commanders pleaded that their men needed rest. Harbord was particularly displeased with the reports sent back by his commanders. In an 11-point communiqué, he called them vague and demanded more detail including concrete numbers of friendly and enemy casualties and precise map coordinates. "Losses are heavy may mean anything," he admonished. He told his officers to use what resources they had and "not count on reinforcements."

With the world watching, the Allied press was already writing about America's great victory in Belleau Wood, and with his own reputation at stake Harbord ordered another attack. This one came on June 10. The plan ordered the 3/6 Marines, taking up positions directly south of the wood, to attack due north. At the same time the 2/5 Marines, operating west of the wood, was to attack east into the center. This time artillery fire was better coordinated, with barrages bracketing German positions and targeting troop concentrations. Beginning at 4:30 AM, the 3/6 Marines made excellent progress advancing north and reported by 8 AM that they had achieved all their objectives. In fact, they advanced so rapidly because the Germans had abandoned the southern edge of the wood. The Marines had actually stopped several hundred yards short of their objectives. The 2/5 Marines fought their way into the wood, but because the 2/6 Marines had stopped short they were not adequately supported and unable to complete their sweep to the east. About half of Belleau Wood was in Americans hands, but the northern half was still occupied by the Germans.

On June 12, the attack was renewed. The 2/5 Marines led the assault and actually pushed through the north of the wood and into the open. The Germans now only held a swath in the northeast part of the wood. The 2nd Division's official history describes the Marines' hold on the wood as "precarious." With the Germans still in the northwest sector, contact was established with American units on the left. On the right, the 23rd Infantry occupied Bouresches. Over the next few days, the German artillery pounded Belleau Wood. On June 12, the Germans launched a general counterattack focused on Bouresches, but the Marines turned them back. The Germans' presence in the wood was not eradicated until June 23 when the 3/5 Marines attacked and overran their positions in the northwestern sector.

As the 4th Brigade's sector was settling down, the 3rd Brigade was tasked with taking the village of Vaux. The brigade had been in the line for weeks; it had aggressively patrolled and mapped German positions in Vaux. The attack was carried out by the 9th Infantry and incorporated the lessons of Belleau Wood. German positions were subjected to a 12-hour preparatory bombardment, which included a gas attack 90 minutes before jump off. American troops advanced before a rolling barrage, with special units delegated to the advancing battalion's flanks to maintain contact between advancing sections. German defenders in Vaux were quickly overwhelmed. A planned German counterattack was broken up by artillery fire. The 9th Infantry quickly consolidated its



positions and prepared either to advance or receive the expected German counterattack. In contrast to Belleau Wood, Vaux was a model American attack.

After these actions, at Foch's request Pershing placed more American divisions in line. The 26th Yankee Division and the 42nd Rainbow Division had relieved the 1st and 2nd Divisions, while the 28th Keystone Division became part of Dougette's corps reserve. These divisions engaged German forces in a series of sharp skirmishes along the Marne. The most famous of these was fought by the 3rd Division, whose unwavering defense earned it the nickname "Rock of the Marne." Here the 38th Infantry stopped a German attack across the Marne, inflicting devastating casualties upon the Germans as they advanced down the Surmelin Valley. The 38th Infantry was notable for its acerbic commander, Colonel Ulysses Grant McAlexander, who carried a Springfield Model 1903 rifle and spent much of the battle sniping at Germans and organizing counterattacks.

While American forces came into the line, Ludendorff's offensive proceeded with a new effort launched against Rheims. As the Germans pushed their dwindling reserves into the salient, Foch determined that the time for a counterattack had arrived. He delegated the mission to the French Sixth and Tenth Armies. American forces participated with the American III Corps joining the Tenth Army on the northwest corner of the salient. The III Corps was newly formed; it contained the battle-hardened 1st and 2nd Divisions and was commanded by Bullard. The Franco-American attack depended on achieving absolute surprise. Units moved to the front only at night, and

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**U.S. artillery gave the Allies a much-needed advantage in repulsing the Germans on the Western Front in 1918. Ninety-minute barrages often preceded an attack, but if surprise was needed, the bombardment was cancelled.**

the usual massive preparatory artillery bombardment was eschewed.

Pershing was elated that American forces were going into battle under a corps organization. However, a few days before the attack Bullard determined that his new corps lacked the necessary higher echelon staff and organization. "Every hour of delay meant increasing chances of discovery by the enemy," he said. "I therefore decided ... that my two divisions should go into the battle as divisions in a French Corps already on the ground, with its orders and plans all ready. This was done." Bullard placed the 1st and 2nd divisions at the disposal of the French XX Corps.

The French XX Corps now consisted of the two American divisions, the 1st Moroccan Division, and the French 58th and 69th Divisions, with General P.E. Berdoulat commanding. The corps' mission was to attack the northwestern corner of the salient and cut the road running from Soissons to the tip of the salient at Chateau-Thierry, severing German communications and strangling the salient. The attack was conducted north to south by the American 1st Division, the 1st Moroccan Division, and the American 2nd Division.

The 1st Division attacked along a 2,800-meter front. The Americans were confronted not only by the German 6th and 42nd Divisions, but also by several physical obstacles. These included German-occupied farms and three ravines from east to west at Missy, Ploisy, and Chazelle. The first

day's plan called for the division to advance in three stages culminating with the seizure of Chaudin two miles east of the American start line.

The attack began at 4:45 AM; the subsequent fighting illustrates many of the problems tactical commanders faced in the Great War. The Americans achieved their first objective by 5:30 AM. As they pressed forward they ran into the German-held farms, each transformed into a strongpoint by the defenders. The Americans engaged the defensive positions, slowing the overall advance. Elements of the 28th Infantry, occupying the American extreme left flank, advanced out of their zone and across French lines to engage a strongpoint from which they were taking fire. After the initial advance, the brigade slammed into the Missy Ravine, nearly a kilometer wide and heavily defended by the Germans. The lead battalion advanced into the ravine and was chewed up by German machine guns. The support battalion followed and took heavy casualties, though it was able to push through the ravine while the regiment's reserve battalion deployed along the western edge.

At the same time, German troops hiding in a cave within the ravine counterattacked and were dealt with by the support battalion's reserve company. To the south, the 26th Infantry also encountered stiff resistance, but it pushed to the east end of the ravine. Farther south, the 1st Brigade took heavy casualties in the fight for Chaudin and it tried for the second objective. It was stopped by German forces dug in on high ground before the Chazelle Ravine. As a result, the 1st Brigade was a mile behind the 2nd Brigade's advance.

To the south, beyond the 1st Moroccan Division, the 2nd American Division attacked along a five-mile front. Its mission was to advance about two miles and take the villages of Vauxcastille and Vierzy. From there, the Americans would eventually press on to the Soissons and Chateau-Thierry road. The 2nd Division's deployment was similar to the 1st Division's—two brigades each on a two-regiment front advancing in battalion columns of assault, support, and reserve. However, the division had unique problems. It received its orders a mere 30 hours before the attack was to begin, and Harbord had to scramble to gather his dispersed units. The subsequent rush to deploy led to jammed roads, and with mere hours until the jump-off time some battalions were five and six miles from the front. While every battalion was able to get positioned in time, many had to leave crucial equipment and men, such as machine-gun companies and 37mm guns, behind.





**American infantry is shown advancing across a shell-torn landscape in a drawing by Lucien Jonas. By August, the Allies had switched over to the offensive, and the Germans would sign an armistice on November 11, 1918.**

Advancing behind a rolling barrage, the 2nd Division got off to a good start. Within five minutes many units overran German forward positions. The 3rd and 4th Brigades pushed on and by the afternoon had reached their second objective, the eastern side of the Vauxcastille Ravine. The far side was taken in a quick rush that cost the Americans heavy casualties. Next lay the line along Vierzy village, which the Germans had turned into a fortress. The 2nd Division overran this line, though it did not take Vierzy proper. Lead units of the 4th Brigade had strayed north and engaged targets in the Moroccan zone. German pockets of resistance remained in the American rear, and several American units were forced to turn their attention to subdue them.

Throughout the next day, the 2nd Division pushed on, achieving a line about a mile east of Vierzy, which the Germans still held despite multiple attempts to dislodge them. The Germans finally pulled out on the morning of July 19. The 2nd Division remained along this line for the next three days. On July 22, the Germans counterattacked all along the American line but were repulsed with heavy casualties. On July 19, the 2nd Division, after suffering 4,300 casualties, was relieved by a French division. The 1st Division stayed in line until July 22 and lost 6,900 men. Soissons was a victory for the Americans.

The attack at Soissons blunted the final Ger-

man spring offensive and put the 1st Division astride the Soissons and Chateau-Thierry road with the 2nd Division near it. Maj. Gen. Charles P. Summerall, commander of the 1st Division, noted with pride that the Germans did not take a single prisoner from his division, while it captured 3,500 Germans. Of his division, Summerall noted, "While no serious mistakes were made, a number of details required improving."

American units still had to master the art of advancing in unison and maintaining contact with flanking units. They also at times failed to consolidate their positions by clearing out pockets of German resistance and readying for the inevitable German counterattack. Pershing wrote triumphantly of Soissons, "We had snatched the initiative from the Germans almost in an instant. They made no more formidable attacks, but from that moment until the end of the war they were on the defensive."

During the spring of 1918, the AEF had gained valuable experience, first in trench warfare and then in offensive and defensive action. The Cantigny and Vaux attacks had been well executed. They had incorporated all arms and had simple, attainable objectives. The Belleau Wood attack was deeply flawed, relying on nearly suicidal open field charges and vague directives such as "clear the wood." Soissons was far more complicated than earlier offensive actions and much better executed than Belleau Wood, although the Americans still had much to learn about maintaining a steady advance. While Pershing's open warfare ideas were proving to be disastrous in attack, his emphasis on marksmanship proved devastating in defense. All across the Marne Salient, German counterattacks slammed into highly accurate American rifle fire.

A few days after Soissons, Liggett's I Corps, comprising the 3rd, 4th, 26th, and 42nd Divisions, attacked in the center of the Marne Salient. Bullard's III Corps later joined the assault. On September 12, the freshly constituted American First Army began a four-day offensive against German forces in the St. Mihiel Salient, a move Pershing saw as a precursor to his planned offensive into Germany. On September 26, the AEF launched its grand offensive in the Meuse-Argonne, an effort spearheaded by the First Army under Pershing and then Liggett, and formed the American Second Army under Bullard.

In the end, Pershing had defeated not only the Germans, but also the Allied commanders who had tried so hard to erase the independence of American units that fought on the Western Front. □



The Knights Templar served as shock troops in the Battle of Montgisard in 1177, which pitted Baldwin IV's crusaders against Sultan Saladin's Ayyubid army. In a well-executed charge, Master Odo's small force of Templars shattered the center of Saladin's line and afterward routed the sultan's household troops.



IN NOVEMBER 1177, Saladin launched his first significant military campaign against a crusader state. With 26,000 men, siege engines, a huge baggage train, and his own personal force of elite Mamluk bodyguards, Saladin marched his Ayyubid army across the Sinai Desert from Egypt into southern Palestine. Saladin's overwhelming numerical superiority over his foe had made him confident enough to allow his troops to disperse into the vast, open countryside, where they plundered, foraged for food, and looted Christian settlements at Ramla, Lydda, and Arsuf.

King Baldwin IV, who was suffering from aggressive leprosy, rapidly cobbled together his remaining forces, approximately 350 mounted knights and several thousand foot soldiers, and with the notorious Christian Prince Raynald of Chatillon in command, marched to Ascalon. There, in the face of Saladin's huge army, Baldwin withdrew his army into the safety of the fortress, leaving the road to Jerusalem wide open. Approximately 84 Knights Templar commanded by

Master Odo de St. Amand marched from Gaza to join the Christian forces.

On November 25, with the roads muddy from recent rains, Saladin and the vanguard of his army were pushing east toward Ibelin. Near the rear of the column, his baggage train and siege engines became mired in mud near the mound of al-Safiya, not far from Montgisard. Suddenly, the sultan of Egypt and Syria was shocked to see a small enemy force, with Knights Templar in the vanguard, forming up



# Soldiers of God

ESTABLISHED TO PROTECT AND CARE FOR PILGRIMS IN THE HOLY LAND, THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR AND KNIGHTS HOSPITALER ALSO DEFENDED THE CRUSADER STATES.

BY JOHN WALKER



on a nearby hill. Baldwin's army had left Ascalon and marched to block Saladin's path to Jerusalem. In his hubris, Saladin had failed to leave scouts behind to monitor his enemy's activities.

Saladin was taken completely by surprise. His army was in disarray, some of it held up with the stalled baggage train, others still absent raiding the countryside. Both his men and horses were exhausted after the long march from Egypt and their subsequent raids. Saladin

raced to assemble his elite troop of personal guards—between 600 and 900 strong—while his nephew and chief commander, Taqi ad-Din, attempted to form the main body into lines of battle. Saladin tried to anchor his line on a nearby hill, but it was too late; as the Christian columns came crashing down on the confused Ayyubid ranks, Master Odo and his Knights Templar shattered the center of Saladin's line. Unable to form ranks or mount any effective resistance, the much larger Muslim force was thrown into confusion and began falling back. Many of Saladin's soldiers had already fled the field before the full force of the Christian charge struck; those who stood and fought were all but destroyed. Taqi ad-Din's son, Ahmad, was killed early in the fighting, and the loss of Ahmad and other high-ranking officers disheartened the Ayyubid soldiers. Vicious fighting raged as the Christian knights turned upon Saladin's elite force of Turkish slave soldiers and routed them as well, after which Saladin managed to flee the carnage.



Odo led his Knights Templar in a charge directly at Saladin's household troops. "Recognizing the battalion of troops in which Saladin commanded many knights, they manfully approached it, immediately penetrated it, incessantly knocked down, scattered, struck and crushed," wrote Ralph of Diss, an eyewitness to the battle. "Saladin was smitten with admiration, seeing his men dispersed everywhere, everywhere turned in flight, everywhere given to the mouth of the sword. He took off for his own safety and fled, throwing off his mail shirt for speed, mounted a racing camel and barely escaped with a few of his men."

Saladin's huge supply train was captured; as they fled, many Muslim soldiers abandoned their weapons, armor, and booty. Losses were heavy on both sides: Baldwin's army suffered 1,100 men killed and 700 wounded, while no more than one-tenth of Saladin's invasion force made it back to Egypt. The sultan's men suffered mightily on their long, hot trek home across the desert. Bedouins constantly harassed them, and any who made the mistake of stopping in villages to beg for food and water were slain or handed over to the Christians as hostages. When Saladin returned to Cairo, he circulated the lie that the Christians had been defeated. It would not be the last time he and his armies would find themselves battling the fierce and supremely disciplined warrior monks of the Christian military orders.

The First Crusade ended with the holy city of Jerusalem back in Christian hands and the founding of a number of crusader states in the Near East, the Kingdom of Jerusalem foremost among them. These nascent realms lacked the necessary military force to maintain more than a tenuous hold over their territories, yet in the religious fervor of the time tens of thousands of Christians from all over Europe began making pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The 35-mile journey from the Mediterranean seaport of Jaffa to Jerusalem, a two-day trek inland along a dangerous mountain road surrounded at all times by brigands, wild animals, and Muslim armies, was fraught with peril for travelers.

In 1119, Hughes de Payens, a French nobleman, knight, and veteran of the First Crusade who had taken religious vows upon the death of his wife, offered to recruit eight other knights—all of them related to him by blood or marriage—to devote their lives to the care and protection of Christian pilgrims traveling through the Holy Land and to form a religious military order for that purpose.

Jerusalem's King Baldwin II approved of this radical new concept—a hybrid army of professional soldiers living as poor monks in service to Christianity—and awarded them lodging in a captured Islamic shrine, the al-Aqsa mosque near the Dome of the Rock, the original site of the Temple of Solomon. In front of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, de Payens and his comrades took vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and the Order of the Knights Templar became a reality. Its mission would grow into providing much-needed military support to Christian states in the Levant as well.

Although the Knights Templar were at first opposed by some who questioned the paradoxical idea of a religious military order and later by those who envied their enormous wealth and influence, many influential secular and religious leaders championed them. One prominent advocate in the early years was Count Hugh of Champagne, a French landowner and the feudal liege lord of Hughes de Payens. Count Hugh became a Templar in 1125 and later provided the site in northeastern France where the Council of Troyes was held in 1129. Pope Honorius II convened that council at the request of Bernard of Clairvaux, the abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Clairvaux and by far the most influential and charismatic figure of the medieval Roman Catholic Church at that time.

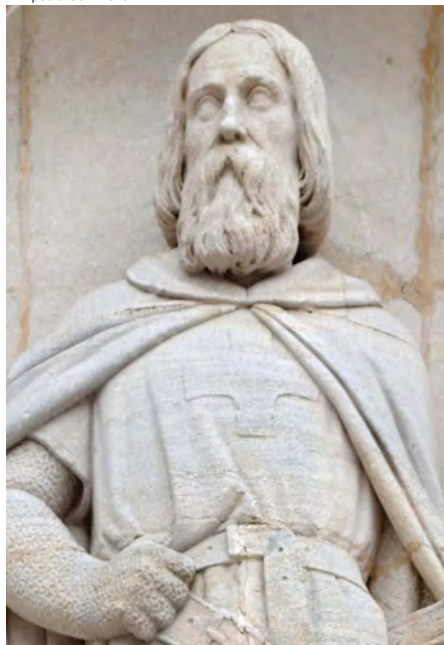
After the council recognized and confirmed the Knights Templar as an ecclesiastical body of the Church, Bernard helped write the Latin Rule, modeled after the Benedictine Rule, to guide their conduct. Knights Templar were awarded their own distinctive dress, a plain white tunic to which a red cross was added in 1147. As a symbol of their humble beginnings, the order's seal depicted two knights riding on a single horse. After the council adjourned, massive donations of land and money began pouring into the order's coffers, and thousands of Christian men hoping to join the order began

the trek to Jerusalem. Less than eight months after the Council of Troyes adjourned, the order dispatched 300 mounted knights, with their retainers and huge entourage to the Holy Land. By the mid-12th century the constitution of the order and its basic structure were in place; it was headed by a grand master who served for life and oversaw all facets of the operation, from military operations in the East to the order's holdings and operations in the West.

In early 1139, even more unprecedented privileges were bestowed upon the order when Pope Innocent II issued a papal bull that

**LEFT: Frenchman Hughes de Payens received support in 1119 from King Baldwin II of Jerusalem to establish the Knights Templar. BELOW: Sultan Saladin is depicted in a 19th-century engraving. His light cavalry was no match for brother-knights of the Templar and Hospitaller orders.**

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exempted the Knights Templar from all tithes and taxes, allowed them to pass freely across any borders, and subjected them to no one's authority save that of the pope. It was a remarkable validation of the Knights Templar and their mission; Bernard of Clairvaux became the order's patron. Western monarchs realized the Knights Templar could play a valuable role defending their territories against non-Christians as well, and Templars were given frontier land to defend on the Iberian Peninsula and in Eastern Europe.



Other Christian landowners, well away from the frontiers, gave huge land endowments to the Knights Templar to both support their mission and to gain divine favor for themselves. While the main military operations of the Knights Templar took place in the Near East and the Iberian Peninsula, all across Europe Templars were soon to be found operating mills, farms, mines, and other commercial operations to support the order's efforts on the frontiers. Active orders were established in England, France, Scotland, Hungary, Portugal, and elsewhere. The Knights Templar eventually held vast tracts of land across Europe and controlled fortresses in Near East cities including Gaza, Acre, Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, Tripoli, and Antioch. In 1130, the order was established on the Spanish peninsula, the scene of the first Knights Templar military campaign against the Moors.

The majority of the order's warrior monks were not knights—only a small minority of Knights Templar were anointed knights; they were called *servientes* in Latin or *sergents* in French, generally translated as sergeants but literally meaning servants. Generally recruited from the lower classes, they wore black tunics and supported their brothers on the battlefield as light cavalry or infantry, while other brothers served in noncombat roles as laborers, engineers, armorers, and craftsmen. The knight brothers, who came from the military aristocracy and were already trained in the art of war, assumed elite leadership positions in the order and served at royal and papal courts. Only the mounted knights wore the distinctive regalia, a white surcoat emblazoned with a red cross. A third class, chaplains, eventually was added. They were responsible for addressing the spiritual needs of other members.

In a matter of years the order rivaled the kingdoms of Europe in military might, economic power, and political influence. The Knights Templar built fortifications throughout Europe and in the Holy Land and were heavily involved in economics, finance, and banking. The order's military strength enabled it to safely collect, store, and transport bullion to and from Europe and Outremer and their network of storehouses and efficient transport organization made them attractive as bankers to kings, pilgrims, and the Church. A pilgrim could deposit funds at a Knights Templar site in his home country and then travel across Europe and into the Levant, drawing funds from his account when needed. One of the most controversial of the order's activities was granting loans. The Church had strict laws against charging interest, but the order circumvented that by charging rates. The Church looked the

other way, yet another significant concession to the order. By 1300, the Knights Templar numbered in the tens of thousands across Europe and the Holy Land, manning a massive system of Templars and civilians in the West and supporting the massive military efforts in the East. At its peak in the Holy Land, the order often numbered as many as 20,000 members, of whom no more than 1,500 to 2,000 would have been mounted knights.

The Knights Templar, whose knights were trained and anointed long before they joined the order, quickly gained a reputation as the best-trained, most fanatical soldiers of the crusading era. Knights Templar were schooled in warfare from an early age and boasted the finest equipment, horses, and support system of any army in the Levant. They had no fear of death since they believed death on the battlefield in the service of God guaranteed them entrance into heaven, and as true holy warriors they fought with seemingly suicidal fervor. The Knights Templar were first integrated into main Christian armies or held back as a special reserve. Later, when their renown grew, they were used as shock troops, the mounted spearheads of attacks meant to break the enemy's front ranks

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**A 12th-century church sculpture depicts a mounted knight. Templars and Hospitallers possessed the finest equipment, horses, and support of any Christian forces in the Levant.**

and allow the main battle force to advance.

The ascendancy of the religious military orders was sealed by events of the Second Crusade when France's King Louis VII and Pope Eugenius III convinced the Knights Templar to accompany the French Army to the Holy Land. The Knights Templar fought and behaved admirably during the hazardous journey from Constantinople across Asia Minor to Antioch. The presence of a German force under King Conrad III created some difficulty since the combined forces lacked a single, competent combat commander and therefore lacked overall coordination and cohesion. As they passed through Anatolia, King Louis lost control of his army; to restore order he surrendered his command to Knights Templar Master Everard des Barres. After des Barres divided the army into units, each under the command of a Templar to whom they swore absolute obedience, the coalition army then fought its way successfully to Attalia.

The mid-12th century witnessed the development of an important trend among the Franks in the Holy Land. Secular lords began to donate castles to the military orders and to rely on them to defend the territories included in those grants. The baronage realized that the cost of maintaining sufficient troops and supplies in those castles was simply too high; it was cheaper to contribute excess property to the military orders than to be forced to defend it. It is estimated that by the time of the Battle of Hattin in 1187, the Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller, the latter





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**Marching south from Acre, Richard the Lionheart's army finally tired on September 7, 1191, of the constant harassment inflicted on it by Saladin's army. Against orders, Knights Hospitaller in the rear guard broke ranks and charged the Ayyubids. The Battle of Arsuf was a decisive crusader victory.**

another religious military order whose roots were established before the First Crusade, held about 35 percent of the lordships in the Outremer.

The Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller served as vanguards and rear guards for Christian columns on the march throughout the Crusades. Kings Louis VII, Richard I, and Louis IX all entrusted Knights Templar with the task of instilling and preserving order within their otherwise poorly disciplined armies, both on the march and on the battlefield. The military orders proved invaluable to King Richard during the Third Crusade, never more so than when he relied on their steadiness and discipline during the rugged march south from Acre into southern Palestine in September 1191. During the Battle of Arsuf, King Richard's army was vulnerable to flank attacks by Saladin's Turkish and Kurdish cavalry, and it was thanks to the iron discipline of the Knights Hospitaller that the attackers were beaten back and the coherence of the Christian column maintained. On the march, Richard placed Knights Templar at the front of his army and Knights Hospitaller at the rear. Infantry armed with crossbows and spears guarded the flanks of the column on the march. King Richard directed his marching columns to maintain their cohesion at all costs while Saladin's cavalry wore itself out in repeated attacks. Upon Richard's order, his cavalry would make sorties designed to sweep the enemy from the field.

The pattern was repeated countless times, beginning with wave after wave of lightly armed skirmishers harassing the Christian army's column, followed by massive attacks conducted by Saladin's light cavalry divisions, their riders firing short bows and swinging scimitars and battle axes. The Christian column managed to hold firm, but the Knights Hospitaller came under intense pressure at the back of the column. Unwilling to endure any further losses of men or horses, the Knights Hospitaller finally attacked without Richard's permission, carrying the French division on their right with them into the fray. King Richard and the rest of the army followed, supporting the Knights Hospitaller charge and shattering Saladin's columns. Arsuf was a tremendous moral and tactical victory for the Christians and a clear blow to Saladin's prestige, a small repayment for the 235 Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller he summarily slaughtered after the Christian defeat at the Battle of Hattin in 1187. Saladin had paid his soldiers 50 dinars for each captured knight from the two military orders they turned over to him after the Battle of Hattin. Wary of their unwavering discipline, ferocity, and lack of desire for material possessions, Saladin

repeatedly vowed to his fellow Muslims that he would kill all of the soldiers from the two orders in the region.

King Baldwin IV's win over Saladin at the Battle of Montgisard in 1177 had been an astonishing tactical victory against crushing odds for the Christian army and a costly defeat and psychological setback for Saladin. A decade later, though, Saladin inflicted a devastating defeat on the Knights Templar at a massive fortress they were building at Jacob's Ford on the Jordan River. Saladin razed the structure and killed 80 knights and 750 sergeants, some during the battle and some executed afterward.

Saladin's continued success eventually helped tip the balance of power in the Holy Land and signaled the first step in the decline of the Knights Templar. After the Third Crusade failed to capture Jerusalem, a number of increasingly futile crusades exhausted the treasuries of Europe and dampened the spiritual ardor that had once so vibrantly animated the cause. Throughout the 13th century, the Knights Templar were forced to fight holding actions to protect their shrinking territories in the Near East and their reputation in Europe. Eventually, their once vast domain along the eastern Mediterranean coast was reduced to just a single fortress at Acre, which had served as the de facto capital of the remnant Kingdom of Jerusalem for a century following the Third Crusade. In 1291, Acre was captured by the forces of the Mamluk Bahri Sultanate of Egypt.



In 1302, the crusading period in the Near East came to an end, and the Christians had essentially been driven from the region.

The origin of the Knights Hospitaller can be traced to the early 11th century when a group of Italian merchants received permission from the Muslim rulers to maintain a Latin church in Jerusalem. As an offshoot of the church, a hospital was established to provide care for poor, sick, or injured Christian pilgrims. Shortly after the Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099, Blessed Gerard Thom, who was the master of the hospital at the time, founded the Knights Hospitaller.

After Gerard was confirmed by papal bull in 1113, he proceeded to acquire territory and revenue for the order throughout the Kingdom of Jerusalem and beyond. By 1130, the order was employing mercenaries to protect pilgrims from bandits and by 1136 was providing armed Knights Hospitaller to escort travelers as well as assume responsibility for the defense of part of the frontier. In 1140, the Knights Hospitaller took over the castle of Bethgibelin near Ascalon at the request of King Fulk I and his barons.

Although there is some uncertainty as to exactly when and how the Knights Hospitaller became a true military order, they were certainly militarized by the 1160s when they took part in Christian expeditions against Egypt. Like the Knights Templar, the Knights Hospitaller were monks and swore vows of personal poverty, obedience, and celibacy. The order included brother chaplains and brother infirmarians who did not take up arms. At the height of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Knights Hospitaller held seven great forts and 140 estates in the region; their main bases of power in the kingdom and in the Principality of Antioch, respectively, were Krak des Chevaliers and Margat castles.

In 1217, still with the intention of capturing Jerusalem, the papacy launched the Fifth Crusade, though the means of doing so was to first attack Egypt. The Knights Templar were involved in this new crusade from its beginning, with their treasurer at Paris overseeing the donations that were to fund the expedition. Forces commanded by King Andrew of Hungary and Duke Leopold of Austria joined with those of King John Brienne of Jerusalem, the latter including Knights Templar, Knights Hospitaller, and Teutonic Knights. The Teutonic Knights were a new military order founded along the lines of the Knights Templar by Germans who participated in the Third Crusade. With no single outstanding leader among this coalition force, overall command of the Fifth Crusade was given to the papal legate Pelagius,

a man with no military experience. In 1219, the crusaders nevertheless captured the port of Damietta in the Nile Delta thanks largely to the Knights Templar, who not only fought admirably on horseback, but also demonstrated a remarkable talent for innovation. Adapting their engineering and tactical skills from the arid conditions of Outremer to the watery landscape of the Nile Delta, they commanded ships and built floating pontoons crucial to the victory. The loss of Damietta so unnerved Sultan of Egypt al-Kamil, who was Saladin's nephew, that he offered to trade it for Jerusalem. But the Knights Templar Grand Master argued that the Holy City could not be held without controlling the lands beyond the Jordan River. The crusaders rejected the offer and continued their Egyptian campaign. Even after another army—led by Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II—failed to appear, Pelagius impatiently urged the crusaders to advance up the Nile toward Cairo. United under the command of an experienced combat leader, the Fifth Crusade might have had a chance of success, but at al-Mansurah, al-Kamil blocked the crusaders' rear, opened the sluice gates of the irrigation canals, and flooded the Christian army into submission. In 1221, Pelagius agreed to give up Damietta, not in exchange for Jerusalem but to save the lives of the crusaders who immediately evacuated Egypt and returned to Acre.

The brief Sixth Crusade began in 1228, just seven years after the failure of the Fifth Crusade. It involved little fighting. The crusade's leader, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II of Ger-

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**Saladin, who wished to kill all Templars and Hospitallers in the Levant, summarily slaughtered 235 of the brother-knights following the Battle of Hattin on July 4, 1187.**

many, did manage, through diplomatic maneuvering, to regain temporary control of Jerusalem for the Christians.

When war broke out between the Ayyubid rulers of Egypt and Syria in the spring 1244, the Knights Templar persuaded the barons of Outremer to intervene on the side of the Damascene ruler Ismail. The alliance was sealed when the Franks were offered a share of Egypt if Sultan al-Salih Ayyub was defeated. Continuing factionalism in Cairo meant that al-Salih could not rely on his regular army, but he took steps to counter that by purchasing Mamluks in large numbers. These slave soldiers were mostly Kipchak Turks from the steppes of southern Russia. Bought, trained, and converted to Islam, they became al-Salih's powerful private army. Al-Salih also bought the support of Khwarezmian Turks, ferocious mercenaries based in Edessa after being displaced from Transoxiana and parts of Iran and Afghanistan by the Mongols. In June, some 12,000 Khwarezmian horsemen swept southwest into Syria. Deterred by the formidable walls that ringed Damascus, they rode into Galilee and captured Tiberius. On July 11, they broke through the feeble defenses of Jerusalem and brutally massacred everyone who could not retreat into the citadel. The surviving defenders emerged from the citadel six weeks later after being promised safe passage to the coast. The garrison, however, together with the city's entire Christian population—6,000 men, women, and children—left the city but were soon cut down by Khwarezmian swordsmen. Only 300 survivors made it to Jaffa. For good measure, the Khwarezmians ransacked the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, destroyed the bones of the former kings of Jerusalem entombed





**Poor leadership of the crusader army during the Seventh Crusade resulted in the capture of the entire Christian army in 1250, including French King Louis IX (lower right), and the loss of several hundred Knights Templar during the Battle of al-Mansurah.**

there, and put the structure to the torch. After that, they burned all the other churches in the Holy City and pillaged its homes and shops. They left the smoking wreckage of the city and marched to join al-Salih's Mamluk army at Gaza.

Christian forces scattered throughout the castles of Outremer responded by gathering at the port of Acre. Not since Hattin had such a considerable Frankish army been put into the field; its numbers included more than 300 Knights Templar, 300 Knights Hospitaller, a small force of Teutonic Knights, 600 secular knights, and a proportionate number of sergeants and foot soldiers. To these were added the more numerous, if lighter-armed, forces of their Damascene ally under the command of al-Mansur Ibrahim, as well as a contingent of Bedouin cavalry. On October 17, 1244, the Christian-Muslim army drew up before the smaller Egyptian army outside Gaza on a sandy plain at a place called La Forbie. The Franks and their allies attacked, but the Egyptians stood firm under the command of their Mamluk commander Baybars (not Baybars I, who later became the fourth Sultan of Egypt), and while the Franks were pinned in place the Khwarezmians tore into the flank of al-Mansur Ibrahim's forces. After the Damascene forces turned and fled, the Christians fought on bravely but within several hours their entire army was destroyed. At least 5,000 Franks died in the battle, among them 260 to 300 Knights Templar and an equal number of Knights Hospitaller, while more than 800 Christian soldiers were captured and sold into slavery in Egypt. The catastrophe was comparable to Hattin, and when Damascus fell to al-Salih the following year it seemed as though time might be running out for Christian Outremer.

The Seventh Crusade to the Holy Land was led by King Louis IX of France, who landed in 1249 with his army at the Egyptian delta port of Damietta. In February 1250, the French advanced toward Cairo but suffered crushing losses at the Battle of al-Mansurah due to the impetuosity of the king's brother, Count Robert of Artois. Artois ordered the Christian van of mounted knights to charge into the city, where they were trapped within the narrow streets. Artois was killed, and the Knights Templar alone lost 280 knights, a terrible blow. King Louis's main army was almost destroyed by an Egyptian force led by Baybars I (the Mamluk commander who later became the fourth Sultan of Egypt). King Louis, rather than retreating to Damietta, opted to remain and besiege al-Mansurah, which led to starvation and death for the scurvy-ridden Christians, not the Muslims inside the city. King Louis finally retreated toward Damietta but was overtaken. At the

Battle of Fariskur, the crusader army was destroyed and the king captured. Louis was released only after a huge ransom was paid, to which the Knights Templar, who as bankers of the crusade had a treasure ship offshore, refused to contribute.

When the remnant Kingdom of Jerusalem fell in 1291, both military orders sought refuge in the Kingdom of Cyprus. The Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller had both built castles on Cyprus, and when the Franks were finally driven from Outremer the island became a sanctuary for both orders. It was the Knights Templar, whose mission had been the protection of Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land, who felt the loss most severely. While charitable work took precedence for the Knights Hospitaller, the Knights Templar were founded as a knighthood, and they had smoothly made the transition to that of a military order whose primary mission was to fight the infidel. To avoid becoming enmeshed in Cypriot politics, Hospitaller Master Guillaume de Villaret created a plan for the order to acquire its own temporal, sovereign domain—the island of Rhodes, which was part of the Byzantine Empire. His successor, Fulkes de Villaret, executed the plan, and in August 1309, after two years of campaigning, Rhodes and a number of neighboring islands surrendered to the Knights Hospitaller. On Rhodes, the order became even more militarized when it began conducting large-scale naval operations.

Cast out of the Holy Land, the Knights Templar found themselves in limbo. France had traditionally been a stronghold of Knights Templar power, but in a tragic twist of fate the Templars found themselves under attack by a new and unrelenting enemy, the ruthless King Philip IV. Philip had inherited the Champagne region in France and did not want the Knights Templar, now a professional army without a base or a battlefield to fight on, to create their own sovereign state close by. The Knights Templar had indicated an interest in founding their own monastic state, such as the Teutonic Knights had done in Prussia and the Knights Hospitaller were doing in Rhodes. King Philip's campaign against the Templars—in truth a naked attack against the papacy and Catholic Church by a secular French monarch—began with his management of the selection of his handpicked French favorite, Cardinal Bertrand de Got, as Pope Clement V in 1305, a victory that ushered in a long period of French domination of the papacy. After inheriting vast debts from his father's wars, King Philip had himself squandered huge sums warring in England and Flanders, stolen from both Jewish and Italian





**TOP: Jacques de Molay, 23rd Grand Master of the Knights Templar, was burned at the stake at the order of French King Philip IV, who saw him as a threat to his rule. BOTTOM: Jealous of the wealth and influence of the Knights Templar in his country, French King Philip IV openly persecuted them, which resulted in the disbanding of the order in 1312.**



bankers, and debased the currency.

Having engineered the election of the pope and the relocation of the papal court to Avignon in France and intent upon getting his hands on Knights Templar cash and precious metals, King Philip moved against the Knights Templar with brutal dispatch. On October 13, 1307, at his order, between 3,000 and 5,000 French Knights Templar were arrested, including Grand Master Jacques de Molay. Soon Christendom was rocked by lurid allegations—

blasphemy, sacrilege, and sodomy—against the warrior monks. Under severe torture, de Molay and others confessed to such crimes. Philip was able to arrest and charge the Knights Templar with heresy through the use of a loophole in the law going back to the time of the Cathars and their heresy trials 80 years earlier. But once freed, de Molay recanted his confession.

A majority of contemporary historians are convinced of the innocence of the Knights Templar, especially after the discovery in 2001 of a document known as the Parchment of Chinon in the Vatican's secret archives, where it had been lost. The document indicates Pope Clement V secretly absolved the Knights Templar of the false charges against them but was forced by King Philip and popular frenzy to disband the order in 1312 and allow de Molay and fellow Knights Templar Geoffrey de Charney (judged to be relapsed heretics) to finally be burned alive in Paris in 1314. They were the last victims of a profoundly unjust, corrupt, and opportunistic persecution.

Considered the West's first uniformed standing army, the extensive financial network of the Knights Templar once reached from London and Paris to the Nile and Euphrates Rivers, leading some chroniclers to label them history's first multinational corporation. Though the order itself grew powerful and wealthy, its knights and sergeants always maintained their simple and austere lifestyle. Their bravery was legendary, their dedication absolute, and their attrition rate high; over two centuries at least 20,000 Knights Templar were killed, either on the battlefield or executed after being taken captive and refusing to renounce their faith.

After the loss of the Holy Land and the persecution of the Knights Templar, the Knights Hospitaller became the last of the old religious military orders still effectively resisting the rising tide of Muslim conquest. After they captured the Greek island of Rhodes, they built it into a strongly fortified naval base and for two centuries conducted vigorous maritime warfare that brought them prestige and riches. The Knights Hospitaller operated from Rhodes as a sovereign power, and later from Malta, which it administered as a vassal state under the Spanish viceroy of Sicily. In command of slave-rowed galleys, the Knights Hospitaller became master sea captains, and in 1522 their "holy piracy" provoked a determined attack by the 28-year-old Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I. The Knights Hospitaller lost Rhodes in 1522 to overwhelming Turkish numbers but not before their heroic, six-month defense so impressed Suleiman that he allowed the survivors to sail away under arms.

In 1530, the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, Charles V, arranged for the Knights Hospitaller to occupy the Maltese archipelago—a barren home, but one in an unrivaled strategic position. Set in the narrows between Sicily and North Africa, Malta was a perfect base for denying Ottoman shipping access to the western Mediterranean waters that the sultan dreamed of dominating. The monk knights set about fortifying a superb natural harbor and renewed their aggressive campaign against Turkish warships and commerce. By 1564, the all-conquering Suleiman I—now called Suleiman the Magnificent—had come to regret the generosity of his youth when he spared the Knights Hospitaller defenders at Rhodes and was determined to crush this dangerous enemy once and for all. The six-month-long "Great Siege of Malta" followed.

Suleiman I was by then 70 years of age and could not lead his forces to Malta; he gave the command to Mustapha Pasha, a fiercely determined and brutal veteran of many campaigns, including Rhodes, Dragut Rais of Tripoli, one of the most successful corsairs of the period, supported Pasha. Dragut's mission was to advise and mediate between Mustapha and the sultan's admiral, Piali, whose fleet of 185 ships carried to Malta a force of 40,000, including 6,000 elite Janissaries and 100 cannon. Awaiting them on the island, which was well fortified with cannons, was Grand Master Jean Parisot de la Valette. His knights and sergeants on Malta numbered 700 and were backed by 8,500 local Maltese troops and foreign volunteers, all concentrated in forts that ringed the vital harbor. After two grueling months of sea attacks by the Turks upon the harbor forts, massive artillery bombardments, mining, and massed ground assaults, the exhausted Turkish forces finally sailed away having suffered 20,000 casualties in an ugly battle of attrition. Suleiman I died in 1566, and in 1571 the Ottoman naval forces were soundly defeated at the Battle of Lepanto by the Holy League alliance of Venice, the papacy, Genoa, Spain, and the Knights Hospitaller.

After their bloody victory at the siege of Malta, the exhausted Knights Hospitaller became enfeebled. They survived, anachronistically, though in increasingly degenerate form, into the era of the French Revolution, finally surrendering the island of Malta to Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798. Even after Napoleon captured their island stronghold, representatives of the order continued to negotiate with the pope, the Russian tsar, and the monarchs of Europe in an attempt to return to their former prominence. It never happened, and none of the various organizations that through the years claimed, with varying degrees of plausibility, to be the order's legitimate heir can be said to much resemble the order in its days of greatness. □



# “LIKE A PICTURE of Hell”

BY CHUCK LYONS



Hard-fighting veterans of Lt. Gen. Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson’s II Corps rush through the thick forest west of the Chancellorsville crossroads in the late afternoon of May 2, 1863, to fall on Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard’s unsuspecting XI Corps in Don Troiani’s painting.





AT CHANCELLORSVILLE IN MAY 1863,  
JOE HOOKER CONCEDED THE INITIATIVE  
TO THE CONFEDERATES. ROBERT E. LEE  
MADE THE MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITY.

THE TWO UNION GENERALS FACED each other on the afternoon of May 1, 1863, at the large house by the Orange Turnpike that had been chosen as the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac. The balding corps commander was agitated, and he was seeking an explanation from the army's commanding general. A short distance to the east, the two opposing armies—Union and Confederate—had begun taking measure of each other that morning, exchanging volleys of musket fire. Not long after the engagement had gotten underway, the corps commander who stood before the army commander had received the following order by courier: "Withdraw both divisions to Chancellorsville." Similar dispatches went to two other corps commanders marching east toward Fredericksburg.

When he received the order, Union II Corps commander Maj. Gen. Darius Couch sent an aide to inform Army of the Potomac commander Maj. Gen. Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker that everything was going precisely according to plan. As for the II Corps, it was marching along the Orange Turnpike and, if all went well, might soon be out of the foreboding forested area known as the "Wilderness of Spotsylvania" and onto the high ground south of Banks Ford on the Rappahannock River. Thirty minutes later, Couch received another dispatch reiterating the original order. Couch considered disobeying the order but thought twice about it and broke off his attack. So did Maj. Gen. George Meade's V Corps to his north on the River Road and Maj. Gen. Henry Slocum's XII Corps to his south on the Orange Plank Road.

Later that afternoon, Couch had a chance to confront Hooker personally and demand an explanation. "It's all right, Couch," said Hooker. "I have got Lee just where I want him; he must fight me on my own ground."

Couch, the most senior of Hooker's corps commanders, was deeply skeptical of that assertion. Many years later, Couch wrote, "I retired from his presence with the belief that my commanding general was a whipped man."

By the morning of May 1, Hooker had managed to steal a march on Confederate General Robert E. Lee and get five of his seven corps across the Rappahannock River west of Fredericksburg, outflanking Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.





All images: Library of Congress



**ABOVE:** Union II Corps Commander Maj. Gen. Darius Couch, left, and Union Army of the Potomac Commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker. **LEFT:** The Chancellor House on the Orange Turnpike suffered heavy damage from shells fired by Confederate artillery. Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker was leaning against a wood pillar on the second-story porch on the morning of May 3 observing the battle when a shell dislodged the pillar, knocking him temporarily unconscious.

What bothered Couch and his fellow corps commanders was that Hooker was relinquishing the initiative to Lee without even giving them a chance to press their attack. However, Couch had no way of knowing what Hooker knew.

Hooker had envisioned getting much closer to the Confederate main position at Fredricksburg before running into resistance. But Fighting Joe, who had received his nickname accidentally as a result of a newspaper copy room's typographical error during the Peninsula Campaign of 1862, had received multiple intelligence reports by telegraph that morning indicating that a large body of Confederate troops was marching west to intercept him. Led by hard-hitting Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, the Confederates counterattacked Hooker's troops, leading Fighting Joe to believe, correctly so, that the two corps already engaged—Couch's II Corps and Slocum's XII Corps—were outnumbered by Jackson's force.

President Abraham Lincoln had advised Hooker at the outset of the campaign to "beware of rashness." Hooker no doubt reflected on the point after receiving the intelligence reports and ordered his five corps—Maj. Gen. Daniel Sickles's III Corps and Maj. Gen. Oliver Howard's XI Corps formed the reserve that morning—to entrench and hopefully entice Jackson to hurl his forces against Hooker's positions the following day. If that occurred, Hooker might do severe damage to Lee's army after all.

The 44-year-old Hooker was a member of the U.S. Military Academy's Class of 1837. A veteran of the Seminole Wars and the Mexican War, Hooker resigned from the Army in 1853 but returned as a brigadier general when the war began in April 1861. His performance at the Battle of Williamsburg in May 1862 earned him a promotion to major general, and he led the Union I Corps at the Battle of Antietam and the Center Grand Division at the Battle of Fredericksburg.

Throughout his career, Hooker had carried a reputation as a hard-drinking, hard-living man with a streak of womanizing, a concern for his men, and a proclivity for criticizing his superiors. In 1862, for example, he had criticized Army of the Potomac commander Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan for failing to take the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia, stating, "He is not only not a soldier, but he does not know what soldiership is."

Hooker had been called intemperate but was praised for liking to fight and for his driving energy. He demanded that his staff be correctly uniformed and well mounted, and he made a grand show of his regular inspections of the army, which inspired his troops.

On January 26, 1863, Lincoln appointed Hooker to replace Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside, who had led the Army of the Potomac in the disastrous Battle of Fredricksburg fought December 13, 1862.

After his appointment, Hooker worked diligently to improve the morale of the Army of the Potomac, which numbered approximately 130,000, through changes in the daily diet of the troops, improved sanitation, and the establishment of a fair furlough system.

On April 27, three of Hooker's seven infantry corps began marching west. To prevent the Confederates from observing troops pulling out of position on the north bank of the Rappahannock

opposite Fredericksburg, Hooker issued orders for the three corps farthest from the river—the V, XI, and XII—to move first. All three were to cross the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford and then cross the Rapidan River. While Meade's V Corps crossed at Ely's Ford, Howard's XI Corps and Slocum's XII Corps were to cross farther west at Germanna Ford.

Once across the Rapidan, the three corps were to concentrate at the Chancellor House, located in a clearing on the north side of the Orange Turnpike. Couch's II Corps joined them on April 30, crossing at U.S. Ford below the confluence of the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers. Sickles's III Corps crossed at U.S. Ford on May 1.

The Orange Turnpike connected Fredricksburg with Orange County Courthouse. Financed during the War of 1812, the turnpike boasted a gravel bed designed to make it passable in all seasons of the year. In 1816, George Chancellor opened a tavern 10 miles west of Fredericksburg on the Orange Turnpike at the its intersection with Ely's Ford Road. The 2½-story building was large enough to accommodate overnight guests. When Chancellor passed away in 1836, the tavern declined from neglect. When the war broke out in 1860, members of the Chancellor family still lived there; however, they rented from a new owner.

Lee had approximately 53,000 troops at Fredricksburg. Conspicuously absent was Confederate I Corps commander Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, who with three divisions of his corps was stationed in Southside Virginia to counter Federal seaborne threats to Virginia's southeastern coast and to prevent the Union Army from raiding inland from its foothold on



the coast of North Carolina.

Hooker's plan called for an attack on Lee at Fredericksburg. The attack would begin with a raid conducted by 10,000 Union cavalry into Lee's rear to destroy Confederate supply and communication lines between Fredericksburg and Richmond. Hooker believed the cavalry raid would compel Lee to abandon his position at Fredericksburg and fall back toward Richmond. Hooker could then hit the Confederate army as it moved.

Major General George Stoneman's cavalry assembled upstream for the raid on April 13, but heavy spring rains raised the Rappahannock, forcing Stoneman to wait more than two weeks for the river to drop sufficiently for them to cross.

As for the rest of the Army of the Potomac, part of it would pin down Lee's army at Fredericksburg, while the other part marched around the Confederate left flank and hit Lee on Marye's Heights from the rear. After Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had been defeated, Hooker planned to march south and capture Richmond.

On April 30, Stoneman finally departed on his raid, while three corps of the Army of the Potomac marched upstream, turned south, and massed at Chancellorsville. Meanwhile, Sedgwick's force established a bridgehead on the south bank of the Rappahannock opposite the Confederate position at Fredericksburg.

Lee was facing what has been called "the gravest situation of his 11-month command"

of the Army of Northern Virginia. He could either attack or retreat; he chose the former.

Hooker had reasoned that the Confederate commander, being so badly outnumbered, would have to take his whole force to attack the Union Army behind him at Chancellorsville. In that case, Sedgwick would be ideally placed to close the pincers and trap Lee. If Lee instead chose to attack Sedgwick, the same thing would happen with Hooker closing on Lee from the rear.

Lee realized the real threat was not coming from Sedgwick at Fredericksburg, but from Hooker and his troops at Chancellorsville. He then violated one of the generally accepted principles of war, which is not to divide a force in the face of a superior enemy. Lee took the bulk of his forces to meet Hooker at Chancellorsville, leaving 11,000 men and 56 guns at Fredericksburg under Maj. Gen. Jubal Early.

On May 1, Lee sent Jackson's II Corps toward Chancellorsville. Jackson marched west on the Orange Turnpike and the Orange Plank Road. About the same time, Hooker's force had begun moving east from Chancellorsville. At 11:20 AM, the forces collided about two miles east of Chancellorsville. Jackson continued to push west, driving back Hooker's troops. Shortly after the fighting started, Jackson was joined by Confederate cavalry commander Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart.

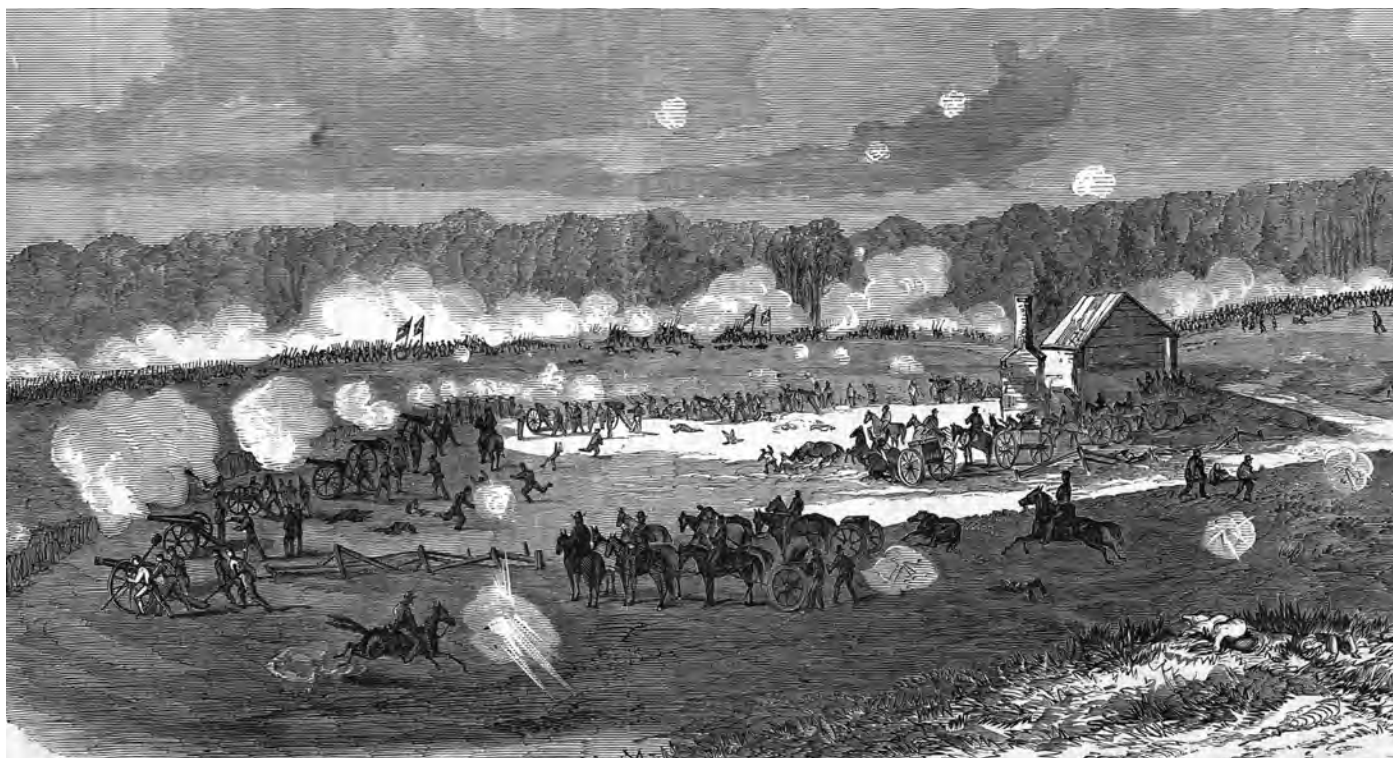
The two forces skirmished until about 2 PM, when Hooker called back the three corps he had sent east on separate roads. Hooker had received incorrect reports that some or all of the detached forces under Longstreet had returned to the area, and Fighting Joe was keenly aware that Lee was not acting as if he were badly outnumbered. Undaunted, Hooker told his aides, "The enemy is in my power, and God Almighty cannot deprive me of them."

To instill confidence in his decision to entrench, Hooker sent the following message at the end of the day to his subordinates: "The major general commanding trusts that a suspension in the attack today will embolden the enemy to attack him."

As Hooker drew back that afternoon, the Confederate forces followed, forming a line encircling Chancellorsville, and the day ended with both sides digging in.

That night Lee and Jackson met on the Orange Plank Road to plan the next morning's action but moved into a group of pine trees as a Union sniper began to fire at them. Sitting together on the same log, they discussed the situation. As they talked, Stuart arrived to report that a cavalry unit commanded by Brig. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, Robert E. Lee's nephew, had reported that Hooker's

**Union artillery fires on the enemy on the first day of the battle. When Hooker's troops ran into large numbers of Confederates moving west to check his advance toward Fredericksburg, he ordered them to fall back to Chancellorsville, thus relinquishing the initiative to General Robert E. Lee.**







**Other units of Hooker's army plug the gap created by the rout of Howard's XI Corps. Jackson's corps was unable to press its advantage in the fading daylight, and the arrival that night of Union Maj. Gen. John Reynolds's I Corps helped stabilize the precarious Union position.**

right flank was in the air. Howard's XI Corps was camped on the Orange Turnpike without having anchored its flank and therefore was vulnerable to attack, said Stuart. Further investigation during the night uncovered a route around Hooker's army that would allow Jackson to pass largely without being seen.

Based on Stuart's report and the later investigation, Lee and Jackson devised an audacious plan.

Lee again divided his forces, agreeing to let Jackson take 28,000 men and march around the Union Army to attack Hooker's vulnerable right flank. The flank march would take most of a day, and during that time Lee would face five Union corps with approximately 14,000 Confederate infantry in six brigades. Lee also had one and a half regiments of cavalry and six batteries of artillery. It was the greatest gamble of Lee's career. If Hooker moved against him while Jackson was on his flank march, Lee might face the destruction of his army.

Jackson agreed to march with his entire command and his artillery. He would be screened by Stuart's cavalry, which would attempt to keep Union troops far enough away that Jackson could pass unseen while Lee's troops would demonstrate in front of the Union position, giving every indication an attack was being prepared.

At 8 AM on May 2, Jackson began his flank march.

Meanwhile, Hooker had inspected his line and was pleased with the fortifications that had been dug during the night. Hooker expected Lee to hit the center of his line and was prepared to inflict heavy casualties on him. When Hooker returned to his camp, he was informed by a courier sent by Sickles that a large Confederate column had been spotted moving south. Union artillery had fired on the column, but the shells had little effect. Sickles then rode to Hazel Grove, a patch of high ground, and made a personal reconnaissance of Jackson's column.

Hooker misinterpreted the movement as a Confederate retreat, which seemed to him the right thing for Lee to do in the situation. Just to be safe, though, Hooker ordered Howard, whose XI Corps held the right flank, to "advance your pickets for purposes of observation as far as may be safe in order to obtain timely information of [the enemy's] approach." Howard replied that he was "taking measures to resist an attack from the west."

Hooker then sent orders for Sickles to move south from Chancellorsville and "advance cautiously toward the road followed by the enemy, and harass the movement as much as possible."

Sickles sent a division, flanked by two battalions of sharpshooters, south as ordered. By doing so, Sickles left a gap in the Union line east of Howard's position, isolating Howard and his men even further.

The nearest Union troops to the XI Corps were positioned two miles to the east. The troops Sickles sent against Jackson's column arrived too late to do much damage. Colonel Emory Best's 23rd Georgia Infantry, deployed 300 yards north of Catherine Furnace to guard the rear of Jackson's column, was able to resist Sickles's strike, but the Georgians were driven south. Sickles's troops attacked the Georgians in the afternoon, and by 5 PM had pushed them back to the Catherine Furnace. But by that time the rear of Jackson's column had already passed. Two brigades from Confederate Maj. Gen. A.P. Hill's division at the back of the column turned to block any possible Union pursuit.

By that time, Hooker believed Lee was in full retreat toward the railroad hub at Gordonsville, and he ordered his corps commanders to prepare to pursue the enemy in the morning.

After completing a grueling 14-mile march at 5:30 PM, Jackson formed his men in two lines stretching across the Orange Turnpike. Despite the warning from Hooker and his own claim that he was "taking measures to resist an attack," Howard had made little preparation or provision for defense. When Jackson's men attacked, most of Howard's men, who were



suffering from poor morale, were resting. The Union right flank was not anchored by any natural feature, and only two cannons and about 900 men had been deployed facing west toward the woods from which the Confederates would soon emerge.

Before the Confederate attack, Fitzhugh Lee had led Jackson up a hill where the men could view the Union right flank laid out before them. The XI Corps line of battle was a few hundred yards in front of them, and they noted abatis in front of the line, stacked rifles, and two cannons facing west.

“The soldiers were in groups in the rear, laughing, chatting, smoking, probably engaged, here and there, in games of cards and other amusements indulged in while feeling safe and comfortable, awaiting orders,” wrote Fitzhugh Lee.

That quiet scene was soon thrown into upheaval.

Rebel bugles sounded, and Confederates streamed out of the woods across an almost two-mile front. The attackers were screaming the rebel yell and firing their muskets. The 900 bluecoats facing them turned and ran, abandoning their two cannons. They were quickly joined by the remainder of Howard’s troops. With great personal courage, Howard attempted to rally his men, shouting and waving a flag that he held under the stump of his right arm, which he had lost at the Battle of Seven Pines the previous year.

Jackson rode with his men in the attack. “I have never seen him so well pleased with the progress and the results of a fight,” wrote Captain Richard Wilbourn, a member of Jackson’s staff.

Despite Howard’s efforts, his force was quickly routed. Most of the men fled in the direction of U.S. Ford. Before it was over, Howard’s corps, 11,000 strong, had suffered 2,400 casualties.

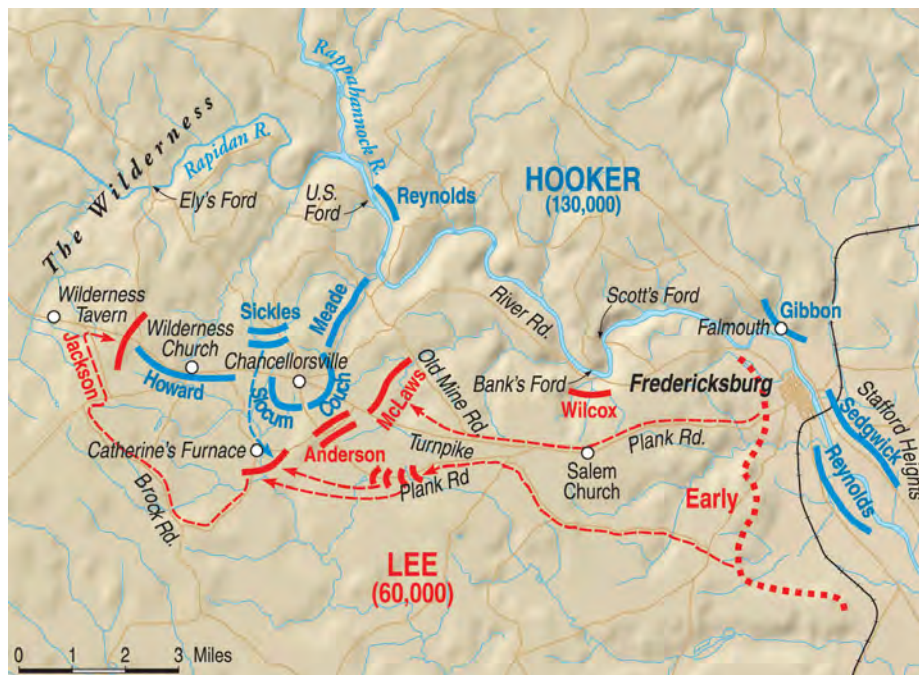
By nightfall, Jackson’s Confederates were within sight of Chancellorsville, but they were almost as disorganized as the Union men they had routed, preventing further pursuit. As the night lengthened, shooting broke out, subsided, and then broke out in new places. Jackson’s men were separated from Lee only by Sickles’s corps, split from the main body of the Union army by the afternoon’s fighting. Sickles began a loose retreat, mistakenly skirmishing with other Federal units when they collided in the dark near Hazel Grove.

At the Chancellorsville crossroads, Federal artillery fired blindly at any movement in the surrounding woods.

At about 9 PM, Hooker ordered Sedgwick to



**ABOVE:** Two Confederate regiments behind the stone wall along the sunken road at Fredericksburg were not enough to hold back two divisions of Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick’s VI Corps on the morning of May 3. **BELOW:** Although greatly outnumbered and stretched thin over a sprawling battleground in the Chancellorsville campaign, Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s superior skills as a military tactician enabled him to easily triumph over Union Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker.



Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

march toward Chancellorsville to “attack and destroy any force he may fall in with on the road,” a move that indicated Hooker still had hopes of springing his trap despite Jackson’s attack on his right flank.

The fighting on May 2 ended with both sides digging in almost within sight of each other. Throughout the Wilderness, brush fires burned wildly, but exhausted troops on both sides slept soundly. It was “like a picture of Hell,” wrote one cavalryman, observing the eerie scene from a hilltop.

Jackson wanted to press his advantage while he had Hooker on the ropes. Stonewall rode east on the Orange Plank Road after dark, contemplating a night attack by the light of the moon. Such





**By late morning on May 3, the two halves of General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia were reunited at the Chancellorsville clearing. When Lee rode up to the Chancellor House, his troops cheered him long and loud.**

an attack would put Confederate forces on the banks of the Rappahannock and cut off any retreat by Hooker. As Jackson and his staff returned to their camp, they were spotted by men of the 18th North Carolina Infantry, nervous after a recent engagement with Union cavalry. Mistaking Jackson and his staff in the darkness as the same cavalry, they fired at the passing horsemen. Jackson was hit three times, one bullet shattering his left arm. He was quickly taken back to his camp, where the arm was amputated.

Jackson lingered for more than a week before contracting pneumonia. He died on May 10. Lee said, "He has lost his left arm, but I have lost my right." Stuart was placed in charge of Jackson's men.

Despite Jackson's flanking march and successful attack, the Union army was still in the battle. Maj. Gen. John Reynolds's I Corps arrived during the night of May 2, helping to stabilize the situation. At that point, 42,000 Confederates confronted six Union corps. The two halves of Lee's army were still separated by Sickles's III Corps on the high ground at Hazel Grove.

Couch, who from that day forward was a lifelong enemy of the Union commander, said later that all Hooker had to do was "take a reasonable common sense view of the state of things."

Hooker failed to do that.

Early on the morning of May 3, Hooker ordered Sickles to abandon the high ground at Hazel Grove and move to a new position on the Plank Road, a move intended simply to tidy his lines. However, it would prove a fatal one. Hazel Grove has, in retrospect, been seen as the key to the entire position; Confederate artillery on that high ground could control the field. As it withdrew, the rear of Sickles's corps was attacked by the Confederate brigade of Brig. Gen. James Archer, which captured four of Sickles's guns and 100 of his men.

Lee, more open to the possibilities Hazel Grove offered than Hooker was, moved quickly. Lee ordered Colonel Edward Porter Alexander to deploy 30 guns on the high ground at Hazel Grove that Sickles had just abandoned.

Hooker's force had by that time been deployed in a giant horseshoe against the Rappahannock, protecting the U.S. Ford and facing south. At about 5:30 AM, Lee attacked from the south and southeast. The newly deployed artillery at Hazel Grove supported the attack. Thirty Confederate guns also had been placed near the Chancellor House, and another 24 were on the Orange Plank Road southeast of Hooker's position. The Union forces were fighting behind strong earthworks, and the initial Confederate assaults were beaten back. A final Confederate push combined with artillery fire carried the day, but the Union defenders began a fighting withdrawal to new positions near the river.

Lee's army reunited at about 10 AM at the Chancellor House, which by then was burning from artillery fire. When Lee approached the house, a staff officer later wrote, he was greeted with "one long, unbroken cheer, in which the feeble cry of those who lay helpless on the earth blended with the strong voices of those who still fought, roaring high above the roar of the battle."

The Confederate guns at Hazel Grove duelled with the Union guns on Fairview Hill until their ammunition ran low. The exuberance of the Confederate gunners that day was best expressed by Major William Pegram, who fought with Walker's artillery battalion. "A glorious day, Colonel! A glorious day!" Pegram said to Alexander.

About 9:15 AM, before abandoning the Chancellor House, Hooker was leaning against a wooden pillar. A Confederate cannonball struck the pillar. Hooker wrote later that half of the pillar "violently [struck me] in an erect position from my head to my feet." Hooker was unconscious for an hour. When he came around he refused to relinquish command. The injury may have contributed to the Union defeat. Several of his subordinates, including Couch and Slocum, later openly questioned Hooker's command decisions after the injury.

Meanwhile, Sedgwick's VI Corps had attacked Fredericksburg. By mid-morning, Union forces had twice assaulted the stronghold of Marye's Height and been repulsed with heavy casualties. A Union party was then allowed to approach the stone wall on the heights sheltering Confederate defenders to collect Union wounded. While doing so, members of the party observed that the Confederate line behind the wall appeared weak. The center was held by only two small regiments and 16 guns. Spurred on by this information, a third Union attack overwhelmed the wall and captured the heights.

Sedgwick then moved west toward Chancellorsville as Early pulled back in a fighting retreat to the south. Lee again divided his force, sending General LaFayette McLaws with 7,000 men to check Sedgwick's 23,600 troops and keeping 35,000 to confront Hooker's six infantry corps. But Brig. Gen. Cadmus Wilcox quickly spread his Alabamians across the Orange Plank Road, slowing Sedgwick's advance and allowing McLaws to move his division to Salem Church, south and west of Fredericksburg, to stop the Union movement. In addition, Union Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's 3,500-man division of the II Corps, which had been left behind to assist Sedgwick, also crossed the Rappahannock north of Fredericksburg. About 5:30 PM Union forces attacked the church but were repulsed. During the night, Sedgwick heard Confederate columns moving around him in the dark.

On the morning of May 4, Lee ordered Early to join McLaws at Salem Church and sent Maj. Gen. Richard Anderson to the area. Lee then rode over to conduct a personal reconnais-



sance. He found that Early had retaken Marye's Heights and that he and McLaws planned to attack Sedgwick as soon as Anderson arrived. However, Anderson did not reach the area until 6 PM. The Confederates launched an attack but accomplished little. Anxious to solidify what already had been gained, Lee, for the first time in his career, ordered a night attack. It was repulsed.

That night, Sedgwick pulled his men back across the river at Banks Ford, a short distance north of Salem Church, and Lee turned his attention back to Hooker. When Hooker learned of Sedgwick's retreat, he called his corps commanders together to discuss the situation and vote on what should be done. A narrow majority wanted to continue fighting, but Hooker decided to withdraw. During the night, he pulled his forces across the river at U.S. Ford. The troops crossed in heavy rain that had caused the river to rise and threatened to break the pontoon bridges. By 9 AM on May 6, the withdrawal was complete.

The Confederate forces, although outnumbered by more than two to one, had routed Hooker's army. In the process, they had suffered 13,460 casualties: 1,724 dead, 9,233 wounded, and 2,503 missing. Hooker's casualties at Chancellorsville were 17,304 men; 1,694 were killed, 9,672 wounded, and 5,938 missing.

Despite the loss, which shocked the Northern states, and in the face of criticism from

many of his generals, Lincoln retained Hooker in command of the Army of the Potomac. Couch, claiming he was disgusted by Hooker's conduct of the battle, resigned and spent the rest of the war in command of Pennsylvania militia. Hooker relieved Stoneman for incompetence and for years after the war waged a campaign against Howard, who he blamed for his loss. Hooker wrote that Howard was "a perfect old woman." Hooker also accused Sedgwick of being "dilatatory."

Before he died, Jackson voiced yet another opinion, blaming Hooker's defeat on the lack of Union cavalry. "That was his great blunder," Jackson told an aide. "It was that which enabled me to turn him, without his being aware of it, and take him in the rear."

Meanwhile, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia began marching north in June. Lee was convinced by the performance of the Union Army at Chancellorsville that his troops were superior to those of the enemy and would prevail in the next major battle. Hooker, who had planned on attacking Richmond, was ordered by Lincoln to pursue Lee while also keeping an eye on the defense of Washington and Baltimore. On June 28, just three days before the Battle of Gettysburg, Lincoln replaced Hooker with Meade.

Hooker became commander of the XI and XII Corps of the Army of the Potomac and was sent west with those troops to reinforce Maj. Gen. George Thomas's Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga, Tennessee. In November 1863, Hooker led his troops well in the Battle of Lookout Mountain and the Battle of Missionary Ridge, regaining some of his former reputation as a solid battlefield commander. Hooker then led the XX Corps in the 1864 Atlanta Campaign, but he resigned before the capture of Atlanta when Howard was promoted to command of the Army of the Tennessee.

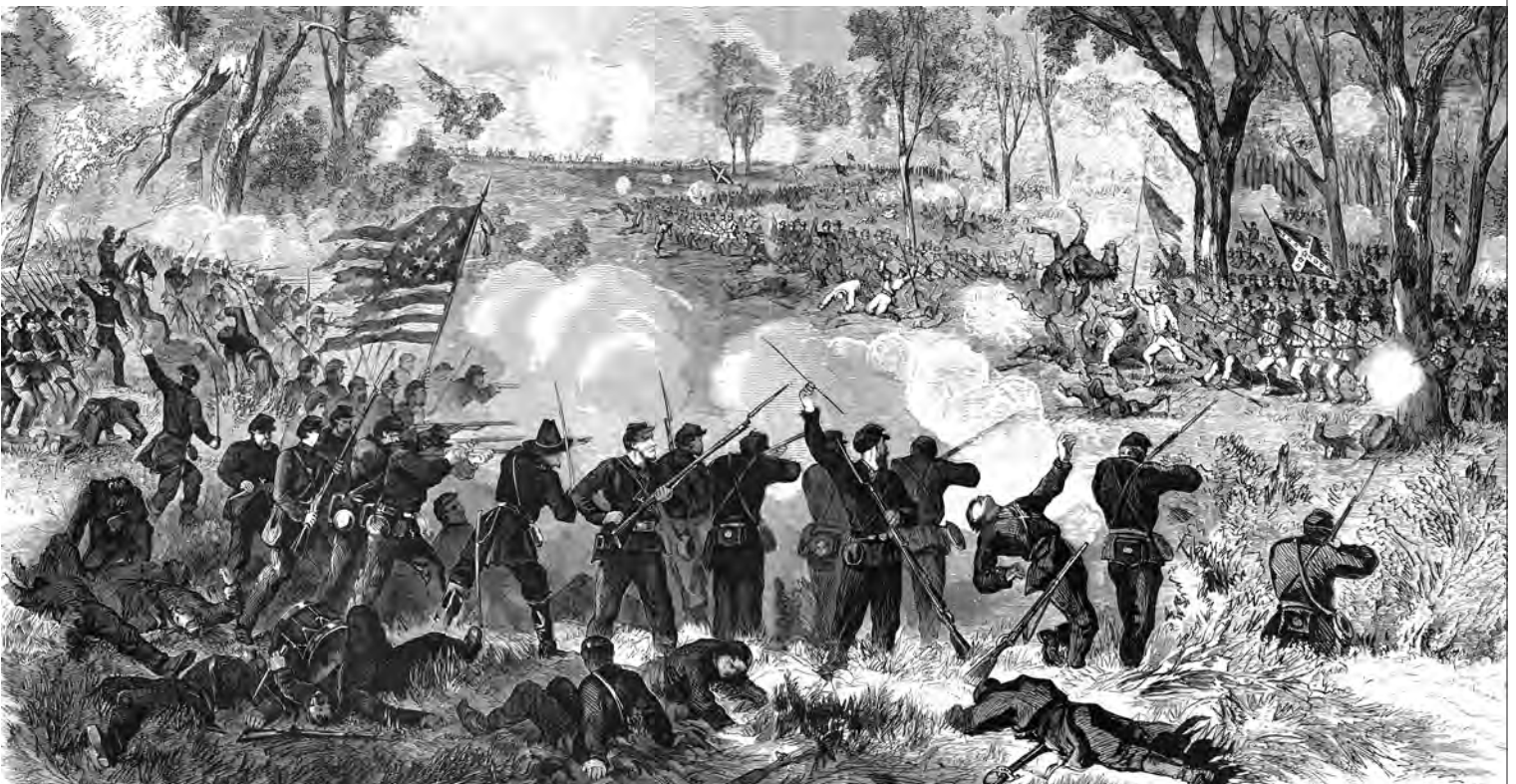
Hooker subsequently was named commander of the Northern Department, which comprised Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and he served in that position until the end of the war.

Lee later told John Bell Hood, who at the time of Chancellorsville was a major general commanding a division under Longstreet at Southside Virginia, "Had I had the whole army with me, General Hooker would have been demolished."


Hooker had devised a fine plan at Chancellorsville, but Lee and Jackson had devised a better one in response. □

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**Following Stonewall Jackson's grievous wounding the night of May 2, cavalry commander Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart took over temporary command of Jackson's corps. The following day, the Confederates maintained pressure on Hooker's army, which withdrew toward U.S. Ford.**







**D**eep snow blanketed the steppes surrounding the northeastern Ukrainian city of Kharkov on February 6, 1943. The soldiers of Major Kurt Meyer's reconnaissance battalion of SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler shivered from the cold. The half-tracks and assault guns were concealed in a belt of woods outside the village of Malinovka on the east bank of the Donets River not far from the railroad depot at Chuguyev. Outside the wind howled. Hardly a word was spoken by the men as they watched tanks and infantry at the head of a Russian column work their way slowly toward them.

Meyer had instructed the crews of the dispersed vehicles not to fire until he gave the order. Meyer had been sent across the Donets to cover the retreat of the remnants of the German 298th and 320th Infantry Divisions, which had been shredded by the spearheads of Soviet armies participating in a major attack along the entire southern sector of the Eastern Front.

That morning as many as 1,400 survivors of the two decimated German divisions had marched through Malinovka on their way to the safety of the main German line at Chuguyev. The sur-

targets. Meyer's ambush caught the Russians completely by surprise. Smoke and flames rose from Russian tanks that ground to a halt in the snow. The white landscape was littered with the corpses of Russian soldiers. "The harvest of death was grisly," Meyer wrote.

Meyer's battalion suffered only 17 casualties in the firefight, while the Russians lost 250 men and several tanks. The skirmish was a delaying action in the face of the overwhelming advantage enjoyed by the southern wing of Col. Gen. Filipp Golikov's Voronezh Front, one of three Soviet fronts that attacked German forces in

# MANSTEIN'S VICTORIOUS PANZERS

In February 1943, German Field Marshal Erich von Manstein unleashed his elite panzer units in a devastating counterattack against Russian forces in eastern Ukraine.

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

vivors were a pitiful sight. Many had fingers and toes black from frostbite. Swaddled in blankets and rags in an effort to protect themselves from snow squalls and subfreezing temperatures, the half dead soldiers bore little resemblance to Meyer's panzergrenadiers, who had arrived at the front by train less than a week earlier.

The ground sloped uphill toward the advancing Russian column, giving the German gunners clear targets silhouetted against the sky. Russian T-34 and KV-2 tanks clanked slowly forward and brown-uniformed infantry followed cautiously, letting the steel monsters lead the way.

"We observed the shadows of the Russian tanks slowly working their way west to the right and left of the road," wrote Meyer. "The tanks avoided the road, snaking across the deeply furrowed landscape, obviously trying to take our bridgehead in a pincer movement and crush it in their armored jaws."

Meyer's battalion of armored vehicles was supported by 88mm guns on the west bank of the Donets at Chuguyev. Between his vehicles and the artillery beyond the frozen river, there would be more than enough firepower to severely damage the Russian tank column.

The radio silence was broken periodically as officers stationed at other points reported the Russian column's progress. "The Red Army soldiers—drunk with victory—were going to deliver their own death sentence," wrote Meyer. "I was in contact with all the units, either by radio or telephone. The units could respond in a fraction of a second and were convinced of their power. They had not been gripped by fear of the Russians."

Meyer waited until the attackers were on top of the German position. At 150 meters, he gave the order to fire. Shells from German antitank guns and armored vehicles streaked toward their

southern Russia the first week of February 1943. That same week, the last remnants of the German Sixth Army trapped in Stalingrad surrendered. The Voronezh Front had been involved in one offensive after another since December 21, 1942, and when its northern and southern wings were ordered to strike toward Kursk and Kharkov, respectively, as part of Operation Star, its armies had not been able to rest and reorganize.

Believing that the Germans in southern Russia were deeply demoralized after the destruction of the Sixth Army, STAVKA, the Soviet high command, ordered Golikov's Voronezh Front, Col. Gen. Nikolai F. Vatutin's Southwestern Front, and Col. Gen. Andrei Yermenko's Southern Front to advance together against the German southern wing in the Ukraine. As envisioned by STAVKA, Golikov and Vatutin would outflank the Germans in northeastern Ukraine and then turn south to





Panzergrenadiers of the 2nd SS Panzer Division Das Reich watch Luftwaffe attacks on the center of Kharkov on March 13, 1943. Lt. Gen. Paul Hausser's SS Panzer Corps was forced to evacuate Kharkov on February 15 during the Soviet offensive known as Operation Star, but Hausser's troops regained all of the ground lost during the subsequent counter-attack directed by Field Marshal Eric von Manstein.



cut the Nazi invaders off from the bridges over the Dnieper River. If everything went as planned, STAVKA believed that it might achieve a grand encirclement of the German forces operating in the Ukraine. It was a highly ambitious undertaking, and one in which the Soviet planners neglected just about every logistical consideration that needed to be addressed if it was to be achieved. The Soviet forces involved were weary from nonstop fighting, and they lacked the manpower, fuel, and ammunition necessary to achieve such a lofty strategic objective. None of this seemed to matter to Soviet leader Josef Stalin, who on the eve of the attack told his front commanders, "This is our moment."

Golikov received orders on January 23 instructing him to capture Kharkov. The Soviets had tried to retake the city in May 1942, but failed. Three days later the orders were revised to include the capture of Kursk, which lay 200 kilometers north of Kharkov.

Kharkov, a major railroad hub and industrial center, was the second largest city in the Ukraine and the fourth largest in the Soviet Union. In the wake of the collapse of the Hungarian Second Army, the German high command began to send reinforcements to bolster Army Detachment Lanz, which was part of Army Group B. Army Detachment Lanz was responsible for a section of the Eastern Front running from Belgorod to Izium, and thus covered all approaches to Kharkov.

Colonel General Maximilian Weichs led Army Group B. General Hubert Lanz, who commanded the army detachment that bore his name, reported to Weichs.

The first of the fresh troops to arrive belonged to Maj. Gen. Walter Hornlein's motorized Grossdeutschland Division, which after earning a much-needed rest and undergoing a major reorganization began arriving in the sector in mid-January. Also dispatched to the sector was the newly created SS Panzer Corps under Lt. Gen. Paul Hausser, which comprised the Das Reich, Leibstandarte, and Totenkopf panzergrenadier divisions.

In addition to the Grossdeutschland Division and the SS Panzer Corps, Lanz had several infantry divisions, including the 168th, 298th, and 320th. Unlike the German infantry divisions, which had horse-drawn artillery and no vehicles to transport their foot soldiers, the Grossdeutschland Division had half-tracks and trucks that could shuttle its battalions back and forth to respond to emergencies as they developed.

Soviet Deputy Supreme Commander Georgi Zhukov and Chief of the Soviet General Staff General Aleksandr Vasilevsky were the principal planners of Operation Star. To ensure that the attack went forward as planned, Vasilevsky worked in Golikov's headquarters throughout the campaign.

Golikov tasked three of his five armies with the drive on Kharkov. Lt. Gen. Kirill Moskalenko's 40th Army would advance toward Belgorod and, once it captured that city, continue in a southwesterly direction so that it encircled Kharkov from the north. In the center, Lt. Gen. M.I. Kazakov's newly formed 69th Army was to advance toward Kharkov, establish bridgeheads across the

Donets, and then push into the city from the east. The strongest of the three armies, Lt. Gen. Pavel Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army, was to cross the Donets south of Kharkov and encircle the city from the south.

Moskalenko's northern pincer and Rybalko's southern pincer were to meet at the railroad town of Lyubotin, a short distance southwest of Kharkov. The distance from the starting point of the Soviet attack to Kharkov was about 120 kilometers. The attack would begin as many as 45 days before the spring thaw of mid-March, which transformed the region's dirt roads into a morass that made armored operations unthinkable until the summer sun arrived to dry the roads. While that was more than enough time to capture Kharkov, no matter how stubborn the German defense, it might not be enough time for the Russians to reach the Dnieper if the Germans put up strong resistance.

Golikov had 200,000 men to Lanz's 50,000 men. The Soviet rifle divisions were greatly reduced from continual operations, and they averaged 4,000 to 6,000 men. The three Soviet armies advancing on Kharkov had about 315 tanks, and the front as a whole had another 300 in reserve. The Germans had about 200 tanks, most of which were with the SS panzergrenadier divisions. The Grossdeutschland Division was seriously deficient in armor. When the Soviet attack began, the division had only 31 tanks, more than half of which needed repairs before they could return to action. The one major advantage the Germans had in the approaching campaign was that they retained control of the skies and could launch tactical air strikes with their Stuka dive-bombers against Soviet tank columns.

Army Detachment Lanz was just being established as Operation Star began. Corps Cramer, comprising the 168th and Grossdeutschland Divisions under the command of Lt. Gen. Hans Cramer, shielded Kharkov from the north. Two divisions of the SS Panzer Corps, both of which arrived just as the Soviet attack got underway, protected Kharkov from the east and south. The Das Reich and Leibstandarte Divisions detrained at Kharkov just in time to prevent the Soviets from pushing unopposed into Kharkov from the east. Lanz immediately fed the two divisions into the battle. They would remain in supporting distance of each other throughout the battle and frequently shared infantry and armor. The Totenkopf Division did not begin arriving in the vicinity of Kharkov until about 10 days after the battle had begun. Southeast of Kharkov, Colonel Herbert Michaelis's 298th Infantry Division was posted behind the Oskol

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ABOVE: Field Marshal Erich von Manstein (left) and Lt. Gen. Paul Hausser. BELOW: 3rd Tank Army's Lt. Gen. Pavel Rybalko (right). BOTTOM: Major Kurt Meyer (right) of the 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler and Captain Erwin Meierdres of the 3rd SS Panzer Division Totenkopf consult a map during Manstein's counterattack.





River from Kupyansk to Ssenkovo, and Lt. Gen. Georg Postel's 320th Infantry Division was deployed from Ssenkovo to Iziium.

Lanz did not have enough troops to man all sectors of his front line, so the troops deployed primarily along the roads and in villages. From those positions they conducted patrols through the frozen steppes in an effort to intercept small Soviet units trying to bypass German strong-points.

STAVKA had scheduled Operation Star to begin on February 1, but because the three armies that formed the southern wing of the Voronezh Front were not ready, it actually began the following day with the attack of Kazakov's 69th Army and Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army. Moskalenko's 40th Army, still occupied with reorganizing following its battle against the Hungarian Second Army, was not able to begin its drive on Belgorod until February 3.

Kazakov's four rifle divisions had established bridgeheads on the west bank of the Oskol River on February 1. Kazakov's infantry, backed by the 137th Tank Brigade and 292nd Tank Regiment, marched abreast from bridgeheads on the west bank of the Oskol against the Grossdeutschland and Das Reich Divisions. Golikov's timetable called for the 69th Army to secure river crossings over the Donets River at and above Volchansk by February 5. The Soviet 161st and 219th Rifle Divisions, which formed the right wing of the 69th Army, ran into considerable opposition on the second day of the attack. At Veliko-Mikhailovka, German soldiers had transformed the village into a strongpoint. The fighting would rage for three days at Veliko-Mikhailovka against Germans who were determined to buy as much time as possible before falling back. On February 6, the elements of the Grossdeutschland Division defending the village retreated to the southwest through a narrow corridor that remained open.

The left wing of Kazakov's army, which comprised the 180th and 270th Rifle Divisions, attacked toward Volchansk. The two Soviet divisions encountered light resistance until 48 hours into the offensive when they ran headlong into stubborn opposition from Colonel Heinz Harmel's Deutschland Regiment of Maj. Gen. Georg Keppler's Das Reich Division, which held a 30-kilometer front east of the Donets River. The Soviets encountered considerable difficulties trying to secure Volchansk. The fighting intensified when Colonel Otto Kumm's Der Führer Regiment of the Das Reich Division went into action on February 5 on Harmel's left flank. Kumm launched a bold counterattack against Maj. Gen. I.Y. Maloshitsky's 180th Rifle Division on February 6 that



A Soviet tank rolls into Kharkov on February 16. Because of the tenacious defense of the city by Hausser's SS Panzer Corps, Rybalko was forced to commit the bulk of his armor to pry the Germans from the city. As a result, there was not enough Soviet armor available to encircle the city from the south, allowing the SS units inside the city to avoid being trapped in a pocket.

drove the startled Russians back eight kilometers and forced them to spend precious time the following day regaining ground previously occupied.

After his forces captured Veliko-Mikhailovka, Kazakov was able to shift the bulk of the troops from his right flank to the drive on Volchansk. The 69th Army finally captured the town on February 9, four days behind schedule. The capture of Volchansk was made possible in part because Lanz had ordered the two regiments of the Das Reich Division to pull back across the Donets when Moskalenko's 40th Army captured Belgorod on February 9, outflanking Keppler's grenadiers.

Rybalko was a talented commander of armored forces, and his army had three tank corps: Maj. Gen. M.I. Zenkovich's 12th Tank Corps, Maj. Gen. V.A. Koptsov's 15th Tank Corps, and Maj. Gen. S.V. Sokolov's 6th Guards Cavalry Corps. The 12th and 15th Tank Corps each comprised three tank brigades, and both were considerably stronger than Sokolov's corps. Rybalko also had four standard rifle divisions and reserve armor in the form of the 179th Tank Brigade and 201st Tank Regiment.

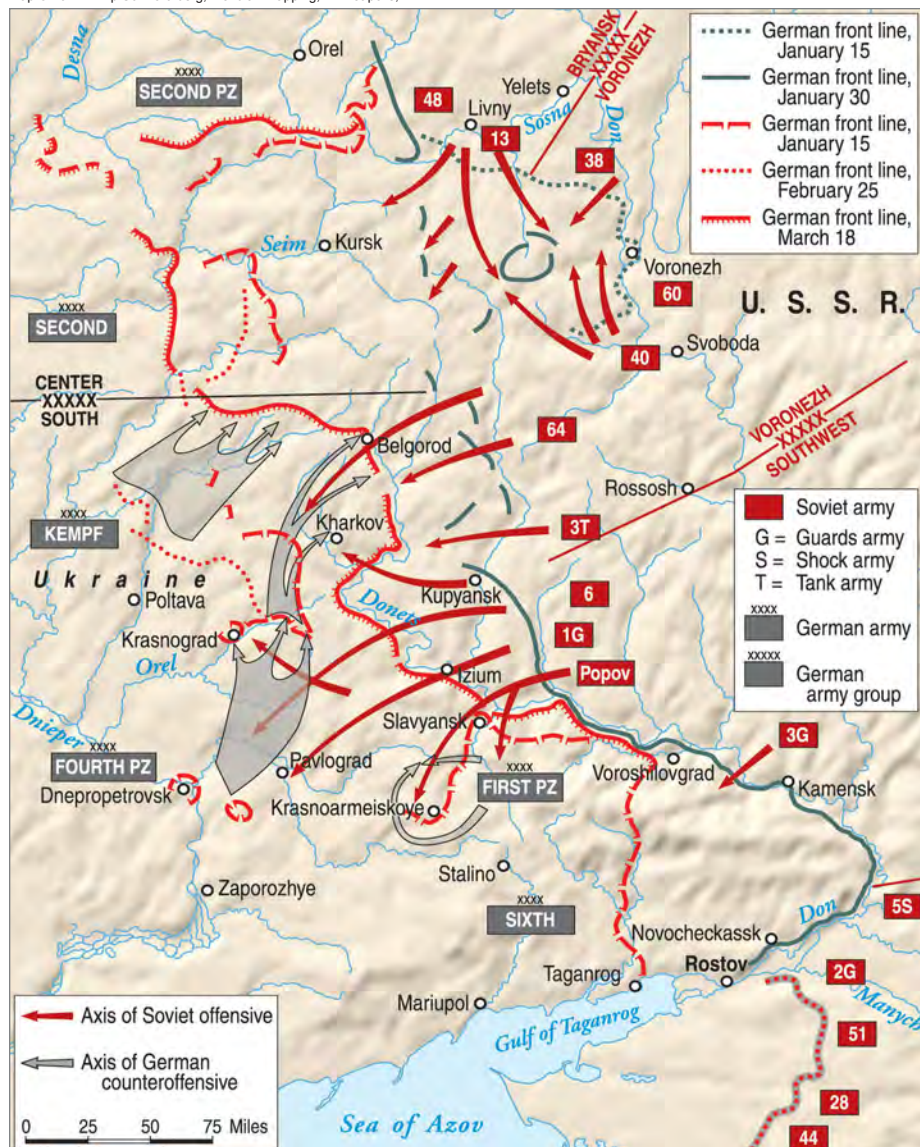
The right wing of Rybalko's army became engaged with Harmel's grenadiers at the outset of the attack in a heated battle for the village of Veliky Burluk. When Kumm's regiment went into action alongside Harmel's regiment, it allowed Harmel to counterattack Maj. Gen. M.N. Mokovchuk's 48th Guards Rifle Division. Incensed by the audacity of the Germans, Rybalko sent Koptsov's 15th Tank Corps against Harmel's tenacious grenadiers. Meanwhile, the 6th Guards Cavalry and 12th Tank Corps continued their advance toward the wide bend in the Donets south of Kharkov.

On the same day Rybalko's army launched its attack, Lt. Gen. Josef "Sepp" Dietrich's Leibstandarte Division detrained at Chuguyev. Dietrich sent a portion of his division, including Meyer's reconnaissance battalion and part of Colonel Fritz Witt's 1st Regiment of the division, across the Donets to assist the withdrawal of the retreating 298th and 320th Infantry Divisions. The Leibstandarte grenadiers on the east side of the Donets eventually became heavily outnumbered and fell back to the west bank, where Dietrich had fortified Chuguyev to contest a Soviet crossing.

Rybalko's tank units had secured some stretches of the east bank of the Donets on February 4, but they would not be ready to attack across the river until the infantry and heavy artillery at the back of the long columns caught up with the armor. By February 9, Koptsov's 15th Tank Corps was preparing to cross at Pechenegi, and Zenkovich's 12th Tank Corps was ready to do the same at Chuguyev. In the meantime, Rybalko ordered Sokolov to shift his forces farther downstream and attempt to cross the Donets at Zmiev, which was unoccupied.

Because his forces were busy mopping up the Hungarian Second Army, Moskalenko did not begin his advance southwest toward Belgorod until February 3. Moskalenko began his attack with four rifle divisions abreast and three rifle divisions in reserve. Maj. Gen. A.G. Kravchenko's 5th





ABOVE: Three Soviet fronts lunged across the Donets River beginning on February 1 with the goal of achieving an encirclement of the German forces operating in eastern Ukraine. STAVKA had no idea that the Germans were strong enough to launch a devastating counterattack that would push them back to their starting points. OPPOSITE: An artillery unit of the Grossdeutschland Division mans a position in mid-February. The division was forced to fight virtually alone during the initial Soviet attack against the full weight of Lt. Gen. Kirill Moskalenko's 40th Army.

Guards Tank Corps, which had approximately 50 tanks, needed time to regroup after fighting the Hungarian Second Army and it was not available at the outset of the attack.

After Operation Star had been underway for several days, Golikov ordered Moskalenko to speed up his attack on Belgorod to compensate for the slow progress of Kazakov's 69th Army and Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army. In response to the request, Moskalenko paired two independent tank brigades assigned to his army with two of the rifle divisions advancing on Belgorod. As a result, Moskalenko's army had two mobile groups that could reach their objective faster and hit the defenders harder than if attacking without armor support.

The defense of Belgorod initially was the responsibility of the German 168th Infantry Division. However, it quickly became apparent to Lanz that it could not contend with the vastly superior Soviet forces arrayed against it. Lanz therefore ordered the 168th Division to deploy west of Kharkov to the village of Tomarovka in an effort to block Moskalenko's right wing. To compensate for the removal of the 168th from the fighting at Belgorod, Lanz shifted the Grossdeutschland Division's two regiments west. This left the division's grenadier regiment on the left flank covering the northern approaches to Kharkov, and the division's fusilier regiment on the

right flank covering Belgorod.

By February 7, the two mobile groups established by Moskalenko had reached the outskirts of Belgorod. Fighting raged around the clock for two days until the Germans were finally forced to pull out on February 9.

The cumulative effect of having three Soviet fronts attacking toward the Dnieper River created an ominous situation that fell squarely, not on the shoulders of Army Group B commander Weichs, but instead on the shoulders of Army Group Don commander Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, who was responsible for the German forces under attack by Vatutin and Yeremenko. For this reason, Adolf Hitler had Manstein flown to his headquarters in Rastenburg for a face-to-face meeting on February 6. Manstein received Hitler's permission to pull back some of his forces and deploy his armored assets as he saw fit without interference from the high command. Manstein subsequently shifted Col. Gen. Hermann Hoth's 4th Panzer Army from the right flank of Army Group Don to its left flank to better resist the Soviet onslaught.

The most significant outcome of the meeting was Hitler's approval of Manstein's request that he be given control of Army Detachment Lanz so that one commander could coordinate the movements of all German forces in southern Russia. Five days later, on February 12, Manstein became commander of the newly established Army Group South. Army Group B, which ceased to serve a real function following the Battle of Stalingrad, was eliminated. Thus, midway through the Soviet 1943 winter offensive in southern Russia, Hitler gave Manstein control of 32 German divisions manning a 700-kilometer front.

The progress of the Soviet attack on Kharkov accelerated rapidly before Manstein had actual control of Army Detachment Lanz. On February 7, Sokolov's 6th Guards Corps was across the Donets at Zmiev. From there, Sokolov's forces advanced northwest through the Mzha Valley toward Merefa. Three days later, despite stubborn resistance from elements of Dietrich's grenadiers, both the Soviet 12th and 15th Tank Corps had also crossed the Donets.

The situation at Kharkov for Army Detachment Lanz had grown critical once Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army had crossed the Donets. In the north, it fell to Corps Cramer to hold back Moskalenko's 40th Army. However, after the fall of Belgorod it became clear that the 168th Infantry Division was no longer an effective fighting force. Although it was supposed to fight a holding action to keep the right wing of Moskalenko's 40th Army from outflanking



Army Detachment Lanz from the west, the 168th Infantry Division retreated out of the path of the Soviet attack, leaving General Walter Hornlein's Grossdeutschland Division to fight alone against Moskalenko's 40th Army. Hornlein stretched his line as much as possible, but Moskalenko's line overlapped it, extending as far as 40 kilometers west of Kharkov.

By February 11, Hornlein's reconnaissance battalion on the division's right flank had been driven back to the northeastern corner of Kharkov. Fortunately for Hornlein, the Das Reich Division had fought Kazakov's 69th Army to a standstill. Kumm's Der Führer Regiment of the Das Reich Division subsequently redeployed south of Kharkov to fight the 6th Guards Cavalry Corps, while Harmel's Deutschland Regiment remained behind to slow the advance of Kazakov's 69th Army.

On the same day, Kravchenko's 5th Guards Tank Army, which had finally joined the advance, smashed through Hornlein's left flank and captured the town of Dergachi, just west of Kharkov. Hornlein cobbled together a battle group and counterattacked the Russians. Although the Germans retook the town on February 12, the following day they were again driven out. With many of its battalions down to company strength after 10 days of fighting, Hornlein's division was forced to fall back to the northern suburbs of Kharkov by February 13.

On February 12, Rybalko attacked along his entire front. While the 15th Tank Corps and two rifle divisions attacked east from their bridgehead at Pechenegi toward Kharkov, the 12th Tank Corps and one rifle division advanced from their bridgehead at Chuguyev toward the city from the southeast. At the same time, Sokolov's 6th Guards Cavalry Corps continued its advance in a wide arc south of Kharkov toward Lyubotin.

Sokolov's troops needed to control two towns en route to Lyubotin to keep a supply corridor open for fuel and ammunition. On the north side of their advance was the key town of Merefa, and on the south side was the town of Novaja Vodolaga. Hausser was determined that the Soviets would not control either, and he was prepared to launch spoiling attacks to make sure that Sokolov's troops did not capture Lyubotin. When Colonel M.I. Surzhikov's 11th Cavalry Division, which formed the vanguard of the 6th Guards Cavalry Corps, approached Merefa on February 11, the Germans launched a major counterattack that compelled the Russians to retreat south to Novaja Vodolaga.

During the night of February 11-12, Das Reich's motorcycle battalion, led by Colonel Jakob Fick, arrived on the outskirts of Novaja

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Vodolaga determined to drive out Surzhikov's division. Backed by a handful of Panzer IVs to cover his flanks, Fick led his dismounted grenadiers in an attack on the town the morning of February 12. Fick's grenadiers drove the Russians out, but a counterattack retook the town. The following day Fick's grenadiers, backed by additional tanks from both the Das Reich and Leibstandarte Divisions, captured the town again, forcing the Russians to retire south.

Just to the north, fighting raged in the town of Rogan southeast of Kharkov as Zenkovich's 12th Tank Corps sought to overwhelm the defenses of two battalions of Witt's 1st Regiment of the Leibstandarte Division. To soften up the German defenses, the Soviets fired Katyusha rockets and 120mm mortars. The artillery bombardment was followed by Soviet infantry attacks supported by T-34s. Understrength German platoons fought with determination to prevent Russian infantry from infiltrating their lines. Nevertheless, the Germans eventually were forced to abandon the town to the Russians.

On February 13, the lead elements of the last division of Hausser's SS Panzer Corps, Lt. Gen. Theodor Eicke's Totenkopf Division, detrained at Poltava. Since Poltava was 140 kilometers southwest of Kharkov, the badly needed reinforcements would not have an immediate effect on the battle. The following day, Koptsov's 15th Tank Corps reached the factory district located in eastern Kharkov and fought building to building against Dietrich's grenadiers, but Zenkovich's 12th Tank Corps, on Koptsov's left flank, was still 10 kilometers from the city's edge.

Despite the arrival at Poltava of Lt. Col. Heinz Lammerding's Thule Regiment of the Totenkopf Division, Hausser was convinced on February 13 that Kharkov could not be held. Although Hitler had ordered that Kharkov be held to the last man, Hausser had no intention of seeing his elite corps destroyed for no good reason. That day Hausser ordered Dietrich to demolish the key bridges inside the city to slow the advance of Rybalko's units, which already were moving slowly into the eastern part of the city.

Manstein sent orders to Lanz at daybreak on February 14 that Kharkov was to be held in compliance with Hitler's orders. After receiving the orders, Lanz forwarded them to Hausser, instructing Hausser to cancel his orders to begin blowing up the bridges inside Kharkov.

That same day, Manstein also appointed Col. Gen. Erhard Raus as the new commander of Corps Cramer, which thereafter became known as Corps Raus. Raus had the unenviable job of commanding the badly mauled Grossdeutschland Division and the demoralized 168th Infantry





A battle group from Lt. Gen. Josef "Sepp" Dietrich's 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler fights its way into northern Kharkov. When the Soviet forces inside the city shifted north to block Dietrich's advance, they unwittingly allowed the 2nd SS Panzer Division Das Reich to enter unopposed from the west. The Soviets withdrew on March 13.

Division. Raus shared with Hausser the responsibility for keeping a corridor open to the southwest should Hitler change his mind and allow those parts of Army Detachment Lanz inside the city to retreat to safety.

On February 14, the SS Panzer Corps continued its attacks on Surzhikov's 11th Cavalry Division. After the fighting at Novaja Vodolaga, the Russians had fallen back to the village of Ochotschaje. That morning two battalions of Kumm's Der Führer Regiment backed by tanks and assault guns attacked the Russian-held village. Surzhikov's troops had concealed a large number of antitank guns on the edge of the city, and the Russians were able to repulse the initial assault, which left the small number of Germans who had reached the village to fend for themselves until another attack was launched later in the day. This time Kumm's grenadiers were able to secure the city, and Surzhikov's troops withdrew southeast to Bereka. The capture of Ochotschaje by the Germans ensured once and for all that Sokolov's 6th Guards Cavalry Corps would not complete its objective of linking up with Moskalenko's 40th Army.

On the afternoon of February 14, Hausser received an urgent message from Das Reich Division commander Brig. Gen. Herbert Vahl, who had replaced the seriously ill Keppler on February 10, informing Hausser that the division had no more reserves to commit to the multiple breaches in its battle lines that occurred that day. Despite admonitions by Manstein and Lanz that the Das Reich Division, namely Harmel's Deutschland Regiment, should continue to defend Kharkov even if faced with annihilation, Hausser ordered Vahl to begin an orderly retreat toward the southwest corridor that evening.

When Lanz learned of Hausser's orders to Vahl to begin disengaging, Lanz reiterated that the Das Reich Division was to continue to defend the city. Hausser rescinded his order, but he knew full well that Harmel's Deutschland Regiment had already begun to disengage. Hausser told Lanz that he was willing to accept full responsibility for Das Reich's failure to comply with Hitler's orders. Hausser knew that unless the Deutschland Regiment began disengaging that evening it probably would not make out of the city before Moskalenko's forces reached Lyubotin, thereby blocking the last escape route from the city.

On February 15, the Soviet forces around Kharkov redoubled their attacks on German forces defending the city. Zenkovich's 12th Tank Corps and Maj. Gen. G.M. Zaitsev's 62nd Guards Rifle Division finally broke into Kharkov's southeast quadrant where they battled elements of the Leibstandarte Division. To the immediate north, other parts of the Leibstandarte Division battled Koptsov's 15th Tank Corps in the factory district. Further north, Harmel's Deutschland Regiment

of Das Reich found its lines assailed by units from three rifle divisions belonging to Kazakov's 69th Army.

By that time, the left wing of Moskalenko's 40th Army, engaged with Hornlein's Grossdeutschland Division, had already entered the northern edge of the city, where Kharkov's enormous Red Square was located. Simultaneously, Kravchenko's 5th Guards Tank Corps on Moskalenko's right wing was approaching Lyubotin, threatening to cut off the two-kilometer-wide corridor through which Hausser hoped to withdraw Harmel's Deutschland Regiment.

At 11 AM on February 15, Lanz wired Manstein informing him that the situation was dire and requesting permission to withdraw the troops that were still inside Kharkov. Although Manstein sympathized wholeheartedly, he was reluctant to go against Hitler's orders. However, Manstein wired orders to Lammerding to move the Thule Regiment of the Totenkopf Division as fast as possible to Lyubotin to reinforce Corps Raus.

With Soviet troops pushing toward the center of Kharkov from the north and east, Hausser instructed Harmel at noon on February 15 to lead his regiment out of the city through the southwest corridor. Harmel's grenadiers quickly boarded half-tracks. As the half-tracks began moving, Katyusha rockets exploded around them, but when Soviet T-34s



started to pursue them, they were ambushed by German tanks and assault guns left behind to slow the enemy's pursuit. The German crews were able to knock out 15 Russian tanks.

The two panzergrenadier regiments of the Grossdeutschland Division retreated through the city after Harmel's troops escaped to the southeast. The first to leave, the fusilier regiment became bogged down fighting Kravchenko's 5th Guards Tank Corps near Lyubotin. The regiment's assault gun battalion fought a determined rearguard action to ensure that the vehicles transporting the infantry were able to get away safely. The last German unit to leave the city was the Grossdeutschland's grenadier regiment. Once again, it was the regiment's assault gun battalion that kept the Russians at bay while the grenadiers withdrew safely in their half-tracks and trucks.

While the Deutschland Regiment of Das Reich evacuated the city to the east, those elements of Dietrich's Leibstandarte Division still in the city managed to fight their way out to the south toward Ochotschaje. Meanwhile, a battle raged on February 15 around Bereka as parts of Kumm's Der Führer Regiment of the Deutschland Division and a battle group consisting of elements of the Leibstandarte Division that had left the city a number of days earlier continued to hound Sokolov's 6th Guards Cavalry Corps.

When Hitler learned that Hausser had withdrawn his troops from Kharkov against orders, he directed his wrath not at Hausser, but toward Lanz. Hitler was not inclined to sack a high-ranking SS field officer, but he had no qualms about removing a German Army officer. In Lanz's place, Hitler on February 16 appointed General Werner Kempf as the new leader of the army detachment, which was known thereafter as Army Detachment Kempf.

That same day, while the Russians secured Kharkov, Army Detachment Kempf reformed facing northeast on a new battlefield that stretched west to east from Okhtyrka to Borova to prevent a southwest push by the Voronezh Front toward the Dnieper River crossings over which supplies flowed to Manstein's Army Group South.

The real threat to the survival of Army Group South was not Golikov's Voronezh Front but Vatutin's Southwestern Front. Specifically, Manstein was concerned by the progress made by Lt. Gen. F.M. Kharitonov's 6th Army, which by that time had captured a stretch of the Dnepropetrovsk-Krasnograd-Kharkov railroad and was close to capturing the important railroad depot at Krasnograd. If that occurred, Kharitonov's next objective would be Poltava,

which would sever the other major railroad supplying Army Group South.

What Manstein knew because of his keen intuition, but which STAVKA chose to ignore, was that the forces of both the Voronezh Front and Southwestern Front were so depleted of armor, manpower, and fuel that they were greatly overextended. Even if they cut the two railroads supplying Army Group South, it was unlikely that they could capture and hold the Dnieper River crossings. In blind pursuit of those very objectives, though, STAVKA ordered Golikov's 40th and 69th Armies to push toward Poltava and Rybalko 3rd Tank Army to cover Kharitonov's right flank.

On February 17, Hitler and his top aides arrived by plane at Manstein's headquarters at Zaporozhye on the Dnieper to discuss strategy. The German leader, furious that Kharkov had been abandoned despite his explicit orders that it be held to the last man, stayed for three days. Even before Hitler had departed, Manstein had reorganized his forces for a bold counterstroke designed to catch the Russians off balance.

The spearhead of Vatutin's Southwestern Front during the late winter offensive of 1943 had been Mobile Group Popov, an armored strike force comprising four Soviet tank corps under the command of Lt. Gen. Markian Popov. Manstein's first objective was to crush Vatutin's Southwestern Front and drive it back to its starting point east of the Donets. To do this, Manstein intended to use Col. Gen. Eberhard Mackensen's 1st Panzer Army, Col. Gen. Hermann Hoth's 4th Panzer Army, and Hausser's SS Panzer Corps.

On February 19, Hausser's SS Panzer Corps assembled for the attack near Krasnograd, while General Otto von Knobelsdorff's 48th Panzer Corps and General Friedrich Kirchner's 57th Panzer Corps went into position northwest of Krasnoarmeiskoye. The 40th Panzer Corps of Mackensen's 1st Panzer Army formed up south of Krasnoarmeiskoye.

Stuka dive bombers from Field Marshal Wolfram Richthofen's Fourth Air Fleet screamed down on Popov's and Kharitonov's columns, softening them up for the German armor. When attacked, the Soviet spearheads were within 25 kilometers of the Dnieper and close enough to force Manstein's headquarters staff at Zaporozhye to prepare for battle in case the Russians reached them that day.

Popov's battle group could only muster about 50 working tanks, and it was heavily outgunned by the German forces arrayed against it. Popov pleaded for permission to withdraw his battle group to a new line 30 kilometers east, but Vatutin denied the request and ordered him to continue west. While Mackensen isolated Popov's battle group, Hoth's two panzer corps carved up Kharitonov's 6th Army over a period of five days. Hausser's SS Panzer Corps, which had been pulled back from the front line to rest and refit after the fall of Kharkov, returned to battle on February 23. The three SS divisions swept southeast and added to the mauling of the beleaguered Soviet 6th Army.

Although too late to mitigate the destruction of Kharitonov's 6th Army, STAVKA on February 22 ordered Golikov to redirect the 69th Army and 3rd Tank Army toward Poltava and Krasnograd, respectively. This meant that Moskalenko's 40th Army would be responsible for most of the territory around Kharkov and would have to fight Corps Raus alone. The decrease in pressure against his corps enabled Raus to order the Grossdeutschland Division to pull out of action on February 23 and refit at Poltava.

Vatutin's Southwestern Front was in full retreat by February 28. To relieve the pressure on Vatutin, STAVKA transferred Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army from the Voronezh Front to the Southwestern Front. Vatutin ordered Rybalko to attack Hausser's SS Panzer Corps to relieve pressure on the other units in the Southwestern Front, but Rybalko's 12th and 15th Tank Corps had to wait for fuel. Even so, when Rybalko's two tank corps advanced south on March 3 they could only muster 30 tanks between them. Golikov released two tank brigades—the 179th and 201st—from his reserve, and this gave Rybalko a total of 55 tanks.

Vatutin ordered Rybalko to advance south and attempt to open a corridor to part of Kharitonov's 6th Army, encircled by the Germans at Kegichevka, a town east of Krasnograd. Rather than rescuing the 6th Army, Rybalko's troops were only marching to their own doom. The Das Reich and Totenkopf Divisions immediately attacked Rybalko's 3rd Army. Koptsov's 15th Tank Corps was in the lead, and behind it was Zenkovich's 12th Tank Corps. Eicke's Totenkopf Division pounced on Koptsov's corps, while Vahl's Das Reich Division took on Zenkovich's corps. During the desperate fighting, Koptsov was mortally wounded. That night part of Vahl's division severed the supply line to both corps. While Koptsov's corps was encircled and annihilated, Zenkovich successfully led his corps in a fighting withdrawal northwest.

Hausser's SS Panzer Corps had hit Rybalko's corps hard from two directions and in 48 hours

*Continued on page 70*



# Napoleon's DRAMATIC RESCUE

ON MARCH 18, 1799, a strange thing happened in the Near East backwater that today is Israel. In the years that followed the birth of Jesus, the rise of Christianity, and the fall of Byzantium, things in the region had quieted down considerably since the Mohammedan conquests (apart from the Crusades). Thus, it was with considerable alarm and a good deal of astonishment that Ahmed Pasha al-Jazzar, the geriatric governor of Sidon, who expected nothing more strenuous from a spring morning in the Middle East than to answer the Muezzin's call to prayer, awoke instead to find a French army priming its muskets on his doorstep. The commander of those troops was the gifted, 28-year-old Napoleon Bonaparte.

How the French, only just beginning to emerge from the shadow of the guillotine and the frat-

ricidal Reign of Terror that had gripped France since the overthrow of the monarchy, came to find themselves fielding troops to this distant desert land is a story in itself.

Since the Revolution of July 1789, the French radicals had spent the better part of the next 10 years indulging in what might be described as a reordering of society. To this end, nearly everything that was there before had to go. For



General Jean Baptiste Kleber's French infantry form squares to defend against superior numbers of mounted Mamelukes on April 16, 1799. Kleber's night raid on Jazzar Pasha's camp at the base of Mount Tabor backfired when he failed to estimate how long it would take to reach the camp, and his approach was discovered at dawn.



starters, the number of days in the week was changed from seven to 10. The number of months in the year, reassuringly, held steady at 12, but each month was now only three “weeks” long, and each one of them was given a new name. The result was mass confusion. But then, there were other more immediate things for a Frenchman to worry about, like keeping his head.

In addition to taking a hammer and chisel to nearly every conceivable institution of society, church and state, the Jacobin Tribunals were also doing away with a lot of people. King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette were sent to the guillotine along with most of the other royals, aristocrats, and members of the upper classes who could not flee the country fast enough, followed, in due course, by the merchants, shopkeepers, and schoolteachers. In

the end, not even the humblest seamstress was safe as the tumbrels rolled down the cobblestone streets day and night, feeding a seemingly endless supply of stunned human beings into the insatiable blades of the guillotines. Eventually, with so many headless corpses piling up, there was almost nobody left that was worth the trouble of killing, at which point the revolutionary leaders promptly began pointing fingers, denouncing, and beheading each other.

Finally, when Robespierre, the most rabid of the fanatics, was separated from his own murderous head, the surviving politicians attempted to cobble together a more reasonable, responsible, and markedly less bloodthirsty form of government called the Directory. It was well named, for with so many squabbling deputies, its member list resembled a small town telephone book of today. Out of this unwieldy government catalogue, one name above all was on everybody’s lips. Having ably defended the country’s borders from the armies of most of the other powers of Continental Europe, which had all attacked France in an effort to crush the revolution, it was the onetime corporal from Corsica, General Napoleon Bonaparte, who was the rising star of the political arena.

In an effort to protect the revolution and quite possibly get the young upstart conveniently out of the way by setting him upon a course that might prove to be his undoing, members of the Directory were demanding that Bonaparte lead an expedition to attack the British, France’s implacably hostile enemy. What they were baying for, in increasingly shrill tones, was a full-scale invasion of England. No doubt sensing some political skulduggery in their motives but not wanting to be seen as backing down from the challenge, Napoleon shrewdly proposed an alternate strat-

## WHEN AN OTTOMAN ARMY SURROUNDED JEAN KLEBER’S DIVISION AT MOUNT TABOR ON APRIL 16, 1799, THE TIMELY ARRIVAL OF GENERAL BONAPARTE ENSURED A FRENCH VICTORY.

BY ROBERT HEEGE







**Murad Bey's Mamelukes were no match for the weapons and tactics of Bonaparte's French army at the Battle of the Pyramids on July 21, 1798. After the French squares and cannon shattered their mounted charges, the French overran their camp and marched into Cairo the following day.**

egy: to strike a crippling blow against Britain by strangling her trade route to India. He would accomplish this by seizing the strategically vital island of Malta and capturing Egypt, thereby denying the British access to friendly ports in the eastern Mediterranean and cutting off any practical overland routes to the East Indies in the bargain. The members of the Directory approved the plan.

The die was cast. On May 19, 1798, Bonaparte set sail into the Mediterranean from Toulon with 100 warships under Vice Admiral Francois-Paul Brueys and 400 transports carrying five infantry divisions and one of cavalry, 35,000 men in all, and almost immediately began to exceed expectations. By June 12, he was master of the storied Isle of Malta, its fabled Knights bowing to the inevitable and surrendering their treasure house. On July 1 and 2, the French landed in Egypt and easily captured Alexandria. At Shubra Kit on July 13, Bonaparte set the locals to their heels, and on July 21, four miles from Cairo within site of the Giza Plateau at what became known as the Battle of the Pyramids, his infantry squares withstood repeated massed cavalry charges from the pride of Egypt, mowing down horse and rider alike with deadly artillery and musket fire that sent the Mameluke warriors of Murad Bey scurrying south, leaving several thousand dead in their wake, while those of Ibrahim Bey, who had shrewdly kept their distance on the opposite bank of the Nile, fled for the safety of the Sinai. The French lost a mere 29 men. On July 24, the victorious Napoleon entered Cairo.

It was an auspicious beginning to the campaign, but Jazzar Pasha, soon to become Napoleon's adversary, though a gentleman of advanced years, was not a man to be taken lightly. To begin with, he was neither an Arab nor a Turk. What he was was a survivor. He was born in Stolac, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, an ethnic Albanian and a baptized Christian. The Ottoman Turks had conquered his people centuries earlier, and also all the other southern Slavs, the Serbians and the Croats, the Albanians, Bulgarians, and the Romanians, nearly all of southeastern Europe. They still languished in 1799 within the oppressive Muslim empire of the Turks. Moreover, whether it was a particularly lovely girl or an unusually bright-eyed boy, the Turks had a nasty habit of kidnapping them from their families. Most would never see them again, and it was probably a blessing, albeit a cruel one.

While the girls who were dragged off in this bestial manner invariably got a one-way ticket to the slave quarters, seraglio, or harem, the most promising of the male children had a different fate in store for them. Routinely beaten and systematically brainwashed over many years, they were battle-trained as they grew to young adulthood, forcibly converted to Islam, and inducted into the ranks of the Janissaries, the much feared mounted shock troops of the Ottomans they were indoctrinated to serve the sultan and his empire with a fanatical, bloodthirsty devotion. Appropriately, they took their name from Janus, the two-faced god of antiquity. The Turks often took a sadistic delight in unleashing these fair-skinned, heartless killing machines upon their own people.

Jazzar was indeed a survivor, and he was nobody's fool. Everything he did, he did by choice. The spartan ranks of the Janissaries were not for him. Far from being a helpless victim, it was said that he had actually killed a man while he was still little more than a boy himself. Quickly taking flight to escape the axe of the executioner, which would have surely been his fate, he made his way to the capital of the Turkish Empire, to the vast slave markets of Constantinople, where he willingly sold himself into slavery.

Across the Mediterranean from Constantinople, a safe haven beckoned for an enterprising slave. Egypt had been conquered and absorbed into the Ottoman Empire several centuries earlier. Eventually, the administration of this Turkish outpost was given to the Mameluks, premier military caste of the Ottomans whose name reverberates in the region to this day.

Operating as a strange mix of elite soldiers and civil servants on behalf of a puppet governor-general, Mamelukes had become a privileged class in Egypt despite the fact that they remained, at least technically, a hierarchy of slaves. Effectively governing the province like a Medieval fiefdom in the name of the Turkish sultan, this army of militaristic functionaries gained wealth, status, and respect.



Only the finest slaves in the empire could become Mamelukes. Like the Janissaries, they were literally hand selected by the Turks from among the lighter skinned, Caucasian, or European subjects of the territories held under their sway. They came from Albania and Bulgaria or Circassia and Georgia in the Caucasus, or the lands of Yugoslavia, southern Slavs, like the hardened boy from Herzegovina. Purchased by an Egyptian overlord who liked his clear-eyed, unflinching, fearless look, he was soon given a new name, Ahmed Pasha al Jazzar, and recruited into this strange new life.

Jazzar seized his chance and aligned himself with this new order with a vengeance. He became his master's personal bodyguard, enforcer, and professional executioner. It was a line of work he evidently came to relish.

As the years passed in Egypt, Jazzar eventually gained in fearsome reputation and status. In time, he would assume a series of coveted offices, including governor of the city of Cairo, before being promoted for his devoted years of capable service by the Turkish sultan to the governorship of Sidon and Damascus, which included Syria, portions of modern Lebanon, and the whole of Palestine (now Israel). There, when he was not living up to his new nickname of The Butcher, touring about the countryside with a kind of portable gibbet and indulging his passion for forced conversions to Islam, the wholesale massacre of Jews, and the torture and murder of every Christian he could lay his bony hands on, he sat, in the winter of his years, on purple cushions in his capital at Acre.

Enter the French. Having already stormed into Egypt, still a nominal Turkish vassal state, and in eight short months scattered the mighty hosts of the Mameluke Beys, Ibrahim, and Murad (the latest duo to assume the leadership of the aforementioned, centuries-old order of warrior-slaves) who ruled there ostensibly on behalf of Ottoman Sultan Selim III, young Bonaparte decided to try his luck in Ottoman provinces that lay to the east. His objectives were Syria, the Jordan River Valley, and the Holy Land, as well as besieging the storied old citadel city of Acre, just as Richard the Lionheart of England had done some 600 years earlier.

Emboldened by the easy victories of his modern troops against the somewhat medieval forces arrayed against him in Egypt and perhaps unaware of the professional capabilities and ruthless qualities of leadership possessed by Acre's ruler, Jazzar Pasha, Bonaparte expected the citadel to fall into his lap like a ripe fig on the road to his real objective, the holy city of Jerusalem. Napoleon went off with the bulk of his army in search of a suitably

grandiose triumph, leaving a single division commanded by the redoubtable Alsatian General Jean Baptiste Kleber to tidy up in the rear, conduct a reconnaissance in force, and deal with whatever opposition the Turks, the Mamelukes, the Arabs, or anybody else might care to muster on his flanks.

In making this typically audacious command decision in the field, the budding military genius proved not only that he was already a decisive tactician, confident in his own abilities, but also a commander that was equally unafraid to delegate great responsibility to a trusted subordinate. In selecting Kleber for the task at hand, Bonaparte proved to be a good judge of character. Indeed, he could not have chosen a better man.

At 46, Kleber was a seasoned, professional soldier. If his youthful commander can rightfully be called a child of the Revolution, Kleber was equally, in many ways, a self-made man. Born in Strasbourg, in the French province of Alsace, he spent 25 years in the military. In 1776 he began his career in the Austrian Army, and by 1789 he had returned to France and joined the French Army. Advancing to the rank of Major General during the French Republic's military campaigns in Europe, Kleber briefly held the rank of commander-in-chief.

By 1797, Kleber was as worn out as France's foes, and with his letter of resignation reluctantly accepted he retired to private life. Within a year, the summons from none other than the meteorically ascendant Bonaparte arrived, offering him command of a full division and the once in a life-

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Five years after his visit to plague victims in Jaffa in 1799 during the Egypt-Syria campaign, Bonaparte commissioned a painting of the event by neoclassical painter Antoine-Jean Gros.

time opportunity to whet his appetite for glory and adventure in the storied ancient land of the pharaohs. It was an offer he could not refuse. In the vanguard, Kleber was nearly killed before the expedition had scarcely begun, when a musket ball came within centimeters of taking off his head. And so it was that Kleber, a man of action, now found himself there, squatting besides the waters of the Nile, tasked with covering Bonaparte's glory hungry backside, in spring 1799.

By March 20, Napoleon's siege of Acre was underway despite the fact that, after easily overcoming the fortress of El-Arish on February 20 and seizing Jaffa, in Palestine, on March 7 (where Napoleon proceeded to slaughter thousands of prisoners just outside the city's walls), his famous luck began to run out. Bubonic plague broke out, decimating Napoleon's troops (with some Imams declaring this to be God's own vengeance against the infidels), though the French were able to occupy the port of Haifa on March 17. A fleet of Royal Navy ships under the command of the positively clairvoyant British Admiral Sir Sydney Smith had arrived off the coast on March 15 to



bombard the coastal road, intercept Napoleon's transport ships, and capture his siege guns.

Smith even managed to put ashore a group of sailors to help Jazzar's artillerymen at Acre to defend the city. Nevertheless, a confident Bonaparte opined that even without the use of his big guns the enemy might manage to hold out for two weeks at the most. The trouble was that nobody consulted the defenders of Acre, who proceeded to put up a spirited defense. March passed into April, and as the weeks rolled by the French timetable went out the window.

Kleber, meanwhile, standing pat with his small division, was becoming anxious. After watching with envy as Napoleon's star rose ever higher as his Armée de l'Orient racked up one lopsided success after another during its Egyptian adventure, Kleber finally decided that the best way to discharge the rather thankless task allotted to him would be to take the offensive. Kleber would engage the Ottoman forces streaming out of Damascus and assembling just south of Bonaparte's position while they were still busy girding themselves for battle and before they could effectively intervene at Acre.

He would do this, straightforward soldier that he was, by means of a cut-and-slash assault on their encampment in Palestine, just below Mount Tabor on the Plain of Esdraelon. It was an audacious idea. The Turks had about 35,000 men, with approximately 25,000 of them mounted

Both: Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection



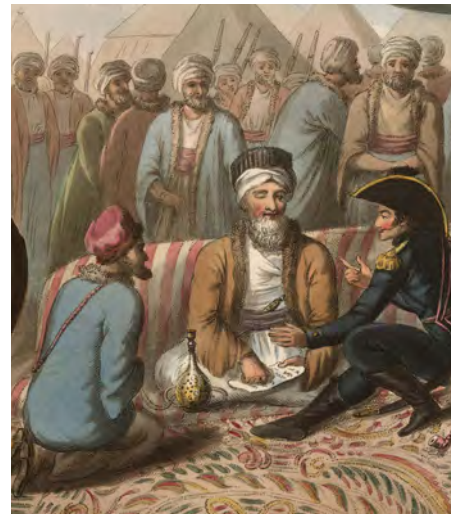
cavalrymen, of which a considerable number were enraged Mamelukes led by Ibrahim Bey, recently driven out of their Egyptian stronghold by the French. Adding to this mighty host were another 10,000 foot soldiers, all of them representing the Sultan, the Turkish Empire, Islam and its prophet, and the elderly crocodile, Jazzar Pasha, himself.

While many of the troops at the Jazzar Pasha's disposal were poorly trained militia and a grimy horde of volunteer jihadis amounting to little more than an impassioned rabble, Kleber was almost ridiculously outnumbered, commanding a single small division of approximately 2,000 men. His strategy was simple: avoid, if possible, the embarrassing and deadly possibility of annihilation in a set-piece battle far from home against an enemy force that, despite its evident shortcomings, was still superior in number. His task was not only to survive the encounter, but also to carry the day with speed, surprise, and the irresistible martial élan of a better class of soldiery.

Kleber's sole audacious tactic would be a daring night raid launched straight at the Turkish camp to sow confusion and chaos. He hoped to scatter the enemy before they realized how few in number his men really were.

Since the eyes of the Turks were everywhere, it was safe for Kleber to assume that the enemy was aware of his general location, if not his actual strength. Accordingly, he had to know that he and his men, separated from Napoleon's main force, might find themselves a tempting target. Kleber could not allow the initiative to pass to his foes. He would have to move fast.

On the evening of April 15, Kleber decided to strike, marching his men around Mount Tabor from the north. In the dead of night, they wheeled east from Nazareth, hoping to smash through



ABOVE: British naval officers sent ashore by Admiral Sir Sydney Smith meet with Jazzar Pasha in a period engraving. LEFT: General Napoleon Bonaparte besieged the Ottoman stronghold at Acre in March 1799 but was thwarted when a British fleet arrived to support the Ottomans.

the enemy camp on the Plain of Esdraelon. Kleber dutifully sent word to Napoleon, informing him of his intended plan. His bravery lies in the fact that he did so, knowing all the while that by the time the dispatches reached Napoleon he would already be in the thick of it and most likely on his own.

Immediately upon receiving word of Kleber's plans, Bonaparte rashly dispatched approximately 3,000 of the assault troops already besieging Acre to reinforce Kleber. Riding at the head of this column was Napoleon himself.

With dreams of washing their blistered feet in the Jordan River, Kleber and his men slogged toward the Plain of Esdraelon. As the first rays of dawn began to pierce the night, Kleber and his division had just reached the southern approaches at the base of the mountain, where the Turkish pickets caught sight of them almost immediately and alerted the camp. At about 6 AM on April 16, with the element of surprise completely lost, the battle began pell mell. The clamor of war echoed across the ancient landscape.

Almost at once, Kleber realized that retreat was not an option. If his troops tried to make a run for it, they would be cut down in short order before they left the mountain or die out in the open on the plain with the enemy at their backs. He ordered his division to form two infantry squares and face the Ottoman whirlwind. If the French had to die, they would go down like men.

From 6 AM until about 4 PM under the blistering sun, Kleber and his exhausted, dehy-



drated men held their ground against repeated furious assaults. Amazingly, their casualties remained sustainable. However, like Kleber's ammunition, time was fast running out.

The moment had come to do or die. Under a scorching sun, with no water and next to no ammunition left, Kleber was set to order a breakout toward the Jordan River to the east. It would be a near suicidal action, but the fighting general had no options left. Once his ammunition stocks were gone, the enemy would quickly overwhelm the Frenchmen. Just then, shortly past 4 PM, a soldier shouted that he could see a column of soldiers in the distance and the tricolor fluttering in the haze. Others thought they saw it, too. Then, just as suddenly, it seemed to vanish into thin air, only to reappear yet again.

Kleber suddenly realized that what they were seeing was a French column coming toward them from Acre to the north. The column was rushing forward, cresting the natural slopes and depressions in the landscape as it hurried to join the fight. Through his spyglass, Kleber could see Napoleon in the van. Pouring onto the Plain of Esdraelon, Bonaparte immediately sent 300 of his men straight into the Turkish encampment, just as Kleber had hoped to do, cutting the Ottomans at Mount Tabor off from their camp. On a small scale, it was the classic divide and conquer strategy that Napoleon would employ many times in the years to come. The encampment was quickly sacked and burned, which brought an unexpected but happy consequence for the French.

Forced to choose between dealing with the French squares on Mount Tabor and the rescue of their few miserable possessions in the camp, many of the enemy combatants broke from the fight and rushed back toward their burning bivouacs. Turkish unit cohesion broke down as fear of encirclement took hold in the enemy's ranks. What started out as a few desperate men running down the slope southward onto the plain became a mad, irrational dash by thousands of panic-stricken souls, who suddenly melted away before Kleber's astonished eyes. Seizing the initiative, Kleber shouted to his men, and they charged after the enemy. Caught between Kleber's men racing down upon them from behind and Bonaparte's column rushing straight into them from the north, the Army of Damascus was shredded like so much confetti, pursued all the way to the banks of the Jordan River, which ran red with their blood.

Incredibly, Kleber's casualties throughout the entire ordeal were just two dead and 17 wounded. It was a great victory and an amazing tale of survival, but if Napoleon had not

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General Jean Baptiste Kleber, left behind to rule French-held Egypt upon Napoleon Bonaparte's return to France, was mortally wounded by an Arab assassin in Cairo and died as a result on June 14, 1800.

chosen to reinforce Kleber or had been delayed for only an hour or two it would have been an entirely different story.

As for Acre, Napoleon never did take the city, and on May 20 he called off the siege and fell back into Egypt. There, the British, who controlled the sea lanes, kept him more or less bottled up on the mainland, despite a further string of victories against the Turks and the Mamelukes. As time passed, his *Armée de l'Orient* found its position in Egypt increasingly untenable as British and Turkish cooperation at sea and on land mounted. Bonaparte, who was more concerned with the political and military situation in France and the rest of Europe than with that of Egypt, eventually put to sea in secret and sailed back to France, determined to mold Europe in accordance with his own towering ambitions. Once back in France, his rivals were neutralized and the squabbling Directory was whittled down to a workable form of government with fewer deputies called the Consulate. Bonaparte, his victory laurels still fresh from his Egyptian adventure, assumed the office of First Consul. It would not be long before he would assume a new and even loftier title, Emperor of France.

His *Armée de l'Orient*, after an arduous campaign and a Byzantine series of negotiations with Selim III and his British allies, made its own way home. By August 30, 1801, the last French soldier had set sail for France.

The valiant Kleber was not among them. Left in command of France's Egyptian province, he came upon what he thought was a teenage beggar in the garden of his compound and, bending low in response to his supplications, was rewarded for his pains with a deadly thrust from a young Arab assassin's knife. Kleber died of his wounds in Cairo on June 14, 1800.

For a time even in death, Kleber was denied a return to his homeland. His embalmed body was shipped back to France, but Napoleon refused to allow him to be buried in his native soil. Bonaparte was never one to share the limelight with anyone. Kleber's unburied corpse languished in a cell on the notorious island prison of the Chateau d'If for several years. It was not until long after the Age of Napoleon had come and gone and Bonaparte himself was dead that the French authorities brought Kleber's remains back to his beloved Strasbourg. He was laid to rest beneath a bronze statue of himself in the town square, a monument to a great victory against near impossible odds and to one man's tenacity and peerless courage.

In Egypt and Syria, Napoleon had shown a continued ability to win battles under unfavorable conditions and also to save his own skin. The latter was a knack that he would exhibit many more times in his famous life. □



## The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1987-1988 was notable for the use of many innovative weapons and technologies.

THE COLD WAR WAS FOUGHT ON EVERY CONTINENT AND HEMISPHERE in thousands of battles, large and small. Americans are mostly familiar with those the nation was directly involved in, such as Korea and Vietnam. Other conflicts are largely forgotten in the West today, especially those of long-suffering Africa. It was there some of the largest battles were fought; one in particular pitted two indigenous

forces, each backed by a superpower, against each other in Africa's largest battle since World War II.

The Angolan Civil War lasted from 1975 to 2002. On one side, the Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) was backed by the Soviet Union and its client state, Cuba. Opposing them was the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), supported by South Africa. In turn, the South Africans were assisted by the United States, Israel, and several other Western nations to varying degrees, sometimes clandestinely, other times

not. Weapons, equipment, and advisers flowed into Angola from both sides, and eventually combat troops deployed into the war-torn nation.

During 1987 a FAPLA offensive threatened UNITA's strongholds in southeastern Angola, and the South African Defense Force (SADF) intervened to prevent this. The stage was set for a showdown that became one of the last large engagements before the Berlin Wall fell. *The Last Hot Battle of the Cold War: South Africa vs. Cuba in the Angolan Civil War* (Peter Polack, Casemate

Publishers, Havertown, PA, 2013, 232 pp., photographs, appendices, notes, index, \$32.95, hardcover) is the story of that battle. It centered on a town called Cuito Cuanavale, the name a holdover from the former Portuguese rulers of Angola.

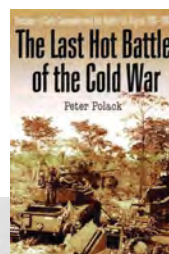
Each side brought strengths and weaknesses to the fray. FAPLA was equipped with hundreds of Soviet

T-54/55 tanks, vehicles, artillery, and MiG jets. FAPLA had Soviet advisers to guide it, although in time the Soviets, unused to fighting a guerrilla war in the jungle and doctrinally closed-minded, proved of limited use. The Cubans,

initially used as advisers and in support functions, had a different mindset and eventually came to lead the fight. UNITA and the SADF had advantages in training that offset FAPLA's size and vast equipment stocks. SADF in particular was the best-trained force, with an understanding of combined arms warfare and a professional core. It suffered from a frequent rotation of leaders, an aversion to casualties, and was always understrength.

The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale also saw innovations often considered the children of later wars. SADF formed its troops into small combined arms battlegroups supported by artillery, air defense, and antitank assets. Overhead flew small reconnaissance drones providing real-time

South African mechanized units pummeled Angolan government (FAPLA) forces with minimal losses during the Angolan Civil War.





*You deserve a factual look at . . .*

## **The Truth about the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement**

### **Does it stand for Middle East peace or does it seek Israel's destruction?**

Leaders of the effort to boycott, divest from and apply sanctions against Israel—the so-called BDS movement—say they stand for an “end to the occupation of the Palestinian territories,” “justice in Palestine” and “freedom for the Palestinian people.” But what are the real motives of BDS leaders—do they really want peace between Israel and the Palestinian people?

#### **What are the facts?**

While the BDS movement uses highly emotive language in their appeals for support—such as “ending repression” and “Israeli war crimes”—a closer look at the real motives of the movement reveals a more sinister goal.

First, note that the BDS movement focuses only on alleged war crimes and repression by Israel—and ignores real war crimes and tyrannical repression by other Middle Eastern nations and terrorist organizations. When Hamas and Hizbollah target thousands of rockets at Israeli civilian populations in violation of international law, BDS utters not a word of criticism, let alone a call for boycotts or sanctions. When Iran's government violently crushes peaceful protests and Egypt stifles its press and political opposition with a dictatorial hand, BDS is likewise silent. Why?

By singling out Israel for criticism and economic pressure, BDS employs a double standard—a hypocritical and dishonest tactic frequently used by anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hate groups.

The reason, as we'll see, is that the BDS movement is not really interested in alleged war crimes or repression. Rather its purpose is to delegitimize and then destroy Israel.

The second critical fact about the BDS movement is that while it masquerades behind words like “freedom” and “occupation,” one need only listen closely to its rhetoric to realize that these are code words for the elimination of Israel.

**BDS leaders oppose a two-state solution—why?** While the United States, Western European powers, Israel and the U.N. Security Council have embraced a “two-state solution” as the basis for peace in the Middle East, BDS leaders, such as Ali Abunimah and Omar Barghouti, are clear: They openly and outspokenly oppose a two-state solution. Why?

Because when BDS supporters talk about “the occupation of Palestine,” they refer not to disputed West Bank territories, but to *all* the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea—including all of Israel. When they talk about “freedom,” they don't mean freedom from security roadblocks, they mean freedom from Jews in their midst. When they talk about “occupation,” they mean *not* just Israeli

security forces in the West Bank, they also mean Israelis “occupying” the state of Israel.

The third telling fact about the BDS movement is that it consistently and vehemently opposes any efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians together to work in peace and on peace. For example, BDS leaders advocate boycotting cultural exchanges between Israelis and Palestinian artists. They condemn educational cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian universities. Most revealingly, they *oppose peace talks* between Israel and the Palestinian leadership, calling them “collaborationist.”

#### **BDS is not about “occupation.”**

In short, BDS is not about peaceful coexistence or ending the “occupation” of the West Bank. Indeed, Omar Barghouti, a graduate student at Tel Aviv University and BDS founder, admits, “If the occupation ends . . . would that end support for BDS? No it wouldn't—no.”

Not only do BDS leaders admit this, but they implacably support the “return” of nearly five million *descendants* of Arab refugees who left during Israel's war of independence in 1947. In fact, most of these Palestinians are not truly refugees—fully 95 percent of them have never set foot in Israel.

Most importantly, the immigration of millions of Arab refugees' descendants to Israel would make Jews a minority in their own state. As President Obama has correctly noted, “The ‘right of return’ would extinguish Israel as a Jewish state, and that's not an option.” Yet destroying Israel by flooding it with millions of Palestinians is precisely what BDS leader Barghouti insists upon: “This (the right of return) is something we cannot compromise on.”

**BDS's goal: “Extinguish Israel as a Jewish state.”** BDS unequivocally rejects Israel's many peace offers—including numerous land-for-peace proposals supported by the United States—and rejects Israel's willingness to sit down to direct peace talks without preconditions.

Thus, the facts make BDS's intentions clear: Rather than being a movement that seeks peace and freedom, it is a movement motivated by an obsessive hate of Zionism and Jews and opposition to the Jewish state—one bent on fomenting strife, conflict and enmity until Israel is utterly defeated.

**Rather than a movement that seeks peace and freedom, BDS is motivated by an obsessive hate of Zionism.**

*If you support peace between Israel and the Palestinians, if you support two states for two peoples—living side by side in cultural, social and economic harmony—please oppose the ill-intentioned BDS movement in your community. Speak out against hateful, one-sided campaigns to boycott Israeli goods, to divest from companies that do business with Israel and to enact sanctions against the state of Israel. This is not the path to peace!*

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## SHORT BURSTS



**On War: The Best Military Histories** (various writers, Pritzker Military Museum and Library, 2013, \$27.00, hardcover) A collection of essays excerpted from the works of prize-winning authors in military history. Subjects range from the American Civil War to Vietnam.

**Reconstructing a Shattered Egyptian Army: War Minister Gen. Mohamad Fawzi's Memoirs 1967-71** (Youssef Aboul-Enein, Naval Institute Press, 2014, \$64.95, hardcover) This Egyptian general undertook the effort to rebuild his nation's army after its loss in the Six Day War. The result was Egypt's ability to go to war again in 1973.

**Assault from the Sky: US Marine Corps Helicopter Operations in Vietnam** (Dick Camp, Casemate Press, 2013, \$32.95, hardcover) Personal accounts and official reports are blended to tell the story of how the U.S. Marine Corps used helicopters to take the fight to the enemy. Helicopters often provided a crucial mobility that enabled battlefield victory.

**George Crook: From the Redwoods to Appomattox** (Paul Magid, University of Oklahoma Press, 2011, \$24.95, softcover) A new biography of the famous frontier general. This version focuses on his early career in a newly released paperback edition.

**U-9: A Damned Un-English Weapon** (Jim Thesing, Merriam Press, 2013, \$16.95, softcover) The story of the German submarine that sank three British cruisers in September 1914. This successful attack brought attention to a new threat to the supremacy of the Royal Navy.

**Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality** (Jeffrey T. Sammons and John H. Morrow, Jr., University of Kansas Press, 2014, 34.95, softcover) This book ignores the myths surrounding this famous New York unit to explore its real history. Included is its role in the contemporary fight for racial equality.

video surveillance to commanders in the field. Armored cars carrying electronic warfare equipment gathered radio intercepts. To protect its own communications, SADF used frequency-hopping radios, and also new Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to offset FAPLA's access to satellite imagery. Due to the arms embargo, the South Africans developed their own air-burst artillery shells, mine-resistant vehicles, and fire-control computers for the howitzers. These developments occurred at a time when the U.S. Army was just introducing many of the same types of equipment.

The FAPLA attack was quickly blunted by the SADF-supported UNITA troops, and before long the offensive became a defensive fight. The Soviet advisers were unprepared and soon fled the field as the South Africans pushed their Angolan enemies back in disarray. As the FAPLA forces fell back to Cuito Cuanavale, the situation began to change. Cuban troops entered the fray in large numbers and set up a firm defensive line, using minefields to channel the attacking UNITA/SADF columns into kill zones. The South Africans could still make

progress, but only slowly. By April 1988, the fighting ground to a halt as events elsewhere drew attention away until a peace agreement was reached leading to the withdrawal of South African troops.

The novelty of this book is in its coverage of an unknown battle in a little-known war. The author tries to cover the subject in a neutral fashion and mostly succeeds. The book shows a slight lack of military expertise in the writing, but this is balanced by his open approach to the combatants, thorough research, and explicit detail. Students of Africa's wars and the merely curious should enjoy the book. It is mainly a story of the odd match between Cuba and South Africa, separated by an ocean but brought together on the battlefield of another country trapped in its own struggle.



**Defender of Canada: Sir George Prevost and the War of 1812** (John R. Grodzinski, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2013, 375

pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, \$34.95, hardcover)

When the War of 1812 began, George Prevost, governor of Canada, found himself in an unenviable position. He was charged with the defense of a vast, underpopulated area, mostly undeveloped, with scant forces to do the job. Regular troops were few and had to be supplemented by a militia not always reliable. Most of the naval assets needed for the job had to be constructed and manned. American forces, also mostly militia, were more numerous and threatened Canada from several directions.

Prevost was up to the task, though. He understood how to use the system of rivers and lakes throughout the Canadian-American border. The Northwest Frontier area in particular was populated by native tribes who could be stirred against the encroaching Americans. The governor also proved adept at servicing the logistical needs of his widely spread forces. As a result, British forces were able to defeat most American plans, thus keeping Canada intact.

Despite these accomplishments, Prevost was charged with failing to act decisively and losing a battle at Plattsburgh in 1814. Recalled to London, he requested a court martial to clear his name but died before it was held. Subsequent criticism of him was negative but failed to take into account how he and his officers preserved Canada, keeping it British for the postwar world. This new work by a Canadian scholar maintains Prevost deserved a better end than the one he suffered.



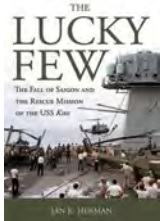
**Hundred Days: The Campaign That Ended World War I** (Nick Lloyd, Basic Books, New York, 2014, 400 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, \$29.99, hardcover)

"I never saw so many men, guns, ambulances, and various kinds of equipment. We knew something was coming off," wrote American Corporal Frank Faulkner on the night of July 17-18, 1918. Though he could not know it, what he was watching was the beginning of the end of the Great War. He was one of hundreds of thousands of soldiers from a number of nations ready to carry out a herculean effort to finally smash the German defenses after four years of horrible conflict.

Just days after the young American saw his side's vast military machine moving, the Hundred Days' Offensive began. The Germans were exhausted after their own attacks failed and it was time for the Allies to move. It began with the Battle of Amiens where the Western pow-



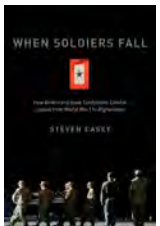
ers achieved surprise and started the Germans on their retreat from France. New weapons such as the tank and light machine gun played their part, but it was the soldiers who truly carried the war to its conclusion. Using accounts of men from the front lines all the way to the war rooms of the general staffs, this work pulls together the end of the war in a concise, readable fashion.



hardcover)

The end of the Vietnam War was sad and ugly. In April 1975, as North Vietnamese tanks were entering Saigon, the city collapsed into chaos. A U.S. Navy task force cruised offshore, plying the waters while a handful of American diplomats and Marines awaited evacuation to the safety of those ships. The destroyer escort USS *Kirk* was among those ships. As the evacuation continued, not only Americans but South Vietnamese fleeing their defeated nation began to appear. Some were from the South Vietnamese Navy, its own ships burdened with refugees. Others began to appear in helicopters, more than the task force could accommodate. For the USS *Kirk* and her crew, this meant unloading UH-1 Huey helicopters, which landed on her helicopter pad, then unceremoniously dumping them overboard to make room for another.

In the end, approximately 32,000 people were rescued by the task force in what became a massive humanitarian effort. The crew of the USS *Kirk* gave aid and fed these exiles; some even changed diapers and dried frightened children's tears. The pilot of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter, too large to land on the flight deck hovered above so the occupants could jump down to safety, then he ditched his helicopter in the ocean. Desperation and heroism combined for a few harrowing days in the South China Sea.



notes, bibliography, index, \$29.95, hardcover)

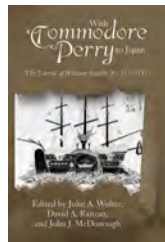
The United States has a reputation of being averse to taking casualties in its wars.

***The Lucky Few: The Fall of Saigon and the Rescue Mission of the USS Kirk*** (Jan K. Herman, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2013, 192 pp., photographs, notes bibliography, index, \$39.95,

Deserved or not, the belief exists at home and abroad that losses in battle weaken the resolve of the American public. While time has actually shown this view to be often false, it persists nonetheless. Political and military leaders have had to work around this issue for decades for numerous reasons: partisan politics, poor accounting of the lost, and the stated aim to protect the families of the dead have all played into the issue.

At different times, casualty figures have been censored, downplayed, or even exaggerated, depending on the situation at hand. For the military, wariness over losses has led to investment in technology and overwhelming firepower to reduce the number of killed and wounded. As communications technology has advanced, the cycle of reporting has become faster, requiring quick responses to losses during America's recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even the improving ability to identify bodies on the battlefield has left its mark.

Years of research went into this book and the effort shows clearly. The author combines the disparate arenas of politics, military affairs, the news media, and even race relations into a coherent narrative to shed light upon his subject matter.



illustrations, notes, bibliography, \$39.95, softcover)

The American expedition to Japan was a major undertaking for the young nation with far-reaching effects for subsequent world events. Matthew Perry's voyage opened a previously closed, insular Japan to relations with the Western nations. Sailing with the famous Perry was 16-year-old William Speiden Jr., purser's clerk aboard the steam frigate USS *Mississippi*. His father of the same name was the ship's purser. Young Speiden kept a 300-page journal of his experiences aboard ship and in Japan. This journal is reproduced along with background information and a number of Speiden's sketches. Many other illustrations were drawn by other members of the crew or Chinese artists during the voyage. Aside from covering the events of this monumental cruise through the Pacific, which created new relationship between the United States and Japan, this book provides insight into life aboard an American warship during the mid-1800s. □

***With Commodore Perry to Japan: The Journal of William Speiden, Jr., 1852-1855*** (Eds. John A. Wolter, David A. Ranzan, and John J. McDonough, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2013, 320 pp., maps, illus-



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# A stand-alone expansion takes us back to the Western Front, while independent developers look to get into the world of war gaming.



## COMPANY OF HEROES 2: THE WESTERN FRONT ARMIES

*Company of Heroes 2* made a decent splash when it arrived in June of last year, placing players on the Eastern Front of World War II. Those who either weren't too keen on the setting or are simply looking for something new within the same framework should be pretty pumped for *Company of Heroes 2: The Western Front Armies*, which, as the name implies, is an expansion that takes us back to the setting of the first *Company of Heroes* game.



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This expansion is the first stand-alone multiplayer release for the game, so it will mostly be of interest to folks who have been enjoying taking on other players in challenging online skirmishes. *The Western Front Armies* throws the U.S. forces and the German Oberkommando West into the mix, bringing their own distinct tactical gameplay options, new infantry, team weapons, vehicles, abilities, and upgrades along with them.

Other updates include a new progression system that introduces more unique content into the game, letting players delve more deeply into its tactical and strategic aspects. Even though *The Western Front Armies* is a standalone release, new players will also still be able to access 23 existing *Company of Heroes 2* maps via auto-match, and look forward to playing against all the other existing factions.

*Company of Heroes 2: The Western Front Armies* should be out right around the time this issue hits stands, and it will be interesting to see how it affects the overall multiplayer atmosphere of the game. It promises to represent an entry point into the franchise and the online community, and hopefully that will involve diving more deeply into the intricacies of succeeding in multiplayer. There are so many nuances to the game that are only achieved by trial and error in *Company of Heroes 2*—things as simple as the ideal order in which one should build certain units, for instance—and while that's not inherently bad, even the slightest series of mistakes can be crippling. Either way there should be plenty of opportunities to jump into action once everyone has their hands on this one.

## INDEPENDENT WARFARE

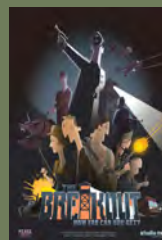
### THE BREAKOUT

Over the past few years Kickstarter has really grown as a means of funding games that might otherwise not see the light of day. There have been both high-profile companies and unknown up-and-comers getting in on the action and succeeding, and you never know when that next burst of unforeseen innovation will pop up out of nowhere. Not everything is a success story, though, and when projects fail one can only hope they'll eventually find another way to overcome those odds.

One such case was the recent crowd-funding campaign focusing on a game called *The Breakout*. Since we live in a fantastic time that's made the resurgence of point-and-click adventure games not only possible, but a viable means of engaging with a relatively large audience, developer Pixel Trip Studios is attempting to mix that gameplay style up with a familiar World War II setting. In addition to 1990s adventure games, this particular project draws inspiration from classic movies like director John Sturges's 1963 film *The Great Escape*.

In *The Breakout*—billed as a nail-biting adventure game for adults—players would have to deal with life or death consequences that depend on stealth, preparation, and adequate supplies as they attempt to break out of the most feared prison camp of all. The plot revolves around Guy Kassel, an ex-thief who cleaned up his act and became a pilot, only to be shot down and imprisoned in a POW camp in the dreaded Verdammen Hof. In hopes of regaining his freedom and returning home to his fiancée, Guy partners up with a group of specialist escapees who aim to cook up their most daring breakout to date.

It's not as simple as just walking up and talking to a set of repeat escapees, of course. With so much on the line, Guy will have to earn the trust of some of the prison's most notorious inmates, spending the rest of his time casing the joint by taking note of daily guard routines, discovering new areas, and more. Once night falls, the camp is essentially the player's domain. Guy's thievery skills come into play as he sneaks about, picks locks, and steals tools, all the while avoiding spotlights, guard dogs, and watchful



**DEVELOPER**  
PIXEL TRIP STUDIOS

**SYSTEM(S)**  
PC, MAC, LINUX

tower lookouts that won't hesitate to shoot on sight. Pixel Trip Studios also hints at a mysterious connection between the vile Colonel Schwarzer and an occult secret society.

Despite the fact that *The Breakout*—initially planned for PC, Mac, and Linux, with additional platforms to be considered if further funding is added—failed its attempt at Kickstarter, we're hoping they either try again down the road or find another way to make the game happen. The world could always use more unique takes on war games that stray from the traditional shooter and strategy genres to which we're all so accustomed.

### THIS WAR OF MINE

11 Bit Studios—a game developer based in Warsaw, Poland—has an even more unique take on war in the works. The tagline says a mouthful: "In war, not everyone is a soldier." That's right, in *This War of Mine* players don't step into the battle-worn shoes of soldiers or generals; they're not sitting behind the controls of a tank and charging into battle. Rather, players take control of civilians, who, while not directly involved, are greatly affected as the war happens all around them.



*This War of Mine* is currently in the works for PC, Mac, and Linux, and is aiming at a late 2014 release. At the time of this writing, designer Pawel Miechowski hadn't even shown the public what it looks like in action, but it sounds as difficult to play as it is to create. As civilians players can stand guard at home, craft items, and venture out at night at great risk to their lives. People can get sick and wounded so you'll need to create alcohol or trade for it, and use it to disinfect wounds. The setting echoes extended war-torn eras like the siege of Sarajevo, and if it all sounds frighteningly real, it's because Miechowski and his team are talking to people, doing research, and pulling from real life experiences.

This is a far cry from some of 11 Bit Studios' previous work, like *Anomaly Warzone Earth* and *Anomaly Korea*. While *This War of Mine* seems like a pretty harrowing perspective to tackle, and Miechowski said he and his team have decided to exclude certain atrocities of war, it seems like something that could be worth experiencing for the ensuing discussion alone.



self. The *Cumberland* finally arrived, adding to his problems.

First, the British position was to urge the expulsion of the German ship at the 24-hour deadline. The Germans protested and requested two weeks for repairs. The Uruguayan decision held firm that the *Graf Spee* crew had 72 hours to repair their ship and then must leave. Then the British changed their strategy and tried to hold the raider in the harbor until sufficient strength arrived to assure British control. They even suggested that British merchant ships begin leaving to delay *Graf Spee* another 24 hours. Then the British would send another merchantman to ensure another 24 hours, and so on. However, the Uruguayan 72-hour rule stood fast, and that period would expire at 8 PM local time on December 17, 1939.

On December 15 there was the sobering funeral in Montevideo for the 37 German sailors and officers killed in the battle. Led by Langsdorff and a local brass band and firing party, the Germans proceeded to the 37 open graves. During the services, the Germans, virtually to a man, rendered the outstretched arm of the Nazi salute, but Langsdorff very conspicuously saluted with the old German hand salute.

The citizens of Montevideo were enthralled by the spectacle of the German presence. Reporters gathered news and watched the activity in the port. To fill the hours of airtime required to keep people listening, radio broadcasters repeated every rumor that floated across the city, mostly dealing with the British naval reinforcements on their way.

Finally, on the night of December 16, 1939, Langsdorff called his officers together. Just a few hours earlier he had almost decided to run for open water, but Uruguayan port authorities told him that a British merchant ship left that day at 6:15. That meant he could not leave until the evening of December 17 at 6:15 PM, but had to be gone by 8 PM.

Langsdorff's plan was to remove all crew members except a skeleton crew, sending them by tug to the nearby German freighter *Tacoma*. Then he would place aboard the ship at strategic intervals enough explosives to ensure her destruction, remove all technical equipment, and leave as the detonations were to begin. The waters were shallow, and the large vessel would not be completely submerged, so removing instruments and equipment that might have helped the enemy was important.

The final communication Langsdorff received from Berlin had given him three

options: press the Uruguayans for more time, break out to the sea, or fight his way to Buenos Aires since the Argentineans were more pro-German than his present hosts. He had exhausted efforts to stay longer. The British merchant ship's departure had cost him the option of a surprise departure; and the bay was too shallow to allow any chance of reaching Buenos Aires. It was made clear that he was not to let the ship fall into foreign hands. So Langsdorff proposed scuttling, and Berlin approved.

Nothing in Montevideo could be kept secret. On Sunday morning, December 17, 1939, the residents of Montevideo watched in almost total silence from every vantage point in the city as the *Graf Spee* raised anchor and slowly moved west. There were neither cheering crowds nor noisy celebrations, just quiet as they waited. *Graf Spee* sailed slowly with her Nazi swastikas flapping in the breeze, moving toward the designated spot for her final act.

Tugs chugged up to the warship, and the few crew still aboard climbed onto their decks, their eyes never leaving their ship. They had only minutes to wait until the sky turned bright and the sounds of explosions shocked even those fully prepared for the event. Viewers gasped, cried, and moaned as a farewell to the venerable *Graf Spee*.

Langsdorff still had work to do. He boarded the *Tacoma*, which took his crew to Buenos Aires. There he saw to it that the crewmen were properly housed and fed, then visited the wounded in scattered hospitals. The Argentinean government declared that the crew would be held as internees in the interior of Argentina and the officers would be paroled in Buenos Aires. That ended the captain's responsibility to his men. He penned a last letter to the German ambassador to Argentina, Baron von Thermann.

"For a captain with a sense of honor, it goes without saying that his personal fate cannot be separated from that of his ship," he wrote. "I can do no more for my ship's company. Neither will I be able to take an active part in the present struggle of my country. I can now only prove by my death that the fighting services of the Third Reich are ready to die for the honor of the flag."

On the night of December 19, *Graf Spee*'s commander dressed in his best uniform complete with his decorations and with his sword belted on. He lay down on the old Imperial German Navy flag, put his service revolver in his mouth and died.

The Battle of the River Plate changed naval warfare. Langsdorff was one of the last of the old ship captains, who spared life even while taking it. □

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## manstein

*Continued from page 57*

of desperate fighting had mauled the two tank corps and three rifle divisions. By March 5, Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army had switched over to the defensive and formed a new line facing southwest from Novaya Vodolaga to Ochotschaje. The same day the armies of Kazakov and Moskalenko also halted offensive operations.

After the destruction of the Southwestern Front, Manstein ordered the 48th Panzer Corps north to reinforce Army Detachment Kempf in preparation for an attack on Golikov's forces. No sooner had the Voronezh Front gone over to the defensive than the Germans attacked it.

Manstein began the second phase of his attack with an assault by the SS Panzer Corps and 4th Panzer Army against the left flank of the Voronezh Front south of Kharkov. His plan was to annihilate once and for all Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army, which would enable the Germans to gain the rear of Golikov's other two armies east of Kharkov and cut off their retreat. From west to east, the German forces included Army Detachment Kempf, SS Panzer Corps, and 48th Panzer Corps. The attack began on March 5 when three German panzer divisions—Das Reich, Leibstandarte, and Lt. Gen. Walther Hunersdorff's 6th Panzer Division of the 48th Panzer Corps—slammed into Rybalko's forces while they were still reforming south of Kharkov.

The following day, the refitted Grossdeutschland Division joined Corps Raus, part of Kempf's forces deployed west of Kharkov. The same day, the Totenkopf Division, which had been busy mopping up the encircled Soviet 15th Tank Corps, took up a position on the left flank of Hausser's battle line. In the fighting on March 6, the Das Reich Division retook Novaya Vodolaga.

On March 6, a major clash occurred at Taranovka on Rybalko's left flank, which would last 48 hours. When Hunersdorff's 6th Panzer Division advanced against the 25th Guards Rifle Division, it ran headlong into a dozen tanks of the 179th Tank Brigade waiting in ambush for the German tanks near a church. Rather than attacking the Russian strongpoint head on, Hunersdorff ordered his tanks to outflank the church by swinging around the town to the west. Meanwhile, Hunersdorff's grenadiers assaulted the town from the south.

By March 8, the SS Panzer Corps and 4th Panzer Army had captured the key railroad towns of Novaya Vodolaga and Taranovka, forcing the remnants of Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army to fall back toward Lyubotin and

Merefa. By that time, Rybalko had used up nearly all his tanks and had to rely on artillery to hold back the German armored divisions that were butchering his forces. At Merefa, Rybalko massed nine artillery batteries to contest the German advance north. By that time, Manstein had sent the 11th Panzer Division from the 1st Panzer Army north to reinforce the two divisions of Knobelsdorff's 48th Panzer Corps.

The following day, the SS Panzer Corps captured Lyubotin when the Leibstandarte Division surrounded it from the north and the Das Reich Division pushed into it from the south. The capture of Lyubotin drove a 20-kilometer wedge between Kazakov's 69th Army and the remnants of Rybalko's 3rd Tank Army. While Knobelsdorff's panzer forces mopped up the remnants of Rybalko's army at Merefa, Hausser ordered his SS divisions to join Corps Raus in an assault to recapture Kharkov.

By that time, Golikov was fully aware that the Germans would attempt to recapture Kharkov, and he ordered Maj. Gen. E.E. Belov, the Soviet commandant of the city, to prepare to defend Kharkov with the 17th NKVD Rifle Brigade and the 86th Tank Brigade, which had been sent from the front's reserve to reinforce Rybalko. On March 10, the Grossdeutschland Division, spearheading an all-out attack by Corps Raus against Moskalenko's overextended 40th Army, swept north to retake Belgorod. That same day, Hausser's SS Panzer Corps shifted west to support Corps Raus, and Dietrich's Leibstandarte Division captured Dergachi.

Resistance from Moskalenko's 40th Army had melted away, and Hausser's SS Panzer Corps was able to swing west around Kharkov. Dietrich's Leibstandarte Division entered Kharkov from the north on March 11, while Vahl's Das Reich Division pushed into the city from the west. When Belov shifted his forces north the following day to battle the Leibstandarte Division, he uncovered the west side of the city, allowing the Das Reich Division to advance unopposed toward its center. On March 13, Belov ordered a fighting withdrawal to the east.

Manstein, through the clever shifting of his forces, had managed in less than a month to drive the Soviet forces in southern Russia back to the starting points of their late winter offensives. In the process, he had destroyed upwards of five armies and crippled several others. The successful counterattack gave the troops of Army Group South a significant boost, which they would need for the titanic clash at Kursk in the summer of 1943. □



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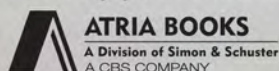
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