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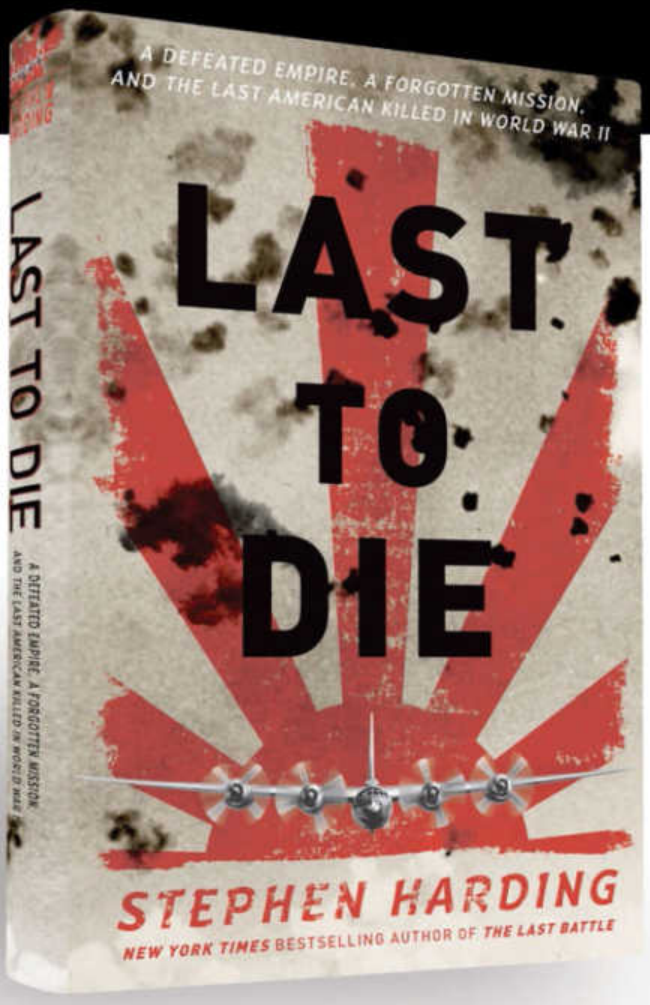

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* Andrew Roberts, author of *The Storm of War*

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FEATURES

Aiming for an enemy pillbox, a Marine on Tarawa prepares to throw a hand grenade.

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WORLD WAR II

Vol. 30, No. 5 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

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Franz Stigler escorts the B-17 "Ye Olde Pub" during the Dec. 20 "A Higher Call" encounter.

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Ronald H. Bailey ("Secret Doings in Dayton"), who has written many books and articles about World War II, grew up in Franklin, Ohio, a small town about 20 miles south of Dayton and its top-secret code-breaking project. Bailey was astonished to learn that a technician suspected of enemy spy activities lived less than a mile from his childhood home.

Hermann Balck ("Storm Across the Meuse") wrote the memoir from which this article is excerpted, *Ordnung im Chaos* ("Order in Chaos"), in 1981; the German general died in 1982. The first English-language edition of his work was published in 2015, translated by **David T. Zabecki** and **Dieter J. Biedekarken.** Zabecki, *World War II* magazine's chief military historian, holds a PhD in military history from Britain's Royal Military College of Science. Biedekarken was born and educated in Germany and, after coming to the United States as a graduate exchange student, became an American citizen and a U.S. Army officer.

Carlo D'Este ("No Fear") is a former army officer who has written seven books of military history and biography. He is the cofounder and executive director of the William E. Colby Military Writers' Symposium, held annually at Norwich University. His most recent books are *Patton: A Genius For War; Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life*; and *Warlord: A Life of Winston Churchill at War, 1874–1945*. In 2011 he received the Pritzker Military Museum & Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing.

David Sears ("Death and Valor on Tarawa") is a New Jersey-based historian and author who writes frequently for *World War II* and other HistoryNet publications. His most recent *World War II* feature was September/October 2015's "White-knuckle Countdown to Peace." David has also written frequently about efforts to find, document, and return the remains of fallen U.S. airmen, soldiers, and sailors from battlegrounds across the globe.

James Ullrich ("Time Travel") is a freelance travel writer, tour guide, and author. His work has been published in the *New York Examiner*, *Aviation History*, *Renaissance*, and *Military*, among others. In addition to writing, James teaches seminars on traveling in Europe independently on a budget; information on his lessons is at his website, jamesullrichbooks.com.

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Lieutenant Herschel A. Pahl of U.S. Task Force 38 gave this signed photo to our letter writer.

At the End, a Near Ace

I thoroughly enjoy *World War II* magazine and I especially enjoyed David Sears's article "White-knuckle Countdown to Peace" in the September/October 2015 issue about the closing days of the Pacific War with Task Force 38.

Regarding an item on page 38, the USS *Hancock*-bound VF-6 Hellcats that tangled with several Japanese fighters were led by Lieutenant Herschel A. Pahl, not Paul Herschel. Retired Captain Pahl described this wild dogfight in his self-published 1988 autobiography *Point Option*. He was credited with one kill, as were his wingmen Daryl Grant and Ray Killian. This brought Pahl's total to four, one shy of an Ace.

I served under Captain Pahl during his "twilight tour" as Professor of Naval Science at the University of Nebraska NROTC unit from 1969 to 1972. He was a great leader and wonderful father figure to us young midshipmen.

G. Marty Black
Pismo Beach, Calif.

The Heavyweight

I'd like to compliment Dr. Stuart Goldman on his excellent September/October 2015 article, "Russia's Rock." Konstantin Rokossovsky arguably was the war's finest field general, a "master of maneuver" as described by one of his soldiers. He lived a life of challenges and tragedies with unfailing courage and resilience, and strove to be just and kind though compelled by fate to serve a cruel and inexorable system.

Mary O. Den Dooren
Naples, Fla.

Listen In

Horace W. Hall's explanation of short-range radios and short-wave bands in September/October 2015's letters section brought back memories of my youth.

Immediately after the Russian army occupied the small town of Lindow, Germany, the first edict issued for the entire regional population was to turn in all radios at city hall. Anyone who didn't would receive heavy punishment. A huge mountain of radios clogged the city square. I took our wonderful Grundig radio and added it to the pile.

Some time later we were told to come back and pick up a radio. All the nice ones were gone, and the one we received would only carry the local communist propaganda channel. The mind control of East Germany and beginnings of the Cold War were in place while the rest of the Allies were still celebrating victory.

Jack P. Getzel
Mahtomedi, Minn.

Long-distance reception is possible with a 1920s farm radio, a Boy Scout radio from the 1950s, or a People's Radio—the limiting factors are season, time of day, antenna, the number of stations on the same channel, and user skill!

To hear London, a People's Radio user had to wait until late at night when long-distance skywave reception rolled in, have an antenna (just a single wire some tens of meters long), carefully use the radio controls, keep the volume low, and be very, very careful about repeating what they heard to anyone else.

Hue Miller
Newport, Ore.

Correction

The "Journey to the End of World War II" timeline on page 53 of the September/October 2015 issue incorrectly identifies the date of the Trinity atomic bomb test. It took place on July 16, 1945, not June 16.

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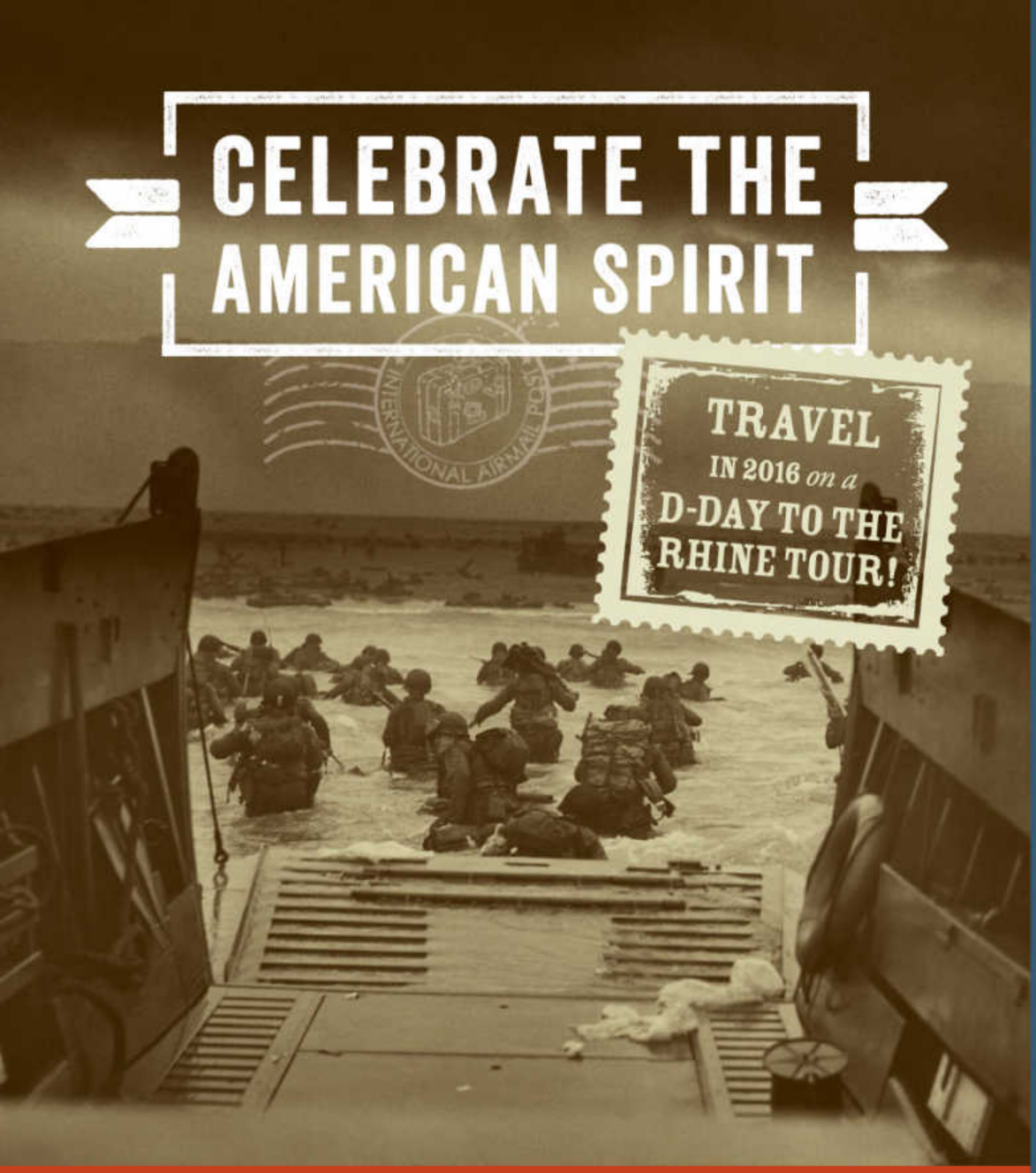

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Japanese legislators rumble in the Diet as foes fight a bill to let military forces—such as these men of the Maritime Self Defense Force (below)—deploy overseas for the first time in 70 years.

Japan Allows Overseas Military Engagements

For the first time since 1945, Japan's government has authority to send troops to fight overseas. In September, the Diet passed a bill reinterpreting the country's pacifist postwar constitution to allow Japanese forces to provide logistical and even armed support to the United States and other allies.

Opposition lawmakers tried to stall the measure by mobbing the presiding committee chairman and attempting to rip his microphone from his hands. Legislators from the majority party broke up the scrum, encircling the chairman in a scene the *New York Times* compared to a rugby match. The final vote took place in the middle of the night.

Enactment was a win for Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who has long sought to represent Japan as a "normal" nation that does not have to account and apologize repeatedly for its wartime transgressions. The law also aims to counter the belllicose North Koreans and the increasingly assertive Chinese.

Abe rammed the bill through parliament despite resistance among politicians and the general populace.

Members of the opposition Democratic Party of Japan, leftist politicians, and other critics say the law violates the pacifist constitution imposed on Japan after World War II. Article 9 of that document renounces war and "the threat or use of force." For many, pacifism is integral to Japan's current

Reported and written by
Paul Wiseman

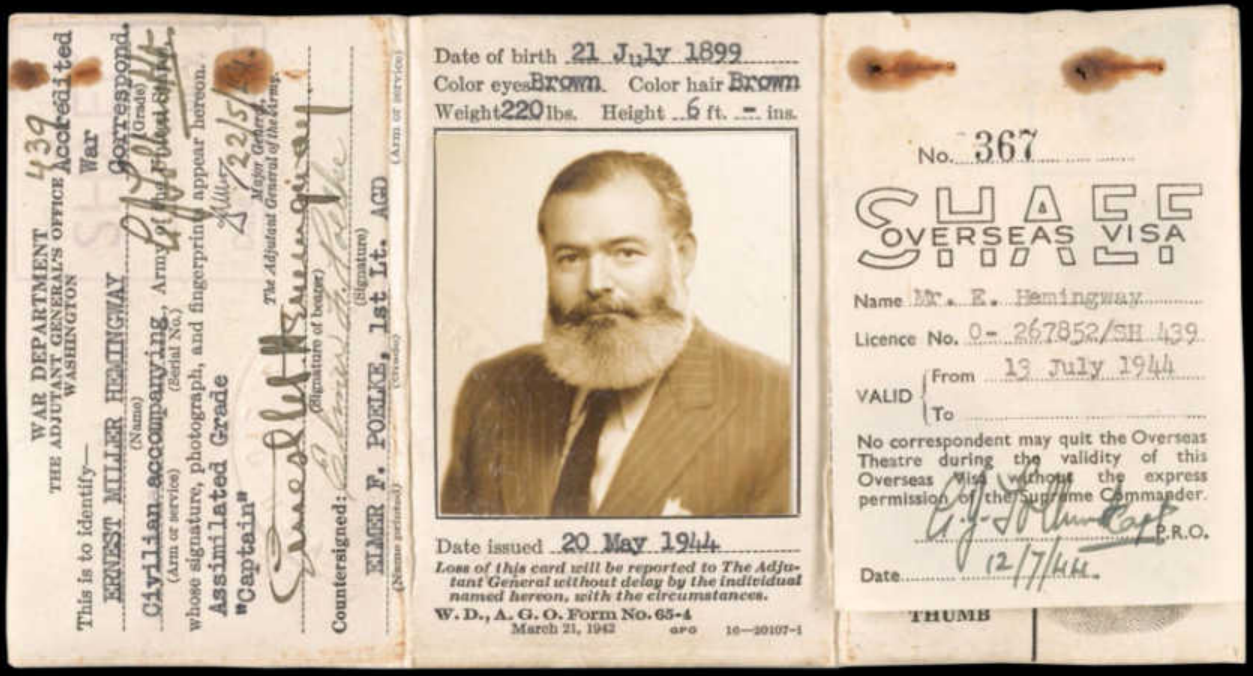
TOP, © MOTOO NAKA/AFLO/ALAMY LIVE NEWS; BOTTOM, THOMAS PETER/LANDOV

national identity. Opponents worry that the United States will drag Japan into military adventures abroad.

Writing in *Foreign Policy*, law professors Bruce Ackerman and Tokujin Matsudaira allege that President Barack Obama was complicit in what they called Abe's "constitutional coup." In April, the United States and Japan agreed to conduct joint operations more extensive than anything required for self-defense.

DISPATCHES

The Detroit Tigers and Chicago Cubs wore throwback 1945 uniforms at an August 19 game to mark the 70th anniversary of victory over Japan—and the last year the baseball teams met in a World Series. The Victory Belles, a singing trio from the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, performed "The Star-Spangled Banner."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whose signature, photograph, and fingerprint appear hereon.
Assimilated Grade
"Captain"

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Color eyes Brown Color hair Brown
Weight 220 lbs. Height 6 ft. — ins.

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March 21, 1942

No. 367
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P.R.O.
Date 12/7/44
THUMB

Papa's SHAEF Credentials Featured in NYC Exhibit

Ernest Hemingway's wartime ID card is among items on display at the Morgan Library in New York City. The exhibition chronicles the writer's most fruitful period, from driving ambulances in the First World War through World War II, when he traveled with Allied troops to France and Germany (right). The show closes January 31 (themorgan.org/exhibitions/ernest-hemingway).

TOP, AP PHOTO/CHARLES REX ARBOGAST; BOX, HEMINGWAY PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, JFK PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

Rumored Nazi Treasure Zone Draws Gold Diggers

For decades a legend has enticed treasure hunters: In spring 1945, Germans fleeing Soviet troops steered a train hauling perhaps 300 tons of plundered gold into a tunnel near Ksiaz Castle in southwestern Poland, also known as Lower Silesia–but never emerged. In August explorers Andreas Richter, a German, and Pole Piotr Koper, acting on that legend, caused a sensation when they claimed to have used ground-penetrating radar to locate the "gold train." A Polish treasure hunter, Krzysztof Szpakowski, subsequently said he'd discovered a tunnel network near the site Richter and Koper pinpointed, apparently part of a vast complex ordered by Adolf Hitler.

The area was said to be studded with wartime mines, a risk that promised to slow official inquiries but did not deter gold diggers, who poured into the area by the hundreds. A 35-year-old treasure hunter fell to his death near the town of Walbrzych trying to break into a German textile magnate's tomb believed to contain treasures. Ostensible gold train aside, the Nazis are thought to have stashed looted jewelry, gold, and artwork in Lower Silesia's castles, and mansions are said to harbor hidden caches of jewelry, precious metals, and artwork, not only with Nazi fingerprints but dating as far back as an 1807 Napoleonic campaign.

Counterclockwise from top: "Gold" candy sold at Ksiaz Castle in Walbrzych, Poland, near a tunnel said to hold Nazi treasure. Souvenirs depict the tunnel and "gold train." In May 1945, workers inspect gold seized from Jews.

Barbara Nowak-Obelinda, conservator of monuments in Lower Silesia, filed a complaint against two groups for using radar without a permit. "This gold rush madness got to a point where we had to do something to scare off other amateur treasure seekers," she told the *New York Times*. The opportunistic swarm is revitalizing a battered area economy, filling hotel rooms and restaurants. Visitors are buying train-themed souvenirs that the local Old Mine Science and Art Museum markets. They are also entertaining inhabitants. "I've been hearing about this train for at least half a century," said Elzbieta Mirkowska, 74, who lives about a mile from where the train vanished. "After all this time, it would be lovely to finally dig this thing out."

CANDY AND SHIRT, EPA/ALAMY; CASTLE, AFP PHOTO/JANEK SKARZYNSKI; LOOT, GETTY IMAGES

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Veteran David Daniel, in Yangon, Myanmar, hails the war's end. Former guerrillas also honored British Major Hugh P. Seagrim (inset), who died leading them against the Japanese.

Burmese Honor Guerrilla Leader

Aged former guerrilla fighters of Burma's Karen ethnic minority marked the 70th anniversary of victory over Japan by praying and singing hymns at the grave in Yangon, Myanmar, of "Grandfather Longlegs"—Major Hugh P. Seagrim. The eccentric British Army officer led them against Japanese occupiers. "He gave his life," veteran Saw Berny, 92, told the Associated Press. "We have never stopped praying for him because he loved our people."

From 1942 to September 1944, Seagrim—a towering Southeast Asian version of Lawrence of Arabia, fond of native dress and given to carrying a Bible in a musette bag—led Karen guerrillas against occupation forces. The Karen, who number between 5 million and 7 million, speak a language related to Tibetan and reside mostly in southern Myanmar. A minority, including many who followed Seagrim, practices Christianity; most are animist or Buddhist.

Japanese Imperial forces responded to Seagrim's campaign by torturing and slaying Karen villagers until September 1944, when in an effort to stop that torment Seagrim surrendered. The Japanese immediately executed him. After the war, the Karen fought a long, bloody, and unresolved insurgency against Burmese authorities.

To mark V-J Day, Seagrim's former comrades gathered at Commonwealth War Cemetery in Yangon to do as he had asked and sing "On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand" in their language.

DISPATCHES

Ben Kuroki, 98, a Japanese-American who overcame wartime discrimination to become an Army Air Forces gunner, died September 3 in Camarillo, California. Kuroki flew 58 bombing missions, including the 1943 raid on oil fields in Ploesti, Romania. Kuroki, who earned three Distinguished Flying Crosses and a Distinguished Service Medal, gave patriotic speeches to Japanese-Americans confined in internment camps. He drew a prolonged ovation from the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco in February 1944 when he said, "When you live with men under combat conditions for 15 months, you begin to understand what brotherhood is all about."

WORD FOR WORD

The USS *West Virginia*, keel sunk to the bottom of Pearl Harbor.

"The fleet, dear, is at the bottom of the ocean."

—Admiral Chester Nimitz to his wife when she congratulated him on getting command of the Pacific Fleet after Pearl Harbor, December 1941

TOP LEFT, KIM MAUNG WIN/AP PHOTO; SEAGRIM, AP PHOTO; KUROKI, SPENCER WEINER/LS TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES; SHIP, NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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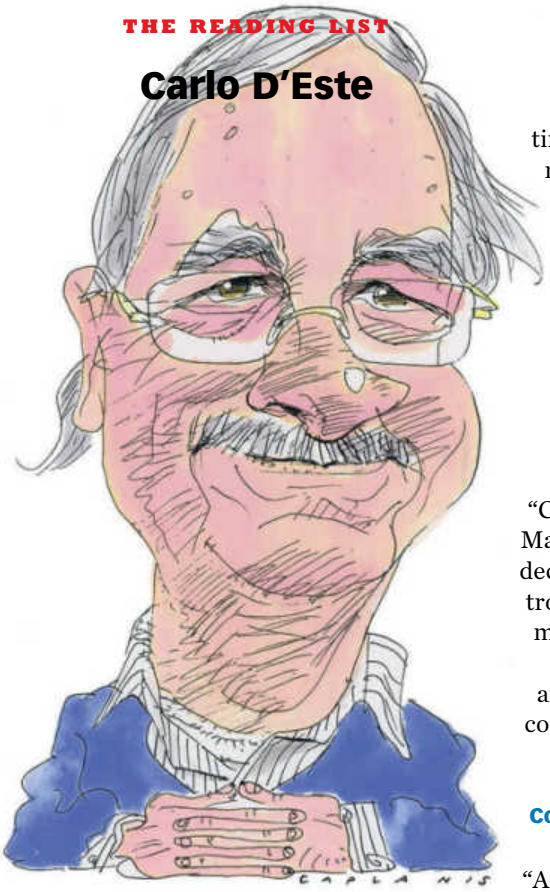
THE READING LIST

Carlo D'Este

It's been said of Winston Churchill that he won the war twice: first in office as Britain's wartime Prime Minister, then by writing about it—which earned him the 1953 Nobel Prize in Literature. How did other World War II memoirists do? We asked Carlo D'Este, an acclaimed historian and biographer of wartime Allied leaders, to assess recollections from men in the cohort he knows so well.



Crusade in Europe
Dwight D. Eisenhower (1948)

"Ike's remarkable account of the war he directed in Europe, with all its challenges and uncertainty, was written without the assistance of a ghostwriter and reflects in highly personal terms his role as the Allied Supreme Commander."

The Memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery (1958)

"While some consider it self-promoting, Monty's account of the war is actually very well balanced and offers lucid and valuable insights into the planning and operations carried out by one of the war's top field commanders."

War As I Knew It
George S. Patton (1947)

"Unfortunately for historians, Patton did not live long enough to write his own account of the war. This book, selectively edited from his diaries by his former subordinate, General Paul D. Harkins, reveals far too little about Patton the warrior and his generalship. While it's entertaining and often insightful, it can never rival the far more revealing book Patton certainly would have written."

A Soldier's Story
A General's Life
Omar N. Bradley (1951, 1983)

"Written primarily by his former aide, Chester Hansen, from Bradley's wartime diary, both books are his highly readable and engaging versions of World War II, notable not only for their compelling narrative but also for the often-scathing criticism of Bradley's contemporaries and superiors, including Eisenhower, Patton, and Montgomery."

Reminiscences
Douglas MacArthur (1964)

"Completed shortly before his death, MacArthur's autobiography spans five decades of the most towering and controversial figure in modern American military history. *Reminiscences* is as illuminating and highly personal and unsparing as the self-confident commander who fought in more wars than any senior commander."

Command Missions: A Personal Story
Lucian K. Truscott Jr. (1954)

"As skilled with a pen as he was on the battlefield, Truscott wrote a self-effacing memoir remarkable in its straightforward, honest, and revealing tale of war as seen through the eyes of the man widely regarded as the most well-rounded and successful American combat commander of World War II."

Military historian and biographer **Carlo D'Este**, a retired lieutenant colonel, is the author of this issue's "No Fear" (page 30), about General Lucian K. Truscott Jr.

ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE CAPLANIS; BOTTOM LEFT, HISTORYNET ARCHIVES; RIGHT, AP PHOTO/VIRGINIA MAYO

DISPATCHES

Chiwy cared for GIs despite army racism.

Augusta Marie Chiwy, who as a nurse helped save the lives of hundreds of GIs wounded in the Battle of the Bulge, died August 23 in her hometown of Bastogne, Belgium. Chiwy, 94, was born in what is now the African nation of Burundi. In December 1944, she volunteered at a medical station in Bastogne where a sole army doctor, John Prior, was tending to thousands of Americans wounded in the German counteroffensive in the Ardennes. U.S. Army regulations banned blacks from caring for white soldiers, but Prior told wounded men, "You either let her treat you or you die."

Belgian and American soldiers honor Chiwy.

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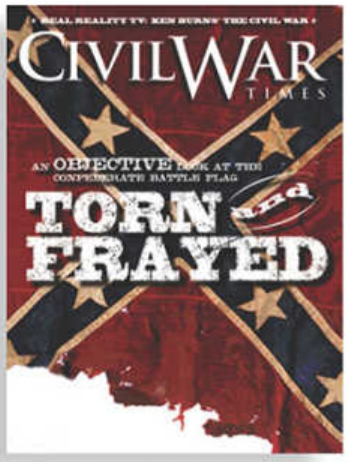

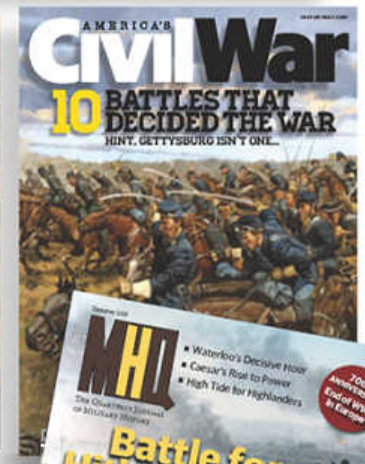

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Russian Pins Second World War Start on Poland

A Russian diplomat started a rumpus in September by claiming that Poland had a hand in starting World War II, outraging Poles and exacerbating tensions between the countries. During the 1930s "Poland repeatedly blocked the formation of a coalition against Hitler's Germany," Sergey Andreev, Russia's ambassador to Warsaw, told Polish network TVN. "Poland therefore was partly responsible for the disaster which then took place."

Andreev meets the press in the wake of his statement.

Germany attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, soon after secretly arranging with the Soviet Union to divvy up the Eastern European state. The U.S.S.R. invaded Poland 16 days later. In spring 1940 the Soviets also slaughtered 22,000 Polish officers, policemen, and members of Poland's intelligentsia in the Katyn Forest and at additional execution sites in Russia.

The Polish Foreign Ministry expressed "surprise and alarm" at Andreev's claim. The Russian's allegation "undermines the historical truth and reflects the most hypocritical interpretation of the events known from the Stalinist and Communist years," the ministry said.

Three days later, Andreev backtracked a bit. "I regret I wasn't sufficiently precise," he said, sticking by his comment that relations between the two countries are the worst they have been since 1945. Poland, a former Soviet bloc country, rejected Russian overtures after the Soviet Union's breakup and turned west, joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. Poland has criticized Russia for seizing the Crimea from Ukraine and for supporting pro-Russian separatists fighting in eastern Ukraine.

EPA/CORBIS

ASK WWII

Q: My father was in the 8th Division, 28th Regiment, fighting in the Hürtgen Forest from November 19, 1944, until January 1945. GIs in the Hürtgen fought every day of the Battle of the Bulge but get no credit. Why? —John B. Berg, Tarpon Springs, Florida

A: The Battle of the Hürtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge were adjacent, and one led into the other, but they are considered separate actions. After an October 2 to 21, 1944, assault captured Aachen, those troops entered the Hürtgen Forest, heading for the German Westwall, or Siegfried Line. Between October 22 and December 16, German Field Marshal Walter Model inflicted galling losses that encouraged Adolf Hitler to proceed with a counteroffensive through the Ardennes that ever since has overshadowed the Hürtgen battle.

After clearing Hürtgen on November 28 and Brandenburg on December 3, the badly mauled 8th Division pushed toward the Roer River—until the Germans counterattacked in the Ardennes. For several weeks, starting December 16, the division defended the northern flank of the Bulge. As another example of the phenomenon of battles impinging on one another, between January 14 and 26, 1945, Allied Operation Blackcock overran the Westwall and secured the Roer Triangle—and is counted as an additional action. *—Jon Guttman*

Infantrymen advance through the hard-fought Hürtgen Forest near Vossenack, Germany.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

■ Send queries to: Ask *World War II*, 1600 Tysons Blvd, Suite 1140, Tysons, VA 22102, or e-mail: worldwar2@historynet.com.

Showtime in the Strait

By Michael Dolan

As his three brothers did, Philip Hollywood left Long Branch, New Jersey, to join the U.S. Navy. Between 1943 and 1945 he served as a fire control technician in the Pacific aboard the Fletcher-class destroyer USS *Melvin*, where he had a ringside seat for one of the greatest sea battles of all time. In late 1945 Hollywood hired on at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC, as a $35-a-week mail clerk, worked his way up, and served 17 years as vice president and managing director before retiring in 1991. He and wife Brinda spend their time between Duck, North Carolina, and Alexandria, Virginia.

How old were you when you enlisted?
I was 17, and needed my parents' permission. My mother didn't want to sign. "Oh, don't worry," my father said. "He's so skinny they won't take him." I weighed 117 pounds. They took me.

Where did you train, and for what?
After boot camp at Sampson, New York, I asked for sea duty. I was sent to fire control school at Great Lakes, Illinois. I became a petty officer. Again I asked for sea duty and requested to serve aboard the light cruiser USS *Columbia* with my older brother, Tom, a boatswain's mate. But because of the November 1942 Sullivan tragedy, in which five brothers went down with their ship, no more than one family member was allowed on a ship. I went to advanced fire control school in San Diego, California, then to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the USS *Melvin*, a new destroyer. I'm very proud of that ship; it was built in Kearny, New Jersey, and I was a New Jersey boy.

"Fire control" sounds like firefighting.
Our job was controlling five five-inch guns. We tracked the target, getting range and speed and then pressing our firing keys. The guns fired automatically. We worked atop the bridge in the main battery director—what in the old days would have been the crow's nest.

Describe your team and its tasks.
The gunnery officer was up highest. Below him, in the director, were three of us. We each had a particular viewfinder. The pointer looked at the horizontal, the trainer looked at the vertical; we had cross hairs in our telescopes. Our third man, the range finder, had eyepieces he could move to approximate the distance to target. We would get an attacking plane in our cross hairs and send the plane's speed, elevation, and direction to the computer in the plotting room.

What was the plotting room?
The plotting room was in the ship's guts, the most protected area. In it was a computer made by the Ford Instrument Company on Long Island. About four operators were stationed at the computer, working dials and knobs to get a match with our input. The matchup was a "solution" that locked guns onto a target and commenced firing. The *Melvin* had torpedo tubes that torpedomen handled by finding firing solutions for aiming and releasing torpedoes.

How did the *Melvin* get into the war?
The Saipan and Tinian operations were our first action and we were thrilled at the results. Off Saipan, we sank a Japanese sub and assisted the USS *Remey* in sinking a second. To support troops on Saipan, we had infantry officers giving us firing coordinates.

The *Melvin* really made the rounds.
We sailed to Ulithi, Peleliu, and Hollandia, New Guinea, where we picked up ships carrying the 24th Infantry

SIMON BRUTY

Division and escorted them to the Philippines for the invasion at Leyte Gulf, where we provided antiaircraft support.

An unexpected mission came up.
Intelligence learned an enemy force was coming through the Surigao Strait, to the south, to attack the invasion fleet. Our destroyer squadron, DesRon 54, was dispatched to the strait, to ambush this "Southern Force"—a couple of battleships, some cruisers, destroyers—which our PT boats had slowed down.

What were your orders?
We were to make a torpedo attack—our first surface operation against enemy ships—and everybody was wound up, especially when we learned that this task force included battleships. It was after midnight. We were laying low and quiet. All hands were on deck. The captain had ordered no gunfire because muzzle flashes would disclose our position. The torpedo guys took over.

What were you doing?
We were listening to the torpedo computer get a nice torpedo firing solution. We made a swift torpedo attack in column. The Japanese fired star shells that illuminated us. Their searchlights were on, and their firing was accurate. Salvoes straddled us as we dropped fish. It was found later that the *Melvin*'s torpedoes scored direct hits and sank the battleship *Fuso*. After we fired—we got off nine fish, but one hung up in its tube—we made a sharp turn and started making smoke to throw off enemy gunners. Tokyo Rose, the Japanese propaganda doll, said American ships were seen retiring north smoking very heavily; well, that was true. We pulled off by Dinagat Island to watch the floor show.

What floor show?
We had the jump on the Southern Force. The U.S. Navy 7th Fleet's capital ships had formed a battle line at the north end of the strait. Tom's ship, the *Columbia*, was there; we were in the same battle, 15 or 20 miles apart. He was worried about me; a destroyer didn't offer much protection. I wasn't worried about him; he was on a cruiser in the shadow of those battleships. The Japanese sailed straight at our line. When our ships fired, tracers arced slowly through the sky. You could see big shells outlined against the darkness, followed by bursts as our rounds hit. It was like having orchestra seats to one of the last great surface battles in World War II.

"You could see big shells outlined against the darkness, followed by bursts as our rounds hit."

Petty Officer Hollywood spent V-J Day in Washington, DC—stuck on a navy base.

What did the *Melvin* do at dawn?
Another Japanese force had come through the San Bernardino Strait up north and was attacking our jeep carriers and destroyers, which had no capital ships protecting them. We were ordered north with our one torpedo. The Japanese turned around. I was very happy about that. I often wonder what would have happened if they had come down to Leyte Gulf. I don't see us having too much luck with one torpedo.

After Leyte, where did you sail?
We supported the invasion at Lingayen Gulf. One afternoon we got word of 100 Japanese planes coming our way. They hit us at sunset. Planes were diving all over the place. Several kamikazes hit the *Columbia*, which was gone the next morning. It was two months before I heard from Tom that he was okay.

You weren't through with kamikazes.
From Lingayen we sailed to Iwo Jima. We were escorting the carrier *Saratoga*, which took four or five kamikaze hits in a row. After Iwo was Okinawa, which was very bitter, especially for destroyers. The *Melvin* was on the picket line up north; we were attacked but never struck. When the Japanese came in force we added destroyers for antiaircraft support. We also had a four-plane combat air patrol, usually Hellcats or Corsairs, assigned to us and under our control. That was very comforting.

You were back at school when the war ended.
After Okinawa I got orders to Washington, DC, for advanced fire control training. I was transferred at sea by breeches buoy to a tanker that got me to the Philippines. I hung around Manila waiting to get a flight to Pearl. That wasn't easy because officers had priority and I was an NCO. Finally I got on a stripped-down DC-3. The island hopping campaign had left some of the islands we'd be flying over in Japanese hands. The pilot came on the intercom. "No smoking," he said. "We have fuel leaking and it'll be an hour before we're over friendly territory." I thought, "My God, this plane is gonna blow up and my mother is never gonna know what happened to me." But it didn't. From Pearl Harbor I sailed to California, then took a train to Washington. At the Navy Yard there were three sections of advanced fire control students. On V-J Day, command said one section had to stay on base. With all those women in Washington hugging everybody, I stayed on base. ✯

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Curators at The National World War II Museum solve readers' artifact mysteries

I am the curator at the Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County Museum, which has a large area dedicated to the county's military veterans. Recently, we received a World War II inflatable tire. We are curious what it is and what it was used for. On one end is a double-nozzled device that reads "USN"; the total length is 55 3/4 inches. There are instructions on how to inflate it, but the text is worn. Stamped on is: "Contract No. W33-034-TC-25, the General Tire & Rubber Co. Akron, Ohio, Feb 9, 1943." —Clerissa Connelly, Indiana, Pennsylvania

This is a World War II-era U.S. Navy M1926 inflatable flotation belt constructed of two parallel rubber tubes covered by canvas. It could be used as a life preserver by activating two CO_2 cartridges in the belt or by blowing into a smaller pair of rubber inflation tubes. Commonly worn by sailors standing topside watch on ships' open bridges or decks, the belt is most famously known for being issued to U.S. Army D-Day invasion troops. Uninflated, the belt was most comfortable worn at the waist, but the designers intended it be right under the armpits when inflated—otherwise a wearer would tip in water, submerging his head and chest. Tragically, this is exactly what happened to many men on D-Day who drowned when they inflated life belts being worn too low. *—Larry Decuers, Curator*

1 **This inflatable flotation belt could save lives in the water when worn high on the body, as this GI on Omaha Beach (below) is doing. Worn too low, it could be deadly.**

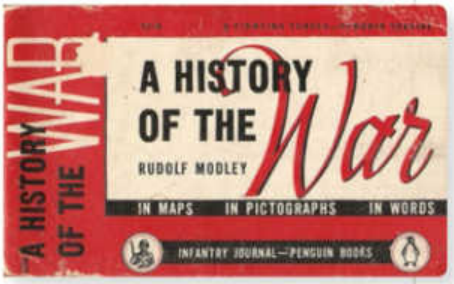
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

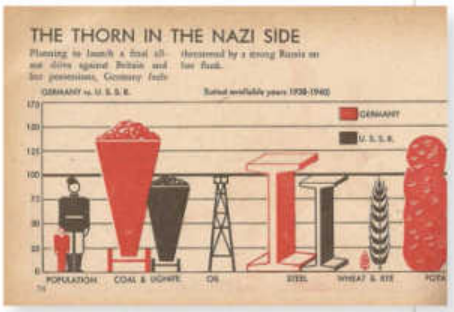
2 **My grandfather, Erwin J. Soper Jr., was a private first class with the 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion of the 82nd Airborne's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Among his things was this invasion armband, which he probably wore during the September 1944 Market Garden jump. He was one of the soldiers who made the mass Waal River crossing. I am curious about the marking on the reverse side. What does the CL stand for? And who would have worn this and why? —Brian Soper, Southwick, Mass.**

Too large to be a makers mark, the "CL" was undoubtedly a brassard meant for use in the field. I have seen other oilcloth invasion flags stamped this way, but have found no one who knows what the "CL" means. My best guess is "Chalk Leader." Airborne operations staged troops in "chalks"—groups deploying from a single aircraft—corresponding with the numbers

CAN YOU SOLVE THIS MYSTERY?

2 **Paratrooper Erwin Soper (below) may have worn this armband during his September 1944 jump into the Netherlands in Operation Market Garden, like the American airborne forces at left. But what does the "CL" on the reverse side mean?**





3 **Meant to inform the American public, this slim paperback book used striking, simplified graphics to make its point. One key thing the 1944 history doesn't address is how the war ended.**

written in chalk on their assigned planes. The chalk leader was the NCO or officer responsible for loading the chalk aboard. On Allied parachute drops during the Normandy invasion, chalk leaders wore cardboard signs around their necks, marked with numbers. Perhaps by Market Garden an additional form of identification had emerged. We have a very sharp bunch of readers; someone out there must know what these initials stand for. I would love to find out. *—Larry Decuers*

3 **My daughter sent me a booklet she found in a thrift shop. It measures 4 1/4 by 7 inches, and includes 183 pages of maps and text in an easy-to-read format. Can you tell me anything about this item? —Tom Sweatt, Greensboro, North Carolina**

This book, a result of a joint venture between the American branch of publisher Penguin and the U.S. Army publication *Infantry Journal*, was intended for American readers. Strikingly, its simplified history of the war was issued while the war was still underway. A 1942 edition had been produced for servicemen; this 1944 edition was expanded for a general readership. An introduction—acknowledging the war as a significant topic of conversation—reads: "It would be a lot better if those who talk knew what they were talking about. This book is a modest attempt to pull together the most important facts which they ought to know." The format resembles that of another wartime genre, the Armed Services Editions. Nearly 123 million copies of fiction and nonfiction books published by the Council on Books in Wartime were shipped to American troops and helped spark a postwar interest in reading. To keep the books inexpensive and easy to pack, they were printed two at a time on a magazine press and cut in half, resulting in short, wide books well-suited to carrying in a uniform pocket. *—Brandon Stephens, Curator*

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PARATROOPERS: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Purpose-built

By Robert M. Citino

FOLKS ALWAYS buttonhole me. "What was the best army of World War II?" they ask. "Which was the worst?"

Neither query is easy to answer. What do "best" and "worst" even mean? In an absolute sense, you need not be really good at war: you only need to be better than whomever you're fighting. The scenario calls to mind the old joke about a bear chasing a couple of hikers. You don't have to outrun the bear, just your buddy.

There is a way to rank a force: examine its designers' intent. The U.S. Army, for example, fought World War II using the M4 Sherman and other relatively light tanks. Critics scorned the Sherman for insufficient armor and a puny main gun, some labeling the ubiquitous growler a "death trap." Certainly, one on one, an M4 was no match for any of Germany's best tanks of 1944 to 1945.

But no one made the Sherman to go one on one with big Panzers. The mission of killing latter-war German tanks went to big-gun vehicles called tank destroyers. American tanks handled exploitation, grinding through gaps in enemy lines opened by infantry and artillery. Moreover, World War II's enormous spread required the United States to form expeditionary armies and ship them and their materiel across the world, dictating lighter mass-produced armored vehicles. Can you imagine how much transport tonnage the Allies would have needed to haul tens of thousands of 60-ton Tiger-style tanks across the Atlantic and the Pacific?

Neither can I.

Every army has a back story, and knowing that provenance is critical to understanding its performance. The British Army, for example, took its lumps from the Germans, especially early on. But look back. Between the wars British planners debated which would best preserve the empire: a light force ideal for policing (or "constabulary") duty in India, or a conventional force suited to pounding conflict on the Continent?

The question was tangled in myriad imponderables, and the British never did fix on a firm response, as seen in their army of September 1939. Consider British armor, which paired fast, lightly armored tankettes and speedy cruiser tanks with lumbering infantry tanks like the heavy Churchill. A synthesis—a medium, all-purpose vehicle melding cruiser speed with the Churchill's armor and firepower—would have been nice, but that blend eluded British designers.

Or look at a force usually hung with the sobriquet "worst in World War II": Italy's army, which had a sea of troubles. In the North African desert, which demanded mechanization, Italy overwhelmingly deployed infantry. Such tanks as the Italians did have, CV-33s and Fiat M13/40s, were lightly armored, such easy meat for enemy tank crews and antitank gunners that Benito Mussolini's soldiers called them "rolling coffins." Throwing this army against the Soviets on the eastern front, as the Italians did in the 1942 Don River campaign, was tantamount to slaughter, which was more or less what happened.

But again, what of the back story? In the 1930s, when Mussolini and his brain trust were equipping an army, the map showed two realistic possibilities: France to the west and, in the east, Yugoslavia. Either fight was bound to involve the Alps, demanding a force oriented to mountain warfare on the national frontier, with infantry dominant, light vehicles in support, and a short logistical tail. And that was pretty much what the Italians had in World War II. Among the European powers, Italy's army was the lightest, and so least able to stand up to sustained combat in the open field.

Italy's senseless 1930s foreign policy—including Mussolini's Caesarean delusions in East Africa—generated a war far different from the conflict for which Italy had formed its army, and that army did very badly. Partly blame *il Duce*, who designed his legions to fight on Italy's border, then shipped them to North Africa, then blithely ordered them to conquer Greece barely supported, and, finally, threw his men to the wolves in the Soviet Union.

What were the best and worst armies? Like everything about World War II, the question is more complicated than it seems, and demands serious analysis, rather than sloganeering. ✯

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN TOMAC

History Through a Happy Lens

By James Ullrich

Half-timber—in German, *Fachwerk*—facades (left) are a common feature of Rothenburg, Germany, which an ancient wall (above) encloses.

CAMERA-TOTING TOURISTS in khakis and comfortable shoes amble about Rothenburg, Germany, snapping photos of medieval buildings. The visitors pass colorful shops selling steins, cuckoo clocks, and Christmas ornaments bearing images of the square. Others ascend ramparts to walk the thick wall of gray stone that has ringed the town for hundreds of years, its surface weathered, cracked, and dotted by lichen. Most visitors leave Rothenburg without knowing the extraordinary drama the postcard-perfect town experienced during and after the Nazi era. Revered as a model of tradition and nationalism by Nazi leaders, cobbled Rothenburg escaped violence until 1945, followed by a remarkable resurrection that again had Rothenburg exuding the classic German attributes of industry and culture. Indeed, the town succeeds thanks to those characteristics, and a historical focus on tourism. Two-thirds of its residents earn their keep making 2.5 million visitors a year happy.

The central square is the town's bustling heart, with a 15th-century fountain and a city hall flanked by fine examples of medieval architecture. Cobbled streets—none of them quite straight—radiate from the plaza into intriguing and inviting little corridors. Wandering town I wonder how many of my fellow travelers know of Rothenburg's special place in Nazi regard, or of the city's destruction and revival.

Strolling down a side street, I take shelter from the sun and summer tourist crush in one of many quiet, leafy *Biergartens*. As a blonde server in a blue-and white barmaid's apron dashes from table to table, I rejoice that around Germany these establishments, with their rustic authenticity, still provide a mellow lunch of bratwurst and beer served outdoors in good weather to those who know how to find them; many beer gardens lurk, unannounced, behind hotels. My table is sticky and flowers abound. A grizzled old gent sips a beer held in worn hands and nods politely in my direction. Settling in for a quiet meal, I wipe my brow, grateful for the reality of the stein in my hand, a cold, hearty contrast to this friendly and walkable town that seems determined to be a stage set for a fairy tale.

LEFT, JAMES ULRICH; RIGHT, CHRIS HOWES/WILD PLACES PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY

The Third Reich held up postcard-perfect Rothenburg as a gleaming example of Germanic culture and history. Today's edition displays more innocent versions of the same totems (bottom) to catch tourists' eyes.

Rothenburg

Nestled in the Franconian countryside near the Tauber River—thus the town's full name, Rothenburg ob der Tauber—Rothenburg dates officially to 1170, but humans have lived much longer at the site, the intersection of two major trade routes. The village and then the town and city prospered through the Middle Ages as a waystation for travelers commercial and otherwise. The resulting affluence financed handsome dwellings built in the medieval style in which exposed lumber encloses fields of masonry or painted plaster, hence the phrase "half-timbered." Prosperous and devout burghers also underwrote stately churches like St. Jacob's—a point on the pilgrimage route to St. James Church in Santiago de Compostela, Spain—and Rothenburg's town square. The town has sweeping views of the Tauber Valley.

Trade shifts and a 1631 sacking during the Thirty Years' War plunged the city into poverty and obscurity that accidentally conserved its antiquarian atmosphere. Rothenburg woke again in the 1890s, when affluent casual travelers from around the world discovered this ambiance. Residents seized the opportunity and reoriented their city toward tourism. Prosperity returned.

Rothenburg's popularity among Germans crested in the 1930s, when Nazi leaders declared the city the embodiment of tradition, economic vitality, cultural pride, and other ostensibly "Germanic" traits. *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy), the Party arm dedicated to embracing workers, seized control of the town's tourism industry, ballyhooing Rothenburg throughout the Reich as a near-sacred setting where Germans could revel in *Heimat*—an untranslatable term meaning the essence of German-ness, approximated in English by "homeland." Emerging from the demoralized 1920s, loyal *Volk* flooded the cobbled streets until hostilities began in September 1939.

The war kept domestic tourists away but otherwise did not touch Rothenburg

FROM TOP: HISTORYNET ARCHIVES; REAL IMAGES/ALAMY; MAP BY HASAM HUSSEIN

until spring 1945, when diehards designated the city to be held at all costs. On March 31, with German troops hunkered for a last stand, 16 American bombers destroyed more than 300 buildings and obliterated more than 2,000 feet of the old wall, including nine original watchtowers. Fewer than 40 died in the air attack, but a significant portion of the "ideal German town" vanished into mountains of rubble, among which hundreds of homeless families wandered.

Still, in mid-April 1945, German forces held on. U.S. Army General Jacob L. Devers, suspecting that the town's status with the Nazis could make it a center of postwar resistance, prepared a ground attack by his 6th Army Group. News of Devers's plan reached U.S. Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, who knew of Rothenburg's history. McCloy ordered Devers to use minimal artillery.

Devers sent six soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division's 12th Infantry Regiment under a white flag to press the defenders to give up. The German commander, a major named Thömmes, recognized the folly of fighting on and surrendered. Devers canceled the attack and his troops entered Rothenburg on April 17 without further violence.

Citizens of Rothenburg entered the postwar era much as many German communities did, living amid debris. City leaders made a worldwide appeal for funds to support rebuilding. Donations poured in; plaques immortalized those who gave, and in 1948 the town awarded McCloy the title "Honorable Protectorate of Rothenburg." Keen to restore the town's pre-Nazi appeal, the government recruited preservation experts. Working from photos, paintings, and first-person accounts, restorers assembled a town nearly identical to what had been. That was the first step. Now the city had to stagger to its feet and reopen for business without the benefit of a major industry. All that would sustain the revived municipality was its reputation as a tourist stop. But that sufficed, and the city reclaimed prosperity yet again.

Not far from the bustle of the square, down a side street leading to a peaceful garden, is the place I came to see—the 15th-century church of St. Wolfgang. Unlike showier St. Jacob's, St. Wolfgang's displays no masterpieces and receives few visitors. But the tiny, drafty interior is deceptive; its upper level hides a little-known collection of historic photos not mentioned by the town's official museum or tourist office.

An ancient conical staircase hides behind a door. I climb uneven steps worn smooth over centuries. One story of the building holds an exhibit of traditional garb and agricultural implements. I climb on. The stairs narrow and the air gets clammier. At the top floor I find what I seek: a small display of photographs documenting Rothenburg circa mid-1945. The resolution is poor, lending the images a ghostly quality. But the devastation is clear. I can make out the skeletons of once-grand buildings. Figures stand in the street, dwarfed by piles of shattered stone, timber, and plaster. The wall looks as if siege engines have been battering it prolongedly.

The Rothenburg of today presents a 21st-century edition of the commerce that gave birth to the city a millennium ago, buzzing behind the facades of ancient timber-frame buildings. Merchants selling souvenirs mass-produced in China swipe credit cards proffered by tourists—many of them Chinese. The hokey *Kriminalmuseum*, billed as the largest museum of crime and punishment in Europe, never lacks for a queue of curiosity seekers paying to peek at shiver-inducing tools of medieval justice. Cash registers in trendy cafés chirp relentlessly as customers line up for pricey soy lattes and vegan treats. It's good to be a well-polished relic with plenty of eating options and ATMs.

As dusk nears the town empties. Tour buses full of daytrippers depart. I climb rickety wooden steps to the wall's parapet. Walking the ramparts I study the many plaques naming those whose donations rebuilt a shattered Rothenburg. Looking out over the still town, I picture in my head the devastation that I studied earlier, mentally overlaying those freeze-frames onto perfectly replicated medieval facades.

There is a lesson in this, and though it's heartening, it's also a warning against recalling the past with excessive nostalgia. Rothenburg is living proof that an ancient city can rise from its own ashes, and that the past can be a wonderful place to visit and even live in, provided you choose wisely about what to remember—and what to forget. ✭

WHEN YOU GO

Rothenburg ob der Tauber (rothenburg.de) is in Franconia, along the "Romantic Road," about 40 miles south of Würzburg and 50 miles west of Nuremberg.

WHERE TO STAY AND EAT

Finding a good hotel is easy; most visitors are day-trippers. Hotel Gerberhaus (gerberhaus.rothenburg.de) and Gasthof Goldener Greifen (gasthof-greifen-rothenburg.de) are good values, modern and friendly. For a less costly stay, try Kreuzerhof Hotel (kreuzerhof-rothenburg.de). Eating options abound. Alter Keller offers traditional German fare near the Market Square. Burgerkeller serves hearty local cuisine in a medieval cellar. In warm weather, *Biergartens* like the Eisenhut offer less-cloistered perches.

WHAT ELSE TO SEE

Seen enough churches, museums, and town squares? Follow the trail from the castle into the lush Tauber Valley. On the valley floor, stroll or bike its course for fine rural views. Nearby Detwang, a hamlet older than Rothenburg, has an ancient church, St. Peter and St. Paul's, containing a priceless altarpiece by the German sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider.

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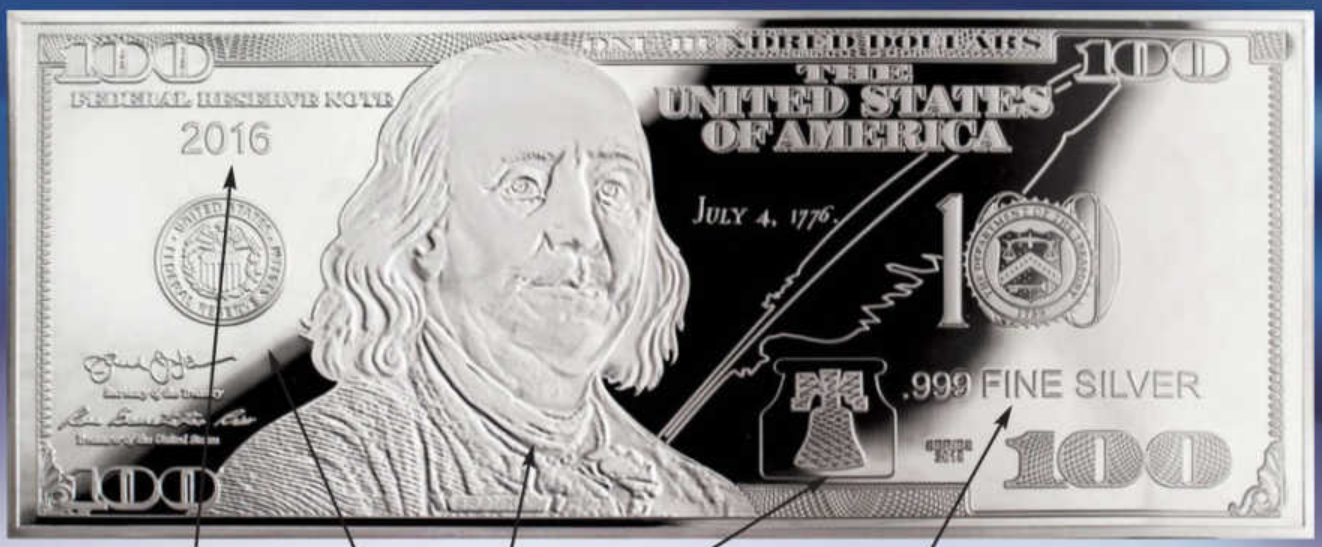

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GREAT LEADERS

Lucian K. Truscott Jr. had a voice like gravel, a brain for combat, and a heartfelt grasp of the soldiering life

By Carlo D'Este

NO FEAR

GEORGE SILK/TIME & LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

Unmistakably an old-school cavalryman, Lucian K. Truscott Jr.—here in France in 1944—led troops in Sicily, Italy, and France with aggressive confidence and a relentless will to win.

GREAT LEADERS

ONE OF THE U.S. ARMY'S FINEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL World War II combat commanders is one of the war's most neglected generals. Because Lucian K. Truscott Jr. toiled in Sicily and Italy—both largely forgotten campaigns—and because he lacked the appetite for publicity, despite appearing on *Life* magazine's cover, commanders who served in the European Theater eclipse Truscott.

The square-jawed, rough-hewn Truscott possessed all the qualities needed for success on Earth's deadliest place: the modern battlefield. He had toughness, courage, tactical ability, and professional competence. He also had an intangible only the best possessed: great leadership under fire—the genius for doing what must be done in the heat and chaos of battle that separates the adequate from the exceptional. Supreme Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower knew what he had in Truscott; in 1945, Eisenhower rated Truscott as his most able army commander, second only to General George S. Patton.

"He was absolutely fearless," recalled Truscott's son, Lucian K. Truscott III—a West Pointer who commanded an infantry rifle company in Korea and an infantry battalion in Vietnam. Lucian III was referring to his father's polo game, where fearlessness "gave him an advantage over many opponents who would eventually back off a little when he pushed them too far. And he played to win, for sport and exercise too, but mainly to *win*."

Truscott brought the same philosophy to war. "Listen, son, goddamnit," he once counseled young Lucian. "Let me tell you something, and don't ever forget it. You play games to win, not lose. And you fight wars to win! That's spelled W-I-N! And every good player in the game and every good commander in a war, and I mean really *good* player or *good* commander, every damn one of them has to have some sonofabitch in him. If he doesn't he isn't a good player or commander. And he never *will* be a good commander. Polo games and wars aren't won by gentlemen. They're won by men who can be first-class sonsofbitches when they have to be. It's as simple as that. No sonofabitch, no commander."

LUCIAN KING TRUSCOTT JR. WAS BORN IN CHATFIELD, Texas, in 1895 and raised in Oklahoma under hardscrabble conditions. His lifelong raspy voice resulted from accidentally swallowing carbolic acid as a boy. *Life* magazine war correspondent Will Lang called it Truscott's "rock crusher voice," and it only enhanced his persona.

Truscott dreamed of attending West Point, but knew his chances for an appointment were slim. At 16, he quit school to become a teacher, claiming to be 18—the minimum age required for a teaching certificate. For six years he taught school in the small town of Eufaula, Oklahoma, before joining the army. Pancho Villa's 1916 raid on Columbus, New Mexico, and the war in Europe provided opportunity in the form of a new program to enlarge the army and recruit officers outside the usual channels. In 1917 Truscott, 22, secured a provisional commission as a cavalry lieutenant.

Truscott spent 1917 to 1918

The 1925 Fort Bliss, Texas, polo team: Truscott is third from left. The team's coach arranged for Truscott's reassignment to Fort Bliss in time for him to participate in a national championship—which the Fort Bliss team won.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF POLO AND HALL OF FAME, LAKE WORTH, FLORIDA

3rd Infantry Division soldiers take aim at a sniper near Cisterna, Italy, during the 1944 Battle of Anzio.

GEORGE SILK/LIFE MAGAZINE/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

training in Arizona. He took up polo in the early 1920s while stationed in Hawaii with the 17th Cavalry. By the mid-1930s, as a four-goal handicapper on the army polo team, he had become legendary for his fierce competitiveness and reckless disregard for his safety.

Truscott bore a striking resemblance in appearance and manner to another cavalryman and fierce polo player—George S. Patton, Truscott's senior by 10 years. Both were profane around troops, uncompromising, and fervently despised all foes. "Be aggressive, be tough. When you strike the enemy, aim to kill and destroy," Truscott told his men. "Take your objective at all costs.... Give the enemy no pause. Destroy him!"

In 1942, Truscott was assigned to England as army liaison to Lord Louis Mountbatten's Combined Operations Headquarters. After observing British commandos, he pushed to create a kindred U.S. Army force he named "Rangers" and selected a rising army star, field artillery major William O. Darby, to command the unit.

Truscott was the primary American observer at the disastrous August 1942 Anglo-Canadian raid on the German-occupied port at Dieppe, France. While most viewed the amphibious operation, which incurred enormous losses in men and materiel, as a failure, Truscott saw Dieppe as a lesson in war that the Allies had to learn—in this case the hard way.

FOURTH IN A SERIES

Matthew Ridgway, *January/February 2013*

Ernest N. Harmon, *January/February 2011*

James M. Gavin, *July/August 2011*

By November 1942 Truscott was a major general, commanding a task force under Patton as part of Operation Torch, the invasion of French North Africa. A few months later, he was running the advance command post at the Allied front in Tunisia. He reported directly to Eisenhower, then commander of Allied Forces Headquarters in North Africa, as Ike's eyes and ears. Truscott's outstanding performance led to his April 1943 appointment to command the 3rd Infantry Division for the July 1943 invasion of Sicily.

Eisenhower visited the division in Tunisia in late June. "From every indication it is the best unit we have brought over here," he wrote to General George C. Marshall, U.S. Army chief of staff. "Truscott is the quiet, forceful, enthusiastic type that subordinates instinctively follow. If his command does not give a splendid account of itself, then all signs by which I know how to judge an organization are completely false."

Familiarity with the debacle at Dieppe and the fledgling

American army's stumbles in Tunisia led Truscott to hold the division to a tough regimen. "I had long felt our standards for marching and fighting in the infantry were too low," he wrote in his 1954 war memoir, *Command Missions*. "Not up to those of the Roman legions nor countless examples from our own frontier history, nor even those of Stonewall Jackson's 'Foot Cavalry' of Civil War fame."

Rigorous physical training raised the division's march speed to four miles an hour, greatly outpacing the infantry standard of two-and-a-half miles per hour. Doing the "Truscott Trot," most of his infantry battalions could hit five miles an hour, combat loaded. In Sicily this capacity paid huge dividends: like modern-day Roman legions, the 3rd Division marched the length and breadth of the island under grueling conditions. When Truscott's infantrymen advanced more than 100 miles from Agrigento to Palermo over treacherous terrain in only three days, one general observed, "What Truscott did in Sicily was to turn his infantry into cavalry."

TRUSCOTT'S MEN FEARED AND ADMIRED HIM. AS A RESULT of his leadership and extraordinary far-sightedness, the division's reputation improved along with its performance. He engendered such loyalty that more than one officer refused promotion to keep serving with him. But behind the rugged image and harsh philosophy, Truscott was an unfailingly modest man almost contemptuous of his personal image. "He seems to have been as unflamboyant a leader as has appeared in the history of the U.S. Army since Ulysses S. Grant," eminent British historians Dominick Graham and

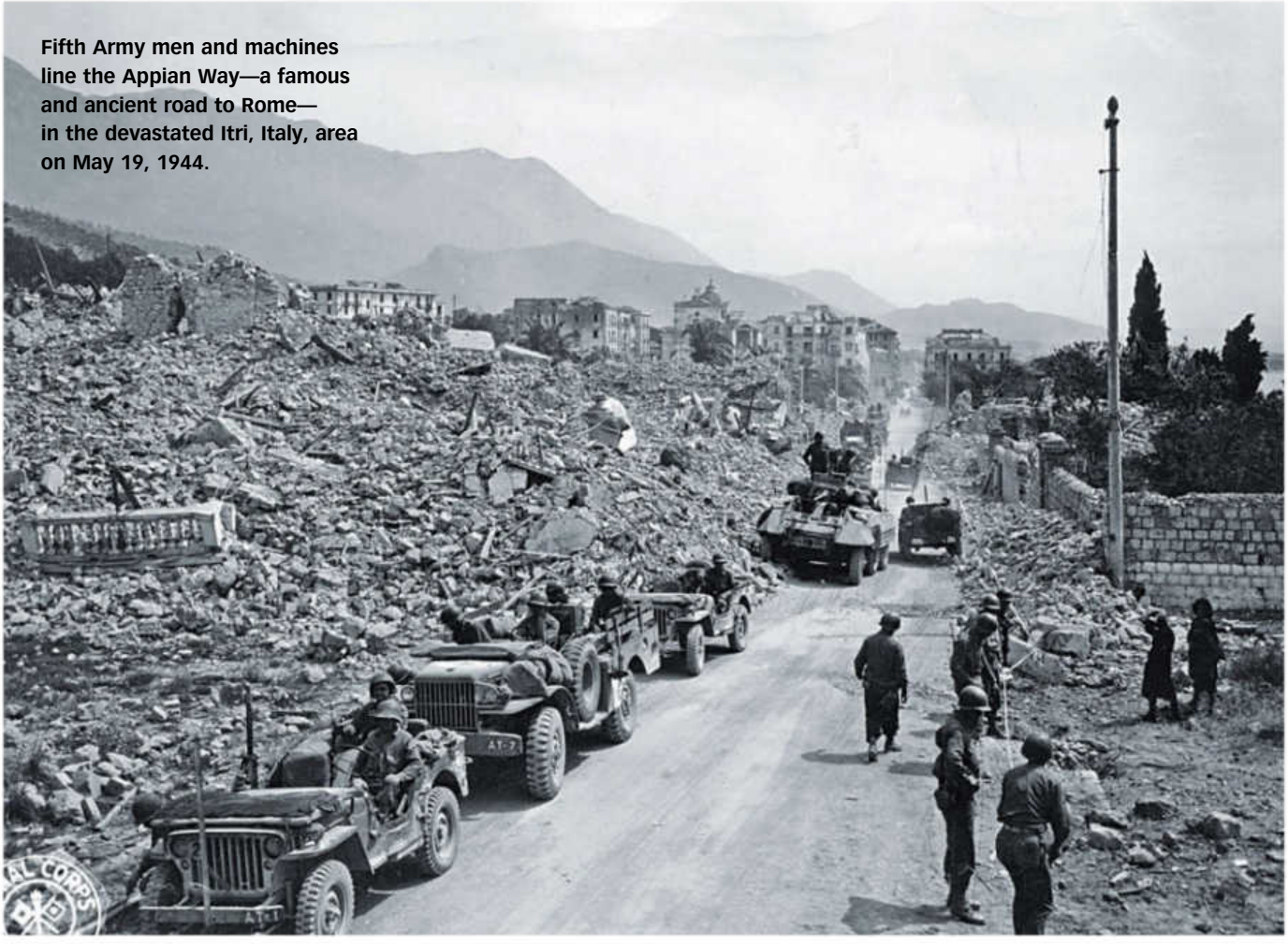
Truscott, here in September 1944, replaced John P. Lucas (left) as VI Corps commander seven months earlier. Lucas "was a lovable personality," Truscott recalled, "although his appearance invited the less respectful among his juniors to refer to him as 'Foxy Grandpa.'"

Shelford Bidwell—both combat veterans—wrote.

Truscott was unafraid to challenge superiors, Patton included. During the 3rd Division's advance on Messina, Patton and Truscott argued over the timing of an amphibious end-run along the island's northern coast. Truscott stood his ground. "If you don't think I can carry out orders, you can give the division to anyone you please," he told Patton. "But I will tell you one thing, you will not find anyone who can carry out orders which they do not approve as well as I can." Any other commander would likely have relieved him on the spot, yet the incident quickly passed. Patton not only declined to sack Truscott but had a drink with him.

Truscott had idiosyncrasies, including a deep superstition about clothing. He habitually wore a white scarf from an airman's escape kit that featured a map of the fighting area. He donned the first one in Sicily after acquiring it as a present, using the piece of neckwear so often to protect his nose, mouth, and raspy throat that it became a trademark. Each campaign brought a new scarf, bearing an escape map of the region being contested. Truscott also wore a battered brown leather jacket, and strapped a GI-issue .45-caliber semiautomatic pistol to his waist. And he considered his ancient pink cavalry breeches and fragile knee-high cavalry boots "lucky." Whenever he wore them enemy shelling seemed to stop as if by divine command. Truscott also had an aesthetic side. Through the war, four Chinese-American cooks and valets tended him. He allowed no one else to prepare his meals and his attendants made sure the mess table was always topped with a vase of fresh flowers.

In September 1943, the 3rd Division landed at Salerno, Italy, after the beachhead was secured, joining the Allied Fifth Army's slow grind north through some of the world's harshest fighting terrain. Truscott's fearlessness was on display a few weeks later during a difficult crossing at the Volturno River, just north of Naples. He was decorating a colonel who was also an old friend when German artillery shells began falling close by. "I can think of no finer way of presenting



Fifth Army men and machines line the Appian Way—a famous and ancient road to Rome—in the devastated Itri, Italy, area on May 19, 1944.

THIS PAGE AND PREVIOUS PAGES: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

this decoration than under battle conditions," Truscott said. Then he growled, "Now what are you going to do about this goddamn situation on the river? Goddamnit, your men will be in trouble if you don't get some armor over to help them."

Another incident at the Volturno illustrated his talent for improvising at the front. Seeing engineers erecting a pontoon bridge in support of a regiment that had already crossed the river in rubber rafts, Truscott noted tanks idling behind a tree line, waiting for the bridgework to be completed. He bounded from his jeep and began banging on the tanks until their commanders' heads appeared. "Goddamnit, get up ahead and fire at some targets of opportunity," he growled. "Fire at anything shooting at our men." The tankers hastily complied.

WRITER'S EYE

Truscott traveled with a selection of books he preferred to read at war.

TRUSCOTT WAS A GIFTED WRITER. His account of the cavalry in the interwar years, *The Twilight of the U.S. Cavalry*, has become a classic, and his 1954 autobiography, *Command Missions*, is widely regarded as among the best World War II memoirs (see "Reading List," page 16). In it, he reveals a flair for description suffused with wit. Here, he describes a close call at his quarters at Anzio, involving his Chinese-American cooks and valets, and his driver, Lewis Barna Jr.:

"Lee, the cook, was standing one morning in the small garden just outside his kitchen door. He was holding in his hands one of the cloth dolls dressed in feminine clothes which some of our soldiers had found in Italian shops. Talking with Hong and Barna, he was making the doll salute when a shell exploded in an adjoining lot. That was not unusual. But one jagged, razor-edged fragment whizzed through the air and severed the head from the doll which Lee was holding as nearly as though done by a razor. Lee was untouched, but he returned to his kitchen, and no one ever saw him with the doll again."

IN JANUARY 1944, HOPING TO OUTFLANK FANATICAL resistance that was stalling the Allies' advance around Monte Cassino, the high command decided on a risky flanking action at the seaside town of Anzio. VI Corps, reconstituted as an Allied expeditionary force, landed on January 22. Initially, resistance was light, but attempts to push inland soon ran into serious opposition. The German commander in chief in Italy, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, rushed massive reinforcements that thwarted the Allied advance on key high ground—the Alban Hills—and stood to prevent the capture of Rome, 35 miles from Anzio.

VI Corps lacked the strength to take Rome or advance far inland without exposing its flanks to counterattack. Anzio quickly turned into siege warfare. In savage and bloody battles eerily reminiscent of World War I, the sides locked in a deadly struggle for survival. The Allies hugged a narrow semicircular beachhead against German forces determined to drive them into the Tyrrhenian Sea. The battles that resulted are unique in World War II history; there was no distinction between frontline and rear-area troops. Everyone was under threat from long-range German artillery that pounded the beachhead day and night.

Allied positions began to unravel during a massive German counteroffensive codenamed *Fischfang* ("fishing") that began on February 16. The moment called for extraordinary leadership—which beachhead commander Major General John P. Lucas was not delivering. Lucas—who rarely left his underground headquarters in Nettuno, east of the beachhead—had grown increasingly pessimistic. He failed to inspire confidence, particularly among the British, who saw him as weak and ineffectual. Eventually his superiors viewed Lucas the same way, sealing his fate.

The Fifth Army commander, Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark, turned to Truscott, assigning him as deputy commander of VI Corps. Dismayed at having to give up his beloved 3rd Division to play second fiddle in an assignment with no command authority, Truscott was only briefly bitter. "This was certainly no time to consider personal preferences," he wrote later. "There was a job to be done, and I was a soldier. I could only carry the order out loyally."

Six days later, on February 22, Clark relieved Lucas and appointed Truscott VI Corps commander. Truscott had three daunting tasks: find a way to keep the beachhead secure, reassure British leadership, and eliminate the corps command post's bunker mentality.

Truscott acted quickly. Despite a severe case of laryngitis, he visited every unit in the Anzio beachhead within 24 hours—a practice he continued, routinely coming under enemy fire. Unlike Lucas he worked and lived above ground. In his war room, he hung an enlarged copy of a Bill Mauldin cartoon showing scruffy GIs Willie and Joe in a mud-filled Anzio foxhole. "Th' hell this ain't th' most important hole

GETTY IMAGES

in th' world," the caption says. "I'm in it." The message that things were different soon got through to corps staff, who reacted favorably to Truscott's tough command.

Exposed to British customs in his days at Mountbatten's headquarters in 1942, Truscott began inviting British officers to his quarters for drinks, conducting a great deal of serious business. Truscott also often visited their units. His aide, Captain James M. Wilson, recounts how while at one observation post, Truscott and a British division commander cautiously crawled up to observe the front, where they encountered heavy machine-gun fire. "As they came tumbling down, each lost his helmet," Wilson recalled. "In the ensuing confusion each ended up with the other's helmet on his head, much to the amusement of the Tommies." The hostility Lucas had triggered among the Brits vanished.

Truscott also worked the press. "Gentlemen, we're going to hold this beachhead come what may," he told war correspondents. Wrote British reporter Wynford Vaughan-Thomas: "And he stuck out his jaw in a way that convinced you that any German attack would bounce off it."

WITH THE ALLIES HOLDING THE BEACHHEAD BY A THREAD, Truscott prepared VI Corps for a May 1944 breakout. His lucky boots had become too fragile to wear daily. The offensive went badly at first and seemed to worsen when Truscott had a jeep accident. His staff fretted over Truscott's broken rib and injured legs. And, as Will Lang wrote in his October 2, 1944, *Life* magazine profile, "there was also concern because of reports that he couldn't get his boots back on. Embarrassed, admitting this was a silly way for grown men to act, his officers approached and asked him if he couldn't try just once more to get his lucky boots on. Truscott groaned into them. The offensive succeeded."

German opposition began to collapse as VI Corps broke free of the Anzio beachhead, poised to capture Rome. Truscott had victory within his grasp when Clark committed the Italian campaign's gravest blunder. Instead of seizing Rome and punishing the retreating German Tenth Army, Clark ordered Truscott to halt his offensive, switch the main effort northwest of the Alban Hills, and advance on Rome from that direction.

Clark's order "dumbfounded" him, Truscott said later, and "turned the main effort of the beachhead forces from the Valmontone Gap and prevented the destruction of the German X Army." Clark's decision forced Truscott to fight in the most heavily defended sector, costing his force time and men, and delaying the capture of Rome.

As VI Corps finally reached Rome's outskirts, Truscott again courted death—this time from a German machine gun in an outhouse. He was reviewing a map with Major General Ernest N. Harmon, commander of the 1st Armored Division, when the gunman opened fire. "This, I thought, was the ultimate anticlimax," Harmon recalled. A nearby Sherman tank simply veered across the field, crushing the building. "When the tank had finished, there was neither machine gun, outhouse nor German." Harmon said. "Truscott and I picked ourselves up, resumed the tattered vestments of our dignity and went back to being generals again."

LEADER'S SOUL

ALONG WITH MILITARY SERVICE, WRITING RUNS IN THE TRUSCOTT family. In an op-ed for the *New York Times*, General Truscott's grandson, Lucian K. Truscott IV, recounts how as a cadet at West Point in 1967, he met journalist Will Lang, who had profiled his grandfather in 1944 for *Life* magazine. Lucian IV describes a telling encounter Lang revealed, in which the journalist had pressed the general with queries about tactics:

"Grandpa apparently grew frustrated with these questions, so he grabbed Lang by the arm, and hauled him back to the trailer. He pointed to a pin on the map and asked Lang if he knew what it meant when he moved that pin an inch or two forward. Lang admitted that he didn't. 'It means by nine o'clock, 25 of my men will be dead, and a few hours later, 25 more of them will die, and more of them will die until that unit accomplished the mission I gave them.' Grandpa said. 'That's what it means.'

"Then Grandpa led Lang back to the table and they finished their breakfast."

Wearing VI Corps insignia, Truscott briefs a war correspondent.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The American cemetery in Nettuno—here in March 1944—opened two days after the Anzio landings. Later called the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery, it would hold nearly 8,000 dead.

GEORGE SILK/LIFE MAGAZINE/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

A FEW DAYS AFTER THE LIBERATION OF ROME, MARK Clark assigned Truscott and VI Corps to Operation Dragoon, the August 1944 invasion of southern France. Before Truscott left Italy, Pope Pius XII granted him an audience. "It was not a bad rise for a poor boy from frontier Oklahoma," Truscott proudly wrote to his wife.

Truscott's service with VI Corps ended in September 1944 when he was promoted to the three-star rank of lieutenant general and reassigned to command the newly activated Fifteenth Army in the United States. But Italy was not yet in his past; in December, when Clark succeeded British general Harold Alexander as commander of Allied troops in Italy, Truscott was given command of Fifth Army. He led that force through the difficult battles in northern Italy that lasted until the German surrender in May 1945.

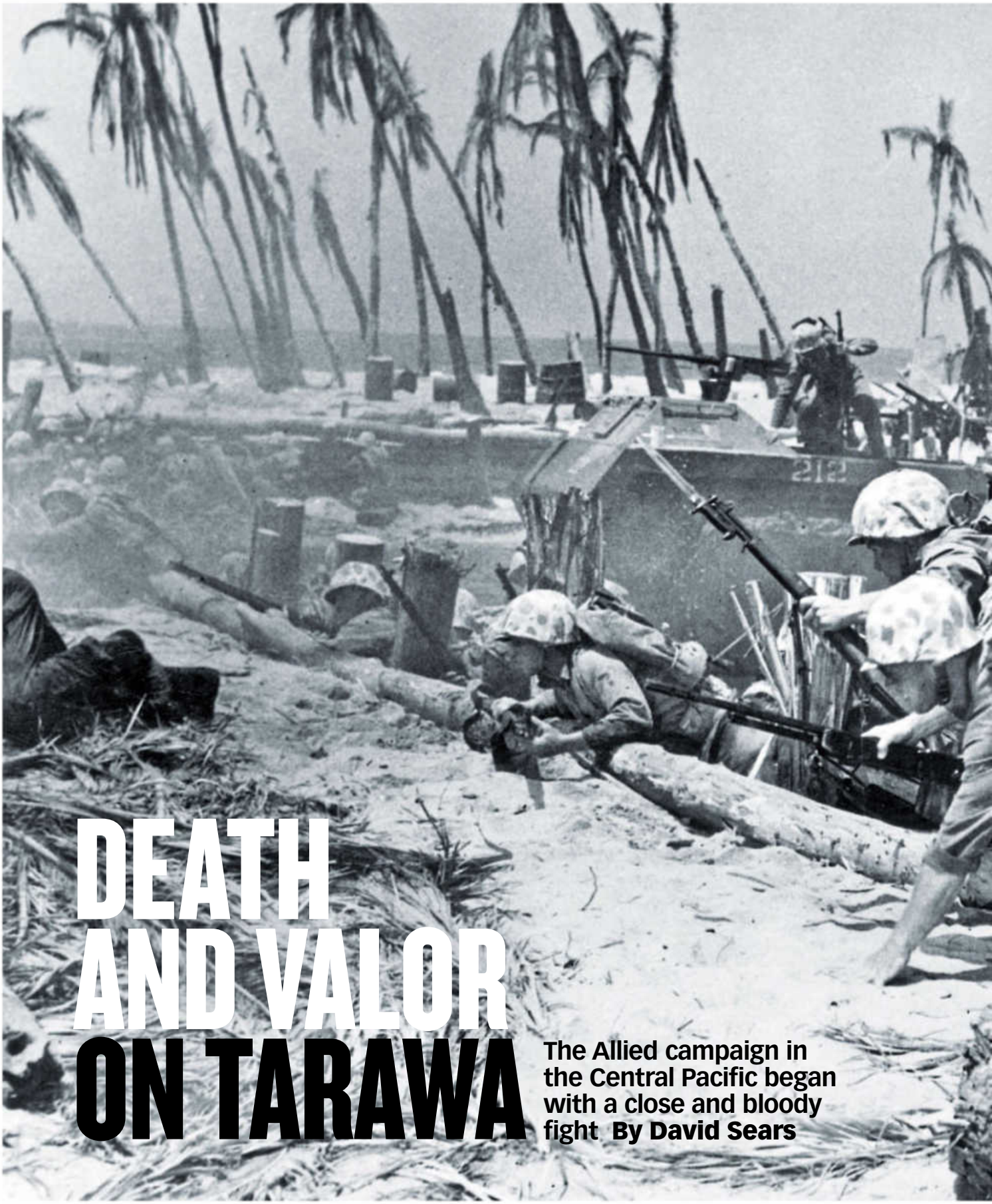
ON MAY 30, MEMORIAL DAY, TRUSCOTT TRAVELED TO A new American military cemetery at Nettuno that was full of Anzio dead. Unlike today's beautifully maintained facility, the 1945 edition was a raw, muddy, unfinished place with wooden temporary grave markers. VIP visitors included several American senators. Cartoonist Bill Mauldin was also present to witness an extraordinary ceremony.

As the general who had commanded Allied troops at Anzio, Truscott, 50, was the primary speaker. When introduced, he stood, turned his back on the VIPs, and addressed the graves of the men he had commanded.

No text of the speech exists; the fullest account is Mauldin's. "The general's remarks were brief and extemporaneous," the artist wrote. "He apologized to the dead men for their presence here. He said everybody tells leaders it is not their fault that men get killed in war, but that every leader knows in his heart this is not altogether true."

Rough voice rising over the graves, Truscott said he hoped anyone interred there through any mistake of his would forgive him, but knew this was asking a lot. He said he would not speak of "glorious dead" because he didn't see any glory in getting killed in your late teens or early twenties. He promised that if he ever ran into anybody, especially old men, who thought death in battle glorious, he would straighten them out; it was the least he could do.

"It was the most moving gesture I ever saw," Mauldin recalled later. "It came from a hard-boiled old man who was incapable of planned dramatics." ✯



DEATH AND VALOR ON TARAWA

The Allied campaign in the Central Pacific began with a close and bloody fight **By David Sears**

Marines clamber over a log seawall encircling tiny Betio Island during the fierce fight for Tarawa Atoll in the Pacific's Gilbert Islands.

After defeats at Midway and Guadalcanal, Japanese strategy shifted in mid-1943 to defending a vast oceanic perimeter.

This line included the Central Pacific's Gilbert and Marshall island groups. Coincidentally, the Allies postponed the invasion of Hitler's Fortress Europe, freeing warships, transports, and landing craft for a limited strike in the Central Pacific.

American planners initially eyed the Marshall Islands as a target, but they lay beyond aerial reconnaissance range. Focus shifted southwest to Betio (pronounced like "ratio") Island, part of Tarawa Atoll in the Gilberts. Barely two miles long and less than 700 yards across, Betio nonetheless had a usable Japanese-built airfield. The conquest of Betio by the 2nd Marine Division was one of Operation Galvanic's dual objectives, along with the U.S. Army 27th Division's capture of Butaritari in nearby Makin Atoll. A landing on Betio was set to begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday, November 20, 1943, following a brief, intense bombardment by ships and planes.

Previous American amphibious assaults, like that at Guadalcanal, had featured surprise landings on large landmasses with varied terrain; although Guadalcanal had evolved into a grinding campaign, the initial landing itself went smoothly. Senior Marines knew that would not be the case on Betio, which was small and flat and garrisoned by well-organized Japanese troops occupying heavily built fortifications.

Marine leaders were not mistaken. By the time Japanese Rear Admiral Keiji Shibazaki took command of Tarawa in September 1943, imperial forces had made Betio's defenses nearly impregnable. Emplacements with large-caliber guns and reinforced cement command posts dotted the tiny island. Construction crews had made maximum use of coral slabs and coconut logs. Foragers timbered thousands of eight-inch logs on outlying islands, fashioning them into a seawall that fronted portions of Betio's perimeter. Crews erected sturdy beachfront firing positions. Some redoubts featured double thicknesses of horizontal logs joined with steel spikes, buttressed by logs pile-driven vertically, the whole covered by three feet of sand. Cement blockhouses were fitted with 55-inch-thick walls and roofs.

Shibazaki planned to defend his holding at the water's edge, so he worked his 5,000 men hard, alternating grueling construction tasks with painstaking drills in marksmanship and gunnery. The garrison included construction personnel and Korean laborers, but over half were Special Naval Landing Force troops—*kaigun tokubetsu rikusentai*. Marine grunts initially dismissed them as "damned sailors"; however, *rikusentai* were tough, seasoned, and ready to fight.

The resulting clash was brief but hard-fought, a furious portent of invasions to come. Dug-in defenders forced Marines to struggle hour by bloody hour; the Americans finally prevailed by blending strength of numbers, doctrine, and small-unit improvisation. More than 1,000 Marines died taking Betio, four of them honored with the nation's highest award for valor. One was First Lieutenant Alexander "Sandy" Bonnyman Jr., whose gallantry led him to die valorously in combat and then to lie for more than 70 years in an anonymous and distant grave.

THE INITIAL ASSAULT CALLED FOR 1,500 Marines led by Lieutenant Colonel David M. Shoup to approach Betio's relatively less-fortified northern coast, then charge onto three designated landing beaches: Red 2 in the center, flanked by Red 1 to the west and Red 3 to the east.

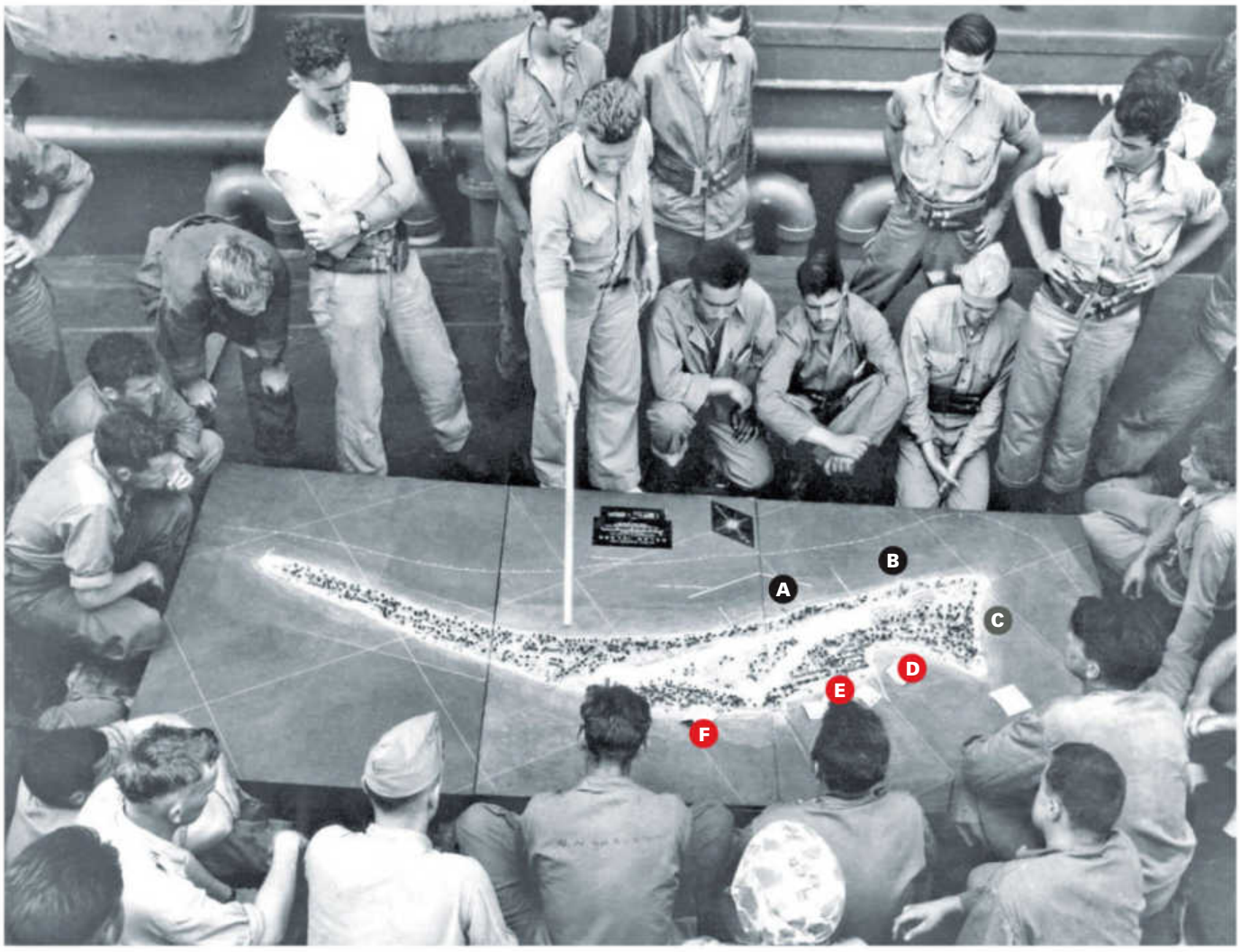
The tactic did surprise Shibazaki's garrison, but the defenders still made Shoup's men pay dearly. A shallow and treacherous coral reef lay between the open sea and the beaches. Amphibious tractors, known as amtracs, were able to carry some Marines directly to shore by crawling over the coral, but most men arrived in Higgins boats that drew too much water to clear the reef. Disembarking under intense fire, men had to wade hundreds of yards to shore through the bloody lagoon. Those who reached the dubious shelter of Betio's coconut-log ramparts realized the pre-assault bombardment had accomplished little.

"We're going to stick and fight it out," Shoup vowed when he finally reached shore near a long pier that marked the line between Red 2 and Red 3. In the hours that followed, Shoup's urgent calls for reinforcements were accompanied by a troubling assessment: "Situation in doubt."

The battle for Betio remained tooth and nail that first day and much of Sunday, November 21. Only Marine gumption finally enabled Shoup to punctuate Sunday afternoon's otherwise grim report by declaring, "We are winning."

Even as he gave that assurance, Shoup had a clarifying

PREVIOUS PAGES, FREDERIC LEWIS/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



Aboard a Betio-bound ship, a Marine indicates the island's south shore on a model. Planners picked six landing beaches, but used only C-F.

LANDING BEACH A Black 2
LANDING BEACH B Black 1
LANDING BEACH C Green
LANDING BEACH D Red 1
LANDING BEACH E Red 2
LANDING BEACH F Red 3

aside for *Time* magazine reporter Robert Sherrod. "Well, I think we're winning, but the bastards have got a lot of bullets left," the Marine told the war correspondent, who was huddling close by. "I think we'll clean up tomorrow."

AS D+2, NOVEMBER 22, DAWNED ON RED 3, the survivors of two Marine battalions, augmented by combat engineers, shore party personnel, and the crew of a lone Sherman tank, found themselves stalled by three obstacles: a coconut log emplacement bristling with machine guns, a steel pillbox, and, about 40 yards inland, an enormous bombproof bunker that defenders had heaped with at least three feet of sand and camouflaged with palm fronds.

In an effort to overcome the strongpoints, Major Henry P. Crowe's Marines were to push east on Red 3 beginning at 9 a.m., synchronizing with attacks originating elsewhere on Betio. A battalion lodged on Betio's westernmost nub at newly designated Green Beach would push along the south shore to close with elements of Shoup's Marines fighting inland from Red 2. Another battalion would advance into Red 1—west of Red 2, east of Green—to root out defenders in the "Pocket," a warren of Japanese heavy weapons.

Crowe, who once coached the Marine Corps rifle team, ordered his men to field strip, clean, and lubricate their weapons, then sorted his troops into three company-size units to take on the stubborn Red 3 fortifications.

To storm the big bunker, Crowe assigned his executive officer, Major William C. Chamberlin. The 27-year-old had been valedictorian at Dartmouth College in 1938 and had completed doctoral work in economics at Columbia University. He was teaching at Northwestern University in Chicago

EVERETT COLLECTION/ALAMY

when he was called up. Two days of combat had transformed the former economics professor. "When he got ashore, he was like a wild man!" recalled one veteran.

One of Chamberlin's assistants was another Marine anomaly. First Lieutenant Sandy Bonnyman, 33, was tall, handsome, and charismatic, a restless son of privilege born in Atlanta and raised in Tennessee. His father ran Knoxville-based Blue Diamond Coal. After graduating from prep school, Bonnyman enrolled at Princeton University in 1928. He studied engineering and lettered in football but withdrew after sophomore year.

In 1932 Bonnyman joined the Army Air Corps as a flight cadet. Perhaps because he had trouble conforming to rigid flying protocols, he only lasted three months as a prospective pilot but came away with an honorable discharge and soon married a San Antonio debutante. He worked for his father until 1938, when he bought a New Mexico copper mine. In 1941, he moved with his wife and three daughters to Santa Fe, working hard but also enjoying a squire's life of tennis, raising field dogs, and shooting game—until Pearl Harbor. As a 31-year-old father working in a vital industry, Bonnyman was entitled to stay out of uniform; he instead enlisted in the Marines. On Guadalcanal his vigor and resourcefulness earned him a field commission.

LANDING ON BETIO THE FIRST DAY, Bonnyman led a platoon of shore party "pioneers" through withering fire across the long pier to deliver supplies to the front line. To keep from being drawn into combat and away from their crucial logistics work, Bonnyman and his men wore prominent red patches on their helmets and pants. But such distinctions meant little on tiny, embattled Betio—and anyway, Bonnyman had volunteered them all to help Crowe's troops destroy enemy bastions and pull wounded men to safety.

On day two, for example, Bonnyman led a group of riflemen and pioneers in an abortive assault on the big bombproof bunker. During their unsuccessful foray Bonnyman was able to size up the humped structure, the closest thing on Betio to a hill thanks to its mantle of sand. Large black ventilators studded the roof; a flamethrower nozzle aimed into those openings would drive defenders into the open.

Bonnyman was figuring to do just that in the Red 3 assault, which began auspiciously. A 60mm mortar round penetrated the smaller coconut log strongpoint's roof, touching off the magazine inside. The crew of *Colorado*, the only one of four Sherman medium tanks to survive d-day on Red 3, closed on the pillbox so tanker 2nd Lieutenant Louis R. Largey could fire several 75mm rounds pointblank. Before the pillbox's stunned occupants could react, Marines swarmed. Grenades and demolition charges silenced the enemy bastion. It was not yet 10 a.m. and Marines had eliminated two of the obstructions to progress inland from Red 3.

However, moves against the main bunker faltered. At midday Chamberlin sent troops east along the seawall in a flanking maneuver. Around 1 p.m., as they charged, defensive fire stopped them cold. Crossfire already was tying down other troops on the western flank, so Chamberlin gathered stray riflemen and engineers for a head-on assault. After a huddle, he vaulted the seawall screaming, "Follow me!" Only a Marine cameraman and his assistant did. The three scrambled all the way to the crest, miraculously untouched, to behold a dozen startled defenders. After a moment of stunned silence, the Americans withdrew at high speed.

Sandy Bonnyman now saw his chance. He had his own pick-up team of pioneers and riflemen, plus Private First Class Johnny Borich on flamethrower. Armed with a carbine, Bonnyman leaped the coconut-log rampart and dove

NATIONAL ARCHIVES; INSET, U.S. MARINE CORPS

Sandy Bonnyman (inset) was among the swarm of Marines on the crest of a buried and heavily reinforced bunker, where he died on November 22, 1943.

behind a wooden fence perpendicular to the bunker's northwest corner. His team followed, several men at a time. The Marines inched along the fence to the foot of the bunker.

As Chamberlin waited to resume his thrust, he intercepted a demolition squad led by Corporal Harry Niehoff. Chamberlin ordered Niehoff to heave charges at the bunker. After the charges went off, Niehoff's men joined Bonnyman's team at the fence. On Bonnyman's cue, Borich sprayed the bunker with flame and Niehoff hurled a charge at the crest.

The flames and blast ignited the palm-frond camouflage covering the bunker and shut down a machine gun atop the crest. Under withering Japanese fire, the Marines clambered up the sandy slope; a half dozen, including Bonnyman, Borich, and Niehoff, made it all the way to the summit. With Bonnyman shouting encouragement and firing his carbine, Borich torched the vents while Niehoff and others tossed charge after charge at the Japanese below.

"Go!" came a shout from the beach. Covered by the Bonnyman team's fire, Chamberlin again was rallying his Marines, this time to the fence and up the bunker slope.

"Here come the Japs!" came a cry from the east flank. Borich's flamethrower had forced the bunker's occupants to flee—and Niehoff's TNT had exposed their subterranean escape route. More than 100 rikusentai rushed into the clear, touching off a rifle and grenade shootout documented by the camera crew. *Colorado* compounded the slaughter with a 75mm canister round that cut down several dozen Japanese.

Bonnyman's men were still firing and blasting from the crest when Chamberlin's reinforcements began arriving. Bonnyman rose up on one elbow. He was yelling for more demolition charges when a bullet killed him. He and 13 of the first 21 Marines to reach the crest lay dead or wounded,

Finding Lieutenant Bonnyman

It took almost 72 years for Sandy Bonnyman to come home from Tarawa

Clay Bonnyman Evans (left) stands at the excavated bunker his grandfather helped to take, losing his life and gaining a Medal of Honor. Honor Flight archaeologist Kristen Baker (right) gingerly brushes sand from Sandy Bonnyman's remains, found in a long-obscured mass grave.

CLAY BONNYMAN EVANS/HISTORY FLIGHT, INC. (BOTH)

At first the official word was that the navy had buried the Medal of Honor recipient at sea. Younger brother Gordon Bonnyman, who served with distinction in Merrill's Marauders, expressed doubts. A 1946 U.S. Army search of Tarawa Atoll's Betio Island found 500 Marines' remains, but not Alexander "Sandy" Bonnyman's. Gordon maintained that his brother and other Marines killed in battle were still on the island.

His family's energies and broader interest in Bonnyman's story propelled the search even after Gordon's death in 2004. Sandy Bonnyman's daughter, Francis Evans, who at 12 had come to Washington, DC, with her mother to accept her father's medal, told and retold the story to son Clay Bonnyman Evans.

Evans, who is writing a book about his grandfather, learned that History Flight, a nonprofit that collaborates with the Department of Defense to recover military remains, had begun working in 2006 on Tarawa, now a densely populated part of the Republic of Kiribati. In 2008 the organization concluded that ground-penetrating radar had shown where Bonnyman and other Marines lay on Betio.

A parcel on what once was Red 2 beach included a burial ground called Cemetery 27; History Flight pinpointed the site in 2011. In March 2015, the owners demolished buildings on the plot, making an excavation possible. The work proceeded gingerly; the sands contain unexploded ordnance.

"We dug a first test unit and immediately found human remains," Kristen Baker, an archaeologist/anthropologist with History Flight, said. "We expanded and just kept finding more people."

Evans came to Betio familiar with intimate details—such as the gold inlays in several of his grandfather's teeth. On May 28 he was at the burial ground as technicians worked with trowels and brushes. Sunlight flashed golden on a jawline. Soon a cigarette lighter engraved with a "B" appeared. DNA corroboration followed on June 16.

"We found Alexander Bonnyman, period," Evans declared.

The family's plans to bring Sandy Bonnyman back to his hometown, Knoxville, Tennessee, were at long last realized the weekend of September 26 to 27. Carried in a flag-draped casket by a Marine honor guard, Bonnyman's remains lay in state that Saturday at the East Tennessee Veterans' Memorial. Veterans' groups laid wreaths at his casket at the standing-room only event attended by Governor Bill Haslam and other dignitaries. On Sunday, two months short of the 72nd anniversary of his death on far-off Tarawa, Sandy Bonnyman was buried near his parents in West Knoxville's Berry Highland Memorial Cemetery.

"My aunt was only one when he left to join the Marines," Evans said. "She's kind of lived vicariously through getting to know about him. She is just ecstatic." Identifications and family notifications for several dozen other Cemetery 27 Marine heroes continue, but the work is a slow process and identifying DNA and tracking down relatives will take time.

Many of Betio's massive wartime fortifications remain. "Local people use them for everything from houses to pig stys," says Baker. Just 300 yards east of where Sandy Bonnyman lay for decades loom remnants of the bunker where he perished, now used to store the live rounds that continue to crop up.

—David Sears

Having secured Betio, Marines—some on a disabled Sherman tank—study knots of their dead comrades, soon to be buried en masse.

but the bunker was still. As a bulldozer went to work sealing in remaining Japanese, the fighting pushed east from Red 3.

Around that time, somewhere on Betio, a Japanese radio operator managed a final transmission.

"Our weapons have been destroyed," he reported. "From now on everyone is attempting a final charge."

Marines across the island had been waiting for a *banzai* attack. Assaults did flare that evening south of Betio's airstrip: a 50-man probe at 7:30 p.m., more at 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. But instead of suicidal stampedes, these thrusts were fierce, well-planned, and crisply executed. Aided by artillery and mortar fire plus star-shell illumination from navy destroyers, Marine riflemen repulsed the enemy incursions.

At 4 a.m. hundreds of rikusentai made a final screaming rush. Marines cut down most, but a few got near enough for sword and bayonet duels. "They told us we had to hold," Major William K. Jones said. "And by God, we held."

Diehard Japanese persisted, especially in the Pocket, but at noon on day four a U.S. Navy fighter landed on Betio. At 1:05, Major General Holland M. Smith, commander of Galvanic land forces, declared organized resistance over on Betio.

Amid sporadic fire and explosions, Marines set to cataloging and burying their dead. On Red 2, Sherrod watched a bulldozer operator, ducking occasional sniper rounds, scoop a long trench three feet deep in the sand. Burial details placed scores, then hundreds of bodies side by side, most of them uncovered, as chaplains supervised the identification of each fatality and performed last rites. The 'dozer closed the mass grave with sand, and began a fresh trench. Dead Japanese—virtually the entire garrison—were addressed less ceremoniously. Most had been obliterated or buried alive during battle; of nearly 5,000 Japanese defenders of Tarawa, only one officer and 16 enlisted men, along with 129 Korean laborers, survived to surrender. It fell to Seabees to inter the remainder in the course of their construction work.

Heroics on Betio would earn 2nd Division Marines a total of nearly 500 awards for valor. Navy Crosses went to Henry Crowe, Bill Chamberlin, and William Jones; Silver Stars to Louis Largey, Bill Niehoff, and Johnny Borich. David Shoup, who eventually became commandant of the Marine Corps, received the Medal of Honor for service above and beyond the call of duty. So, posthumously, did scout sniper platoon commander Lieutenant William D. Hawkins, combat engineer Staff Sergeant William J. Bordelon, and Sandy Bonnyman, who, with hundreds of other Marine dead, would be consigned to the sands of Betio for decades to come. ✯

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The Brief, Glorious Bloom of the White Rose

With Germany on the march toward world domination, a band of students in Munich dared question the Nazis—and paid the ultimate price

"It is my firm belief that no one raised in the United States can fully comprehend what it is like to live under an absolute dictatorship," the last surviving member of a German anti-Nazi movement, the White Rose, recalled late in life. In the early 1940s, medical student Jürgen Wittenstein (below)—who took most of the photos on these pages—and a small group of like-minded friends distributed a series of leaflets in Germany to raise awareness of the Nazi regime's brutality. The act was highly dangerous, and the official response was swift and savage; the regime executed seven White Rose members and arrested many others. Wittenstein survived by requesting a transfer to the front, where the Gestapo did not have jurisdiction: "the only 'safe' place for me," he said. He spent the rest of the war in Italy, where he was wounded, and emigrated to the United States in 1947, taking the name "George."
—Karen Jensen

FAREWELL, MY FRIENDS
Brother and sister Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst (left to right) assemble at a Munich train station in June 1942 as fellow students, required to spend summers in military service, depart for the Russian front. Eight months later—on February 18, 1943—the trio became the first White Rose activists to be arrested for resistance activities. Tried four days later, they were immediately beheaded.

DAYS OF GRACE

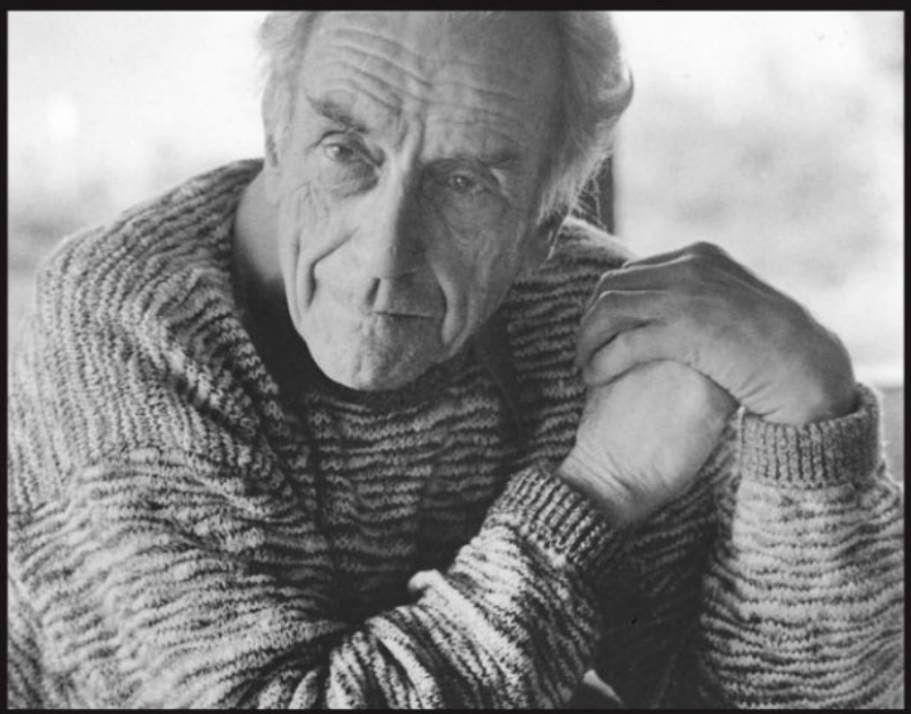
Wittenstein met Alexander Schmorell (above) in 1938, and introduced him to Probst (right) and others; in 1942, the group shared a meal (below) before being deployed to the front. "In time politics and the inescapable oppression by our government, its crimes and atrocities, entered our discussions," Wittenstein recalled, "and we struggled with our ethical responsibilities as citizens and human beings versus our loyalty to our 'Fatherland.'"

ALL PHOTOS: GEORGE WITTENSTEIN/AKG-IMAGES, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

JOURNEY TO THE EASTERN FRONT

Wearing the uniform of the Wehrmacht medical corps, with a silver sharpshooter braid, Wittenstein peers from a train bound for Russia. In the summer of 1942 he served as a medic in the Wehrmacht's 252nd Infantry Division, part of Army Group Center. The trip to the front took nearly three weeks. En route, members of his student battalion (below) enjoy a rare opportunity to wash up and shave.

THROUGH NEW EYES
A civilian trudges through the German-occupied town of Vyazma, in Smolensk Oblast, where Wittenstein's battalion deployed. Because Alex Schmorell was fluent in Russian, Wittenstein recalled, "we had the exceptional opportunity to get to know Russian people, learn what they were like…, and see the suffering Hitler and Stalin brought upon them." Schmorell was later executed—on July 13, 1943.



RIGHT, DEBRA MYRENT

LOW BLOW

On a stop in Warsaw, Wittenstein watched an SS officer kicking Jews as they returned to the ghetto from work (above). The final White Rose leaflet, written a few months later by Kurt Huber, exhorted: "Rise up, my people, the fiery beacons beckon!" Huber would be executed the same day as Schmorell. "The brutality of the Nazi regime is illustrated by the bill for 600 marks which was presented to Mrs. Huber for 'wear of the guillotine,'" noted Wittenstein (photographed in 1994 at left). He settled in California, where he lived until his death last June, at 96.

A German Panzer II rumbles through a shocked French town in 1940. Hermann Balck (in 1944, right) played a key role in the assault, which he detailed in his recently translated memoir, *Order in Chaos.*

"NOTHING INCURS HIGHER CASUALTIES THAN AN UNSUCCESSFUL DEFENSE. THEREFORE, **ATTACK WHEREVER IT IS POSSIBLE.**"

—HERMANN BALCK

STORM ACROSS THE MEUSE

In the definitive firsthand account, the officer whose leadership assured Germany of victory in France tells how he advanced that success **By Hermann Balck**

Translated by David T. Zabecki and Dieter J. Biedekarken

STUDENTS OF THE WAR KNOW WELL GENERAL HEINZ Guderian's armored thrust that poised Germany to conquer France in May 1940. Less famous is that action's spearhead, the 1st Panzer Division's 1st Rifle Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hermann Balck, 47. Balck and his men crossed the Meuse River and attacked forcefully, taking the high ground—a decisive advance that made possible Guderian's victory. Balck's philosophy of battle was straightforward: "Nothing incurs higher casualties than an unsuccessful defense," he wrote. "Therefore, attack wherever it is possible."

As a young officer during the Great War, which saw him wounded six times, Balck prefigured his future with a successful 1918 attack on Mount Kemmel in France. Widely regarded as one of World War II's finest field commanders, he stood out afterward among Wehrmacht leaders by refusing to participate in U.S. Army debriefings of German military leaders. That

emphatic silence makes the recent publication in English of his 1981 memoir, excerpted here, a significant event for historians. The passage begins on the afternoon of Monday, May 13, 1940, as Balck's regiment awaits orders to cross the Meuse. "Suddenly we received the classic order," Balck recorded: "'X time 1600 hours. Act in accordance with the established playbook scenario.'"

FOR TWO HOURS WE WAITED IN TENSE ANTICIPATION. The orders were perfectly clear; there was nothing more to do. At 4 p.m. I was at the Meuse when we had our first crisis. The rubber dinghies were in place, but not the engineers. At this moment the commander of the engineer battalion of the Grossdeutschland Regiment showed up.

"You are heaven sent," I told him. "Here are the dinghies, put us across."

"We are not trained to do that," he quibbled. "We are assault engineers."

We knew how to assault. For that we did not need engineers. Thank God I had trained all my personnel in dinghy operations at the Moselle River. We ended up doing it all ourselves—river crossing and assault.

The air and the ground shuddered from engine noise and detonations. The French artillery remained silent, as did the enemy bunkers. We attacked, just like on maneuvers. Prisoners flooded out of their bunkers, completely demoralized, many drunk and senseless. When we broke through the first line of bunkers, Guderian showed up. He was delighted; he had been the main proponent of such tactics, and had led the difficult struggle for their acceptance. The results were proving him right.

Once through that first line of bunkers we still faced enemy emplacements on hills. Reports that our own artillery was firing on us came in from everywhere, but that was not true; the French artillery finally had opened up. I committed my reserve battalion in the forward-most position.

"Let's go," I told them. "Next orders briefing at that bunker up there on the hill."

I moved forward. In such moments a leader must expose himself; he must show disregard for danger. My regiment was not exactly a model of combat readiness; the attack was dragging. But what would be easy today could cost a lot of blood tomorrow. The day was coming to an end and we still had to reach the dominating terrain. I pushed and pushed, and by sunset we had destroyed the last enemy bunkers and owned the commanding hills. The regimental staff had broken through with the lead battalion. We closed in on the key bunker, the one from which I had said I would issue my follow-on order. As we approached the bunker from the rear, the riflemen of the 2nd Battalion were storming forward. They were quite surprised to find their regimental commander already in the French positions.

"I MOVED FORWARD. IN SUCH MOMENTS A LEADER MUST EXPOSE HIMSELF; **HE MUST SHOW DISREGARD FOR DANGER.**"

We had accomplished a huge success. My totally exhausted troops fell into a leaden sleep. The enemy was gone, leaving a huge gap in his lines. I thought back to Mount Kemmel, where we had achieved a similar great success, but with no senior leadership in place to carry through to victory. It was my great good luck that I was allowed to lead at a point where I had seen others in the First World War fail so critically. The hill happened to be where the Prussian General Headquarters had its command post on September 1, 1870. It was there that French General André Reille delivered Napoleon III's surrender note to King Wilhelm of Prussia.

I walked off a distance, thought about the situation, and made a decision.

We had to advance another 10 kilometers into the enemy.

"Sir, that would lead to the destruction of the regiment," said my adjutant, First Lieutenant Andreas Braune-Kriekau, a resolute and courageous man with a keen military mind.

"No," I replied. "It will lead to the destruction of the French."

My battalion commanders insisted it was impossible to advance with totally exhausted units. I refused to budge. We would rest one hour, then move forward. Battalion Richter was to remain and occupy the hills. The other two battalions staggered and hobbled forward into the black night.

MAY 14—A NIGHT THAT WAS NOT REALLY ONE set in over the battlefield. At daybreak I moved up to my forward elements in Chéhéry. There was no enemy anywhere; we had achieved the breakthrough. Our vehicles were still on the other bank of the Meuse; all the equipment we had had been hand-carried across. We had an antitank gun that I had towed with my command car. The division's Panzer brigade was on the far side of the Meuse, its troops completely spent. Additional elements moved forward piecemeal, especially my somewhat rested 3rd Battalion, followed by individual antitank guns and ammunition. We still had to take the crossing sites on the Ardennes Canal, which we needed for our turn west. Elements of all kinds of

PREVIOUS PAGE, © SUEDDEUTSCHER ZEITUNG PHOTO/ALAMY; INSET, ULLSTEIN BILD/GETTY IMAGES

German troops near Aiglemont, in northeast France, cross the Meuse River under the watchful eyes of an antitank gun crew.

ULLSTEIN BILD/GETTY IMAGES

units thrust forward on any available vehicles, even my command car, moving toward Omicourt and Malmy. My personal adjutant, 1st Lieutenant von Kurzetkowski, advanced in the forest near Vendresse, where he shot up a French battery until the enemy's tanks forced him to withdraw on foot.

Beaming, Guderian and my division commander, Lieutenant General Friedrich Kirchner, arrived with Guderian's brilliant staff officer, Major Walther Wenck.

"IT WAS MY GREAT GOOD LUCK THAT I WAS ALLOWED TO LEAD AT A POINT **WHERE I HAD SEEN OTHERS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR FAIL SO CRITICALLY.**"

"Just hold out for another one to two hours," Guderian said. "The Panzer brigade will be here."

His gumption was a guarantee for us to hold out in this crisis. My units at Malmy-Chéhéry reported: "Strong French tank elements moving toward Chéhéry...our antitank guns cannot penetrate the French armor...we have to withdraw."

"The order is to stay in place," I responded. "The regimental staff will stay also."

I sent forward a freshly arrived engineer company, not sure that would help. French tanks might be overrunning us any minute. We needed Panzers. A motorcycle messenger arrived, reporting that the Panzer brigade had crossed the Meuse and would close with us within the half hour. An officer of an antitank company from the Grossdeutschland Regiment said his unit would be arriving shortly with heavy antitank guns. As the French tanks slowly closed on us, we heard engine noises from behind—the antitank guns, we thought. Instead two field kitchens pulled up. The devil himself must have sent them to taunt us.

Finally, the antitank guns arrived. French tanks knocked out the first. The second opened fire, setting an enemy tank alight, then a second, and a third. The French attack faltered as the courageous antitank crews from the Grossdeutschland kept firing. The Panzer brigade arrived, went straight into the attack and, in short order, destroyed dozens of French tanks. We had overcome the crisis and during the hellish episode not a single man of my regiment had left his position. Consequently, our losses were minimal. Meanwhile, the staffs of the Panzer brigade, the 2nd Panzer Regiment, and the 43rd Engineer Assault Battalion were meeting at an intersection in Chéhéry. As I was hurrying there a misplaced strike by our Stukas hit the group.

A column of German tanks advances in France. The main guns' short barrels allowed ease of movement, especially through forests, but reduced the guns' effectiveness.

THE FRENCH TRIED TO STEM THE TIDE OF defeat. Despite the horrible communications situation and the masses of refugees clogging all the roads, General Pierre Lafontaine, the commander of the French 55th Infantry Division, managed to assemble forces for a counterattack. He committed two tank battalions and his 213th Infantry Regiment against my rifle regiment, but chaos and congested roads and villages delayed his force for hours. Lafontaine threw forward another infantry regiment but in the disorder that unit too dissolved, becoming completely combat ineffective. When Lafontaine finally did launch a well-planned counterattack that reached the German lines, Panzers and antitank guns halted it cold. My regiment's exhausting night advance had paid off. Nonetheless, I give General Lafontaine great credit for even attempting to mount a counterattack.

My regiment lay strung out along the road in deep sleep, waiting for vehicles stuck far in the rear. During every peacetime maneuver I had driven home the point that any machine gun not committed against ground targets or being transported was to be kept ready to engage in air defense. Thus, more than 200 of my regiment's machine guns, augmented by a light antiaircraft unit with 20mm automatic cannons, were ready when a large number of French aircraft attacked. Machine guns blazing, the low-flying French planes raked our positions. But our return fire knocked the enemy planes to the ground, where they broke up and exploded. In only minutes that crisis was over; hardly any of those courageous French pilots could have survived.

"I HAVE FOUGHT AGAINST ALL ENEMIES IN BOTH WARS AND ALWAYS IN THE HOTTEST PLACES. **RARELY DID ANYONE FIGHT AS WELL AS THE 3RD SPAHI BRIGADE.**"

Now we were alone. I lay down in a garden and slept as if

dead. My adjutant woke me."Everything has been prepared as ordered," he reported. "We're ready to move out."

With a surprised look I asked what was going on and who had given the order.

"Sir," Braune-Kriekau said. "You gave that order just two hours ago."

I apparently had given the order in my sleep. It had, however, been a pretty reasonable one.

The 1st Panzer Division thrust tore the French lines wide open. Adjacent German units that had been lagging now were moving swiftly. The French brought up reserves and threw them against the threat. Guderian executed one of his tactical concepts by turning the mass of his corps 90 degrees toward Amiens and the Channel coast before the majority of the trailing infantry division had come fully forward and staged for action.

"NOW WE WERE ALONE. I LAY DOWN IN A GARDEN AND SLEPT AS IF DEAD. MY ADJUTANT WOKE ME. 'EVERYTHING HAS BEEN PREPARED AS ORDERED,' HE SAID. 'WE'RE READY TO MOVE OUT.'
I APPARENTLY HAD GIVEN THE ORDER IN MY SLEEP. IT HAD, HOWEVER, BEEN A PRETTY REASONABLE ONE."

On the evening of May 14 my regiment moved west into the gathering night. We took prisoner upon prisoner.

MAY 15—THE ADVANCE GUARD, BATTALION Richter, met the enemy and attacked aggressively, but got stuck in a confusing and uncomfortable situation near the village of Ménil-la-Horgne. We were taking casualties rapidly; we had to change the situation. My Battalion Studnitz on its own accord had begun to envelop the enemy to the right through thick underbrush. In the dense forest my regimental staff encountered the staff of the Moroccan 2nd Spahi Regiment, killing the regimental commander, Colonel Geoffrey.

Richter encircled and took Ménil-la-Horgne, killing Colonel Burnol, commander of the 2nd Algerian Spahi Regiment. I have fought against all enemies in both wars and always in the hottest places. Rarely did anyone fight as well as the 3rd Spahi Brigade. Including the two regimental commanders, 12 of the brigade's 27 officers were killed, seven officers were wounded, and 610 Spahis were killed or wounded. The 3rd Spahi Brigade had ceased to exist, sacrificing itself for France. I issued special orders to treat the few surviving Algerian prisoners well.

We were near Bouvellemont, on a wide-open flatland facing that village. We were taking machine-gun and anti-tank fire from the outskirts from Bouvellemont. Battalion Studnitz was in a long line at the edge of the flats, its troops completely exhausted. They were low on ammunition, had run out of rations, and in the extreme heat had nothing to drink. The preceding days' losses had been minimal but were starting to add up. We had paid for every success with the lives of some of our best, mostly officers.

I assembled the officers, who told me that after a good night's sleep we would press on.

"Gentlemen," I said, cutting them off. "We will attack, or we will lose the victory."

I could see that no matter what I ordered, my soldiers were not going to move. So I turned around.

"If you're not going, then I'll just take the village myself," I said. I started for Bouvellemont across the field—50 meters, 100 meters. Suddenly all broke loose. Troops and officers who seconds ago could not move were passing me, not rushing from cover to cover but simply storming ahead, the setting sun catching their bayonets. There was no stopping them. With loud shouts echoing, the thin, totally exhausted line of riflemen entered the village. Bouvellemont was ours. I had not miscalculated. No German soldier will abandon an officer who moves forward. ✯

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

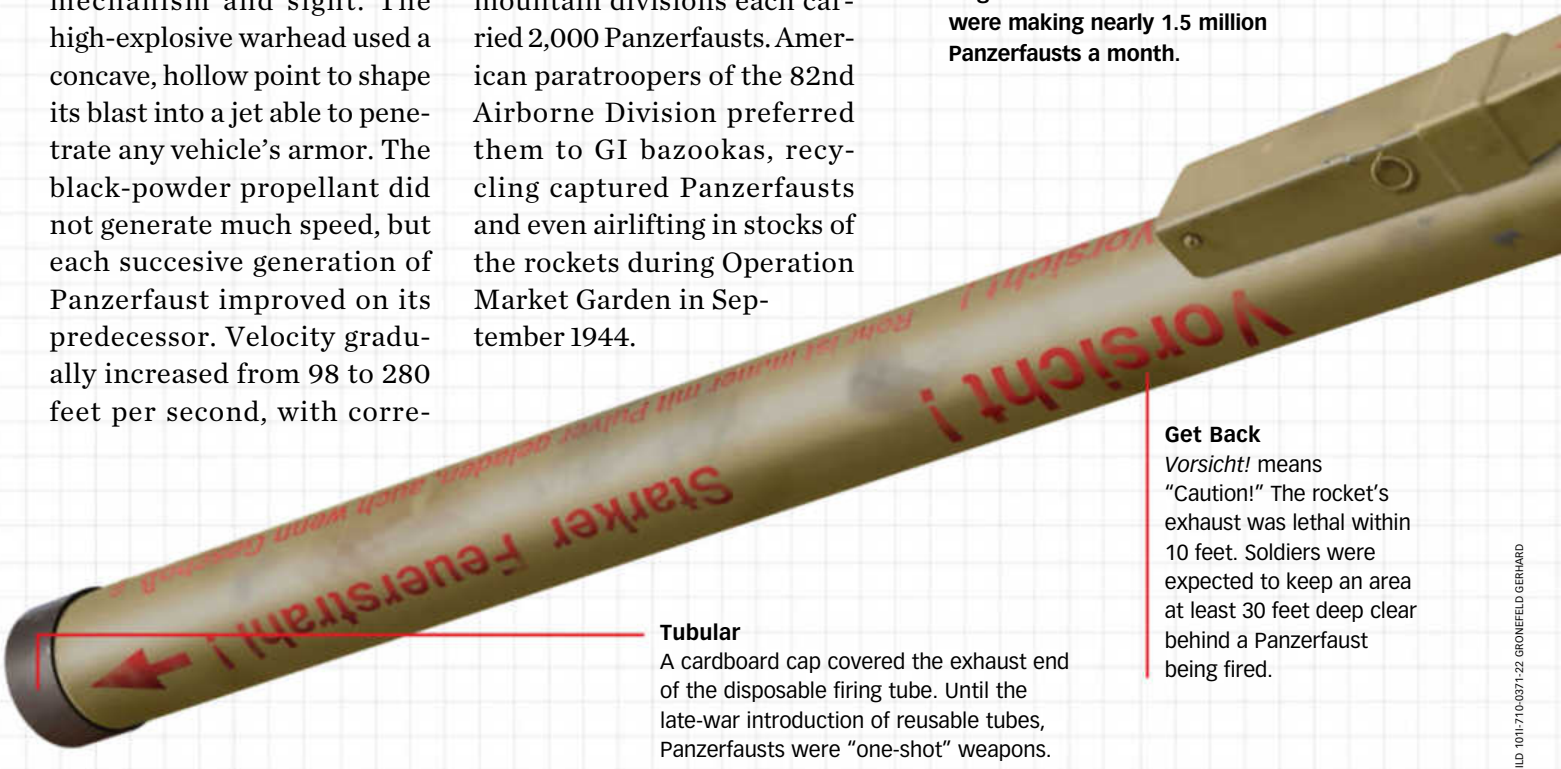
Hitler awards Balck a Diamonds clasp for his Knight's Cross on August 31, 1944—a high honor only 26 other German soldiers received. Of the Führer, Balck wrote: "Beware of strong men who do not know the limits of their power."

Fiery Fist

Germany's Panzerfaust antitank weapon

Against tanks and other vehicles, the recoilless one-man *Panzerfaust* ("armor fist") offered destructive power at short range. The 11.2-pound P-30 could penetrate 200mm of armor at 30 meters. The 13-pound P-60, depicted here, was as effective at twice the distance, with a better firing mechanism and sight. The high-explosive warhead used a concave, hollow point to shape its blast into a jet able to penetrate any vehicle's armor. The black-powder propellant did not generate much speed, but each succesive generation of Panzerfaust improved on its predecessor. Velocity gradually increased from 98 to 280 feet per second, with correspondingly longer ranges. The rockets worked best fired straight on. On sloped armor, such as a Soviet T-34 tank's, the warhead ricocheted rather than exploding. One man could manage a Panzerfaust, but the German army formed two- and three-man squads for loading and firing. Infantry, light, and mountain divisions each carried 2,000 Panzerfausts. American paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division preferred them to GI bazookas, recycling captured Panzerfausts and even airlifting in stocks of the rockets during Operation Market Garden in September 1944.

By late 1944 the firm HASAG Hugo Schneider and others were making nearly 1.5 million Panzerfausts a month.



Tubular
A cardboard cap covered the exhaust end of the disposable firing tube. Until the late-war introduction of reusable tubes, Panzerfausts were "one-shot" weapons.

Get Back
Vorsicht! means "Caution!" The rocket's exhaust was lethal within 10 feet. Soldiers were expected to keep an area at least 30 feet deep clear behind a Panzerfaust being fired.

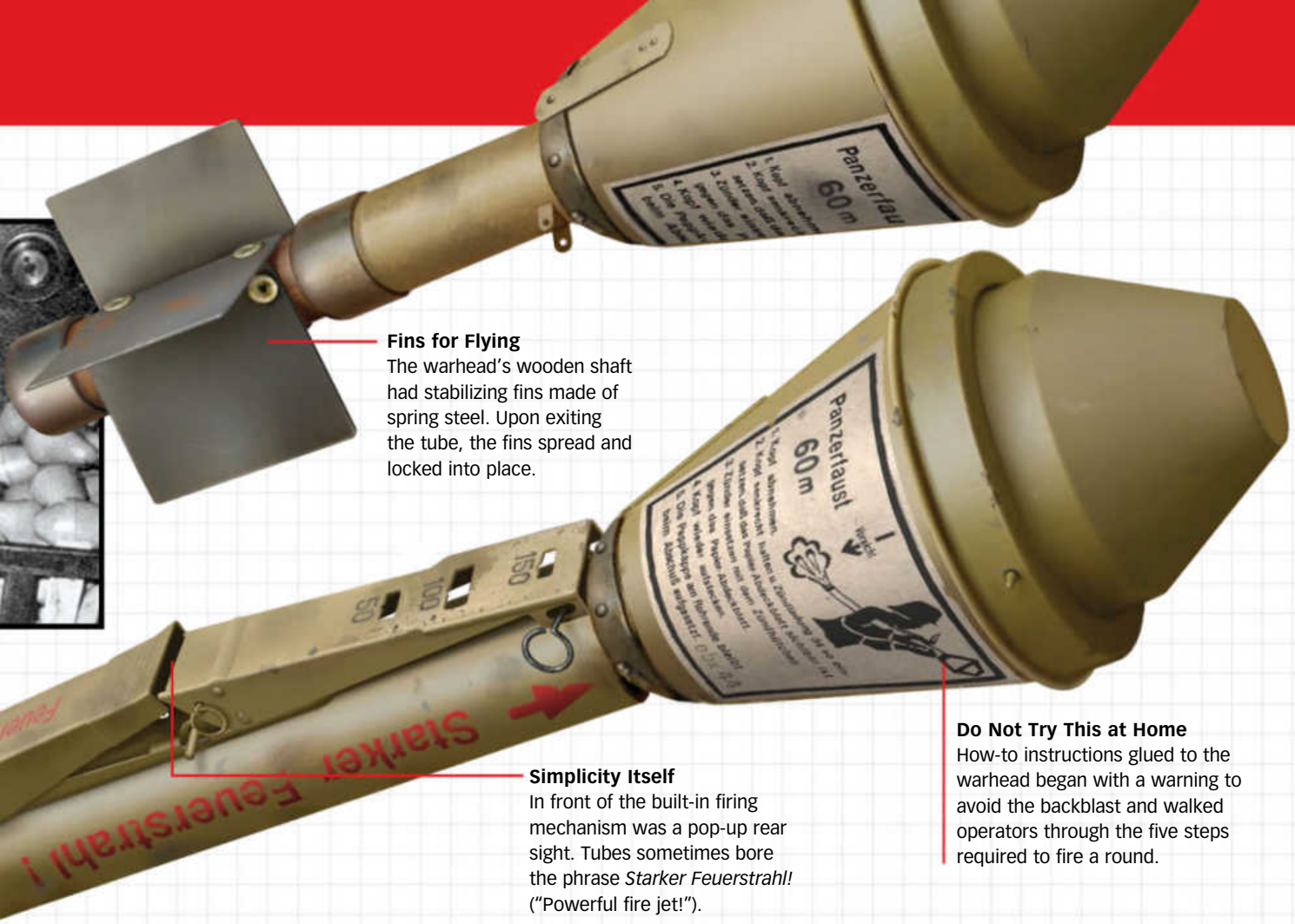
The Competition

American Bazooka
• Crew: 2 • Warhead weight: 3.5 lb. • Length: 61 inches • Range: 120 yards • Muzzle velocity: 275 fps • Production: 476,000 • Named for a 1920s-era trombone-like musical instrument.

German Panzerschreck
• Crew: 2 • Warhead weight: 7.27 lb. • Length: 65 inches • Range: 164 yards • Muzzle velocity: 360 fps • Production: 289,151 • This 88mm copy of the bazooka was nicknamed *Ofenrohr* ("stove pipe").

British PIAT
• Crew: 2 • Warhead weight: 2.5 lb. • Length: 39 inches • Range: 115 yards • Muzzle velocity: 250 fps • Production: 115,000 • PIAT is an acronym for Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, NATIONAL ARCHIVES; OPPPOSITE, BUNDESARCHIV BILD 101I-710-0371-22 GRONEFELD GERHARD



Fins for Flying
The warhead's wooden shaft had stabilizing fins made of spring steel. Upon exiting the tube, the fins spread and locked into place.

Simplicity Itself
In front of the built-in firing mechanism was a pop-up rear sight. Tubes sometimes bore the phrase *Starker Feuerstrahl!* ("Powerful fire jet!").

Do Not Try This at Home
How-to instructions glued to the warhead began with a warning to avoid the backblast and walked operators through the five steps required to fire a round.

A German soldier aims a Panzerfaust during an exercise in southern Ukraine, spring 1944.

SECRET DOINGS IN DAYTON

AN OHIO FACTORY TOWN WORKED UNDERCOVER TO CRACK THE ENIGMA CODE, AND KEPT MUM ABOUT IT FOR DECADES

BY RONALD H. BAILEY

THE ALLIED WAR EFFORT relied on gritty towns in America's heartland—burgs like Dayton, a hub of research and manufacturing in southwest Ohio known for being the home of entrepreneurs and inventors like the Wright brothers. Three nearby military bases bustled with 45,000 airmen and employees. Some 115,000 workers—nearly half of the city's population—toiled at 60 factories making everything from bombsights to machine guns to fighter plane engines.

One of Dayton's biggest companies, National Cash Register (NCR), occupied a 90-acre campus that sprawled along the east bank of the Great Miami River. After Pearl Harbor, NCR, proscribed by wartime controls from its usual trade, switched to manufacturing 37mm rounds, fuzes, computing bombsights, and carburetors for heavy bomber engines. Most important, the NCR campus housed a top-secret project dedicated to breaking enemy codes. That effort bore the stamp of Dayton-born engineer Joseph R. Desch, whose national reputation for advanced electronic innovations landed him in charge of the enterprise. Thanks to secrecy maintained for decades afterward, Desch's pivotal role in helping to shorten the war remains little known.

Midwestern cities like Dayton, Ohio, here in 1945, might have been far from the battle fronts but they were integral to the prosecution of the war.

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DESCH AND HIS COLLEAGUES were pitted against the remarkable German encryption machine known as Enigma. Patented by electrical engineer Arthur Scherbius in 1918, the machine evolved to resemble a portable electric typewriter in a wooden carrying case. An Enigma operator scrambled radio transmissions using three rotors, each with keys for 26 letters of the alphabet. Scrambling turned a message into gibberish; only a recipient with an Enigma of his own who knew the original settings and rotor starting positions could decipher the communiqué. Outsiders had no chance of winnowing approximately 17,000 possible combinations for the three rotors. In the 1930s, the German military began using Enigma to encode messages, confident the system would remain impenetrable even if a device fell into enemy hands.

In 1938, however, Polish mathematicians developed a means of mimicking the Enigma machine's logic with a hand-operated device they called the *bomba*—or bombe. Explanations of the name vary, but popular opinion argues "bomba" was selected for its resemblance to a spherical ice cream dessert by that name. The bombe could skip unlikely wheel orders and positions and help decipher Enigma encryptions. In July 1939, the Poles shared their device and methods with the French and British.

The British sent the bombe to the Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park outside London. In secret, mathematical wizards there like young Alan Turing set to work improving the crude Polish mechanism. The resulting British bombe worked like 36 Enigma machines linked and operating in reverse. To track possible letter pairings of cipher and plain text, Bletchley technicians wired drums, or commutators, to spin at high speed, simulating Enigma rotors. Tweaked using clues from German routines, captured manuals, codebooks, and actual Enigma machines, the bombe could lead code breakers to correct settings.

Under the code name "Ultra," the British operated multiple bombes, 210 by the end of the war, principally against U-boats, an undertaking enhanced in May 1941 when the Royal Navy captured a German weather trawler with its naval code information intact and a U-boat with its cipher machine, code book, and all accompanying material. The British now could decipher Morse code between U-boat headquarters and subs to find marauders. This rebalanced the Battle of the Atlantic—until February 1942, when the Germans added a fourth rotor, multiplying to nearly half a million the number of Enigma settings Ultra had to digest. This challenge, which the British labeled "M4 Shark," virtually disarmed Bletchley Park. The second half of 1942 saw sinkings of Allied ships in the North Atlantic more than triple.

Joseph Desch (second from left above) spent his life in Dayton, Ohio. The young baseball player grew up to be an ace engineer, shown at a wartime event (second from left, opposite) with spouse Dorothy and U.S. Navy Commander Ralph Meader.

UNABLE TO REPLICATE satisfactorily the four-rotor Enigma, the British turned to the Americans for help, just as the U.S. Navy—desperate to have an Enigma-breaking bombe—was starting its own Bletchley Park in Washington, DC. The navy knew of only two American companies capable of the work: International Business Machines and National Cash Register. The navy already had close ties to NCR, idled by wartime production constraints, so in spring 1942, the service took over part of the spacious NCR complex in Dayton. After all, a cash register was a kind of code machine—and NCR had Joe Desch.

Navy code breakers in Washington, DC, like their British counterparts, were mostly PhDs from elite universities. Not Desch. He was a hands-on, factory-floor engineer with a bachelor of science from the University

ALL PHOTOS: NCR ARCHIVE AT DAYTON HISTORY, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

of Dayton who had worked his way up to chief of electrical research at NCR. A lean, muscular scientist, Desch spent his spare time canoeing and camping, and as an army reservist had won medals for boxing; he was a right-hander. A devout Catholic with a slow-building but intense temper, Desch always had a fierce enthusiasm for mathematics and science. In eighth grade at his parish elementary he once decked his math teacher, a brother of the Marianist order, during a dispute over a solution to a math problem. On the job he was personable but demanding, and he had eagle eyes; despite the close work he did he was 50 before he needed spectacles.

Even before the navy came calling, the government had brought Desch in on the design and production of a proximity fuze for artillery and antiaircraft shells. While many men doing war work at NCR happily accepted their draft deferments, Desch resented the fact that he could not serve. Since his days in college ROTC he had been an officer in an Army Reserve ordnance unit. After Pearl Harbor, when the army called up his unit, the navy forced him to resign his commission; his country needed his talent at home.

IN 1942 JOE DESCH WAS 35, a man of his era: chain smoker, Scotch drinker, whistler of Sousa marches, classical music, and movie theme songs. He and his wife, Dorothy, lived in a modest Tudor cottage on Greenmount Avenue in Oakwood, a streetcar suburb near NCR. Joe liked to take Dorothy—"a beautiful woman tall and elegant just like she stepped out of *Vogue*," an observer said—waltzing at the Biltmore Hotel nightclub.

Joe was born in Dayton in 1907. His working class neighborhood was a mile from the Wright brothers' bicycle shop. He "came into the world at the right place and time to become an inventor," daughter Deborah told writer Jim DeBrosse, who recounted Desch's story in a 2001 series for the *Dayton Daily News*. "He grew up at a time when Dayton was teeming with tinkerers and craftsmen."

Desch was thoroughly German in heritage; his mother had emigrated from Germany at 13, and young Joe was fluent in her native tongue. His father, Edward, was a wagon wright, like Joe's grandfather and uncles. These artisans were woodcrafters and blacksmiths, but also precision toolmakers and problem solvers. When Joe became fascinated by radio at age 11, he decided to build a set with tools he designed and his dad fabricated. In a basement laboratory, the boy tried building vacuum tubes, an interest he never lost.

After graduating from the University of Dayton in 1929 with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering, Desch worked in radio and electrical research at local General Motors and Frigidaire plants before joining NCR, where his work with vacuum tubes brought him regard as an innovator. In his lab, where Orville Wright often visited, Desch experimented with thyratrons, miniature fast-firing gas tubes that could count electrical impulses traveling at the rate of more than a million per second. With these forerunners of silicon computer chips, he and his NCR team designed a system the army used to precisely time cannon shells and, later, to measure radioactivity at the University of Chicago's Fermi Laboratory, a bastion of the Manhattan Project.

THE U.S. NAVAL COMPUTING Machine Laboratory, as Desch's bombe-making operation was innocuously known, occupied Building 26 on a remote part of the NCR campus that had been a city dump. Air-conditioned and fireproof, Building 26 had 37,000 square feet of reinforced floors sufficient to hold heavy equipment and a loading dock on a spur line of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. It was the 26th building put up on the corporate campus—not, as someone once claimed, named for the number of letters in the alphabet.

Desch set up shop in September 1942, overseen by U.S. Navy Commander Ralph Meader, a reservist and electrical engineer who had spent more than two decades at Western Union and other companies. Washington wanted the bombe to be electronic for greater speed, but Desch concluded that an all-electronic device would require too many tubes and take too long to build. He proposed a unit combining the British machine's

logic with the best American high-speed electro-mechanics. The device Desch envisioned, essentially 16 four-rotor Enigma machines working in reverse, would deliver speed, power, and reliability. In an extra fillip, the machine would be constructed ruggedly enough to be able to brake at high speed and, running in reverse, replicate a sequence of settings that had broken the code. The mechanism's innovative heart would be an electronic tracking and control system equipped with a built-in memory consisting of vacuum tubes, including the miniature thyratron tubes the engineer and his NCR colleagues had perfected.

Desch and his team felt they were starting from scratch. Because the British feared leaks, information from Bletchley Park was slow to trickle to Dayton. In late December 1942, Alan Turing made a personal appearance to assess his counterparts' progress. Turing—a sophisticated cosmopolite and an atheist with degrees from Cambridge and a doctorate from Princeton—had little in common with Desch except inventive brilliance. But the men got along. Housing in Dayton was scarce, so Turing slept on the living room floor at Desch's Oakwood cottage—the same accommodations endured by the occasional American admiral.

During his brief sojourn in Dayton, Turing provided valuable insights, such as explaining a probability technique that cut the number of American bombes needed. He afterward wrote a memo so critical of the Dayton project that Washington kept it from Desch and his team for fear of undermining morale. Among the Englishman's complaints was that the Dayton team, striving to be able to replay a successful rotor sequence, had overbuilt their mechanism. "It seems a pity for them to go out of their way to build the machine to do all this stopping if it is not necessary," Turing wrote.

Desch grumbled later that British paranoia made the Anglo-American relationship "a one-way street" that sapped his project's efforts. "The British came over and visited me and looked at everything I was doing," he told a Smithsonian Institution interviewer in 1973. "But I could never see anything they were doing."

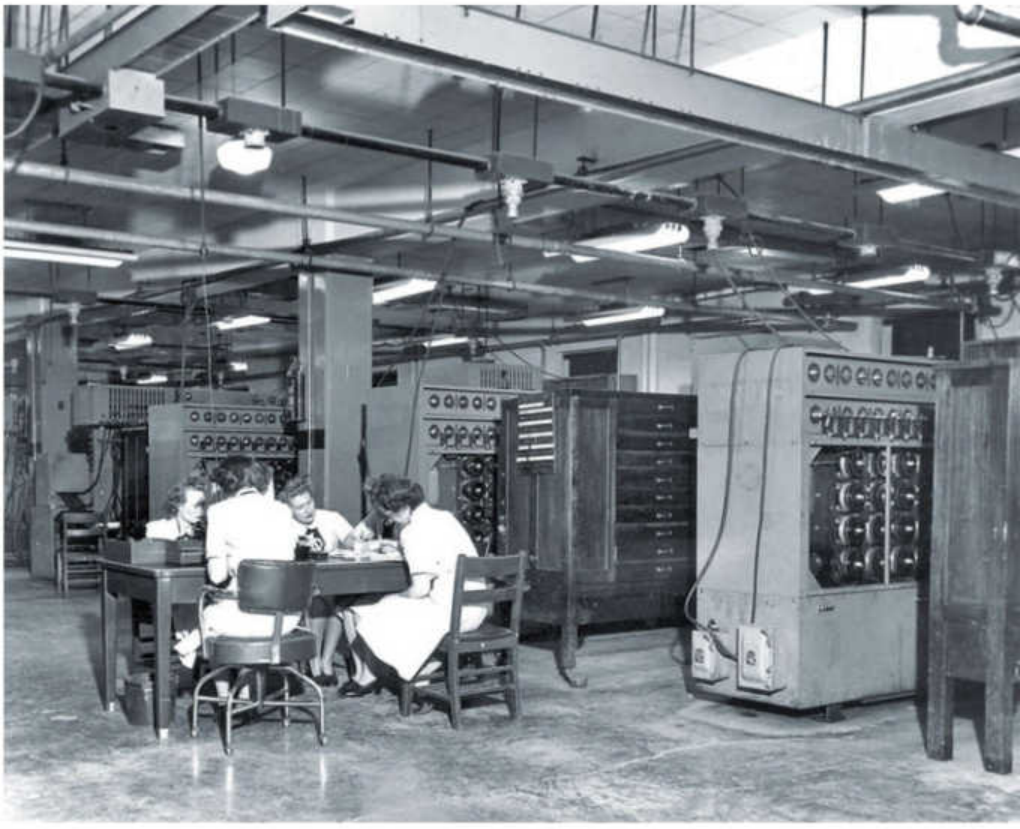
Desch's work got the same priority accorded the Manhattan Project. An initial $2 million commitment for the Dayton code breakers soon doubled. At its peak the project employed more than 1,200 navy and civilian workers. Some 12,000 suppliers, none with a clue about what was happening in Building 26, shipped components and materials there.

Desch was operating under huge stress compounded by unrelenting deadlines and tight wartime security. The navy wanted two bombes by early 1943. German ancestry made Desch suspect. He could visit his mother and two younger sisters only briefly. No one in the family could have contact with Joe's cousin in Dayton, whose father in Germany was a Nazi. Navy plainclothesmen trailed Desch and hovered outside his home and office. The onsite naval project chief, Commander Meader, actually lived with the Desches—though unlike Turing and other guests he had his own bedroom. Though he was married to a British-born actress, Meader, who fancied himself a ladies' man, flirted relentlessly with Dorothy Desch, infuriating her husband.

Desch coped as best he could. He smoked two packs of Chesterfields a day and after long stretches in the lab returned home and hit the Scotch and water, sometimes retreating to his garden. But he could not say a word about what he was doing at work, even to Dorothy.

By February 1943, when the navy expected its first machines, Desch and team, sometimes logging 90-hour weeks, had produced only two balky prototypes dubbed "Adam" and "Eve." At the required 2,000 rpm, the units' large rotors overheated and wobbled out of shape. Motors, shafts, and gears leaked oil. Faulty contacts shorted out.

Out on the Atlantic, U-boats prowling behind their four-rotor Enigma shield were savaging Allied ships. March



Desch (front left) and others from his top-secret project, at the entry to Building 26. Opposite, technicians in Washington, DC, work alongside rows of the project's product: code-breaking "bombes."

1943, one of the most devastating months in the Battle of the Atlantic, counted 95 merchant vessels sunk and hundreds of seamen lost. At night Americans living along the East Coast were able to see vessels burning at sea.

Meader reacted by bearing down on Desch, who passed along the pressure to colleagues.

"No more excuses! We've got to work harder, faster, smarter!" he would yell in meetings, pounding a fist at each word. "Everybody's ass is on the line!"

Desch stopped going to Mass and confession out of guilt at not being able to perfect the bombe. Buddies in his old Army Reserve ordnance unit were fighting and dying. "I would much rather have been with them," he said after the war.

Slowly the bombe project lurched ahead. In May 1943, Adam and Eve scored their first "hit" on a test exercise using a previously decrypted Enigma intercept. The navy ordered two more prototype machines, "Cain" and "Abel," and advised Desch to get ready to go into production.

SPRING BROUGHT TO BUILDING 26 a contingent of navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), the first of 600 female sailors who would assemble and operate the bombes. They had to master the tedious, exacting work involved in wiring and soldering scores of intricate connections.

The WAVES lived at Sugar Camp, a compound of rustic cabins set in a maple woods that overlooked the NCR campus. The young women sometimes would skinny-dip in the outdoor pool between the night watchman's rounds. Dayton families welcomed the WAVES for meals and socializing. The Desch's Oakwood cottage became a favorite haven for many, who found there a home away from home.

All summer Desch and his people tinkered. Solutions sometimes caused problems. Rotor contacts sat only 1/20,000th of an inch apart, and bits of copper left by sanding could bring about short-circuits. Desch instituted a rigorous maintenance regime: Using minuscule tools and blowers, workers regularly dusted the rotors and sensing brushes on every bank of each bombe. In August, early production models performed as hoped.

BY SATURDAY night, September 11, 1943, the team had ironed out most of the kinks and assembled and successfully tested six of the 120 bombes on order. Each validated machine—seven feet high, 10 feet long, and two feet wide—filled a wooden crate rolled onto a rail car waiting at Building 26's B&O siding. Four sailors kept watch. "All I knew, it was NCR," Midshipman Raymond Torchon said. "I thought they were cash registers." On the 12-hour ride to Washington, DC, Torchon and his buddies slept atop the mysterious crates.

At least four bombes a week would make the same journey. From the capital's Union Station, trucks carried them across DC to the new Naval Communications Annex, erected on the site of a private women's school near Ward Circle NW that the navy had appropriated. There, at Building 4, two stories held banks of bombes set up and operated around the clock by WAVES, many of them from Dayton. Clacking through millions of permutations, the bombes made a deafening roar and generated heat—"a constant sauna," as one WAVE put it.

Setting up a bombe could take as little as a minute or more than half an hour, whereupon the device typically needed 20 minutes to test one Enigma key. Arriving at a possible solution—a "hit" or "strike"—the machine automatically stopped. Lights flashed, a bell rang, "and a probable key setting would print out," WAVE Veronica Hulick recalled. "We'd take the sheet of paper down the hall and knock on a

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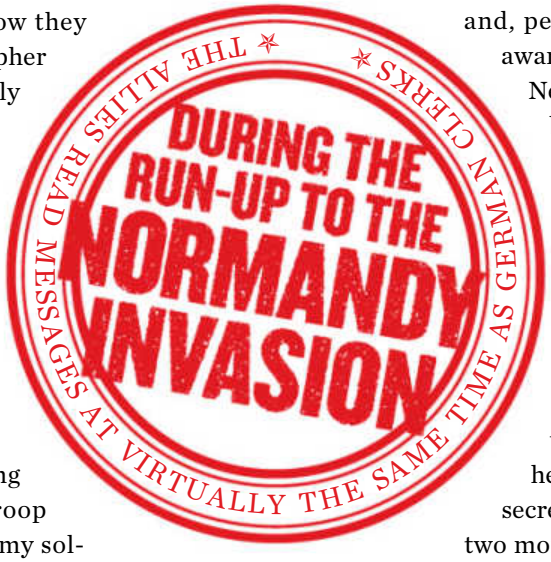
door. A hand would come out; we'd turn over the printout and go back and start all over again."

By November Desch's design was paying off. In December the average time to break a four-rotor code fell to 36 hours. Dayton bombes ran 30 times faster than Turing's original three-rotor model and nearly 50 percent faster than a temperamental four-rotor version the British had developed.

In Dayton, elation was tempered by alarm. It came to light that in January 1941, technician James Martin Montgomery Jr., had contacted the German Embassy. Hamstrung by secrecy, the FBI and other agencies found little evidence that he had been spying, but to ease him out, federal prosecutors persuaded him to plead guilty to stealing three tubes worth $35 and imprisoned him for the remainder of the war.

During the run-up to the Normandy invasion, Dayton's bombes were unscrambling Enigma messages in an average of 18 hours. Allied code breakers were often reading transcripts at virtually the same time as the German clerks receiving them. Ultra—mostly the U.S version—figured in nearly 30 percent of U-boat sinkings during 1944. That May, the Allies sank more than half of the German subs at sea, destroying them faster than the Kriegsmarine could replace them. By then, so many bombes were whirring at Ward Circle NW that operators could devote more than 60 percent of running time to cracking the German army and air force Enigma codes.

The NCR team got no rest. Now they were at work on machines to decipher Japanese codes, and on a radically advanced bombe intended to outfox a more complex Enigma the Allies feared was in the works. That über-Enigma never appeared, but Desch and his men logged 19-hour days for weeks trying to checkmate it.



The grind was wearing on Desch. In November 1944, he sent Washington the solution to a Japanese code problem, enabling U.S. submarines to ambush a troop convoy, killing thousands of enemy soldiers. He could no longer stomach what he later called "that damned, dirty business of the war."

Desch walked out of Building 26, and in the morning drove to a friend's farm east of Dayton, taking lumberjack tools. All day he cleared and split deadwood, loading the dry chunks into his car. He drove home, stacked wood in the fireplace, and as the logs burned sat talking for hours with Dorothy. This went on for six weeks until Commander Joseph N. Wenger, his code-breaking boss in Washington, paid a visit. Wenger, who had had a breakdown the year before, empathized with his stricken subordinate. Promising to limit Desch's workload, Wenger gently persuaded him to return to the job. But Wenger balked at moving Meader elsewhere. The irritating reservist stayed with Joe and Dorothy another year—and left without taking his car, a rattletrap Nash the Desches had to dispose of.

The evening of August 14, 1945, Joe and Dorothy Desch had unexpected guests. Hearing the news of victory over Japan, WAVES impetuously hurried from Sugar Camp to celebrate downtown. It was raining, but the young women were exuberant. Walking barefoot through puddles, they decided to head to Oakwood, where a cottage on Greenmount Avenue was the closest thing many of them had to home. Joe and Dorothy Desch welcomed the girls. "They seemed glad to see us," Evelyn Vogel said. "We danced on the front lawn in the rain until midnight."

JOSEPH DESCH DID RECEIVE formal recognition for his achievements, but no one could know. In a secret July 1947 presentation at the Department of the Navy, he received the Medal for Merit, the highest honor for wartime civilian service. The citation, signed by President Harry S. Truman, praised Desch's "brilliant originality, superb skill, and immeasurable perseverance"—without explaining what he did.

Desch had to pay his own way to the award ceremony, and, per instructions, kept the news of the award to himself and went about his work. Neither he nor his colleagues from NCR broke their oath to keep mum about what happened in Building 26—even after the British, beginning in 1972, revealed details of Ultra and Alan Turing's contribution. When daughter Deborah, putting together clues she encountered here and there, would ask her dad what he did during the war, he would tease her, saying that she would never figure out what he had done. In August 1987, he took the secret to his grave. The United States waited two more decades to declassify Dayton documents, but even then the project remained obscure.

In the fall of 1989, Deborah Desch Anderson's son, Jesse, 10, was assigned at school to write a report about his family. His mother offered to help. She started out by unearthing and studying a collection of family photographs.

That search led Anderson to what remained of her late father's papers, the beginning of a decade of digging that startled Joe Desch's daughter again and again as she uncovered the secret accomplishments of a Dayton boy who was born at the right time, in the right place. ✯

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IJNAS Naval Flying Group, 1943

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1/48 SCALE

P-51 MUSTANG

USAAF, 332nd FG, 302nd FS, 1944

"Kitten" was a P-51 Mustang piloted during World War II by Tuskegee Airman Charles McGee — the Air Force aviator credited with the most combat missions flown with over 400.

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LVT (A)-2

USMC, 10th Marine Amtrack Battalion, 1945

The LVT (Landing Vehicle Tracked) was a World War II-era amphibious vehicle initially designed solely as a cargo carrier, though it eventually served in the assault troop and fire support role as well.

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Fw-190A

Luftwaffe II, JG I, 1944

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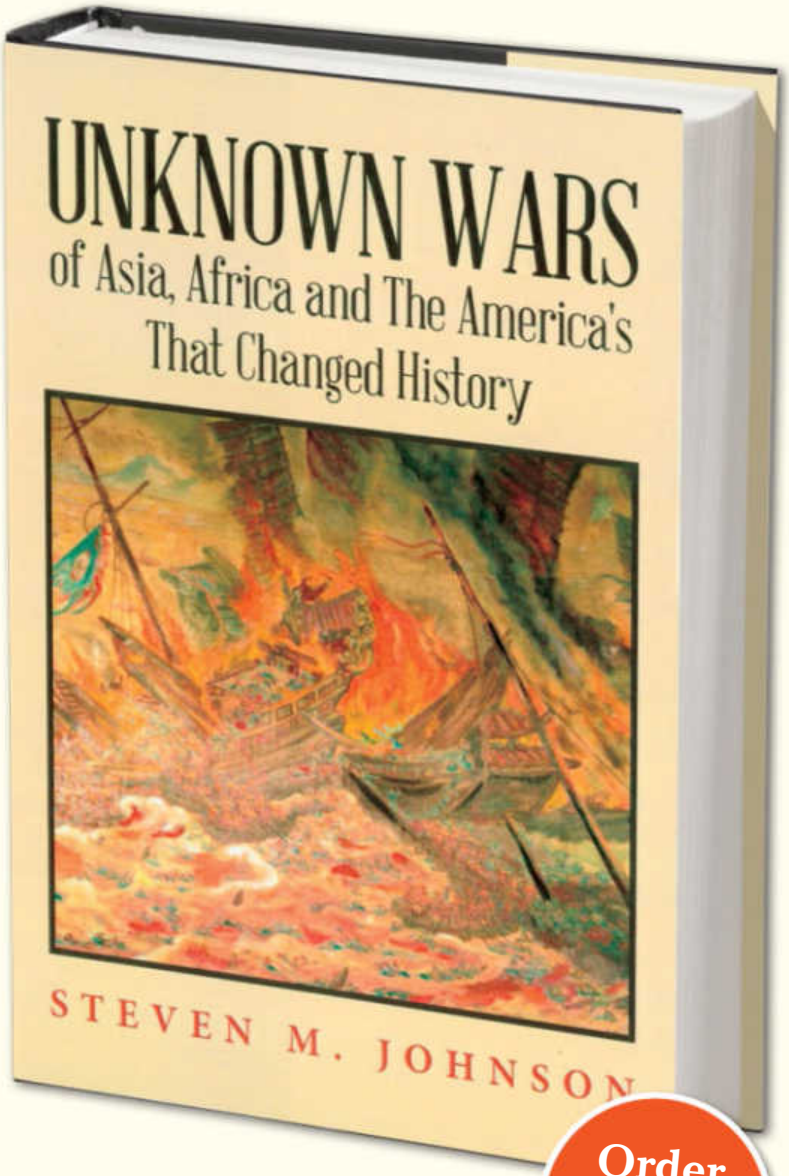

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[BOOKS]

A Lost Battalion Discovered

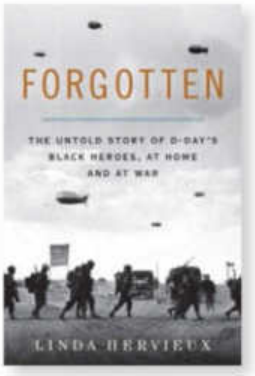
FORGOTTEN
The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War
By Linda Hervieux. 368 pp.
HarperCollins, 2015. $27.99

Members of the all-black 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion prepare for a launch above the beaches of Normandy, France.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The Allied invasion of Normandy was among the most complex operations in the history of war. Dozens of specialized units with three-digit numbers supported and enabled the landings. Most of them are lost to history, like the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion—a black outfit, part of a segregated army organized by a segregated society. Journalist Linda Hervieux mines interviews, archives, and printed sources to tell the battalion's story in the context of a black wartime experience that remains largely pigeonholed.

The 320th was a wartime creation of draftees from across America's black communities, from glittering Atlantic City to a subsistence farm in South Carolina. The first third of the book is a vivid reconstruction of the civilian experiences of young black men in a Jim Crow society. The second part addresses the shocks men experienced while serving in an army that from Chief of Staff George C. Marshall down refused to challenge American racial mores—ostensibly from fear of disrupting the war effort, substantively because of a fixed belief that black people would not make effective fighting men. When "whites only" restaurants admitted German POWs, when black soldiers' on-base facilities were makeshift compared to counterparts for whites, when derogatory terms were everyday epithets; black soldiers, Hervieux writes, "felt that they could fall no lower."



The government's decision to concentrate training in the South made matters worse. Many camps and stations were established in underdeveloped rural areas, and thousands of young GIs swarmed the limited facilities with time on their hands and money to spend. This was disproportionally true for black soldiers. The results were predictable: a

series of racially based incidents escalating in scope and violence and a growing master narrative of alienation.

Racial tension within the army increased with movement to Britain. Though black soldiers made up less than 10 percent of U.S. personnel in Europe, they comprised a fifth of servicemen convicted of crimes—almost half of those rape. Hervieux highlights the often-successful British public protests at egregious miscarriages of justices, such as a death sentence for an alleged rape that in fact involved a soldier's refusal to pay what he considered an inflated price for sex. And she highlights the unobtrusive courage and competence the men of the 320th demonstrated on June 6, 1944. They kept aloft the balloons that kept the Luftwaffe above strafing altitude. The work may have been unspectacular but it helped open the way off the beach.

It was also quickly forgotten: mothballed in archives, encysted in footnotes—until now. Hervieux does not merely correct the record. She creates it. *—Dennis E. Showalter is a professor of history at Colorado College and past president of the Society for Military History.*

[BOOKS]

In Service to the Empire

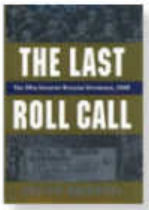
INDIA AT WAR
The Subcontinent and the Second World War
By Yasmin Khan. 432 pp. Oxford, 2015. $29.95.

The people of India, wrote Winston Churchill in his six-volume history of the war, "were carried through the struggle on the shoulders of our small Island." As this exhaustively detailed account demonstrates, the reverse is closer to the truth. The fighting barely reached the colony's borders; nonetheless it was the tremendous and often-coerced sacrifices of the United Kingdom's Indian subjects that arguably bore the imperial nation through the conflict, millions perishing in the process.

The colony's soldiers fought in theaters from North Africa to Southeast Asia; its sailors ferried goods across the Indian Ocean and on to Britain; its factory workers produced uniforms, jeep bodies, and myriad other necessities; its laborers carved roads across the malaria-ridden eastern Himalayas; its farmers produced wheat, milk, and eggs; its women serviced Indian, American, English, African, and Chinese troops; and even its children contributed to the war effort as servants in military camps. *India at War* tells us their stories. We hear of Richpal Ram and his heroic

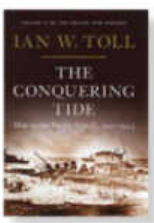
Tensions between Indian soldiers and the British nation they defended escalated as the war progressed.

[BRIEFS]



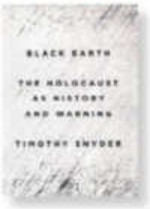
THE LAST ROLL CALL
The 29th Infantry Division Victorious, 1945
By Joseph Balkoski. 400 pp. Stackpole, 2015. $29.95.

Not every unit had a war worth the buckram and paper that a five-volume treatment consumes, but the 29th did, in spades, and in Balkoski's deft and insightful handling the division's epic story still ends too soon.



THE CONQUERING TIDE
War in the Pacific Islands 1942–1944
By Ian W. Toll. 656 pp. Norton, 2015. $35.

Toll begins volume two of his trilogy evoking the scent of the Solomons and, despite ranging wide and deep, consistently illuminates the middle stage of the Pacific campaign in urgently intimate tones and engaging detail.



BLACK EARTH
The Holocaust as History and Warning
By Timothy Snyder. 480 pp. Tim Duggan, 2015. $30.

After the Shoah's embers cooled, the cry was "Never again!" Snyder, author of the brilliant and excruciating *Bloodlands*, reinterprets the fate of Europe's Jews and others under Nazism to suggest Hitler's depredations were only a preview and that a more realistic call might be "History repeats!"

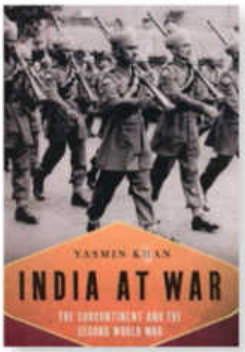
FERDINAND AND ELEFANT
Tank Destroyer
By Thomas Anderson. 256 pp. Osprey, 2015. $34.95.

Once, monsters roamed the land: 91 *Sonderkraftfahrzeug* 184 tank destroyers—in the vernacular, "Ferdinands," after their designer, Dr. Ferdinand Porsche—and, as a later variant, "Elefants." These 70-ton steel behemoths, built to dominate all that their crews might behold, embodied Nazi Germany's man-crush on heavy metal and the Reich's general obsession with gigantism. The relentless Anderson, justifiably famed for his intricate exegeses on German armor, again delivers the metallic goods, richly illustrated. *—Michael Dolan is the senior editor of* World War II.

CENTRAL PRESS/GETTY IMAGES

attack on Italian forces entrenched on the heights of Keren; of Eglind Roze, an Anglo-Indian boy shot dead for trying to steal a U.S. Army jeep; and of an unknown white woman who had just given birth and, after the Japanese invasion of Burma, was carried to India on the shoulders of a Naga man: "No one knew who she was but once she got to safety she and the baby quietly died."

When the colony boiled over in outright rebellion against the British occupation in August 1942, many officers of the British Indian army saw their first action—against essentially unarmed civilians. "We had some grand fun including a number of firing incidents," one officer wrote home. Wartime deprivations and a scorched-earth policy in the east soon led to famine. By 1945, British India had suffered 89,000 direct casualties in the war, but the famine would claim another three million lives or more.



With death in the air, and Gandhi silenced by years of imprisonment, violence came to the fore. In just a few years after the war, horrific riots would tear British India into what are now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

The book has its limitations, a weak narrative structure among them: A reader unfamiliar with this period may get lost in the minutiae. It also appears to rely on only English-language sources, so that despite its multitude of voices one fails to hear directly from the civilian poor, who spoke no English. *India at War* nonetheless manages to decisively situate South Asians among the peoples who were ravaged—and irrevocably transformed—by the most brutal conflict in history. *—Madhusree Mukerjee, a former editor of* Scientific American, *is the author of the 2010 book* Churchill's Secret War: The British Empire and the Ravaging of India During World War II.

AIR MADDOX

[GAMES]

Into the Teeth of Air Battle

FLYING TIGERS
Shadows over China
For Windows, 2015.
$24.99 for download.
From Ace Maddox.

World War II Rating
★★★★☆

THE BASICS: *Flying Tigers* is a dogfight simulator that pits you, a Flying Tiger, against the aircraft of Imperial Japan. The Flying Tigers operated in the China-Burma-India Theater from 1941 to 1942, a locale not often reproduced in other World War II games. If you just want to get into the action of dogfights, this game is an excellent choice.

THE OBJECTIVE: Begin with a training flight or engage in a single dogfight against any number and type of enemy aircraft. When you're ready, start the campaign game: several missions in different aircraft with the objective of shooting down enemy aircraft or bombing and strafing attacks. These missions can be played solo or online with other players.

HISTORICAL ACCURACY: The game only includes aircraft seen over China in the 1940s. Chinese Air Force planes have the correct markings and camouflage patterns, and the aircraft recreate flight characteristics similar to period maneuvers. Weather effects and night missions add to the ambience while well-executed graphics enhance the accuracy.

PLAYABILITY: There are few controls players must master in order to dogfight, and the training missions are adequate preparation for bigger campaigns. Slow-motion gameplay called *TrazerTime* offers precision firing practice. Once you've learned the basics, the game thrusts you into the fray—all you have to worry about is scoring hits and surviving.

THE GOOD, BAD, AND UGLY: *Flying Tigers* is strictly a combat simulator, not a flight simulator. There is no view from inside the cockpit and only a few controls to monitor during combat, such as radar and gun sights. Plus, there's no take off or landing. This isn't a criticism—the quick action of dogfights presents a tremendously enjoyable challenge.

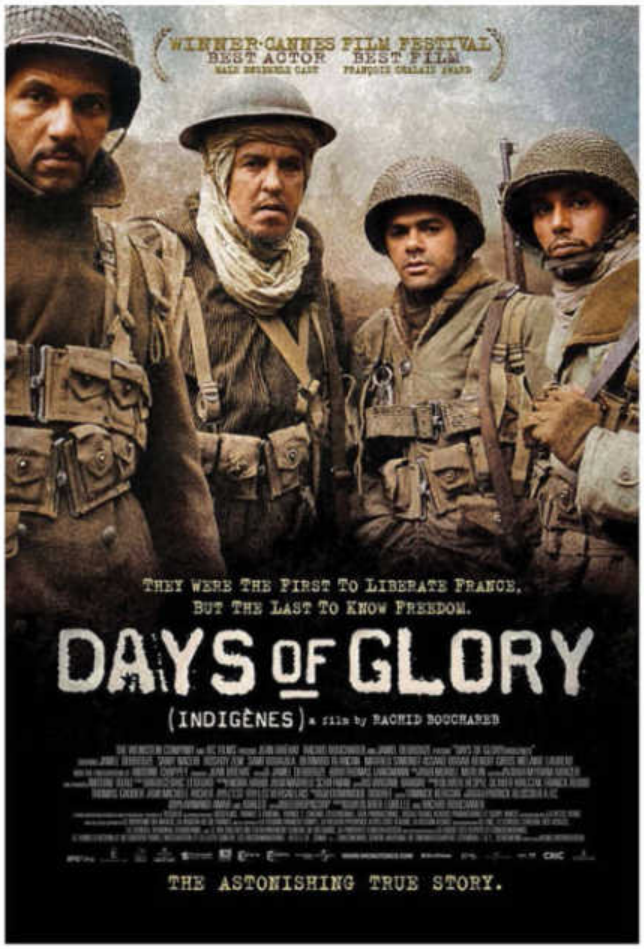
THE BOTTOM LINE: Inevitably, this will draw comparisons to the game *IL-2*, a much more elaborate simulation. But for simple dogfighting, this game is tops. Plus, the creators left room for expansions, meaning more missions and aircraft may come in the future.
—Chris Ketcherside, a former Marine, is working on a PhD in military history.

Bastard Sons

By Mark Grimsley

IN A VILLAGE in Algeria in 1943 an aged Berber makes his way through narrow streets, urging young men to enlist with the Free French. "We must rid France of the German occupation!" he proclaims. "We must wash the French flag with our blood!" Among those who answer his call is Saïd Otmari (Jamel Debbouze, a comic actor well-known in France). Saïd seems shy and bewildered, but finds the elder's summons so compelling that he ignores his mother's pleas not to join up, even after she reminds him, "Your grandfather never came back."

So begins *Indigènes*, a 2006 film produced and directed by Rachid Bouchareb, a Frenchman born to Algerian parents. Bouchareb's own grandfather fought for France during World War I. His uncle was a veteran of the French colonial wars in Indochina.



A French film's English title ironically invokes the wartime experience of soldiers regarded as second-class citizens.

Along with Saïd, *Indigènes* introduces viewers to Yassir (Samy Naceri), a burly Moroccan who enlists to earn money for a dowry that will allow his younger brother to marry; Abdelkader (Sami Bouajila), a literate Algerian espousing the revolutionary French ideals of liberty, equality, and brotherhood; and Messaoud Souni (Roschdy Zem), a tall, gaunt Algerian sporting a tattoo reading *Pas de chance* ("Unlucky"). The three find themselves reporting to hard-bitten Sergeant Roger Martinez (Bernard Blancan)—a *pied noir*, or "black foot," slang for an Algerian of European descent—who leads them into battle.

The title chosen for the film's English-language release—*Days of Glory*—is misleading, for *Indigènes* tells a story that is anything but glorious. It is instead a tale of squalid treatment and outright betrayal. The original title, which translates as "Natives," comes closer to the mark. Colonial infantry comprised more than two-thirds of the Free French forces that helped liberate France while enduring systematic discrimination by the French leadership.

In their maiden battle, Saïd, Abdelkader, and Messaoud are among colonial soldiers thrown against a seemingly impregnable mountain in Italy as bait to force German defenders to reveal their artillery positions. Next the men board a transport to join the invasion of southern France. En route, a French cook refuses to give the colonials fresh tomatoes, explaining that the produce is for white soldiers only. Abdelkader angrily overturns the crate of tomatoes and stomps on them. Martinez, who shows his men the same scorn their French officers do, privately remonstrates with his captain, demanding fairness for colonial troops.

"They're ready to die for us," Martinez says. "But any injustice will cause mutiny."

"You know the natives," the officer protests.

"Avoid that term, sir," Martinez replies.

"The Muslims."

"That's no better."

Genuinely puzzled, the captain asks, "So what do I call them?"

"The men, sir," Martinez tells him. "The men."

But no Frenchman encountered in *Indigènes* is capable of seeing colonials as men, even though Saïd, Abdelkader, and Messaoud view themselves as sons of France. "I free a country, it's my country, even if I have never seen it before," Saïd tells a young woman after the liberation of Marseilles. In their superiors' eyes, however, colonials are at best bastard sons. When Messaoud meets and falls in love with Irène (Aurélie Eltvedt), his superiors reflexively try to quash this romance between a white woman and a "wog." Their letters to one another are marked "Censored" and thrown away. White troops receive leave to go to Paris;

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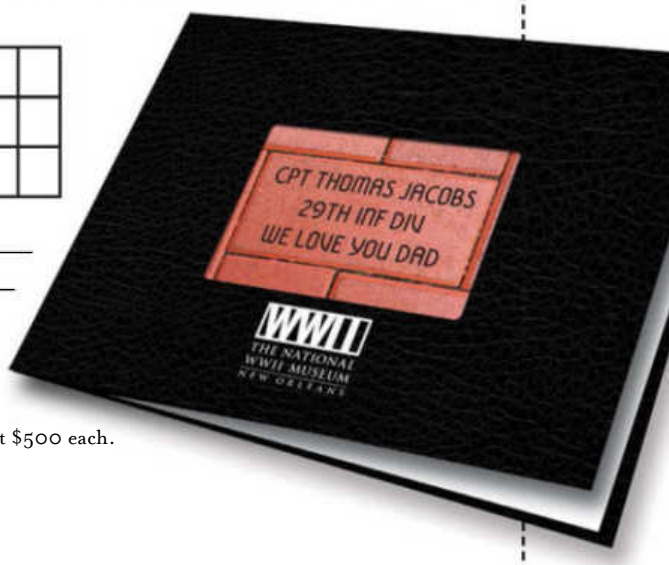

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WORLD WAR II MARKETPLACE

the colonials get nothing more than a ballet performance ("What is this shit?" Messaoud demands). Disgusted by the condescending substitute for leave, the colonials walk out. Messaoud heads for Marseilles and Irène; Abdelkader harangues his comrades that it is time the French honored the ideals of liberty, equality, and, above all, brotherhood for which the colonials are being asked to sacrifice their lives. Messaoud and Abdelkader wind up confined in a stockade, and they are easily persuaded to undertake a difficult mission through German lines to get supplies to an American unit in an Alsatian village. "Corporal, I give you my word of honor," a colonel assures Abdelkader. "The reward for yourself and all the brave men who contribute to this exploit will be worthy of the feat. You will be the first to reach Alsace. All of France will watch and remember you."

Ultimately Saïd, Abdelkader, Messaoud, and Yassir arrive in the village, to find no troops there. With them is Martinez, now badly wounded and helpless. Attacked by a heavy German force, they defend the town. All are killed except Abdelkader; only a timely intervention by colonial reinforcements saves him. With his rescuers is the unctuous colonel, who does not even notice the man to whom he gave his word. A junior officer brusquely orders Abdelkader into another squad. He joins it just as a French cameraman pans across relieved-looking villagers and a quintet of soldiers, suitably white: the public face of Alsace's liberation.

At its close the film flashes forward 60 years to an elderly Abdelkader at a military cemetery, praying beside his comrades' graves. The camera follows the old colonial soldier to his sparsely furnished one-bedroom in Paris, then returns to the cemetery. Over a panorama of tombstones scrolls an epitaph: "In 1959, a law was passed to freeze the pensions of infantrymen from former French colonies about to become independent. In January 2002, after endless hearings,

PHOTOFEST

The protagonists fight the enemy while contending with leaders who at best condescend to them and at worst scorn them.

the Council of State [a French governmental body that is roughly equivalent to the U.S. Supreme Court] ordered the French government to pay the pensions in full. But successive governments have pushed back the payment."

Indigènes can be heavy-handed at times. However, Bouchareb's sure-footed direction and strong performances by his ensemble cast earned the production an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Film and a special prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Bouchareb's film also achieved something even more important. The director arranged to screen *Indigènes* in advance of its premiere for French president Jacques Chirac and his wife.

After viewing the film, Bernadette Chirac turned to her husband. "Jacques, we must do something," she said. He agreed, and in September 2006 Chirac issued a presidential order raising colonial veterans' pensions onto par with those paid French counterparts, distributing $140 million per year among 80,000 veterans from 23 countries. ✭

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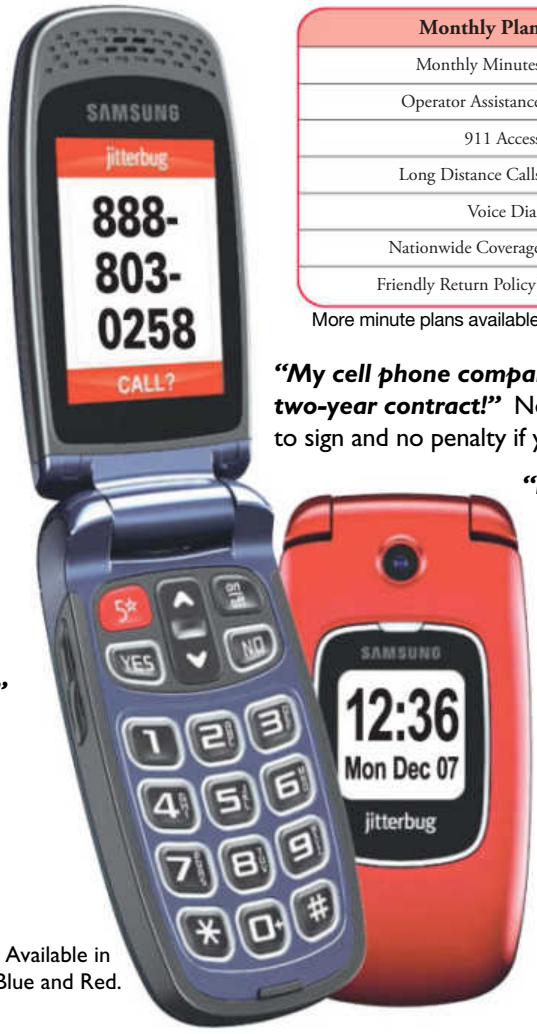
"I'd like a cell phone to use in an emergency, but I don't want a high monthly bill." Jitterbug has a plan to fit your needs… and your budget.



Available in Blue and Red.

Monthly Plan	$14.99	$19.99
Monthly Minutes	50	was ~~200~~ NOW 400
Operator Assistance	24/7	24/7
911 Access	FREE	FREE
Long Distance Calls	No add'l charge	No add'l charge
Voice Dial	FREE	FREE
Nationwide Coverage	YES	YES
Friendly Return Policy[1]	30 days	30 days

More minute plans available. Ask your Jitterbug expert for details.

"My cell phone company wants to lock me in on a two-year contract!" Not Jitterbug, there's no contract to sign and no penalty if you discontinue your service.

"I'll be paying for minutes I'll never use!" Not with Jitterbug, unused minutes carry over to the next month, there's no roaming fee and no additional charge for long distance.

"My phone's battery only lasts a couple of days." The Jitterbug's battery lasts for up to 25 days on standby.

Enough talk. Isn't it time you found out more about the cell phone that's changing all the rules? Call now, Jitterbug product experts are standing by.

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ANSWERS
to the September/ October Challenge

What the...?!?
The Kubuś, a Polish armored car used during the Warsaw Uprising

Hollywood Howlers
The map shows Switzerland dominated by Nazi Germany

Name That Patch
The 9th Infantry Division

Congratulations to the winners:
John Nachtigall, Chuck Sherman, and Wieslaw Krajewski

Hollywood Howlers

In 1959's *The FBI Story*, as FBI man Chip Hardesty (James Stewart) comforts daughter Jennie (Diane Jergens), who has flubbed her high school graduation speech in Washington, DC, they hear on the car radio about the Pearl Harbor attack. What's wrong here?

Please send your answers

to *all three* questions, and your mailing address, to:

January/February Challenge, *World War II*
1600 Tysons Blvd Suite 1140, Tysons, VA 22102

or e-mail: challenge@historynet.com

Three winners, chosen at random from all correct entries submitted by February 15, will receive the book *Forgotten* by Linda Hervieux. Answers will appear in the May/June 2016 issue.

Name That Patch

Which unit wore this symbol?

ANSWERS: FROM TOP: HISTORYNET ARCHIVES; PARAMOUNT PICTURES; GUY ACETO COLLECTION; HOWLERS: WARNER BROS.; WHAT THE: HISTORYNET ARCHIVES; PATCH: HISTORYNET ARCHIVES

Work of Art

As a young actress, **Peggy Moran**—daughter of celebrated pinup calendar artist Earl Moran—appeared in a host of western and horror films. To her exasperation, Moran's best-known role was in the movie she most disliked—*The Mummy's Hand* (1940), which she regarded as amateurish. "I like to tell people my horror films come back to haunt me," she said. When she married director Henry Koster in 1942 he asked that she give up acting—she agreed—but promised nonetheless to put her in all his pictures. And so he did: In every subsequent Henry Koster picture, a sculpted bust of his wife appears. Peggy recalled: "In Hollywood, we were known as the closest couple there was."

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