

8 FREE HISTORY E-BOOKS! SEE PAGE 37

www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com

Curtis 02313

# WWII HISTORY

**GI's Ordeal  
IN FRANCE**

**Tank Fight  
ON MAKIN**

INTREPID PT BOATS

**Daring Attack  
Off Guadalcanal**

JUSTICE AT NUREMBERG

**Nazi War  
Criminals**



HITLER AND STALIN PACT, USS FRANKLIN,  
A PRISONER IN JAPAN, NAZI JET Me-262,  
BOOK & GAME REVIEWS, AND MORE!

JUNE 2015



# CELEBRATE THE AMERICAN SPIRIT



"THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND  
HISTORY IS TO STUDY THE  
PLACES WHERE IT WAS MADE."  
— Stephen E. Ambrose, Author

## BOOK YOUR DREAM TOUR!

### **The Original Band of Brothers Tour**

May 1-15, 2015 — **Sold out!**

July 17-31, 2015 — **Few spots left!**

September 4-18, 2015 — **Sold out!**

### **Civil War: This Hallowed Ground**

May 24-31, 2015

September 27-Oct 4, 2015

### **D-Day Tour**

June 1-13, 2015 — **Few spots left!**

August 7-19, 2015

September 25-October 7, 2015

### **Operation Overlord**

June 1-9, 2015

August 7-15, 2015

September 25-October 3, 2015

### **In the Footsteps of Patton**

June 9-20, 2015

### **Lewis & Clark: Undaunted Courage Tour**

June 17-28, 2015

### **The Ghost Army: Secret War Tour**

July 9-22, 2015

### **Italian Campaign**

October 16-25, 2015

### **Civil War: Mississippi River Campaign**

October 31-November 8, 2015

### **WWII in Poland & Germany**

September 2016

### **WWII and Historical Private Tours**

Let us customize a tour for your group!

- Military associations
- Student and alumni groups
- Family tours

**CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE! [STEPHENAMBROSETOURS.COM](http://STEPHENAMBROSETOURS.COM)**

Celebrate the American Spirit on an enlightening and entertaining vacation with Stephen Ambrose Historical Tours, founded by Stephen E. Ambrose, author of the best-selling book, "Band of Brothers."

**STEPHENAMBROSETOURS.COM or 1.888.903.3329**

**SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER!** Receive promotions, new tour alerts and captivating stories about history! Email [info@stephenambrosetours.com](mailto:info@stephenambrosetours.com). Put NEWSLETTER in the subject line.

**STEPHEN AMBROSE**  
ESTD  1979  
**HISTORICAL TOURS**  
FIRST NAME IN HISTORIC TRAVEL



# STOCK UP

# ON SILVER



+



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**JUST RELEASED**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**BUY ONE  
SILVER AMERICAN EAGLE,  
GET ONE  
FREE.**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



- and check or money order -

**CALL TODAY  
877.870.8694**

NO DEALERS PLEASE • EXPIRES: 05/15/2015 • LIMIT: 2 • OFFER ONLY VALID WHILE SUPPLIES LAST • IF WE ARE UNABLE TO FULFILL YOUR ORDER  
YOU WILL RECEIVE A PROMPT REFUND • ORIGINAL HARD COPY MUST BE IN HAND TO PLACE ORDER • VAULT VERIFICATION #UMIL1880415P





## Features

### 30 Last of the Gilbert Islands Coastwatchers

New Zealander John M. Jones recalls the perilous duty he performed during World War II and his capture by the Japanese.

By **Bruce M. Petty & Peter McQuarrie**

### 38 Caught in the Crosshairs

Sergeant Mort Sheffloe took a sniper's bullet in the chest outside the French fortress city of Brest during the Brittany Campaign.

By **Kevin M. Hymel**

### 46 Midnight in Iron Bottom Sound

American PT-boats thwarted a Tokyo Express run on December 7, 1942, near embattled Guadalcanal.

By **John Domagalski**

### 52 Trial of the Nazi Ministers

A disillusioned prosecutor looks back at court proceedings that gained world attention.

By **Alan Waite**

### 58 Makin Taken

The American 193rd Tank Battalion played a pivotal role in the capture of Makin in the Pacific in 1943.

By **Patrick J. Chaisson**

## Columns

### 06 Editorial

Edward Saylor, one of four surviving Doolittle Raiders, passed away in January.

### 08 Ordnance

Surviving two devastating bomb hits, the aircraft carrier USS *Franklin* managed to limp home.

### 14 Insight

The Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939 shocked the world.

### 20 Profiles

Brigadier Bernard Fergusson took part in several hazardous operations in the China-Burma-India Theater.

### 26 Top Secret

The Messerschmitt Me-262 was among several new weapons unveiled for the Führer that the Nazis hoped would turn the tide of war.

### 68 Books

The Thrid Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry faced a horrible test of combat from the siege of Bastogne to war's end.

### 76 Simulation Gaming

Wolfenstein 3D returns with the new, stand-alone prequel "The Old Blood," and World of Tanks X-Box 360 adds Japanese armor.



Cover: A G.I. photographed during training, somewhere in the U.S. Sergeant Mort Sheffloe experienced Army training at Camp Fanning, Texas, and Camp Polk Louisiana before heading for combat in France. See story page 38. Photograph: National Archives.

*WWII History* (ISSN 1539-5456) is published six times yearly in February, April, June, August, October, and December by Sovereign Media, 6731 Whittier Ave., Suite A-100, McLean, VA 22101. (703) 964-0361. Periodical postage paid at McLean, VA, and additional mailing offices. *WWII History*, Volume 14, Number 4 © 2015 by Sovereign Media Company, Inc., all rights reserved. Copyrights to stories and illustrations are the property of their creators. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without consent of the copyright owner. *Subscription services, back issues, and information:* (800) 219-1187 or write to *WWII History* Circulation, *WWII History*, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703. Single copies: \$5.99, plus \$3 for postage. Yearly subscription in U.S.A.: \$19.95; Canada and Overseas: \$31.95 (U.S.). Editorial Office: Send editorial mail to *WWII History*, 6731 Whittier Ave., Suite A-100, McLean, VA 22101. *WWII History* welcomes editorial submissions but assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of unsolicited material. Material to be returned should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We suggest that you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a copy of our author's guidelines. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *WWII History*, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.



# Going...Going...GONE!

## United States Baseball Legal Tender Coin



Legal Tender  
Clad Half Dollar.  
Actual size is  
30.61 mm

Cooperstown, N.Y.

**T**he National Baseball Hall of Fame and the U.S. Mint have released the **FIRST EVER curved** American coin. This legal tender half dollar was struck in 2014 to honor the 75th anniversary of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

### First Ever Curved American Coin

The coin's curved design is a first in American history. The outward curving 'tails' side of the coin depicts a baseball—complete with intricate stitching. The inward curving 'heads' side of the half dollar reveals a classic leather baseball glove, with the curve perfectly reflecting the natural shape of a weathered and well-loved baseball mitt. Among the celebrity judges who selected this **FIRST EVER** curved design were Hall of Famers Joe Morgan, Brooks Robinson, Ozzie Smith, Don Sutton, and Dave Winfield. The curved design is like nothing you have ever seen before. You won't believe it when you hold it!

### Going...Going...GONE

Public demand for these coins exploded and a number of versions sold out almost immediately. The Baseball Hall of Fame Half Dollar will go down in history as a runaway best seller. But even though the coins are no longer available from the U.S. Mint, you don't have to strike out.

GovMint.com • 14101 Southcross Dr. W. Dept. HOF311-05 • Burnsville, Minnesota 55337

Prices and availability subject to change without notice. Past performance is not a predictor of future performance. NOTE: GovMint.com® is a private distributor of worldwide government coin and currency issues and privately issued licensed collectibles and is not affiliated with the United States government. Facts and figures deemed accurate as of February 2015. ©2015 GovMint.com.

If you **CALL NOW**, you can lock in your very own piece of baseball history—not to mention the *most unusual American coin ever struck!*

### Pristine Brilliant Uncirculated Half Dollar

Each 2014 Baseball Hall of Fame Commemorative Half Dollar is minted in Brilliant Uncirculated condition and comes in official U.S. Mint packaging, including the official Mint Certificate of Authenticity. Best of all, you can secure yours today for only \$29.95 (*plus s/h*). Due to overwhelming demand, orders are limited to a maximum of 5 coins. No dealer orders will be accepted. Lock in yours now. Hurry! A sellout is expected at any time.

When you call, ask about the extremely limited Pete Rose autographed edition.

For fastest service call today toll-free

**1-800-563-6468**

Offer Code HOF311-05

Please mention this code when you call.

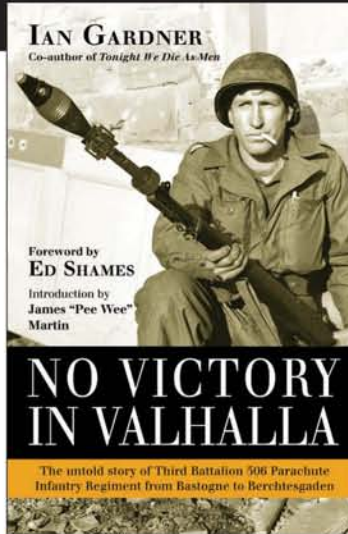


**GOVMINT.COM®**

**THE BEST SOURCE FOR COINS WORLDWIDE™**



## FROM THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE TO BERCHTESGADEN



**“The words of literally hundreds of veterans were used to make up this account, and it shows.”**

**CHRISTOPHER MISKIMON**  
WWII HISTORY MAGAZINE

Ian Gardner concludes the gripping trilogy he began with *Tonight We Die As Men* and *Deliver Us From Darkness*.

Now in *No Victory In Valhalla* Gardner follows the legendary 3rd/506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne as it wages a desperate fight to hold Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge, through the battalion's involvement in the discovery of the Nazi concentration camps to its final destination of Berchtesgaden, Hitler's mountain retreat.

Your Destination for Military History

**OSPREY**  
PUBLISHING

www.ospreypublishing.com

## Edward Saylor, one of four surviving Doolittle Raiders, passed away in January.

**ON APRIL 18, 1942, SCARCELY FIVE MONTHS AFTER THE DEVASTATING JAPANESE** attack on Pearl Harbor and other American military installations on the island of Oahu, the U.S. armed forces struck a blow against Japan that had far-reaching consequences in the outcome of World War II in the Pacific. It also bolstered American morale at a time when a boost was sorely needed.

Eighty Army Air Corps pilots and crewmen flying 16 North American B-25 Mitchell medium bombers from the deck of the aircraft carrier USS *Hornet* bombed the Japanese capital of Tokyo. They inflicted little real damage; however, the “bombshell” that went off among senior Japanese military commanders reverberated through their strategic planning to protect the home islands from future attack and influenced the Japanese decision to seize Midway atoll to extend their security zone within 1,200 miles of Hawaii. The resulting Battle of Midway was a turning point in the Pacific War and a serious defeat for the Imperial Japanese Navy, which lost four aircraft carriers and never regained the offensive initiative.



Edward Saylor

Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Doolittle and the airmen under his command trained extensively at Eglin Field, Florida, to operate the land-based bombers from the deck of an aircraft carrier. During the raid itself, three airmen were killed. Eight were captured by the Japanese, and three of these were executed while a fourth died in captivity. One crew landed in the Soviet Union and was interned. Others ditched in the sea or crash

landed in China, making their way to safety with the help of Chinese troops and friendly villagers. Fifteen B-25s were lost. Doolittle believed that he would be court-martialed but instead received the Medal of Honor and promotion to brigadier general. Every man who participated in the raid was a volunteer.

For years, the surviving Doolittle Raiders gathered to drink a toast of cognac to their fellow airmen lost during the raid and those who passed away during the previous year. The last such reunion was held in November 2013 at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. At the time, four Raiders remained, Colonel Richard Cole, pilot of B-25 No. 1; Lt. Col. Robert L. Hite, co-pilot of B-25 No. 16; Lt. Col. Edward Saylor, flight engineer and gunner of B-25 No. 15; and Staff Sgt. David Thatcher, a gunner aboard B-25 No. 7.

Now there are three. Saylor passed away in January at the age of 94 in Sumner, Washington. Like so many other young men, he was 19 when he enlisted in 1939 after seeing a recruiting poster that promised pay of \$78 a month. Born in Brusett, Montana in 1920, he served 28 years in the Air Force and retired in 1967.

The news of Saylor's death offers an opportunity to reflect on the courage and willingness to go in harm's way that characterized to a man those intrepid Doolittle Raiders. In a 2013 interview Saylor told the Associated Press, “It was what you do. Over time, we've been told what effect our raid had on the war and the morale of the people.” He once observed, “There is no way you can call yourself a hero. That is for someone else to say.”

In 2014, the Doolittle Raiders received a gold medal from the U.S. Congress for “outstanding heroism, valor, skill, and service to the United States in conducting the bombings of Tokyo.”

Saylor was buried quietly next to Lorraine, his wife of 69 years, who passed away in 2011. In lieu of flowers, he requested donations to the Wounded Warrior Foundation. Throughout its history, the United States has been fortunate that heroes have stepped forward during wartime. Today, heroes continue to volunteer in defense of their country. Edward Saylor saluted them, and so should we.

Michael E. Haskew



Volume 14 ■ Number 4

CARL A. GNAM, JR.  
Editorial Director, Founder

MICHAEL E. HASKEW  
Editor

LAURA CLEVELAND  
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DETULLEO  
Art Director

KEVIN M. HYMEL  
Research Director

## CONTRIBUTORS:

Mark Albertson, Valor Dodd,  
John J. Domagalski, Robert F. Dorr,  
Kevin M. Hymel, Joseph Luster, Chuck  
Lyons, Christopher Miskimon, Alan Waite

ADVERTISING OFFICE:  
BEN BOYLES

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

Advertising Sales  
LINDA GALLIHER  
(570) 322-7848, ext. 160  
lgalliher@sovhomestead.com

MARK HINTZ  
Chief Executive Officer

MITSY PIETENPOL  
Accountant

ROBIN LEE  
Bookkeeper

TERRI COATES  
Subscription Customer Service  
sovereign@publishersserviceassociates.com  
(570) 322-7848, ext. 164

CURTIS CIRCULATION COMPANY  
WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION

SOVEREIGN MEDIA COMPANY, INC.  
6731 Whittier Avenue, Suite A-100  
McLean, VA 22101-4554

SUBSCRIPTION CUSTOMER SERVICE  
AND BUSINESS OFFICE:  
2406 Reach Road  
Williamsport, PA 17701  
(800) 219-1187

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

## WARFARE HISTORY NETWORK

www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com

## MODERN WAR STUDIES

### The Mediterranean Air War

#### Airpower and Allied Victory in World War II

Robert S. Ehlers, Jr.

"Robert Ehlers has assembled a perceptive, skillful, and comprehensive account of the air dimension of World War II's pivotal Mediterranean campaign."—Douglas Porch, author of *The Path to Victory: The Mediterranean Theater in World War II*

536 pages, 32 photographs, Cloth \$39.95,  
Ebook \$39.95



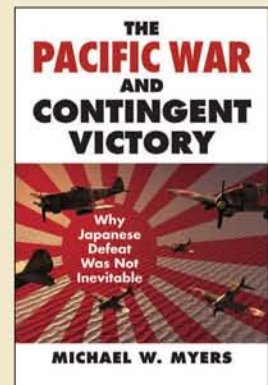
### The Pacific War and Contingent Victory

#### Why Japanese Defeat Was Not Inevitable

Michael W. Myers

"A major new and provocative account of the Pacific War that draws from a wide and diverse number of sources. Myers turns a lot of received wisdom about this subject on its head and tackles many assumptions that scholars of the conflict have assumed are a given. His argument merits a close and careful read."—Nicolas E. Sarantakes, author of *Allies against the Rising Sun: The United States, the British Nations and the Defeat of Imperial Japan*

208 pages, 7 maps, Cloth \$34.95, Ebook \$34.95



## NEW IN PAPERBACK

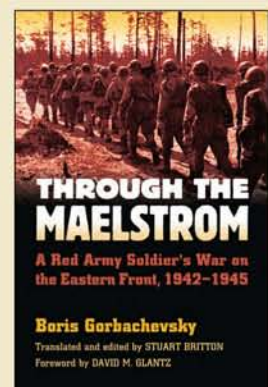
### Through the Maelstrom

#### A Red Army Soldier's War on the Eastern Front, 1942–1945

Boris Gorbachevsky

"A work that not only brings to life the daily experiences of a Soviet soldier on the Eastern Front, but also provides a window into Soviet society during the struggle to defend the Motherland. Masterful. and balanced . . . A must-read for scholars of the Eastern Front and those interested in the role of the Communist Party in the Red Army during World War II."—*Army History*

476 pages, 32 photographs, Paper \$29.95



## University Press of Kansas

Phone 785-864-4155 • Fax 785-864-4586 • www.kansaspress.ku.edu



All photos: National Archives



## Ordeal of the Franklin

Surviving two devastating bomb hits, the aircraft carrier managed to limp home.

### THE USS FRANKLIN WAS NOT A LUCKY SHIP.

In March 1945, off the Japanese mainland, the Essex-class aircraft carrier was hit by two 550-pound bombs that struck her flight deck and penetrated into the hangar deck. Less than six months earlier, a kamikaze had hit her off Leyte in the Philippines, killing or wounding 120 members of her crew.

The second attack ignited the fuel tanks of 31 armed and fueled aircraft awaiting launch, as well as “Tiny Tim” air-to-surface rockets and other ordnance aboard the ship. Fires raged. Rockets whistled across the deck, and machine-gun ammunition clattered. In minutes, the Franklin was dead in the water with massive casualties, a 13-degree starboard list, and without any radio communications. Many of her damage control team members were dead and some of her water lines, needed to fight the fires, were severed. Flaming and wreathed in choking smoke, she was 52 miles from the Japanese mainland and drifting closer.

“I saw guys flying through the air [and] saw men running around on fire, just flaming torches,” a seaman on a nearby destroyer reported. Like most of the men who could see the *Franklin*, he thought she was doomed.

But the *Franklin* would survive.

Not only would she survive, but dubbed “the ship that wouldn’t die,” she would steam 12,000 miles under her own power first to the Caroline Islands, then across

the Pacific to Pearl Harbor, and then through the Panama Canal to the Atlantic Ocean and then to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Her story is considered one of the greatest survival sagas of the war.

Four days before the 1945 attack, the *Franklin* had sailed from Ulithi in the Caroline Islands, part of the 120-ship Task Force 58 deployed to launch attacks against the Japanese homeland in support of the Okinawa landings set for April 1. It was the *Franklin*’s return to combat after undergoing repairs from the kamikaze attack suffered in the Philippines. Her captain was Leslie E. Gehres, who had taken command of the ship the previous November. A veteran of World War I and a naval aviator since 1927, he was the Navy’s first aviation commodore. Captain Gehres was known as a disciplinarian and was said to be disliked by most of his men, who had nicknamed him Custer (after General George Armstrong Custer) because of his perceived aggressiveness.

The keel of the *Franklin*, the fifth U.S. Navy ship so named, had been laid on December 7, 1942, the first anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. She was launched in Virginia 10 months later on October 14, 1943, and by June 1944, she had been deployed to the South Pacific where she was involved in operations in the Marianas, the attacks on Iwo Jima, Chichi Jima, Haha Jima, and Peleliu. By September she had been named the flagship of Task Group 38.4 and had taken part in attacks in preparation for the assault on the island of Leyte in the Philippines.

While there, the *Franklin*, by now known affectionately to her men as “Big Ben,” just barely escaped being struck by two torpedoes, and on September 13 a Japanese plane—apparently not a kamikaze—crashed onto her deck and then slid across and into the water. On October 27, three Japanese kamikaze planes attacked her, one hitting the flight deck and crashing through to the galley deck, killing 56 men and wounding another 60. She limped back to Ulithi Atoll for temporary repairs and then went on to the Puget Sound Navy Yard in

Washington, where more permanent repairs were made. She left Puget Sound on February 2, 1945, and joined a naval force gathering for strikes on the Japanese homeland. Now, a month later, she was off the Japanese coast.

Early on March 19, the battle group had begun attacks on the Japanese home islands aimed at

Smoke and debris billow from an internal explosion aboard the Essex-class aircraft carrier USS *Franklin*, struck by two 550-pound bombs dropped by a Japanese aircraft, on March 19, 1945, while the carrier was readying airstrikes against the Japanese home islands.



**ALWAYS FAITHFUL —  
EVERY MOMENT OF  
THE DAY**

**Not Sold  
In Stores**

**Almost  
2 FEET  
HIGH**

*USMC "Semper Fi  
For All Time"  
Cuckoo Clock*

- ★ Hand-crafted, cuckoo clock hand-painted in "dress blue" showcases the inspirational artwork of Jim Griffin
- ★ Sculpted, golden metal Eagle, Globe and Anchor symbol along with the "Semper Fidelis" motto grace the top of the clock
- ★ USMC emblem clockface with an accurate quartz movement and glass cover
- ★ Traditional swinging metal pendulum and decorative pine cone weights

Act now to acquire your officially licensed USMC "Semper Fi For All Time" Cuckoo Clock for five convenient installments of only \$35.99, for a total of \$179.95\*. Your purchase is backed by our unconditional, 365-day money-back guarantee. Send no money now. Just mail the Reservation Application today, or you could miss out!



*At the top of every hour, a bald eagle  
emerges to the stirring melody  
"The Marines' Hymn"*

Shown much smaller than actual size of 22 inches high, including hanging pendulum and weights.

[www.bradfordexchange.com/usmccuckoo](http://www.bradfordexchange.com/usmccuckoo)

© 2015 BGE 01-19446-001-EI

**RESERVATION APPLICATION**

**SEND NO MONEY NOW**

**THE  
BRADFORD EXCHANGE  
—HOME DECOR—**

9345 Milwaukee Avenue • Niles,  
IL 60714-1393

**YES.** Please reserve the USMC "Semper Fi For All Time" Cuckoo Clock for me as described in this announcement.  
Limit: one per order. **Please Respond Promptly**

Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address

City

State

Zip

E-mail (optional)

**01-19446-001-E57491**

Requires one  
"AA" battery  
and two  
"D" batteries,  
not included.

© Officially Licensed  
Product of the United  
States Marine Corps

Proud supporter of  
the Marine Corp  
Recruit Depot  
Museum Historical  
Society

\*Plus \$21.98 shipping and service. Limited-edition presentation restricted to 295 crafting days. Please allow 4-8 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.



# JT Software

Computer  
Wargames

From  
Musket to  
Modern



Over 70 PC  
games and  
several apps  
for Android  
and iPad

- \* Civil War
- \* Napoleonics
- \* Naval Warfare
- \* Early American
- \* Modern Warfare
- \* Air Warfare
- \* World War I and II



Search "John Tiller"  
for Free and Paid apps  
for Android, Kindle  
Tablet and iPad

Visit our Website  
and On-Line Store

**JohnTillerSoftware.com**



**ABOVE:** The USS *Franklin* lists 13 degrees to starboard after two Japanese 550-pound bomb hits off the Japanese home islands on March 19, 1945. This photo was taken from the deck of the cruiser USS *Santa Fe*, which has come alongside to render aid. **BELOW:** The *Franklin* burns furiously as blazing aviation fuel pours from the hangar deck of the stricken ship.



knocking out enemy air power. The *Franklin* launched fighters to attack Kobe Harbor. By dawn on March 19, she was closer to the Japanese mainland than any other U.S. carrier had gotten during the war. The Japanese met the battle group's attack with their own air power, and the *Franklin*'s crew had been called to battle stations 12 times in the six hours between midnight and dawn. By 7 AM, however, things had quieted, and except for the gun crews the men were allowed to step down. On the galley deck, 200 men were standing in line for breakfast, their first hot meal in two days.

About 7:05 AM, however, the aircraft carrier USS *Hancock* spotted an enemy aircraft approaching the group and broadcast the sighting to the task force. About four minutes later, the plane was seen lining up on the *Franklin* and another warning was broadcast. However, by that time the plane, possibly a Yokosuka D4Y Judy dive bomber or an Aichi D3A Val

dive bomber, had broken the cloud cover and made a low-level run on the *Franklin*.

Some reports later claimed the plane had no markings and was not being fired on by the task force. Many had assumed it was friendly.

The Japanese plane dropped two 550-pound bombs toward the *Franklin* before a patrolling U.S. Vought F4U Corsair fighter shot it down.

Back on the *Franklin*, however, one of the two bombs struck in the middle of the flight deck slightly forward of the island, blowing a 15-square foot hole in the deck and passing through to the hangar deck, where there were 22 planes, 16 of which were fueled and five armed. The force of the explosion sent the No. 1 elevator up and out its shaft like a rocket. The second 550-pounder had hit the rear of the ship among the 31 planes warming up for takeoff there and igniting their fuel tanks. A burst of flame erupted from the flight deck, and men on other ships in the task force later said they could feel their vessels rock from the force of the explosion. The *Franklin*'s ready room was immediately destroyed, killing 24 of the 28 men in it.

"The center deck slammed into the overhead and the ready room was ripped and torn with flames and smoke and bodies were all over," said Marine Corps pilot John Vandergrif, one of the four survivors.

Casualties were also high on the flight and hangar decks, where many of the crew who were preparing to launch aircraft had never heard any of the warnings, which had been drowned out by the noise of the airplane



engines. The explosions jumbled aircraft together on the two decks and set off the Tiny Tim rockets with 500-pound warheads that whistled across the decks. Ammunition began cooking off.

"Fifty-caliber ammunition in the planes on the deck set up a staccato chattering," Commander Stephen Jurika, a navigator and flight deck officer on the *Franklin*, recalled.

"On the hangar deck," a *Time* magazine reporter would later write, "now a roaring furnace, pilots blundered into still-whirling plane propellers, climbed frantically up the folded wings. Later some were found hanging like black, charred monkeys, caught in the overhead structure."

Only two crewmen were able to escape the hangar deck carnage.

On the galley deck, many of the 200 men who had been waiting for breakfast were burned or crushed in place with still empty stomachs. Many of the ship's men were blown over the side aft of the island or were faced with the choice of going overboard or being burned to death. Other crewmen tried to soak ammunition and missile supplies but found there was no water pressure, and still other men tried to toss live rounds over the side only to be blown



Internal fires rage aboard the *Franklin*, particularly near the forward elevator.

over themselves.

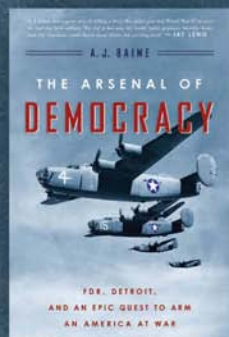
The explosions severed many of the water lines that were needed for firefighting and killed or wounded a large number of the members of the damage control team. The heat melted electric wires, knocked out the ship's communication network, and ruptured fuel lines that then sprayed gasoline on the fires. But in the chaos, many of the *Franklin*'s men rose to the challenge.

Lieutenant (j.g.) Donald A. Gray, one of two men to receive the Medal of Honor for their actions that day, discovered 300 men apparently trapped below deck. An engineer who

knew the ship's layout in detail, he groped his way through dark, debris-filled corridors until he discovered an escape route and made three trips back to the trapped men "despite menacing flames, flooding water and the ominous threat of sudden additional explosions, on each occasion calmly leading his men through the blanketing pall of smoke until the last one had been saved," his Medal of Honor citation reads. He then organized and led work parties to battle fires on the hangar deck and eventually raise steam in one boiler.

The other Medal of Honor was awarded to Lt. Cmdr. Joseph T. O'Callahan, the *Franklin*'s

## A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT FDR'S WAR



A *New York Times* Bestseller

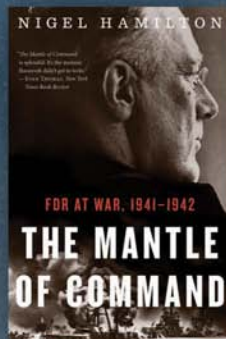
A dramatic, intimate narrative of how FDR and Edsel Ford turned the automotive industry into an airplane production line that would win us the war.

"A memorable portrait not just of an industry going to war but of a remarkable figure who helped to make victory possible." — *Wall Street Journal*

"Fast-paced . . . The story certainly entertains."  
— *New York Times*



Houghton  
Mifflin  
Harcourt hmhbooks.com



A National Book Award Finalist

A close-up, in-the-room look at how FDR took masterful command and control of the military direction of World War II.

"This bold argument . . . will undoubtedly change the way we see Franklin Roosevelt." — *Christian Science Monitor*

"Splendid: It's the memoir Roosevelt didn't get to write."  
— *New York Times Book Review*

"Masterly." — *Wall Street Journal*

NOW AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK



# Unforgettable

## The Biography of Capt. Thomas J. Flynn

By Alice M. Flynn



WWII hero 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Tom Flynn of the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division survived insurmountable odds during the Battle of the Bulge, the Hurtgen Forest and four Nazi POW camps, only to return home to his beautiful, young wife with *Unforgettable* memories that would haunt him for the rest of his life.

**Winner of four book awards in 2012**



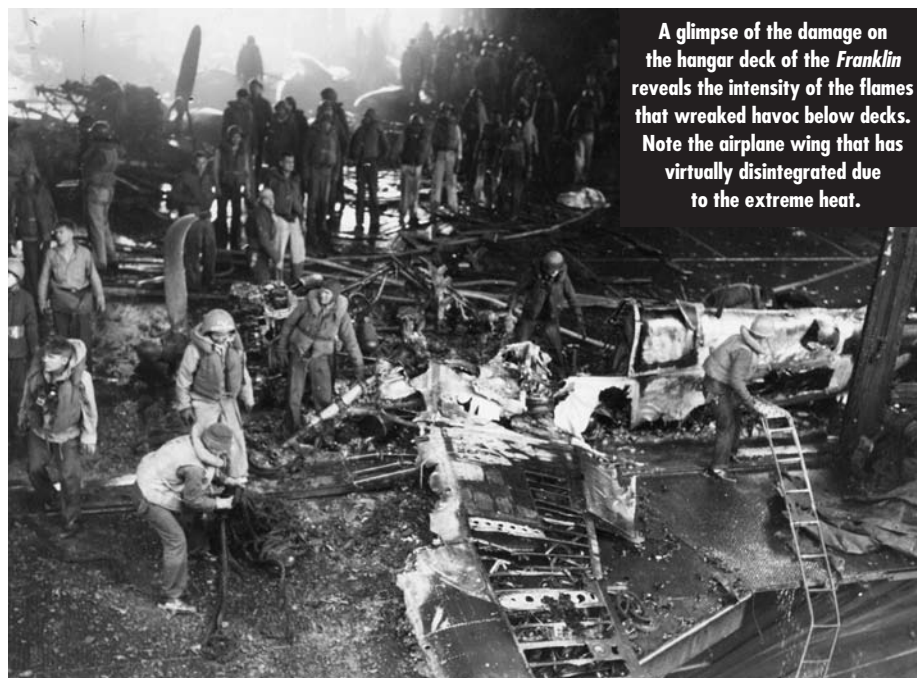
*The 2nd edition, which is now available, includes:*

- additional details on the Dec 16-18, 1944 action in Hosingen, Luxembourg,
- WWII era photos of the town, and
- an expanded list of the 110th Infantry Regiment GIs who fought there.



available on **amazon.com**

**UnforgettableVeteran.com**



A glimpse of the damage on the hangar deck of the *Franklin* reveals the intensity of the flames that wreaked havoc below decks. Note the airplane wing that has virtually disintegrated due to the extreme heat.

Catholic chaplain. Throughout the chaos that followed the attack and explosions and despite a leg wound, he raced around the damaged carrier administering the last rites, comforting wounded crewmen, organizing firefighting and rescue parties, helping to carry hot bombs and shells to the edge of the deck for jettisoning, and leading a party below deck to wet down magazines that were threatening to explode.

"He seemed to be everywhere," an eyewitness later recalled of the chaplain's exploits, "handling hoses, jettisoning ammunition and doing everything he could to help save our ship."

About 7:30 AM, as efforts to battle the fires and sort out the chaos continued, Rear Admiral Ralph Davison, the commander of the *Franklin's* task group, made it to the bridge and told Gehres he was transferring his flag to the *Hancock*. "Captain, I think there's no hope," he said. "I think you should consider abandoning ship—those fires seem to be out of control."

Gehres was reported to have nodded but remained silent, and the admiral was transferred to the destroyer *Miller*, which came alongside to collect him while training four water jets on the *Franklin's* fires before pulling away.

By 9:30 AM, the light cruiser *Santa Fe* had approached along the starboard side of the stricken ship, spraying water on the carrier and beginning to take on the *Franklin's* wounded and nonessential personnel. She was also able to rescue some of the men who had jumped or had been blown overboard. As that was taking place, the ammunition for the *Franklin's* aft five-inch antiaircraft guns exploded.

"Whole aircraft engines with propellers

attached, debris of all description, including pieces of human bodies, were flung high into the air and descended on the general area like hail on a roof," Jurika later said.

At about 10 AM, the men remaining in the engine and steering rooms gave in to the heat and fled their stations. The *Franklin* was dead in the water with a 13-degree starboard list. She was 52 miles from the shores of Japan and had suddenly become the most heavily damaged carrier of the war.

Official casualty figures calculated shortly after the attack set her losses at 724 men killed and 265 wounded. More recent tabulations have put those numbers at 807 killed and more than 487 wounded, figures that would have brought her wartime losses to 924 killed in action, the worst for any surviving U.S. warship and second only to that of battleship USS *Arizona*, which was sunk in the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

Despite the deaths and damage and Admiral Davison's suggestion to abandon ship, Captain Gehres refused to give up the struggle to save the carrier. The heavy cruiser *Pittsburgh* arrived and was able to attach a tow line to the *Franklin* a little after 1 PM. The cruiser then worked the carrier around to the south and headed with her in tow toward Ulithi. By sunset the fires aboard the *Franklin* had been beaten back enough and the heat had abated to the point that men, including Tender 3rd Class Sam "Dusty" Rhodes, could get through to one of the ship's boilers. By 10 PM, that boiler had been lit and was running.

"That's when the ship's heart started to beat



again,” Rhodes later said.

The *Franklin*'s engines began slowly turning, and the tow speed increased to six knots. Additional boilers were brought into operation, and at 12:30 PM on March 20, the tow line was dropped. The *Franklin* was now progressing under her own power.

That afternoon, another Japanese dive bomber swooped in with the sun behind it and dropped a bomb toward the badly crippled carrier. Fortunately, the bomb fell some 100 feet short of the ship, doing little damage. During the night, the *Franklin* was able to increase her speed to 18 knots. Fires still burned on the gallery deck and in Captain Gehres's own cabin, but the gyrocompasses, search radar, phones, and some of the carrier's guns were working again. The *Franklin* was coming back.

As conditions aboard the ship began to slowly improve, the enlisted men and officers left aboard her were faced with the grisly task of disposing of the bodies of the dead that littered the decks. Most of the bodies were buried at sea with a minimum of ceremony, a task that took several days to complete.

When the *Franklin* finally arrived at Ulithi, she picked up a number of her crew members who had been thrown from or had jumped

from the damaged carrier and had been pulled from the sea by other vessels. After emergency repairs at Ulithi, the carrier steamed to Pearl Harbor for more repairs and then headed to the Brooklyn Navy Yard, arriving there on April 28, 1945.

Throughout the saga of the ship's return, however, Gehres, the disciplinarian, complained loudly about those crewmen who had left the ship during the disaster either consciously or unconsciously, men who had been blown overboard or had jumped as the flames approached them. "No order was issued to abandon ship," he said.

The captain also created what he called the 704 Club, consisting of those men who had stayed with the ship throughout the disaster. He refused to recommend anyone not in the club for a citation. It has been suggested, however, that Captain Gehres's ardor was cooled when someone mentioned that perhaps Admiral Davison's name should be included on the list of those who had failed to remain aboard the *Franklin*.

Besides the two Medals of Honor that were awarded, Captain Gehres and 18 other men were awarded the Navy Cross, including the executive officer, Commander Joe Taylor, and

Commander Jurika. Twenty-two men earned Silver Stars, and 115 Bronze Stars. Two hundred and thirty-four men received letters of commendation, and 1,110 Purple Hearts were awarded. In the end, the *Franklin*'s men had become the most decorated crew in United States Naval history.

At the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the carrier suffered a boiler room fire that resulted in no casualties, and in 1946 a leak of carbon dioxide fumes killed two men aboard the ship. She was made seaworthy again but never returned to action. She was decommissioned in 1947 and scrapped in 1966. During her scrapping in Virginia, human remains from the March 19 attack, those of the last casualty to be recovered, were found inside an air duct.

Workers in the navy yard also reported that they had heard sounds while aboard the carrier. They were unable to locate any source. The sounds, they said, were of "men talking, and laughing, or horsing around like guys do."

Were these the final echoes of the USS *Franklin*?

*Author Chuck Lyons has contributed to WWII History on a variety of topics. He resides in Rochester, New York.*



## EM & Officers Wool M-43 Caps

Made in Germany using fine quality, custom woven wool that matches the original. Lined in grey cotton fabric & stamped with manufacturer's code, size & date, like the war-time production. We use correct, aluminum-silver braided piping for Officer Caps, proper type visors and pebbled aluminum, Assmann buttons to make these the most authentic available. Sizes 56-61.

**Enlisted Men's M-43 \$49.00 - Officers M-43 with silver piping \$54.00**



## Nuremburg Desk Eagles

Cast from originals, these highly-detailed castings are very nice quality and make fine looking display pieces, especially at such attractively low prices! Our Desk Eagles are taken directly from an original and are complete with all details, including maker's RZM code. Finished in antique silver or antique bronze and mounted on a genuine marble base, they stand at 7-1/2" high.

**Antique Bronze \$59.00 - Antique Silver \$79.00**



**Send \$5 Today for our Full-Color Catalog #7! Dealer Inquiries Welcome Please add \$8.95 for shipping for orders under \$150**

P.O. Box 847 D-40 Pottsboro, TX 75076

**1-800-786-6210**

Orders@reddickmilitaria.com



All photos: National Archives



## Pact of the Devils

| The Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939 shocked the world.

**ON AUGUST 23, 1939, SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, V.P. Potemkin,** waited at the Moscow Airport for Joachim von Ribbentrop, Foreign Minister of Nazi Germany. He warmly greeted the former champagne salesman and then whisked him away for a clandestine meeting at the Kremlin.

Waiting to receive the emissary were Soviet strongman Josef Stalin and his granite-faced foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov. They concluded what became known as the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact. Included were provisions governing the transfer of raw materials from the Soviet Union in exchange for manufactured goods from Germany. But, more importantly, the pact was a protocol establishing each signatory's sphere of influence. This included Poland. Hitler and Stalin did not merely intend to partition their neighbor; they meant to wipe the country off the map. The Germans would begin to close the vise on September 1, advancing to Brest-Litovsk. The Soviets would close the eastern jaws on September 17 until Poland was gobbled up. As an added inducement for Stalin's compliance, Hitler agreed that Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Bessarabia, which was on the eastern edge of Romania, would be included in the Soviet sphere of influence.

The pact was signed at 2 AM on the 24th. The two dictators not only sealed Poland's fate but set in motion a chain of events that would soon engulf the globe in World War II.

Bottles of champagne were opened to toast the historic moment. Stalin raised his glass to Hitler's health. "A fine fellow," remarked the Soviet dictator. Yet, 21 months later the pact would prove to be just another scrap of paper, for Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union would collide in a titanic struggle that was to become the greatest land war in history.

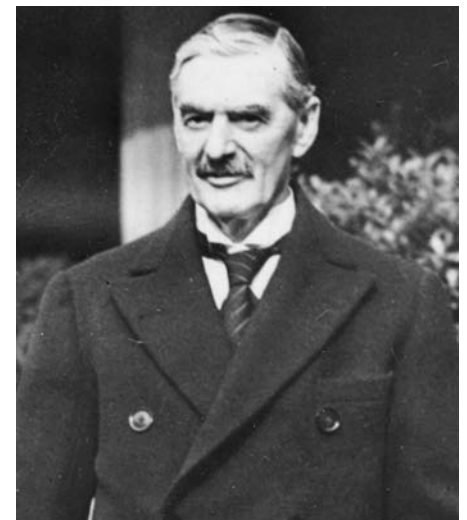
By 1939, Italy, once in the Allied camp, was now a Fascist power under the sway of a swaggering brute named Benito Mussolini. Another former Allied power, Japan, was now militaristic, a self-serving belligerent selling itself to the masses of Asia as their deliverer from the bondage of the white

man, while masking the brutal reality of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The United States seemed hopelessly absorbed in its delusion of self-quarantine and was determined not to mire itself in European politics.

This left Britain and France. Heart and soul of the Allied effort during the Great War, they were able to maintain the façade as power brokers at Versailles but emerged from the four-year contest of attrition as had many of their soldiers—as permanent invalids. And while they were hardly terminal, their economies were still unwell, playing host to cankers of damage and debt; in addition to being socially scarred from the unremitting bloodletting of the trenches, they hobbled along for the next 10 years until the Great Depression.

France, in particular, never seemed to emerge from either. Indeed, it seemed to seek solace in a bunker mentality induced by the Maginot Line, that impenetrable shield of France, a marvel of 20th-century construction with its underground railways, air conditioning system, and fixed fortifications which proved little better than monuments during the coming era of mobile warfare.

Hitler seemed to sense the weakness, testing the waters on March 7, 1936, with his occupation of the demilitarized Rhineland in direct contravention of the spirit of the Versailles and



**ABOVE:** British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was the victim of his own naiveté and a profound desire to maintain the peace after the horror of World War I.

**TOP:** Left to right, German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, Nazi lawyer Friedrich Gaus, Soviet Premier Josef Stalin, and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov pose for photographers as they prepare to sign the infamous Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939.



Discovered: The Coin That Never Was!

# America's Lost Masterpiece

## The \$100 Union



### Original sketches found at the Smithsonian

Imagine that you were examining artifacts in the Smithsonian Institution and you found a never-seen-before sketch for the largest and highest denomination American coin ever proposed.

That's precisely what happened when a coin expert was exploring the collection at this celebrated public institution not long ago.

To his own surprise, the numismatist found the original-design concept for a one hundred dollar denomination created by George T. Morgan, arguably the greatest American coin designer. These sketches, hidden within an original sketchbook for nearly a century, represent perhaps the grandest American coin ever proposed—the \$100 Union®.

George T. Morgan will always be remembered for his most famous coin, the Morgan Silver Dollar. Until recently, the world knew nothing of Morgan's larger and higher denomination \$100 Union concept design. The secret's out!

For a limited time, you can secure the world's first and only \$100 Union Proof struck in pure .999 silver at our special price of only \$99 (plus s&h). Call today!

*This is not a reproduction...  
this is the first-time ever  
Morgan \$100 Union design  
struck as a silver proof.*



**1-800-806-1641** Offer code: **MUS208-05**

GovMint.com, 14101 Southcross Dr. W.,  
Burnsville, MN 55337

Prices and availability subject to change without notice. NOTE: GovMint.com® is a private distributor of worldwide government coin and currency issues and privately issued licensed collectibles and is not affiliated with the United States government. Facts and figures deemed accurate as of March 2015. ©2015 GovMint.com.



# NEW

## IN WWII HISTORY



**ORDER IN CHAOS**  
*The Memoirs of General of Panzer Troops Hermann Balck*

Edited and translated by Major General David T. Zabecki, USA (Ret.) and Lieutenant Colonel Dieter J. Biedekarken, USA (Ret.)

Foreword by Carlo D'Este

\$50.00 Hardcover & Ebook

The memoirs of German general Hermann Balck—one of WWII's greatest battlefield commanders, now available in English for the first time.



**NEW IN PAPERBACK**

**OSTKRIEG**  
*Hitler's War of Extermination in the East*

Stephen G. Fritz

\$24.95 paperback & Ebook

"Of all the hundreds of books on the Russian campaign, Mr. Fritz's is the first I have seen that demonstrates the nexus between mass murder and military operations."

—*Washington Times*



**UNIVERSITY PRESS OF KENTUCKY**

WWW.KENTUCKYPRESS.COM



A column of PzKpfw. II tanks, their German commanders riding atop open turrets in stunning black uniforms, sits menacingly in Wenceslas Square in the center of Prague in the spring of 1939. Hitler reneged on his promise made the previous autumn at Munich to end territorial demands and occupied not only Sudetenland but the remainder of Czechoslovakia.

Locarno Treaties.

Common belief holds that the French reaction or lack thereof to the German provocation was owing to a lack of intestinal fortitude, girded by nightmares of Verdun. A policy memorandum of Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden dated March 8, 1936, shows the British government counseling diplomatic action, urging the French not to scale up to a military riposte to which French Foreign Minister Pierre Flandin stated that France would not act alone. Rather, Paris would take the matter to the League of Nations.

There is, however, another side to this story: the lingering effect of the Great Depression. The French were concerned with their economy and currency. They desperately needed investors like Britain and, in particular, the United States to help bolster the franc. Foreign investment in the franc was hardly possible if Paris was mobilizing for war.

Hitler had won his game of brinkmanship. With just a couple of untried battalions, he had faced down 100 French divisions, throwing cold water on the doubts of his nervous generals and sending his stature soaring among masses of the German people while exposing the fragility of Anglo-French cohesion and the debility of the Versailles and Locarno Treaties.

Such trysts of gamesmanship played by an opportunistic Hitler brought Europe to the brink. His understanding of history spurred him to isolate that colossal power to the East, Soviet Russia. The Hitler-Stalin honeymoon fractured the European balance of power, removed the Red Army as a counterweight to German ambitions, compromised Moscow's membership in

the League of Nations, and revisited British and French ostracizing of the Soviet colossus from European politics at Versailles.

Adolf Hitler assumed the chancellorship of Germany on January 30, 1933. He relied on diplomacy to advance the interests of Germany because he lacked the military muscle for a more belligerent posture. For instance, he ended the clandestine Soviet-German military cooperation of the 1920s. Yet on May 5, Germany and the Soviet Union renewed the 1926 Treaty of Berlin. On January 26, 1934, Hitler signed a nonaggression pact with Poland. On September 18, 1934, the Soviets joined the League of Nations, Germany having withdrawn from the diplomatic fraternity the previous October.

By forging a nonaggression pact with Poland, Hitler prevented Warsaw and Paris from reaching an agreement that would have sandwiched a prostrate Germany and blocked any potential deal between Warsaw and Moscow. This, of course, raised serious doubts in the Kremlin as to German-Polish intentions. The idea of collective security proved attractive, hence Moscow's long overdue membership in the League.

Yet, by the Spanish Civil War it was abundantly clear that Rome and Berlin intended to spread the Fascist creed like a plague across Europe. German and Italian involvement in Spain's conflict, in the face of British and French neutrality, seemed another step toward the eventual isolation of the Soviet Union. Moscow, then, threw its support to the Republicans against Francisco Franco's Nationalists. For Germany, Italy, and Soviet Russia, the contentious Iberian Peninsula offered that battlefield laboratory for new weapons and tactics in preparation for the



main event that was sure to come.

Five years after assuming power, Hitler felt more confident, having successfully affected the Anschluss with his homeland Austria on March 13, 1938, followed seven months later by adding the Sudetenland to the Reich from a friendless Czechoslovakia. Too late did the British and French understand the meaning of “no more territorial claims” when Hitler snatched Bohemia and Moravia on March 14-15, 1939, helping to complete the destruction of Czechoslovakia.

Thus the stage was set for the run-up to world war.

By March 16, 1939, Hitler had positioned Poland squarely between the German jaws of East Prussia to the north and the satellite state of Slovakia to the south. He now controlled the vaunted Skoda Works and added Czech tanks and guns to the Wehrmacht. Romania and Yugoslavia, arms customers of the Czechs, now had another supplier following Berlin's hostile takeover. However, Hitler was not resting on his laurels.

On March 19, a “request” was forwarded to Vilnius. Lithuania was to hand over Memelland, which it had occupied since 1923, to the Reich and do so without delay. Four days later, Lithuania complied.

On March 21, Ribbentrop hosted the Polish ambassador, Josef Lipski, in Berlin. Hitler's huckster urged the Polish diplomat to accept the deal offered the previous October. Danzig was to be returned to the Reich, a deal that included road and rail connections across the Polish Corridor. In return, Hitler would recognize the Corridor and Poland's western borders. To sweeten the deal, territory was promised at Ukraine's expense, a carrot to be finalized at some later date.

Lipski took the German offer back to Warsaw. He returned to Berlin on the 25th armed with Colonel Joseph Beck's reply. The Polish Foreign Minister understood the machinations of the Führer. Caving in now would only invite another set of demands. Beck rebuffed Hitler's offer, intimating that continued German pressure over Danzig would invite conflict. It was clear by the 31st that Polish resolve had been stiffened by London and Paris. On that day, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain addressed the House of Commons, assuring Warsaw that, in the event of a German attack, Britain and France would stand by the Poles. That evening, Hitler ordered Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (German high command), to prepare for Poland. On April 3, Keitel issued a directive known as “White,” ordering the German

**Don't want the Gestapo telling you what you can buy and sell on your online auction?**

**WARSTUFF.COM**

**List and buy anything you like on warstuff.com**



**MILITARY**  
tour.com



Over 1000 items on-line supplying the WWII re-enactor and collector



**www.militarytour.com**

Email: [dj@militarytour.com](mailto:dj@militarytour.com)

Tel: 1-204-334-4949

We  
welcome new  
suppliers

**NEW! from Nedda R. Thomas**

In a narrative that flashes between the life of American pilot Ned Thomas and events of World War II, a young man aspires to fly, and confronts a dangerous mission over the highest mountains on Earth - the vast, mythic, murderous Himalayas - the Hump.

**www.humppilot.com**



**Real War Photos**

Civil War, WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam & beyond

(734) 327-9696

**www.realwarphotos.com**

P.O. Box 414, Somerset Center, MI 49282

**F. Patt Anthony Militaria**



**MILITARY RELICS WANTED**

U.S. / German / Italian & Japanese  
World War I & II Items

Korean War & Vietnamese War Items  
**BUY • SELL • TRADE**

Visor Hats • Belts • Medals • Swords • Field Gear  
Helmets • Buckles • Badges • Daggers • Books  
Uniforms • Flags • Patches • Bayonets • Documents

**F. Patt Anthony**

PO Box 13384 • Greensboro, NC 27415 USA

**(336) 282-3414**

**WORLD WAR SUPPLY**  
VETERAN OWNED & OPERATED

Accessories for your Military Firearms

24/7 Order Center: 616-682-6039

7th Flieger Division  
Fallschirmjäger  
Helmet  
\$139.99



Original  
WW2 German  
Mauser  
K98 Bayonet  
with Bakelite  
Handle  
\$89.99



German Stick Grenade - \$22.00

**www.worldwarssupply.com**



armed forces to be ready for action no later than September 1.

Not wanting to miss the bus, Italy invaded Albania. Hitler was less than pleased. He now faced the possibility of Britain playing on Turkish fears over the Dardanelles. German diplomat Franz von Papen was dispatched to Ankara for damage control.

Now the swing power was the Soviet Union, and the tide for influence was running against the Allies. Warsaw refused to allow the Soviet Army to transit Polish territory. Moscow proposed a six-power conference, which failed to gain traction. Any chance of prying Mussolini loose from the Axis seemed to have vanished. On March 26, Il Duce gave voice to Italy's claims to the Mediterranean. With his April 7 invasion of Albania, he made clear his designs on the Balkans in tandem with Hitler's plans for Eastern and Central Europe.

Hitler, by this time, was taking a greater measure of the Kremlin. For instance, he noted that on March 10, during the 18th Party Congress, Stalin took aim at the Western democracies, stating that the Soviet Union was not going to war "to pull somebody else's chestnuts out of the fire." On April 17 in Berlin, Soviet Ambassador Alexei Merekalov called on Ernst Baron von Weizsacker, state secretary in the German Foreign Office. The topic of discussion was the possibility of improved German-Soviet relations and economic considerations.

On May 3, Stalin replaced Maxim Litvinov as Soviet foreign minister with Vyacheslav Molotov, a no-nonsense hardliner. Popular interpretation has it that Litvinov, a Jew, was replaced as a sop to the anti-Semitic Nazis. However, German diplomat Werner von Tipperskirch observed in a May 4 telegram to Berlin, "Since Litvinov received the English ambassador as late as May 2 and had been named in the press of yesterday as a guest of honor at the parade, his dismissal appears to be the result of a spontaneous decision by Stalin. The decision apparently connected with the fact that differences of opinion arose in the Kremlin on Litvinov's negotiations. The reason for differences of opinion presumably lies in a deep distrust, that Stalin urged caution lest the Soviet Union be drawn into conflicts. Molotov (no Jew) is held to be 'most intimate friend and closest collaborator' of Stalin. His appointment is apparently to guarantee that the foreign policy will be continued strictly in accordance with Stalin's ideas."

Stalin might have played the anti-Semitic card in ridding himself of Litvinov, but in the end the Soviet dictator was a political realist. The Soviets lost territory to the fledgling Polish state in



**On June 22, 1941, Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa, a massive invasion of the Soviet Union that proved to be the undoing of the Third Reich. Soviet Premier Josef Stalin was completely duped by the Nazis and did not expect an invasion. In this photo German infantrymen hitch a ride atop a PzKpfw. III tank equipped with a stubby 50mm main gun somewhere in Russia during the summer of 1941.**

their 1919-1921 armed contest. If there was a way of recouping territory and pushing the Soviet border farther west, then Stalin was certainly interested. As Austria and Czechoslovakia had shown, Britain and France proved lacking as allies in the face of Fascist provocations.

Hitler ordered his ambassador to Moscow, Count Werner von der Schulenberg, to put out feelers to Molotov. On May 5, Nazi Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels forbade disparaging pronouncements toward Bolshevism and the Soviet state until further notice.

For Paris, Poland proved a dilemma. Warsaw would not allow Soviet troops across its territory during the Czech Crisis. And with Chamberlain's pronouncement on March 31, it meant only one thing. England had no army on the European continent. France did. It seemed the Anglo-French-Polish accord, then, was to be guaranteed by the blood of the Poles and the French. France faced a problem. Germany blocked the way to Poland, just as Poland blocked the way to Czechoslovakia for the Soviets. It was imperative, then, that a deal be struck with Moscow.

Churchill concurred and had said so in the House of Commons back on April 3, commenting, "To stop here with a guarantee to Poland would be to halt in No-Man's Land under fire of both trench lines and without shelter of either.... Having begun to create a Grand Alliance against aggression, we cannot afford to fail. We shall be in mortal danger if we fail.... The worst folly, which no one proposes we should commit, would be to chill and drive

away any natural cooperation which Soviet Russia in her own deep interests feels it necessary to afford."

Former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George echoed his protégé's sentiments: "If we are going in without the help of Russia, we are walking into a trap. It is the only country whose arms can get there.... If Russia has not been brought into this matter because of certain feelings the Poles have that they do not want the Russians there, it is for us to declare the conditions, and unless the Poles are prepared to accept the conditions with which we can successfully help them, the responsibility must be theirs."

For Chamberlain, a Conservative Party prime minister, such criticisms from the Labor bench provided another hurdle to the Polish Crisis, opposition at home. He had been sanctioned for not helping the Czechs at Munich and was now being taken to task for being led by the nose by the Poles. However, was not Britain defending the rights of smaller nations? This point was made by Lord Halifax to the House of Lords. Why should the Poles, then, be forced to accept assistance from a people with whom they have a long historic antipathy?

If Chamberlain's negotiations with Moscow proved fleeting, then he and his government would incur blame. If, on the other hand, discussions proved fruitful, credit would have to be shared with Churchill, Lloyd George, and the Laborites.

The Chamberlain government seemed to drag its feet with Moscow. London's first overtures were on April 15; Moscow replied in two



days. The British did not answer until May 9, with Moscow coming back in five days. Again London was slow on the draw, 13 days; the Soviet reply, 24 hours. The British took another nine days with a Soviet riposte in 48 hours. The next go around saw London take five days versus 24 hours for Moscow, then another eight days for the British, 24 hours for Moscow. Six more days for the British, 24 hours for Moscow. The substance of the British communiqués is unimportant when compared to London's spiritless approach to what must be construed as being a diplomatic dilemma of the utmost significance. Indeed, the leisurely pace of the British Foreign Office told Stalin everything he needed to know.

In comparison, the string of cables traded by the Reich Chancellery and the Kremlin show a great deal more attention to the seriousness of the agenda in question, particularly in the exchanges through July and August. These German Foreign Office missives tell a tale of woe for Poland. By this time, the position of the Polish state was untenable. Hitler had abrogated the 1934 German-Polish nonaggression pact, ended the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935, and concluded nonaggression pacts with Estonia, Lithuania, and Denmark, in addition to the Pact of Steel with Italy, on May 22, 1939. It seemed that by summer, Hitler had sealed Poland's fate.

In the autumn of 1939, for the time being, the previous discord between Fascist and Communist was conveniently forgotten. The delusion of rapture instilled by the Nazi-Soviet honeymoon seemed to presage a new era in German-Soviet relations, a marriage of convenience by which the newlyweds exchanged their meaningless vows before a sacrificial altar called Poland.

The tragedy of Poland goes beyond the Hitler-Stalin Pact and the insidious agenda of aggression it has come to represent. It assured that by 1945, in the throes of Allied victory, Poland would merely exchange one overseer for another.

Like Catherine the Great, Stalin was able to push the Russian border west at the expense of the Poles. In the 20th century, Germany and Poland had already invaded the Motherland twice by 1920. However, the nonaggression pact with the Nazis, in the end, failed to buy that breathing space necessary to prepare for the next Teutonic invasion, Operation Barbarossa, on June 22, 1941.

*Author Mark Albertson resides in Norwalk, Connecticut. He has also contributed to WWII History on World War II in North Africa.*

## BATTLEFIELD BERLIN A GUIDED TOUR April 17 – 23, 2016

No world capital has been more central to the history of the 20th century than Berlin. Now a vibrant modern metropolis, traces of the city's turbulent past – whether as the hub of Hitler's 'Thousand Year Reich' or as the front line of the Cold War – may be found on almost every corner.



*"What a wonderful trip! It was even better than I could have expected. Your meticulous planning and attention to detail made it so easy for all of us to experience World War II Berlin without a thought given to the mundane. It was a wonderful group of people and thanks for all your efforts."*  
– Michelle, 2014

### BATTLEGROUND TOURS

[www.BattlegroundHistoryTours.com](http://www.BattlegroundHistoryTours.com)

717 – 642 – 9222

[info@BattlegroundHistoryTours.com](mailto:info@BattlegroundHistoryTours.com)



Explore Berlin's fascinating modern history on this in-depth guided tour. From the Reichstag and the Brandenburg Gate, to Sachsenhausen concentration camp, the battlefields of the Seelow Heights, and the remnants of the Berlin Wall, we will delve deeply into this pivotal city's past.

Battleground offers unique and memorable touring experiences for those who want to get the most out of their historical travels.

Some Of Our Other Tours: NORMANDY – BERLIN – BATTLE OF THE BULGE – CIVIL WAR – AMERICAN REVOLUTION – WORLD WAR ONE



**Your Ship, Your Plane  
When you served on her.**

**Free Personalization  
[www.totalnavy.com](http://www.totalnavy.com)  
718-471-5464**

### WORLD WAR 2 BOOKS USED AND OUT OF PRINT

**T. CADMAN**

Send \$1.00 for Catalog to:  
T. CADMAN DEPT.-A  
5150 Fair Oaks Blvd., #101  
Carmichael, CA 95608

Visit us on the web at:  
<http://www.cadmanbooks.com>



**Kampfgruppe  
Medals and Badges**  
High Quality German World War II Militaria  
**Steve Mezey**

358 Speedvale Ave. E. Suite 26021  
Guelph, ON, Canada N1E 6W1  
Phone: (519) 823-8249 • Fax: (519) 823-8249  
Email: [info@kampfgruppemedals.com](mailto:info@kampfgruppemedals.com)  
[www.kampfgruppemedals.com](http://www.kampfgruppemedals.com)

### Vladimir Petrovich Kozlov - Soviet Infantry w/Mine Detector

List Price: \$71.99

Cotswold Saver

Price: \$67.99



### Pavlo Romanovich Titov - Red Army Assault Engineer

List Price: \$58.99

Cotswold Saver

Price: \$55.99

both manufactured by:



### CALL FOR FREE COLOR CATALOG

Call Toll Free: 877.404.5637

Order Online

[www.elitebrigade.com](http://www.elitebrigade.com)

5550 Vanbarr Pl. / P.O. Box 716M  
Freeland, WA 98249



**Hundreds of 1:6 Scale (12 inch) Action Figures  
Full Sets or Parts, Vehicles, Artillery & More!**



Bridgeman Art Library



## Black Watch in the Chindit Campaign

Brigadier Bernard Fergusson took part in several hazardous operations in the China-Burma-India Theater.

**BERNARD EDWARD FERGUSSON WAS BORN ON MAY 6, 1911, AND COMPLETED** his public school education at Eton. A graduate of the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, he received his commission into the Black Watch Regiment. His regimental service ensured that he would meet his superior officer in the Black Watch, Archibald Wavell, with whom Fergusson would serve as aide-de-camp (ADC) in Palestine during the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939 in the British Mandate.

At the outbreak of World War II, Fergusson was a brigade major in the 46th Infantry Brigade prior to becoming a general staff officer (GSO) in the Middle East under Wavell, who was now Commander-in-Chief Middle East. When Wavell was dismissed from this position in June 1941, after suffering defeat at the hands of German General Erwin Rommel, he was transferred as Commander-in-Chief India, exchanging positions with General Sir Claude Auchinleck. Fergusson accompanied his Black Watch superior officer to Delhi, joining Wavell's General Headquarters

(GHQ) Staff there.

Fergusson wrote of the long association between the two officers, "I shall be grateful all my life for the fortunate chance that brought me into his orbit [Wavell's] from the age of 23 until his death, when I was just 39." In his capacity as a staff officer to Wavell, Fergusson would interact with another of the Field Marshal's protégés, eccentric Brigadier Orde Wingate.

One observer described Fergusson as a "monocled Old Etonian from the Black Watch with a patrician drawl." He was Wavell's first ADC and was to have quite an orthodox military career including being an instructor of cadets at Sandhurst, a student at the Staff College at Camberley, and then a junior intelligence officer in Palestine, where Wingate held a senior post in Wavell's intelligence section during the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939. During World War II's early campaigns, Fergusson was a liaison officer with the Turks in Wavell's Middle East Command, as well as a forward observation officer with the Free French during the Syrian campaign against Vichy and the Luftwaffe in mid-1941. Fergusson was also a regimental officer in Tobruk.

During the British retreat through Burma in the spring of 1942, Fergusson's Black Watch was relieved from its Cyrenaican bastion and rushed from Syria with the intent of reaching Rangoon before its fall. However, the rapidity of the British collapse in Burma meant that Fergusson and his regiment would be too late to do

National Archives



**ABOVE:** Brigadier Bernard Fergusson commanded elements of Orde Wingate's Chindits during long-distance operations in the jungles of Burma. **TOP:** In this painting, Chindits under the command of Brigadier Orde Wingate wait to gather supplies dropped from a Douglas C-47 transport plane.



Wear it today  
for only  
**\$29**

Our Lowest Price  
**EVER** on a Classic  
Dress Watch!



**TAKE 85% OFF  
INSTANTLY!**

When you use your  
INSIDER OFFER CODE

## Back Again for the First Time

*Our modern take on a 1929 classic, yours for the unbelievably nostalgic price of **ONLY \$29!***

You have a secret hidden up your sleeve. Strapped to your wrist is a miniature masterpiece, composed of hundreds of tiny moving parts that measure the steady heartbeat of the universe. You love this watch. And you still smile every time you check it, because you remember that you almost didn't buy it. You almost turned the page without a second thought, figuring that the **Stauer Metropolitan Watch for only \$29** was just too good to be true. But now you know how right it feels to be wrong.

**Our lowest price EVER for a classic men's dress watch.** How can we offer the **Metropolitan** for less than \$30? The answer is simple. Stauer has sold over one million watches in the last decade and many of our clients buy more than one. Our goal isn't to sell you a single watch, our goal is to help you fall in love with Stauer's entire line of vintage-inspired luxury timepieces and jewelry. And every great relationship has to start somewhere...

**Tells today's time with yesterday's style.** The Metropolitan is exactly the kind of elegant, must-have accessory that belongs in every gentleman's collection next to his British cufflinks and Italian neckties. Inspired by a rare 1929 Swiss classic found at auction, the **Metropolitan Watch** revives a distinctive and debonair retro design for 21st-century men of exceptional taste.

The **Stauer Metropolitan** retains all the hallmarks of a well-bred wristwatch including a gold-finished case, antique ivory guilloché

face, blued Breguet-style hands, an easy-to-read date window at the 3 o'clock position, and a crown of sapphire blue. It secures with a crocodile-patterned, genuine black leather strap and is water resistant to 3 ATM.

**Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed.** We are so sure that you will be stunned by the magnificent **Stauer Metropolitan Watch** that we offer a 60-day money back guarantee. If you're not impressed after wearing it for a few weeks, return it for a full refund of the purchase price. But once the first compliments roll in, we're sure that you'll see the value of time well spent!

**Stauer Metropolitan Timepiece—~~\$199~~**

**Offer Code Price ~~\$29~~ + S&P Save \$170**

*You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.*

**1-888-870-9149**

**Your Offer Code: MTW356-02**

Please use this code when you order to receive your discount.

**Stauer®**

14101 Southcross Drive W.,  
Dept. MTW256-02  
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337  
[www.stauer.com](http://www.stauer.com)



Rating of A+

*Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™*

Luxurious gold-finished case with sapphire-colored crown - Crocodile-embossed leather strap - Band fits wrists 6 1/4"-8 3/4" - Water-resistant to 3 ATM





**Wearing his trademark pith helmet, Brigadier Orde Wingate stands at center delivering a briefing to members of 77 Brigade prior to launching a deep penetration operation against the Japanese in the China-Burma-India Theater. This briefing took place at Assam, India, and standing to Wingate's right is American Colonel Philip Cochran, responsible for the mission's air transport.**

anything meaningful there, and so it began training in Bombay. By virtue of Fergusson's planning experience in the Middle East, he was transferred to the newly designated Joint Planning Staff (JPS) at Wavell's GHQ in Delhi in May 1942, to explore the possibility of Burma's reconquest amid the horror of the British Burma Army's retreat toward Kalewa on the Chindwin River.

While at the JPS at GHQ, India, Fergusson heard any number of people offering suggestions for the retaking of Burma, but only one that made a real impression, "a broad-shouldered, uncouth, almost simian officer who used to drift gloomily into the office for two or three days at a time, audibly dream dreams and drift out again ... as we became aware that he took no notice of us ... but that without our patronage he had the ear of the highest, we paid more attention to his schemes. Soon we had fallen under the spell of his almost hypnotic talk; and by and by we—some of us—had lost the power of distinguishing between the feasible and fantastic. This was Orde Wingate."

Fergusson, like Wingate, had a fondness for the Near East, and like him, too, had been engaged in intelligence work in Palestine, where they met in August 1937. Prior to Burma, the paths of Wingate and Fergusson crossed again, when the former was organizing his campaign with Gideon Force in Ethiopia. Fergusson had not been happy in Delhi, where he had had the only job in which he found himself "continuously and thoroughly miserable." He was

vexed by GHQ, not only for himself, but also for his former chief, Wavell.

Fergusson recalled the brilliant staffs that had served under Wavell in Aldershot and Cairo and compared them to those in Delhi. Fergusson was a man of action who longed to "escape the secretariat for battlefield bravado." Thus, when Wavell endorsed Wingate's plans to form a Long Range Penetration (LRP) unit, Fergusson was only too glad to get away. When Fergusson joined Wingate's 77 Indian Brigade in the autumn of 1942 for Operation Longcloth in Burma set for early 1943, Wavell felt that his protégé from the JPS "had reached his real heart's desire."

Fergusson had observed that no one at GHQ Delhi seriously believed in Wingate's ideas except Wavell, and 77 Indian Brigade was derisively referred to "the Chief's [Wavell's] private army." However, in his memoirs Fergusson wrote, "I was almost the only person in J.P.S. with patience to listen to him, and was therefore encouraged to deal with him whenever he showed up."

After lamenting his fate at JPS and requesting a transfer back to the Black Watch at monthly intervals, Fergusson, in September 1942, was granted his return to regiment, currently on internal security duties in Bihar, India. However, Wingate again appeared at JPS and at once said, "You'd far better come and command one of my columns."

When Fergusson arrived at Wingate's jungle training camp at Malthone, another officer approached him and said, "My advice to you

is to turn round and go straight back to Delhi. Wingate's crackers, and I'm off."

For Operation Longcloth, 77 Brigade began its march on February 8, 1943, in a southeasterly direction from Imphal to Moreh on the Assam-Burma border. Once inside Burma, the brigade was divided into two groups. The Northern Group consisted of the Brigade HQ, the Burma Rifles HQ, HQ 2 Group, and Columns 3,4,5,7, and 8. Fergusson commanded Column 5. The Southern Group was composed of HQ 1 Group along with Columns 1 and 2. The total strength of the Northern Group was 2,200 men, while the Southern Group had 1,000 men. The British 77 Brigade was advancing between the 18th and 33rd Imperial Japanese Army Divisions. For Wingate's 3,000-man incursion into Burma, the strategic aim was to disrupt the lines of communication of these two Japanese divisions, primarily through the demolition of the Burmese Railway which supplied them, as well as test his long-range patrol philosophy and tactics.

On February 13, the main body (Northern Group) crossed the Chindwin River at Tonhe, where the river was only 400 yards wide. The entire Northern Group had crossed the Chindwin by February 18.

The Northern Group, under both Wingate and Lt. Col. S.A. Cooke, moved over rough terrain for two weeks undetected by the Japanese until they concentrated near Pinbon and north of Pinlebu. Columns 3 and 5 of the Northern Group, led by Major Mike Calvert and Fergusson, respectively, were to head for the Wuntho-Indaw section of the Burmese Railway, which ran north-south from Myitkyina to Mandalay, and cut the line in as many places as possible. The other columns were to search for and engage the Japanese concentrated near Pinbon and Pinlebu in an attempt to conceal the thrust to the railway north of Wuntho by Calvert and Fergusson.

The Chindits were about to achieve a great success under the aegis of Calvert and Fergusson. By March 6, the railway line had been cut in 70 places by Calvert's Column 3, which had also destroyed two bridges, one of which had a 300-foot span. Fergusson's Column 5 destroyed a railway bridge about 10 miles northeast at Bongyaung, with its 40-foot center span dropping into the river below. Fergusson also blocked the railway line by dynamiting a gorge outside Bongyaung. This section of the railway wound through the middle of northern Burma, providing the Japanese with an excellent line of supply and reinforcement in inhospitable terrain. Despite this demolition, the Japanese, with the help of forced labor,





During their long-range missions behind Japanese lines, the Chindits relied on resupply by air and supplies were frequently gathered and packed aboard mules for ground transportation. This photo is a still from a film documentary on the Chindits.

restored the railway line within four weeks.

Some have argued that Wingate's next decision to cross the Irrawaddy River was extremely difficult and dangerous, producing the greatest number of casualties. Throughout his career, this difficult event is the one for which he is most blamed. Calvert and Fergusson also wanted to cross the great Burmese river. The specific operational dilemma for Wingate was whether crossing the Irrawaddy was more hazardous than taking his depleted columns in a reverse course through jungle country, which was now teeming with Japanese patrols. Finally, it must be stated that when Wavell reapproved Operation Longcloth, his orders specifically provided for 77 Brigade's crossing of the Irrawaddy as long as it appeared possible and to evaluate and test the limits of long-range patrols.

On March 10, Column 5 under Fergusson crossed the Irrawaddy at Tigyaing, but they were discovered by the Japanese. The inhabitants of Tigyaing welcomed Fergusson's column and provided boats for their crossing of the Irrawaddy. Wingate signaled Fergusson on March 23 to meet him at a supply drop rendezvous in the vicinity of Baw, where 77 Brigade fought its last pitched battle as a cohesive unit, albeit under adverse conditions and with only an incomplete airdrop.

Fergusson's Column 5 had little water and food while between the Shweli and Irrawaddy Rivers. They sucked fluid from bamboo shoots

and butchered mules and other small animals for meat. On March 24, Wingate was ordered to recross the Irrawaddy and withdraw westward to the Chindwin. The Japanese presence on the west bank of the river and only a few boats present made this prospect a daunting one. Ultimately, dispersal of the still extant columns into smaller groups was carried out. Fergusson finally met with Wingate on March 25 and suggested that the Chindit force would fare better by remaining intact with its animals and heavier weapons. However, Wingate vetoed this plan, arguing that the force was too large for air resupply.

Within the Shweli loop, where his vulnerability was gravest, Fergusson attacked Hintha, halfway between Baw and Inywa, in one of Wingate's patented feints, losing his radio communications in the process. Unfortunately, this further separated Fergusson from the main body, as well as from another Royal Air Force supply drop. Ultimately, Fergusson's depleted ranks, after a treacherous crossing of the Shweli, staggered on for another 15 days until they reached the Chindwin on April 24 and finally arrived at Imphal two days later. Column 5 had only 95 survivors from an original roster of 318 men.

Fergusson summed up Operation Longcloth: "What did we accomplish? Not much that was tangible. What there was became distorted in the glare of publicity soon after our return. We blew up bits of railway, which did not take long to repair; we gathered some useful intelligence;

# THE "88" IS BACK!

**MINT**

**FULL METAL**

**REAL SIZE**

**Weight:  
22 lbs**



**F technoframes®**  
[www.technoframes.com](http://www.technoframes.com)

**For information,  
characteristics  
and prices visit  
our website.**



we distracted the Japanese from other minor operations, and possibly from some bigger ones; we killed a few hundreds of the enemy which numbers 80 million; we proved it was feasible to maintain a force by supply dropping alone.... But we amassed experience on which a future has already begun to build.”

In the introduction to Fergusson’s book *The Wild Green Earth*, the now brigadier of Special Forces’ (3rd Indian Division) 16th Brigade clearly states what Wingate’s original plan was for Operation Thursday, which commenced in early March 1944.

“To introduce his Special Force into the area of Indaw, the northernmost communications centre of any importance in upper Burma,” wrote Fergusson, “part of the Force was to go in by air; my own Brigade by marching. The Force was then to seize and hold an enclave into which two ordinary divisions were to be flown, and towards which the Corps around Imphal was to advance. By this means, not only would the Japs opposing Stilwell in the north be cut off, but we should have delivered the British-Indian divisions from the defiles in which they had so long been confined, and put them in a bridgehead from which they could advance on a broad front.... It was long afterwards—indeed, until after this book was completed—that I learned from General Sir William Slim, the commander of Fourteenth Army, that the Plan was modified long before the fly-in of Calvert’s and Lentaigne’s Brigades and even before my own Brigade set off on foot. It seems that the Japanese advance across the Chindwin which materialized in March of 1944 was foreseen, and that General Wingate was warned that the ‘follow-up’ could not take place. This modification in the Plan was not made known to General Wingate’s Brigade commanders. Perhaps he thought it would discourage us; perhaps he hoped to create such a favourable situation that the original Plan would be switched on again.”

As early as January 16, 1944, Wingate provided evidence to Mountbatten that an Imperial Japanese Army move up to the Chindwin River was preparatory to an offensive against the Imphal/Kohima Plain in Manipur. His prescient views also offered that the Japanese would be compelled to use the “long bad vulnerable roads of Burma” and that this offensive would be “strong and damaging and that before it was overcome 11th Army Group might have to face the temporary loss of all Manipur.”

This prediction was quite accurate as events unfolded. On March 14-15, three Japanese divisions invaded Assam from north of Homa-

lin and from the center of their Chindwin front, launching Operation U-Go. Fergusson’s firsthand account of Wingate’s original plan in full knowledge of the looming Japanese offensive into Assam reminds the reader that with Wingate the distinction between brilliance, exhibited by such an audacious plan for the reconquest of central and northern Burma, or madness, as Wingate’s critics lambasted him for proposing the second Chindit mission as the fulcrum for Burma’s recapture, was always debated. Fergusson clearly believed in the former description of Wingate’s strategic thinking about the second campaign in Burma, Operation Thursday.

To get to the Chindwin River, Fergusson’s 16th Brigade departed from Ledo in India on February 5, 1944, and climbed over and down the Paktai Hills along General Joseph Stilwell’s Ledo Road. Fergusson’s brigade crossed the Chindwin unchallenged on February 28 north-east of Hkamti, courtesy of a decoy crossing south of the town. Fergusson’s boats and engines for the Chindwin crossing had been landed by glider near the river while the decoy party was flown in by light aircraft.

The brigade’s destination was Indaw and its airfield complex some 300-400 miles to the south. On March 10, when 16th Brigade approached Haungpa, Fergusson sent two columns of Chindits to capture Lonkin from the south. On March 12, Fergusson was ordered to capture the Indaw airfields and the surrounding communications and supply depots and establish an airfield that would be transformed into the stronghold named Aberdeen. Thus, at peak marching rate, Fergusson’s 16th Brigade moved south, parallel with and west of the railway toward Indaw.

Japanese Fifteenth Army commander General Renya Mutaguchi realized the threat to his lines of communication, so he ordered the 18th, 56th, and 15th Divisions, the latter heading west for the Imphal offensive, to send one battalion each to the Indaw area to comprise an anti-airborne brigade. Furthermore, General Torashiro Kawabe, commander of the Burma Area Army and Mutaguchi’s superior, brought up the 24th Independent Mixed Brigade from southern Burma along with elements of the 2nd Division and placed these troops under the command of Maj. Gen. Yoshihide Hyashi of the 24th Independent Mixed Brigade, who assumed command at Indaw on March 18.

Unfortunately, Brigadier Walter Lentaigne’s battalions from the 111th Brigade were late in their longer march from their landing field at Chowringhee and thereby failed to block the Japanese reinforcement route from the south

before Fergusson’s brigade could attack Indaw. By the end of March, there were nearly 20,000 Japanese troops in the Indaw-Mawlu area. On the positive side, these crack troops were now unavailable for the attacks on Imphal and Kohima. Thus, the Chindits, in approximately division strength, eventually confronted the consolidated strength of two Japanese divisions while the whole of Slim’s Fourteenth Army had only three and a half divisions to encounter.

On March 19, Fergusson established a base at Taungle, but after meeting with Wingate it was moved near to Mahnton, where Aberdeen’s Dakota airstrip would be constructed beginning on March 20. Aberdeen, unlike the other strongholds, was never attacked by the Japanese except by air. After the 300-400 mile overland march, Fergusson’s troops were widely scattered and requested time to concentrate. Since Wingate was aware of the massive Japanese reinforcements pouring into the Indaw area, he ordered Fergusson to attack with three battalions on the night of March 24, which temporally corresponded with Wingate’s fiery airplane crash and death.

The Japanese had expected an attack and had 10 battalions for Indaw’s defense. Fergusson wanted some reinforcements from Aberdeen, which included elements of the Chindits’ 14th Brigade, but Wingate, without informing Fergusson, had instead ordered these troops south to interdict Japanese supplies leading to the Chindwin. With Wingate’s death, there is much speculation as to who, ultimately, originated the plan for 14th Brigade to attack the rear of the Japanese attacking Imphal. One account is that when Wingate’s brigadier, Derek Tulloch, informed the Chindit leader that Slim was now seriously considering taking the reserve Chindit brigades (14th and 23rd) into the Fourteenth Army for the defense of Imphal/Kohima, Wingate immediately flew to see Slim at Comilla.

A compromise between Slim and Wingate was struck in which the 14th Brigade would not be incorporated into the Fourteenth Army, nor would it be used to help Fergusson at Indaw. Elements of the 14th Brigade would instead be sent about 60 miles southwest of Aberdeen to sever Japanese communication lines for the U-Go offensive from the rear. Thus, the defense of Imphal/Kohima was to occur at the expense of weakening Fergusson’s assault against Indaw. Fergusson, to his credit, continued to use sound military principles and ordered an RAF raid on a Japanese supply dump near Indaw West airfield after his 16th Brigade Chindits discovered that it was a major ammunition dump for the Imphal/Kohima offensive.

In his memoirs about Operation Thursday,



Fergusson stated, “I made at least three mistakes at Indaw. One was in not insisting on a rest for my troops before we assaulted. One was in failing to assess accurately, after all the practice I had had, the Jap reaction to the news they must have had of my approach. The third, and the least excusable, was in losing touch with my columns. There were good reasons for all three, but all three were bloomers.”

Fergusson’s plan called for Indaw to be attacked from the north with four columns, while additional columns would each block reinforcements into Indaw from the west and south. In the end, 1,800 weary Chindits would attack Indaw after “an arduous march of 400 miles without so much as a day’s rest.”

A variety of things went wrong. First, two columns from a different Chindit brigade, probably heading for Pinlebu, had crossed Fergusson’s attack front using an imaginary attack on Indaw as cover for their own brigade’s primary objective. As Fergusson noted later, “It was another example of the old business of excessive security defeating its own object; the concealment of the main plan from subordinate commanders resulting in its chances of success being compromised.”

Another issue was the scarcity of water on

the eastern side of the Meza River. Fergusson had experience fighting without water.

He wrote, “In Syria, in 1941, I had seen a company of Punjabis pinned to the forward slope of the Jebel Madani, south of Damascus, in the month of June—a hillside studded with lava, and throbbing in the sun. Fourteen men had died of thirst on that day. With this memory behind me, I was determined, whatever else I did, to make sure of a firm hold on a water supply; and, if necessary, to get a footing on the Indaw Lake before anything else.”

In fact, the Japanese knew that Fergusson was to attack from the north and that “the battle would be a battle for water.”

Finally, Fergusson’s synchronization of his attacking columns went awry when an errant column of his brigade stumbled into the Japanese north of Indaw, setting off a firefight. All of these mishaps now coincided with 72 hours of thunderstorms, which deprived Fergusson of wireless communication with his columns as they forayed toward Indaw Lake, which bisected the Indaw West and Indaw East airfields, north of Indaw town and astride the railway.

As Fergusson recalled, “Thus, out of my six columns engaged, three had lost their power to strike; two were fully committed; the only

one intact way ... blocking the road between Indaw and Banmauk, at the 20th milestone from Indaw.”

During this phase of his attack on Indaw Lake, Fergusson contemplated a retreat to the Kachin Hills to preserve his force and was also informed of Slim’s diversion of 14th Brigade Chindits to the Taung and Meza Valleys, and nowhere near Indaw. Fergusson ordered the remnants of his columns to return to Aberdeen, where they could refit after, he noted, “they had had a hard battle on top of a hard march of seven weeks, carried out on short commons and culminating in several days of insufficient water.”

Fergusson added that he was “naturally disappointed at my failure to capture Indaw, although less so when I found that it was no surprise to my colleagues or to Force Headquarters. Apparently even Wingate had said that he wasn’t optimistic about it.”

After refitting at Aberdeen for over a month, Fergusson attacked and captured the Indaw West airfield on April 27. He noted, “This second approach to Indaw was an anti-climax, and for two reasons. First, just before we went in we were told that even if we captured the airfield of Indaw West, no troops, no divisions

*Continued on page 77*

# HEROES BORN HERE.

Experience a place where the heroes of today can honor the heroes of the past, and inspire the heroes of tomorrow. From the Admiral Nimitz Museum, to the Pacific Combat Zone, to the interactive George H.W. Bush Gallery, the National Museum of the Pacific War offers an exciting telling of WWII in the Pacific, and the rich story of the fight for our freedom.

**PacificWarMuseum.org**

**NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF THE PACIFIC WAR**

Home of Admiral Nimitz Museum | Fredericksburg, Texas



All photos: National Archives



that the Allies would never be able to launch an invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe because German fighter pilots commanded the sky. Hitler heard this, was encouraged by it, but saw Göring, grotesquely overweight and addicted to morphine, as an asset of declining value. The Führer ardently hoped that he would ensure that Germany's battle-hardened airmen would continue to command the skies despite the growing strength of the U.S. Eighth Air Force.

Göring saw this as his day to shine. Göring looked "like a child with a new toy," one observer commented, as he prepared to claim credit for Germany's recent scientific advances. The Führer was especially interested in a new jet aircraft called the Messerschmitt Me-262, the reason for his "merriment." Today Göring would be certain the Me-262 was showcased to good advantage. This was his chance, he believed, to restore his on-again, off-again status in good standing with the Führer. It was also a grand opportunity to outshine his rival, Field Marshal Erhard Milch, who held the title of Air Inspector General.

Several "black," or secret, aircraft and items of equipment were ready for Hitler's inspection. None looked more deadily basking in the winter sun than the Messerschmitt Me-262 Schwalbe (Swallow), the *wunderwaffen*, or "wonder weapon," that was soon to become the world's first operational jet fighter. Although he was his country's highest ranking military officer, wearing an elaborate uniform of his own design dripping with awards and decorations, Göring was not as well informed about the Me-262 as he thought.

This was soon to be apparent as the Ju-52 landed at Insterburg just past noon, taxied to a halt in front of the top brass at the military airbase, and disgorged its very important passengers. Emerging from the transport were Hitler, Reich Minister of Armaments Albert Speer, Göring, Milch, and an entourage of officers of the Luftwaffe. Hitler's personal pilot, SS Major General Hans Baur, said that he flew from Berlin, taking off from Tempelhof airport and making the short flight in good weather, so there was no problem in having the transport plane overloaded with so many notable persons.

Hitler, it should be noted, did not like flying on a crowded plane and always kept a seat for himself and his painting of Frederick the Great in a case. He did not talk during flights, since flying scared him. Baur's recollection

## Wonder Weapons on Display

The Messerschmitt Me-262 was among several new weapons unveiled for the Führer that the Nazis hoped would turn the tide of war.

**A MAN WHO WAS CLOSE TO ADOLF HITLER AND HARDLY IMPARTIAL LATER SAID** that the Führer had "a mood of merriment" for a brief period that day.

It was Friday, November 26, 1943. A carefully arranged collection of the Third Reich's most advanced weapons stood ready—almost—to be demonstrated to Hitler. The location was the German military airfield at Insterburg in East Prussia.

Traveling to Insterburg from Berlin with his leader aboard a Junkers Ju-52 trimotor transport plane, Reichsmarshal Hermann Göring hoped his orders to set up an impressive display had been followed to the letter.

Göring was in disfavor with the Führer even though the German air force, the Luftwaffe, of which he was in charge, was shooting down American bombers right and left. A month ago, during one mission, Luftwaffe pilots had shot down 60 Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses, each with a 10-man crew. Göring kept telling the Führer that the Americans would not be able to continue to lose bomber crews at this rate,

**TOP: This Me-262 B-1a/U jet fighter has been converted to a night fighter and trainer. BOTTOM: The Arado Ar-234 jet-powered bomber might have been a game changer in World War II had it made an appearance in large numbers.**





# Upper Class Just Got Lower Priced

*Finally, luxury built for value—not for false status*

Only a few of us are born with silver spoons in our mouths. Until Stauer came along, you needed an inheritance to buy a timepiece with class and refinement. Not any more. The Stauer *Magnificat II* brings the impeccable quality and engineering once found only in the watch collections of the idle rich. If you have actually earned your living through intelligence, hard work, and perseverance, you will now be rewarded with a timepiece of understated class that will always be a symbol of refined taste. The striking case, finished in luxurious gold, complements an etched ivory-colored dial exquisitely. By using advanced computer design and robotics, we have been able to drastically reduce the price on this precision movement.

**Do you have enough confidence to pay less?** Status seekers are willing to overpay just to wear a designer name. Not the Stauer client. The *Magnificat II* is built for people who have their own good taste and understand the value of their dollar—finally, luxury built for confident people. And this doesn't mean the rich aren't smart. Quite the contrary, Stauer's clients include a famous morning news host, the infamous captain of a certain starship, a best actor nominee, a best actor winner and the number one rock guitarist of all time. They were all clever enough to recognize a spectacular value.

**It took three years of development and \$26 million in advanced Swiss-built watch-making machinery to create the *Magnificat II*.** Look at the interior dials and azure-colored hands. Turn the watch over and examine the 27-jeweled automatic movement through the exhibition back. When we took the watch to George Thomas (the most renowned watchmaker and watch historian in America), he disassembled the

*Magnificat II* and studied the escapement, balance wheel and the rotor. He remarked on the detailed guilloché face, gilt winding crown, and the crocodile-embossed leather band. He was intrigued by the three interior dials for day, date, and 24-hour moon phases. He estimated that this fine timepiece would cost over \$2,500. We all smiled and told him that the Stauer price was less than \$90. He was stunned. We felt like we had accomplished our task. A truly magnificent watch at a truly magnificent price!

Try the *Magnificat II* for 60 days and if you are not receiving compliments, please return the watch for a full refund of the purchase price. The precision-built movement carries a 2 year warranty against defect. If you trust your own good taste, the *Magnificat II* is built for you.

**Stauer Magnificat II Timepiece—~~\$399\*~~**

**Offer Code Price ~~\$87~~<sup>50</sup> + S&P **SAVE \$311**<sup>50</sup>!**

*You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.*

**1-800-973-3089**

**Your Offer Code: MAG409-07**

Please use this code when you order to receive your discount.

**Stauer®**

14101 Southcross Drive W.,  
Dept. MAG409-07  
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337  
[www.stauer.com](http://www.stauer.com)



\* Discount for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.

*Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™*

Luxurious gold-finished case with exposition back - 27-jeweled automatic movement - Croc-embossed band fits wrists 6¾"-8½" - Water-resistant to 3 ATM





**The Me-262 jet fighter was the star of the show at the Insterburg arms demonstration for Adolf Hitler and top Nazis in November 1943. This Me-262, airframe number Wrknr. 111711, was the first plane of its kind to come into Allied hands during World War II when its German pilot defected in March 1945.**

**BELOW: Another view of the Me-262, photographed shortly after the war ended.**



tion notwithstanding, some of the other luminaries may have traveled from Berlin aboard other airplanes.

Waiting to greet them on arrival was Germany's most important aircraft designer, Professor Willy Messerschmitt. The tall, thin, balding Messerschmitt wore his title handily even though he possessed no academic degree. He had made certain his name was indelibly attached to the new Me-262 jet, even though he had not worked on the engineering team that designed it. In fact, Professor Messerschmitt had had almost nothing to do with the plane, a Messerschmitt that was going to ensure the Reich's deliverance.

Other aircraft and weapons were ready and on display around the airfield. Pilots were preparing to fly in a demonstration for the Führer. It would not be an exaggeration to say that every man on the airfield on that bright November day was looking to ingratiate himself with the leader and chancellor of the Reich.

Adolf Hitler was 54 years of age. He was five feet, eight or nine inches in height with a manner that often seemed unfeeling or callous, a

likely defense against his discomfort with virtually every other human being in his circle. He began the afternoon at Insterburg in the subdued and businesslike way that was often his manner while his temper was in check. No photograph appears to have survived of his visit to Insterburg, but it seems certain he was wearing a peaked cap and his gray winter military overcoat without the swastika armband. He had rarely worn the coat since the war began.

There is every reason to believe that the Führer was here only because of his interest in the Me-262; the other weapons were of little or no interest to him. Göring had asked Milch to organize the display and did not include the He-280 jet among the exhibits because Milch himself had struck the Heinkel from the development list in favor of the Me-262 eight months earlier. Göring had "nationalized" the Heinkel airplane company and detained Ernst Heinkel, who would not be fully rehabilitated until the postwar era, and had also seized the Arado company, maker of the Ar-234 jet bomber, after its chief, Heinrich Lübke, refused to join the Nazi Party. It was up to Willi

Messerschmitt, the perfect sycophant, to surpass the Reich's other planemakers by putting on a good show for the Führer.

Hitler was initially curious and inquisitive when Willi Messerschmitt and others began showing him around, but he soon began to appear impatient. Hitler may not have been that interested in the V-1 robot bomb, two anti-shiping missiles called the Hs-293 and Fritz-X, and film of the new panoramic radar sets and the Korfu receiver stations tracking British bombers by their radar emissions during a night attack on Berlin a few days earlier.

A six-engined Junkers Ju-390, the largest land plane ever built in Germany, was on display and was mostly ignored. Bauer later said that it clearly involved developmental and operational costs that were unrealistic.

A four-engined Junkers Ju-290A-5 (werke no. 0170, marked KR+LA), an early version of a big plane that could be used as a transport or a bomber, was part of the display. Bauer later wrote in a German-language memoir, "For my needs, the Ju-290 was especially suitable. I was just then inside the aircraft and was taking a good look around when Hitler stuck his head in the door. I called to him and asked him to come inside. Hitler noticed immediately the advantage of this 'Pullman Wagon' with which without difficulty up to 50 people could be flown around. In addition, the aircraft was excellently armed with 10 super-heavy machine guns."

Hitler said, "I want one for my personal use." It would happen a year later when a similar Ju-290A-7 was assigned to his personal flight unit as a Führermaschine—although Hitler would never fly in it.

The Ju-290 in which Hitler never flew had a special passenger compartment in the front of the aircraft for the Führer, which was protected by a half-inch (12mm) of armor plate and two-inch (50mm) bulletproof glass. A special escape hatch was fitted in the floor, and a parachute was built into Hitler's seat; in an emergency it was intended that he would put on the parachute, pull a lever to open the hatch, and roll out through the opening. This arrangement was tested using life-size mannequins. The escape seat for the Führer has appeared several times in speculative fiction.

Hitler never assigned a high priority to large aircraft and seemed to have no further interest in this one. The Third Reich would reach the end of the war without ever having any significant number of four-engined bombers, while the United States and Britain would employ more than 60,000. At this juncture in the war, those Allied four-engined bombers were nothing more and nothing less than fat, inviting tar-



gets for German fighters, and Hitler had no reason to think that would change.

Eager to increase Hitler's interest and to upstage Milch, Göring attempted to take the Führer's arm. Hitler shook off the gesture but could not prevent Göring from acting as chief guide, speaking loudly, claiming credit for many of the technical achievements for his own staff. Göring talked while Milch looked on, infuriated and embarrassed.

In the book *The Rise and Fall of the Luftwaffe*, David Irving described the debacle that followed. The Reichsmarschall "took the printed program out of Milch's hands [Irving wrote] and began introducing each aircraft to Hitler, working his finger down the list. He was unaware that one of the fighter prototypes had had a mishap at Rechlin [the German flight test base on the south shore of the Müritzersee] and as a result one aircraft was missing; the remaining aircraft had each been moved along one place in the line. Milch saw what was going to happen and took his revenge: he stepped tactfully back into the second row. Where the missing fighter should have been, there was now a medium bomber. Göring announced it to Hitler as the single-seater; for several more exhibits this farce continued until the Führer decided that enough was enough and pointed out Göring's error."

The star of the show was the Me-262 jet fighter, but the Insterburg exhibit also included an Arado Ar-234 twin-jet reconnaissance aircraft and bomber, which was transported to the event with great difficulty. While the Me-262 was at the event to show its flying skills, the third airframe in the Arado jet series, the Ar-234V3, was dismantled and transported by road to Insterburg, where technicians hurriedly pieced it back together for static display. The Arado was parked unceremoniously between a pair of Junkers Ju-88 twin-prop warplanes, one of which carried special equipment for laying smoke screens.

According to Arado company records, Hitler immediately gave the planemaker Arado—now nationalized—carte blanche to obtain factory personnel, raw materials, and funds so that the company could build 200 Ar-234s by the end of 1944. Some former members of Luftwaffe bomber units, who had been scheduled for reassignment as ground troops, possibly to the horrors of the Soviet front, were diverted to Arado to become workers on the project.

It did not help that an Me-262 took off as part of the demonstration, flamed out, and had to limp back to the runway for a dead-stick landing with pilot Fritz Wendel at the controls. Hitler appeared impatient as a second Me-262, with Gerd Lindner in the cockpit, took off with its



**ABOVE:** Adolf Hitler and Luftwaffe chief Hermann Göring walk together at Wolf's Lair, Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia, in the autumn of 1944. By 1943 Göring had fallen out of favor with Hitler. **BELOW:** The immense Junkers Ju-390 six-engined bomber, the largest powered aircraft ever built in Germany, was on display at Insterburg. However, it was largely ignored, and most observers agreed that its cost was prohibitive.



imperfect Jumo 004 turbojet engines howling, circled over the visitors, and flew overhead with no apparent flaw. This was the moment when Hitler's face changed and his eyes brightened.

One member of Hitler's coterie who knew nothing about aviation, Hitler Youth leader Artur Axmann, later wrote of a "sparkle" in the Führer's eyes.

Hitler had had a question in mind ever since he learned about the new weapons. Now, he posed the question not to Göring but to the ever servile Messerschmitt. The pair walked side by side. "Tell me," Hitler said. "Is this aircraft able to carry bombs?"

Messerschmitt was clearly uncomfortable and seems to have improvised with his quick answer. "Yes, my Führer. It can carry for sure a 250-kilogram bomb, perhaps two of them."

No one involved in the design of the Me-262 had ever considered such a thing.

"Well!" Hitler beamed. "Nobody ever thought of this!" He was certainly right on that point. "This is the Blitz bomber I have been requesting for years." Another listener heard Hitler used the word *Schnellbomber*, or fast bomber, a concept that had been on his mind for some time.

It was the right moment for Messerschmitt to say, "This aircraft is a fighter my Führer. It has the potential to reinforce our command of the air over the Reich."

But Messerschmitt said nothing.

"No one thought of this," the Führer repeated. "I'm going to order that this 262 be used exclusively as a Blitz bomber, and you, Messerschmitt, have to make all the necessary preparations to make this feasible."

Watching this exchange, Maj. Gen. Adolf Galland, one of the Reich's most experienced combat pilots, felt his heart sink. Galland had met Hitler previously and knew the Führer wanted a Blitz bomber that would halt an invasion by the Western Allies. Willi Messerschmitt, who knew less about the aircraft bearing his name than Hitler realized, was making it sound all too easy. Converting the Me-262 into a bomber required structural changes, a relocation of its center of gravity, and new internal wiring. It was not easy, but it was also not quite so much a challenge as the engines. Messerschmitt's engineering team already knew and had demonstrated that day that the Jumo 004 turbojet was cantankerous and unreliable. The fixes were going to take longer than anyone imagined.

Very likely the highest ranking 31-year-old officer in any military branch in the world, the tough-minded and often argumentative Galland was approaching the end of a prolonged period when he believed the Luftwaffe could prevail and Germany could win the war. The previous month's Luftwaffe triumph at Schweinfurt had been a devastating blow to the Eighth Air Force, to the daylight bombing campaign, and to Allied hopes for an invasion to liberate Nazi-occupied Europe.

With that recent success in mind and with wonder weapons arrayed all around him and Adolf Hitler talking of support for the military, Adolf Galland should have been riding high and thinking big. Although he was relatively young, Galland was, like many of his peers, very tired. As long ago as the Battle of Britain more than three years earlier, the Luftwaffe had sustained enormous losses. Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union two years earlier, although easy at first, became a meat grinder. The sheer

*Continued on page 78*



**New Zealander John M. Jones recalls the perilous duty he performed during World War II and his capture by the Japanese.**

# LAST OF THE Gilbert Islands COASTWATCHERS

BY BRUCE M. PETTY & PETER McQUARRIE

**T**he coastwatching system that operated throughout the South Pacific islands during World War II was introduced to gather and report early information about the movement of enemy ships and aircraft. The initial fear was of German raiders, which sank merchant shipping and attacked shore installations. However, as the war progressed there was growing concern about the likelihood of war with Japan as well.

Gilbert Islands coastwatching was part of a wider coastwatching network spread across the South Pacific, covering the Fiji Islands, Ellice Islands, Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, and other island groups, including those in the more southerly waters around New Zealand. As a part of the New Zealand contribution to this network, the New Zealand Navy controlled 58 stations on tropical Pacific Islands in addition to another 75 on New Zealand and on its offshore islands.

Fourteen small coastwatching stations were established in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in mid-1941, all operated by New Zealanders. Nine of these stations were in the Gilberts. The Gilbert and Ellice Islands held key strategic positions situated between the British colony of Fiji in the south and Japanese-held Micronesia in the north. The northernmost station in the Gilberts was at Bikati Islet, on the atoll of Butaritari, only 100 nautical miles south of the Japanese-controlled Marshall Islands. John M. Jones was the coastwatch radio operator at this station.

Jones was born in Northumberland, England, in 1920. His father was an American, who had served in the Royal Canadian Navy during World War I. His mother was a widow with two daughters, her first husband having been killed earlier in that war. Some years after World War I, the family emigrated from England, where his parents met and married, to New Zealand, where John's father had been offered a job on the west coast of South Island, a part of New Zealand that was sparsely populated then and still is today. Jones lived there until he was 18 and worked for the Post and Telegraph Department as a telegraphist. At the beginning of World War II, he was asked to go to Christchurch for further training, an offer he accepted. From there he went to Wellington for additional training in radio work. At this time, the war was confined to Europe. The bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese and the resulting spread of the war to Pacific waters had not yet occurred.

In early 1941, while attending radio school John volunteered with a number of others to go to offshore islands as a coastwatcher. However, since he was not 21 he had to get parental consent. At the time, manning a radio on a Pacific Island seemed ideal compared to the possibility of later being drafted into the military and put in harm's way. His parents agreed and gave permission. However, as Jones states in his oral history, if his parents had known that Japan would soon enter the war they probably would not have consented.

The original idea at the time was to keep an eye out for German raiders, armed merchant cruisers that had caused some destruction in Pacific waters early in the war, specifically at Nauru Island and Ocean Island, which were being mined for phosphate at the time.

John Jones recently recounted his experiences as coastwatcher during discussions with the authors. He recalled:

We left New Zealand on the *Matua* (Union Steamship Co.). It ran regularly up to Fiji, Tonga, and other locations. We were put on that to Suva (Fiji). It was evident then that we were going to be in the tropics, which was good—better than down in the sub-Antarctic.

Having arrived in Fiji, we were taken out to Samabula camp, which was the headquarters for the New Zealand Overseas Expeditionary Force in that part of the world. I don't remember how many men were there actually, but there weren't very many—but we only spent about five days there receiving more instructions. We had code to learn, and a separate cipher code for weather reporting.

After those five days, we were told we would be leaving by ship the next day and had to be ready to leave by late morning. The ship was the governor's yacht, *Viti*, which was about 900 tons—brand new. It had been launched just the year before.

We were told to buy things for our own benefit. If you smoked, and everybody did in those days, take enough cigarettes for about 12 months. We also needed sand shoes, pith helmets, and a white suit, of all things. I had a white suit and never ever wore it. It was crazy taking a white suit where we were.

We were put aboard the *Viti* late the next morning. We had been warned that army [New Zealand Army personnel] would be coming with us. When we got out into the lagoon I was introduced to two unarmed soldiers (Privates J.M. Menzies and M.

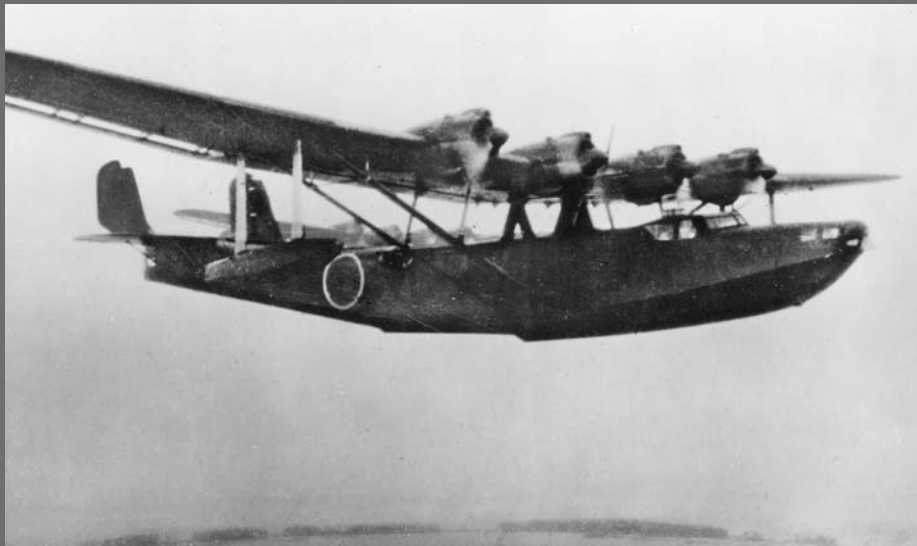


In this photograph, apparently staged for Japanese propaganda purposes, a group of seemingly healthy and well-treated Allied prisoners of war is led along a mountain trail toward a work-site near its camp. During their conquest of much of the Pacific, the Japanese captured hundreds of thousands of prisoners and were overwhelmed by the numbers. Cultural differences and an inability to cope with the burden led to widespread atrocities.





**ABOVE:** This rare photo of coastwatchers in action depicts a pair of these intrepid spies occupying an observation post in a tree on New Guinea. The information provided by coastwatchers during Allied campaigns in the Pacific proved quite valuable. However, the coastwatchers paid a heavy price while performing their hazardous duty. **BELOW:** A large four-engine Japanese Kawanishi flying boat cruises above a Pacific island.



Menzies, who were brothers). The idea was that they were to keep me company. We were going to islands that had no Europeans or were otherwise completely uninhabited.

We were then shown a large map of the Pacific, specifically the Gilbert and Ellice Islands that ran in a northwesterly-southeasterly direction and were just south of the heavily fortified Marshall Islands that were Japanese. They were in a direct line [north] from Fiji, and of course below Fiji was New Zealand.

I am jumping ahead in years, but after the war I found out the real reason—and at the time we were never informed of the real reason—for our being sent to these islands, and that was that the [New Zealand] government had been warned by American intelligence and British intelligence that the Japanese were rattling the saber and getting very aggressive. And

when you come to think about it, we were made to be human tripwires. That is what I have always called us, anyway. The most northern island in the Gilberts [Butaritari] was just 120 miles south of the big Japanese naval base of Jaluit [in the Marshall Islands].

On Butaritari, where I was, there were two Japanese (Chosito Kanzaki and another named Suzuki) who had a 45-foot ketch, and they sailed up to Jaluit not infrequently to carry copra. As we later found out, they were naval reserve officers, although they had married native women. This appeared to be Japanese strategy over the years, spreading people out to places they were interested in. One of the two appeared to be the headman, Kanzaki. That was before Pearl Harbor, so they didn't mean anything to me.

The North Gilberts were made up of three islets. McQuinn [another coastwatcher, Cor-

poral S.R. McQuinn] was 25 miles away on Makin, which was to the east. South of me by about 100 miles, but closer to Tarawa, was Abaiang with one New Zealander [Corporal S. R. Wallace]. There were a lot of Catholic priests and nuns there too.

Butaritari lagoon was a big lagoon, and the Japanese had eyes on it, I suppose, as a base. We were set up on a tiny islet [Bikati] at the northern part of the lagoon, where there were only about 25 people living in a small village. The main island was 14 miles south.

Before the Japanese hit Pearl Harbor, about mid-November they started to fly over us with their four-engine Kawanishi flying boat, which was a copy of the Pan Am Clippers. I saw them at about 5,000 feet and immediately went inside and coded a message when they were still in sight. I was transmitting the information, "Japanese flying boat overhead and heading due south."

That was the first time it happened, and I didn't realize until later that they had come down and flown around all the islands in the Gilberts and back to Jaluit. They did that three times between then and Pearl Harbor, and in late November one of the native boys came—it was about 11 o'clock at night—and said, "Lot's of lights off the West—off the reef."

I looked, and there was quite a decent size ship. It was lit up stem to stern, going slowly past.

I quickly coded a message and got it off early the next morning, about 0630; and I received a reply back, "Very possibly the *Yamaguchi Maru*, from Jaluit."

How they knew the name, I'll never know, but by this time, with all the planes flying over, and then this ship, it made me pretty uneasy. I thought, "If anything happens with the Japanese, well we are right on their doorstep."

Sure enough, I woke up one morning and it was the 8th of December—the 7th in Hawaii. I sat down to send my first communication, which was at 0630, but first I tuned into Honolulu as I always did to hear the news, but they weren't there.

I thought, "That's funny." I could hear noise but nothing being transmitted. So then I tuned into L.A. [Los Angeles] and got a man who was yelling his head off about Hawaii being attacked. So, that is how I got the story of the attack on Honolulu—on Pearl Harbor.

I immediately said to my two companions, "This is really bad news! The Japanese are at war with us." And sure enough, I got a message to be double alert. Of course, we were already double alert, and all the rest of that day we were worried as to what was going to happen. We went to bed that night but didn't

sleep very much.

The next morning, before dawn, one of the lads said he thought he saw something on the western horizon. We waited until there was a bit of daylight, and sure enough the superstructures of ships—quite a number of them—could be seen, but we weren't given binoculars. That was a sore point with us.

All that day, the 9th, they stayed there—never moved—but the next morning, the 10th, they made a three-point landing on the main island. That was 14 miles down from us.

A native operator south in the lagoon was trying to contact Ocean Island, which was our parent station, and he wasn't getting a reply, so I cut in in plain English and told him I would pass it on. So I coded it and told him I would pass it on as soon as I could. Then he told me in plain English, "They'll be up to get you next."

We [John Jones and the Menzies brothers] sat there all that day and the next day, but nothing happened; but on the 12th one of the boys rushed in and said that something was approaching on the outside of the reef.

When we looked we could see a launch, and by the look of it, it was towing a couple of whaleboats. As they got closer, we could see that each one held a certain number of troops. Incidentally, as it turned out they were all [Japanese] marines. I immediately started transmitting, and as I was transmitting a single-engine floatplane came over, and of course he told the approaching launch exactly where to land.

In the meantime, I burned all the codes, smashed all my equipment, and made myself ready to receive them. My last message was, "Japanese landing now. Goodbye all."

While we were waiting for them, the previous day we had taken all of our stores and gone into the thick undergrowth and dug a big pit. Most of it was tinned stuff, and we covered it over. The reason we did this was because I figured that we could have been left there isolated.

I might add that in later years we were mighty pleased to learn that the Navy had captured us, and not the Army. Anyway, they put a ring of marines around us with fixed bayonets. We had to sit back-to-back out back of our house. There was a [Japanese] lieutenant who tried to speak English. He wasn't very good at it, but what we got out of him was that Japan was all victorious and in charge of the whole Pacific, and that we should behave ourselves.

In the meantime, they had brought all 25 people from the village to come and watch us, and then the lieutenant came over and asked if I was the wireless operator. He said why did you burn your codes and smash your radio? That is very wrong! He made out that he was

very upset, which I suppose he was. And these marines were very graphic in what was going to happen to us. They kept saying we would be beheaded, and this went on for three hours, at least, while we were sitting in the sand.

Eventually, they said we were going to be moved down on the beach.

We thought, "Oh well; it's going to happen there."

I was prepared that it was the end, but when we got there we were surprised to be loaded up and taken to the main islet—Butaritari. There were ships there and four Kawanishi flying boats. You see, what had happened, these flying boats had flown over us, and each time they flew over an island our coastwatchers started transmitting. They picked up the transmissions and pinpointed where all the coastwatchers were.

They took me up to the captain's cabin on one of the ships, and the captain spoke very good English. It was a heavy cruiser, but I don't remember the name of it. He pulled out a map of the Gilbert Islands. It was written in Japanese and English, and he said in English, "Point out where your friends are."

Then he asked, "You did report my ships?"

"Via Nauru and Ocean Island," I said. Then he asked me where these people are [other coastwatchers]. I said I didn't know, and he said, "Okay, you go with your two companions and you will be put into confinement here."

We were made to stand in the hot sun for the rest of the day, and then about 6 o'clock or 7 o'clock that evening we were moved onto On Chong's Wharf [named for a Chinese trading company]. On the end of the wharf was a house. We were put in a room in the house, and lo and behold we found that Williams, the resident commissioner, was in the next room. We talked, but that only lasted about a half hour because they came in and said, "No talk," and slapped us.

The next day, McQuinn and his two New Zealand soldiers [Privates L.B.H. Muller and B.L. Were] were brought in. They were captured about 1 o'clock in the morning. That made seven of us. There was one priest on Butaritari, where Williams lived. His name was [Father Pierre] Guichard. He wasn't touched; he said he was Swiss, so he was neutral. But all the priests, I found out later, said they were Swiss or Vichy French.

We had Christmas Day, but they didn't give



National Archives

The primary islet of Makin Atoll in the Gilbert Islands, Butaritari is viewed during an American air raid prior to the invasion of the atoll in November 1943. Jones was stationed here in 1941.

I said, "Yes." He said, "We thought so." Then he said, "How did you get here? You came from Fiji, didn't you? I want to know where the airfields are. Here is a map of Fiji. Where are the airfields?" I said, "I didn't come from Fiji." Of course, I did, and I was running a bit of a risk, but said, "No, I came from Australia."

"Ah," he said, "you Australia. How you get here then?"

us anything special; but Williams had been very good to the Japanese prior to Pearl Harbor. He talked to them nicely and made friends with them, and Kanzaki had been made head interpreter. On Christmas Day, Kanzaki turned up and said, "Two bottles of wine, Williams, for your Christmas." Williams said, "Oh, thank you very much." Kanzaki said, "Oh, don't thank me; I took it from your stores."



That sort of made our Christmas Day, anyway.

On the 27th, we were ordered out and told we were going on a ship. We had to put our stuff on a cart. Williams had to pull, while the rest of us pushed. We had to travel about half a mile through the village, and all the villagers and all the Japanese were lined up. They yelled and jeered and carried on as we went past. This was to let the local population know that they were in charge by belittling Williams in front of them. Father Guichard was watching as well.

We got out to the ship and just brushed alongside and were told to go back. We went back to On Chong's Wharf, and two days later away we went. It was a minelayer we were on. We were taken down below and there were little railway lines with carts on them for dropping the mines off the back.

We were given rice and a pickle for a meal that night. The next morning, we were already in a lagoon, Jaluit, the big naval base just up the road. From there, we were taken to another boat, which was a small gunboat. It had a coal-fed engine, and there sitting on the coal was Wallace, who had been caught on the 24th on Abaiang. That cleaned out the northern group. They had collected all eight of us.

Wallace was very pleased to see us, of course. The engines started and away we went, and we ended up on Kwajalein in the very north of the Marshall Islands. It is probably one of the biggest lagoons in the Pacific. We were transferred there to the *Yamagiri Maru*, which was about 7,000 tons. It was a cargo-passenger ship. But I was surprised at what I saw in that lagoon. I counted 10 submarines. That is all I had time for before they whipped us down below; but there were all types of ships in there.

Once we got aboard, we were taken down between decks, and we were amazed to see 200 to 300 coolie-types; quite a number of them appeared to be Koreans. They were an inquisitive lot; they came right over to us and peered at us, so the officers on the ship put canvas around us, which was nice of them.

The ship left almost immediately. We were then offered American Wonder Bread, with the polka dots all over the wrapper. We were never able to figure out which way we were going, although we figured we were heading due west through the Caroline Islands. And the way they were starting and stopping, we thought they were trying to avoid torpedoes, and we thought that if we got torpedoed we would never get out.

The 7th of January, 1942, we arrived at Yokosuka Naval Base. We were in sight of Mt. Fuji, and it was a grand sight, I must admit, but we were in tropical gear and it was below zero.

We were then shifted by launch to Yokohama, and by truck we were taken to the Yokohama Race Course, where the toilets, etc., were all European. We were fed there—rice and the usual stuff—and the next morning our group, the eight of us, were taken by truck once again to 250 The Bluff, Yokohama. That was in the European enclave right in the middle of Yokohama. Here was a two-story house, a very nice looking place, set in a beautiful garden. We were taken inside. It was nicely furnished, and there was a library that was sealed off. Over the next couple of days, we undid the seals and found all these beautiful books, so we stole quite a number of them. Also, while we were there, we found a card. The people who had been there were Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Dillinghearse Denison of Standard Oil.



**ABOVE:** This grainy and possibly clandestine photo taken in the early 1942 and published that March in a German magazine captures the arrival of American prisoners of war at the Japanese Zentsuji prison camp in Kagawa Prefecture, Japan. These men were among those captured with the fall of Guam in the Marianas. **BELOW:** Three former coastwatchers, put out of business by their Japanese captors, are posed for a photograph at the Zentsuji prison camp in 1942. Left to right are Sid Wallace, John Jones, and Max McQuinn. **OPPOSITE:** A chilling image of the interior of the Zentsuji prison camp appears to show an individual near freshly dug trenches. These trenches are believed to have been intended to serve as mass graves for the prisoners.



There was a dining room there, and we were told to sit down for lunch. Lo and behold, we were waited on by two kimono-clad Japanese girls, and we were offered European food. We didn't know what the meat was, but the bones looked like dog bones. However, whatever it was it was mighty good.

We were fed there for a week, and we were photographed there every day being fed and waited on and being escorted around our beautiful garden. The photographers were here, there, and everywhere. Then after about six days, we were shown the *Tokyo Mainichi Shinbun* newspaper, and there was our photograph on the front page. It said that we were Australians captured in the islands and that we had been treated very well. I found out later that these photographs had turned up in Argentina and also the United States.

We were then taken by train from Yokohama overnight to the island of Shikoku, and we ended up in the garrison town of Zentsuji. We opened up the first prison camp there, the eight of us [actually nine as they had been joined by Arthur Griffiths, a radio operator from the U.S. embassy in Tsingtao, China]. We arrived at 1:30 in the afternoon after traveling all night. There were barracks, two-storied, with raised platforms on each side, with space in the middle for a table and benches. We were given a meal at around 5 o'clock of rice and pickles. We were told that 9 o'clock would be lights out.

The guards were walking in and out all the time, and that was the norm. We dropped off to sleep that first night, and at about midnight we were awakened by a hell of a noise. It was heavy boots on the wooden floor, and it was 450 men from Guam. There were about 100 civilians with them, including five Navy nurses and the governor of Guam, [Captain] McMillan.

In the morning the guards came in and woke us up. We had to stand up and be counted. We milled around for all of January and part of February, and then we were told by Warrant Officer Lane, he was from Guam, what we would have to do. The Japanese would tell Lane, and he would tell us. He didn't speak Japanese.

We had three interpreters, but the chief interpreter was Oshiro Asabuki. He was educated at Oxford and the Sorbonne, and in his own right he was a duke. Williams, our resident commissioner in the Gilbert Islands, was still with us, and he got quite friendly with Asabuki because Williams was also educated at Oxford. A short time later, Asabuki got Williams transferred to the officers' quarters.

David Hutchinson Smith, a captain in the Australian Army who was captured at Rabaul, went back to Japan to find and meet with

Asabuki; it was probably in the early 1980s. He told us all about it at a reunion we had in the States. I didn't get to the first one, but I got to the second one in L.A.

There were two other interpreters, but I can't tell you their names [Tajima and Moryama]; they weren't very friendly. They were fairly short and wore large Army boots halfway up their legs, and they had a habit if they slapped you—if they couldn't reach you because some of the Aussies were over six feet tall—they kicked you in the shins. Our shins took quite a beating; they were always bleeding. These interpreters did this quite often, but never did Asabuki touch anyone. He never hit anyone.

After about four months, the camp had about 700 officers and 100 enlisted men. There had been 250 enlisted men, but about half of them had been transferred to Osaka and Kobe. That left 110 enlisted men at Zentsuji. We three radio operators and the New Zealand Army troops that accompanied us were sold to a company that constructed terraced rice paddies. They took us in squads up to nearby Osayama Mountain, where we cleared land and built retaining walls and terraced it for rice growing. It was very steep.

We were still at that when around August–September [1942?] most of us were sold to a stevedore company. They paid us what would come to about a penny and a half a day. About once a month they gave us some yen but said half of it was being kept for us for a rainy day.

We found out later that the New Zealand government had told our families that we were missing in action. They didn't know where we were. Later in Japan we broadcast from JOA Tokyo to Australia and New Zealand. We had little messages typed for us, and all they said was, "To Mr. and Mrs. Jones, my address, I am well. We are being fed okay." Nothing except that. It was about 25 words.

Funny enough, the neighbors heard me broadcasting that night. They rushed next door and said to my parents, "Did you hear Tokyo?"

They said, "No."

"John was on!"

That was very upsetting for them, but it was said that it would be broadcast again, so they tuned in again the next evening and sure enough they heard my broadcast. They were relieved, but not altogether, because with the Japanese it was very dicey whether you lived or died. But if you made it to Japan you had a 50-50 chance.

Zentsuji was the only camp that I know of where the Red Cross was permitted to visit us, and it had to be a bit better than all the other camps. The reason was because those five



**"We got slapped around and shins kicked, and so on and so on, but we were also starving. We didn't have enough food. It wasn't so bad to begin with, but then it deteriorated. In 1944, I passed out one day while trying to carry a tin of what was supposed to be soup. It was just colored water."**

nurses from Guam and a fellow by the name of Griffiths had joined us in Yokohama. He was a radio operator for the U.S. Navy, but he had been seconded to the embassy in Tsingtao, China, and he was captured there. He was brought to Japan and put with us. He was treated as a prisoner of war, but the American ambassador in Tokyo said, "No, no, no; he is part and parcel of our entourage, so he is classed as a diplomat and will be exchanged for Japanese diplomats." So, he left us and took all of our little messages back to the States. That was the second message that my parents got. They got that later within the year from Griffiths. I don't remember his full name.

The four Navy nurses from Guam were given a room meant for two people. This sort of accommodation was given to anybody who was somebody. For instance, the [British] cruiser *Exeter* was sunk in the Battle of Sunda Strait. We had her officers at our place, and Captain [Oliver] Gordon, the English captain, was given a room, I think, with a major or a colonel from the U.S. Marines, I think from Guam.

I'm getting on a bit, but this is getting on to the end of 1942 when this happened. But those nurses, with Griffiths, were sent to Tokyo about June or July 1942. So, they had been in the

prison camp for about five months. They knew exactly where it was and how we were being treated. Because of all this the word got out that we would be treated just a little bit above normal. Well, as it turned out, we were a hell of a lot better than normal, because when Captain Gordon was put in this other prison camp somewhere near Tokyo they beat the hell out of him. He was really badly treated, and so were the majority of prisoners [in other camps].

We got slapped around and shins kicked, and so on and so on, but we were also starving. We didn't have enough food. It wasn't so bad to begin with, I must admit, but then it deteriorated. In 1944, I passed out one day while trying to carry a tin of what was supposed to be soup. It was just colored water.

I also hurt my back building these rice terraces. I had a yoyo pole with two baskets. There were too many rocks in it. I got up, took two or three steps, slipped on a rock, and my back went click! They carried me down the hill and back to the camp. I was about two or three weeks, I can't remember now, lying on boards, which was good for my back anyway.

It was about 18 months after the nurses got back to the States, and a Swiss [Red Cross] representative from Tokyo came, and it was all a





**ABOVE:** Former coastwatcher John Jones is circled at upper right in this image of a group of Allied prisoners of war at the Zentsuji prison camp in Japan. The photo was taken shortly after the prison was liberated. **RIGHT:** Coastwatcher veteran John Jones smiles in a recent photo at left. To the right, he is shown in uniform in September 1945, following the end of World War II.

setup. There was a table loaded with socks and little pieces of meat, and each man had to go up and bow and take a pair of socks and a little piece of meat in front of the Swiss. He was married to a Japanese and had been in Japan for 20-odd years. He was more Japanese than he was Swiss. We never saw him again. However, this information got back to the States, and we were noted for being a bit better off than other people, but it couldn't be said that we were going to live.

We didn't have any information on what happened to the other coastwatchers in the Gilbert Islands. We [in the northern Gilberts] were taken right away and were very lucky. The Japanese went to Tarawa and told the Europeans there that they had taken the islands. They looted the place and smashed all the boats and told the Europeans not to move. "We'll be back."

They left them there and went up to Butaritari, where they intended to put in a seaplane base. The New Zealand government, between December 1941 and September 1942, had nine months in which to take our guys out, and they didn't. They could have gotten them out, and furthermore they asked each one, "Do you want to be replaced?"

None of them wanted to be replaced.

They [the New Zealand government] must have said that tongue-in-cheek because they didn't have the radio operators to replace them with. Furthermore, they had native operators



Both: John M. Jones

quite capable of taking over. The [Japanese] Navy picked them up, and they turned them over to the [Japanese] Army, and the Army only had them two weeks and executed the lot. They beheaded the lot, and the beheading was seen by a native.

We didn't know anything about what happened to our fellows while we were in the camp, but one day I was on a work party and one of the fellows said to me, "Hey, did you see that fellow who came in yesterday?" I said, "What fellow?"

"Oh," he said, "it was an American pilot [Lieutenant Fred Francis Garrett, 30th Bomb Group, 17th Bomb Squadron, flying the Consolidated B-24 Liberator bomber *Our Baby*, shot down on December 15, 1943]."

He said he was on crutches; he had a leg cut off. I said, "Where did he come from?"

The next day was a day off for me, so I went and found him and said, "I understand you were shot down in mid-Pacific somewhere."

He said, "Yeah, that's right; I was shot down in the Marshall Islands."

I said, "That is where we were captured, just south of there; but we were taken to the Marshall Islands." Then I asked him, "Where did you take off from?"

He said, "We took off from Tarawa."

I said, "While you were in the Gilbert Islands, did you know any of our fellows. We had a unit there called the Coastwatcher Unit. They were all from Tarawa, south."

He said, "Yeah, yeah; I never met them, but there is a monument there that our guys put up in memory of all 22. They were all beheaded."

I just broke out in a sweat. I said, "Well, they were all people I knew. My three best friends were amongst them." So, I went and told the other guys. We were amazed that they had been beheaded, but then the atrocity stories were coming in all the time.

After the war I said to myself, "I'm going to meet their families."

I went to see the mother of my good friend, Rex Hearn, living in Hastings. She received me, but it upset her. She was trembling and crying; and she showed me Rex's bedroom the way he had left it. She said, "I never touched anything."

I was so upset with the way she was upset that, as I was on the way down south to visit the family of Arthur Heenan in Middlesmarch, and also Cliff Pearsall's, I decided against it. Pearsall was from central Otago. I couldn't go any farther because I broke down too.

It went on and on and on. We opened that camp up, and we had been prisoners three years and nine months. Of course, it was marvelous to see the B-29s flying over. The earth just shook when they bombed Kobe and Osaka, which was just down the road. We were 70 miles away from Hiroshima. When that dropped [the Atomic bomb], a little Japanese told us one bomb had killed a quarter of a million people.

Then when fighter planes came over, Corsairs, they would come down and shoot the hell out of the place and we would have to dive under the boxcars. We were unloading sugar this one particular time and had just enough time to see two Corsairs coming toward us between two small hills, and we got under these flatcars. None of us got killed, but we were very lucky because they wouldn't let us go on passenger cars on trains, and one of the delights of the Corsairs was to see a train and strafe it. Yeah, we were lucky, very lucky!

*Bruce Petty is the author of five books, four of which concern World War II in the Pacific. His latest is New Zealand in the Pacific War. He is a resident of New Plymouth, New Zealand. Peter McQuarrie is a retired telecommunications engineer with 30 years of experience in radio communications in small Pacific island countries. He is the author of the books The Gilbert Islands in WWII and Strategic Atolls—Tuvalu and the Second World War.*

From the publishers of WWII HISTORY Magazine

# Get these authoritative e-Book Publications from the Warfare History Network absolutely FREE!



Warfare History Network has created these e-Books and is making them available to you **free with no strings attached**. Well, actually there's one string attached. When you download any or all of these free e-Books we'll sign you up as a member of the Warfare History Network, and the good news is that's **also completely free**.

Warfare History Network is the official web portal of MILITARY HERITAGE, WWII HISTORY MAGAZINE, WWII QUARTERLY, and CIVIL WAR QUARTERLY. As a member of Warfare History Network you'll have access to all of the fresh, in-depth perspectives on a wide variety of topics including battles, weapons, leaders, strategy, and more. All written by the top experts in the field.

As a member of Warfare History Network you'll have access to hundreds of military history articles from the archives of our magazines, you'll be able to download any and all of our free e-Books, plus you'll receive WARFARE HISTORY DAILY, our free email newsletter to bring you important new facts and insights, all at absolutely no cost to you.

**WARFARE**HISTORYNETWORK

**There's no cost, no risk, and no obligation to buy anything.**

*Download your free e-Books today at:*

**[www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com/free-briefings](http://www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com/free-briefings)**



# *Caught in the* **CROSSHAIRS**

Sergeant Mort Sheffloe took a sniper's bullet in the chest outside the French fortress city of Brest during the Brittany Campaign.

BY KEVIN M. HYMEL

American infantrymen of the 8th Infantry Division scramble for cover in the streets of Lu Haye Du Puis. The soldier on the right wields a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR).



**THE** German sniper scanned the battlefield outside his bunker on the outskirts of the port city of Brest, on France's Brittany peninsula. He had already shot an American lieutenant; now he was looking for a new target. In front of him, American soldiers occupied numerous craters, the result of Allied bombings. He spied a sergeant running from one crater to the next, talking to the men, then running back to the wounded lieutenant.

Soon the sergeant returned, again rushing to each crater. As the sergeant made yet another climb, the sniper took aim and pulled the trigger. The bullet tore into the sergeant's lower chest, puncturing his lung and lacerating his liver. Nineteen-year-old Sergeant Mortimer Sheffloe, serial number 37567919, of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Division fell back into the crater. Blood drained from his body as his life passed before

his eyes. The date was September 10, 1944.

More than a year earlier Mort Sheffloe had been a high school senior in Crookston, Minnesota, when the U.S. Army drafted him. He reported to Fort Snelling, near St. Paul, for induction with 35 other classmates in May 1943 and traveled by private rail car to Camp Fannin, in Tyler, Texas, for training. The camp had opened only two weeks before Sheffloe arrived. "It was pretty primitive," he recalled. It had basic facilities, including a theater and a post exchange.

Sheffloe received some good news at the camp. During his induction, he had scored high enough on the Army OCT-X3 exam to qualify for the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), which prepared qualified candidates for

engineering degrees. "I was hoping for [the University of] Southern California or the University of Texas but got Texas A&M," said Sheffloe. So in October he started school again. Eventually, he grew weary of the academic schedule and stopped studying. He was summarily kicked out of school.

"They took me out of the dormitory and put





**Soldiers of the 8th Infantry advance through the French town of Brehal on their way to Avranches.**

me in the horse stables, now a barracks,” he explained.

He shipped out to Camp Polk, Louisiana, and was assigned to the 97th Infantry Division, which was completing maneuvers. A truck took Sheffloe and several other soldiers out to the field, where they gathered around a bonfire on a cold night in January 1944 as they awaited assignment to their units. Soon, the division was transferred to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, for additional training, where Sheffloe qualified as an expert on the Brown Automatic Rifle (BAR).

In early 1944, while the 97th trained to fight in the Pacific, other overseas divisions were taking heavy casualties. Instead of raising new troops for these losses, the Army stripped trained soldiers from stateside divisions to build a pool of replacements. The Army pilfered 6,000 soldiers from the 97th, including Private Sheffloe. He was made part of a “packet” consisting of five platoons commanded by five officers. They shipped out to Fort Meade, Maryland, then to Camp Shanks in New York, where Sheffloe made friends with Private Hamp L. Witt.

“He was a nice fellow,” Sheffloe recalled, “very quiet.”

Then it was a cruise across the Atlantic, ending at a replacement depot in Bristol, England. The depot occupied an old stone orphanage that dated back to the 1880s. One morning while exercising, the packet’s corporal asked the men

“Did you hear? D-Day started.”

It was June 6, and the invasion of France was on. No one reacted openly to the news. “Mentally,” said Sheffloe, “we were thinking of days to come.”

Some of the men reported hearing planes flying over during the night. These could have been bombers heading to attack the German coastal defenses or Douglas C-47 Skytrain transports carrying paratroopers to drop inland, but Sheffloe heard nothing. He had slept deeply that night.

The men transferred to Yeovil in southwestern England. While Sheffloe and his packet trained, a British barrage balloon and anti-aircraft unit arrived to defend the country from Hitler’s latest weapon, the V-1 buzz bomb. V-1s were winged missiles with pulse-jet engines that roared loudly until they ran out of fuel, then the engine would cut off and the rocket would impact randomly, setting off a significant charge of high explosives.

This important defense unit meant something else to Sheffloe. “We found they were all female,” he said. They were members of Britain’s Women’s Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF).

Taking advantage of a hole in the camp’s barbed wire fence one night, Sheffloe and another soldier snuck out to meet the WAAs. With double daylight keeping the sky lit until 11:30 PM, the GIs chatted with the girls past midnight and then tried to sneak back into

camp. They were caught, however, and confined to a Quonset hut brig for the night. Soon, an air raid siren roared and everyone in their tents took cover while Sheffloe and his comrade were left in the hut. Fortunately, no bombs landed nearby.

At the camp, enlisted men had to be in before dark but officers could stay out later. One night, Sheffloe stayed out too late. To prevent getting in trouble, he fashioned a lieutenant’s silver bar from chewing gum foil and placed it on his helmet liner.

“The guards saluted as I walked into camp well after dark,” he recalled.

On July 10, Sheffloe and the rest of his packet boarded a British troop carrier bound for Normandy, France. In over a month of fighting, the Americans, British, and Canadians had pushed the Germans away from the beaches and, although the British were having trouble capturing the city of Caen, the Americans had cut off the Cotentin Peninsula and captured the city of Cherbourg only days before Sheffloe’s arrival. The American First Army commander, Lt. Gen.

National Archives



**LEFT: Private Mort Sheffloe prepares to leave Minneapolis, Minnesota, in March, 1944. RIGHT: Sheffloe revisited his battlefields in 2014. Here he stands outside the American cemetery in Normandy.**

Omar Bradley, was planning Operation Cobra, the breakout from Normandy, with the additional forces arriving from England and with a lot help from the Army Air Forces.

Sheffloe’s ship arrived at Utah Beach around 9 AM on July 11. The English Channel was packed with ships. The men went over the side into landing craft, which carried them ashore. Once ashore, Sheffloe loaded duffel bags onto a 2½-ton truck, which he then rode off the beach. To his left stood a German bunker (today’s Utah Beach Museum). Once the truck drove through a breach in the seawall, he saw another bunker to his right (today’s Roosevelt Café). The truck drove over a causeway and through the flooded lowlands before ascending a hill to the high ground.

After a four-mile journey, the truck arrived in Ste.-Mere-Eglise, where Sheffloe and the truck’s crew awaited the rest of the packet coming on

foot. Once everyone was assembled, they dug foxholes and bedded down in a hedgerow field east of the town. A few hedgerows over a temporary cemetery called Jayhawk II had been started. Sheffloe and the others, two to a foxhole, took turns sleeping or standing guard every hour. They got their first taste of the war after 11 PM and every night thereafter when a German plane flew over the American line. The German pilot earned the nickname "Bedcheck Charlie." The American anti-aircraft guns on land and at sea responded, lighting up the sky. "It was a spectacular sound and light show," recalled Sheffloe.

After a few days in bivouac, Sheffloe's company commander called the men over to a truck. An officer from the 8th Infantry Division's 121st Infantry Regiment pointed at 12 soldiers and said, "You, you, you, you, come with me." Sheffloe was not picked, but his buddy, Private Witt, was.

Then the officer said, "I need a BAR man." Sheffloe raised his hand and was picked. He was now part of the 121st, the Old Gray Bonnet Regiment, originally from the Georgia National Guard.

The truck delivered the replacements to a field near La Hay-du Puits, three miles north of Leese, the front line. An officer asked who his new BAR man was, but Sheffloe did not put up his hand. He was instead assigned as second scout for Lieutenant William Kapuscinski's platoon in Company E. Private Witt was also assigned to Company E, but to a different platoon. Sheffloe liked his new lieutenant and felt the feeling was mutual.

On the first afternoon, Sheffloe learned there would be a night attack, but in a few hours it was cancelled. The next day a sergeant took Sheffloe and five other men a half mile south to a farmhouse. "You six will stay here," he told them.

"We didn't know it," said Sheffloe, "but we were an outpost on the front." The farmhouse contained a huge barrel of apple cider, which the men sipped until a nearby tank destroyer unit found out and drained the barrel into jerry cans.

One night at the outpost, Sheffloe heard a German burp gun fire at close range. He perked up his ears and put his finger on the trigger of his M1 Garand rifle.

"When that [German] gun went off I was all eyes and ears," he recalled. Positioned behind a partially destroyed stone wall, Sheffloe opened his mouth to hear better and twisted his head to listen for twigs breaking or other noises. He heard nothing. The rest of the night was quiet.

While on this duty, Sheffloe got a break from the usual K-rations. A hefty, smiling Frenchman

holding a dead rabbit approached the Americans. He cooked and served it to his liberators. Sheffloe had never before tasted this French delicacy. "It tasted like chicken," he recalled.

The next two weeks were quiet as General Bradley prepared the four corps of his First Army for Operation Cobra. Occasionally, the Germans dropped artillery shells in the 121st's area "just to keep us on our toes," explained Sheffloe. On July 25, some 3,000 American bombers carpet bombed the area between the French towns of Piers and St. Lô, leaving a swath of destruction for the four corps to punch through. The 8th Infantry was part of the VIII Corps, on the far west of the line.

Sheffloe was at the outpost when he saw fleets of bombers flying over. American bombers pounded the German lines and part of the American lines with bombs that fell short of their intended targets, but Sheffloe and his comrades were too far away to hear any explosions.

Three days later, on July 28, a sergeant

had lost walls where tanks had smashed into their corners.

As the men departed Coutances, a German Messerschmitt Me-109 fighter plane dove on some Americans about 400 feet away. Sheffloe quickly raised his rifle, unsnapped its safety, and fired as the plane pulled out of its dive. The plane disappeared as quickly as it had appeared, unharmed. "It was such a spur of the moment thing," recalled Sheffloe. "I can still see it flying from left to right."

He also saw his first Germans. He was about to climb a hedgerow when everyone in front of him went flat. He raced around the hedgerow corner to get a firing position and saw two enemy soldiers running away. No shots were fired. "It was just a fleeting glimpse," he said.

The battalion bypassed Avranches and headed south to Rennes. Along the way, Sheffloe was constantly reminded that he was in a combat zone as artillery shells intermittently flew over. The men also had to be vigilant



**The 8th Infantry spread into the Brittany peninsula with the rest of the VII Corps and helped capture Dinard, St. Malo, and Brest.**

woke the men up before sunrise and said they would be moving out in an hour. After a breakfast of K-rations in their foxholes the men moved out. "We were a jumbled mess," recalled Sheffloe. "Everyone was moving forward at the same time."

The Americans marched through the town of Coutances, which the 4th Armored Division had captured earlier that day. The town had not been heavily damaged, and its grand cathedral stood intact. Only some homes along the road

against land mines. One morning along the march, Sheffloe and his comrades came across an American with half his leg blown off. To avoid other mines, the men had to step over and around him as a medic treated his bloody wound. But there were also wonders to be seen. South of Avranches, Sheffloe and his men glimpsed Mont Saint Michel in the distance. The church and abbey built atop a huge rock in the Mont Saint Michel Bay could be seen for miles.

"It stood out like a sore thumb," he recalled,





**ABOVE:** American soldiers in St. Malo fire on Germans in the Citadel. By the time Sheffloe's company reached Dinard, the Germans had abandoned it for St. Malo. **BELOW:** American soldiers cling to a small hill, protecting themselves from enemy fire outside Brest.



National Archives

although he did not know what it was.

At one point, Sheffloe was climbing a hedgerow when he saw his friend, Private Witt, also climbing but going the other way. He had been wounded and was heading to the rear. The two friends spoke briefly—it was the last time Sheffloe saw him. Witt was killed on August 11 and is buried today in the St. James Cemetery in Brittany.

Near Rennes, the regiment went into reserve. It did not last long. Later that morning, August 8, the 121st was trucked to Dinan. During the drive, the trucks paused at several stops. At one, Sheffloe and his comrades watched three French men and two French women emerge from a wooded area. In front of the Americans, one of the men pulled a pair of scissors from his pocket

and proceeded to cut off one woman's hair. She was a collaborator.

"They got a lot of courage," Sheffloe said of the French Resistance, "from the Americans being there."

The regiment's new mission was to advance along the Rance River, which separated the coastal city of Dinard from St. Malo. During the first afternoon, Lieutenant Kapuscinski told Sheffloe, "We're going on a combat patrol."

The platoon headed through a wooded area with Private Albert K. Wodkowitz, the lead scout, walking point. When they got to the edge of a clearing, the men could hear enemy tanks. "Give me your helmet and rifle," Kapuscinski told Sheffloe, "and climb up that tree." Sheffloe climbed but he could not see anything. Kapus-

cinski decided they had gone far enough.

As night fell, Wodkowitz again led the way back with Sheffloe, the lieutenant, and the rest of the platoon following. Halfway back, Wodkowitz lost the trail in the darkness, but Sheffloe stopped, realizing Wodkowitz had made a mistake. When Kapuscinski asked what was happening, Sheffloe explained and pointed out the bent grass from their earlier journey.

"When we get back," said Kapuscinski, "you're going to be first scout."

Sheffloe did not want the job, but he was in no position to argue. Instead, he led the platoon back to where it had headed out, exchanged the night's password and countersign with the soldiers guarding the line, and found his foxhole.

Around noon the next day, Sheffloe's unit again headed into the woods. When it reached an open field, mortars and artillery began to rain down. An order came to withdraw to a hedgerow, and the men turned and ran. "You hit the deck, fell back, got up to run, hit the deck," Sheffloe recalled about the retreat. Private Wodkowitz was hit on the way back and died later that day. "Somebody stayed with him but couldn't do much."

After that, Sheffloe became first scout, and Kapuscinski often picked him to lead night patrols. Once he offered Sheffloe and his five-man patrol pistols so they would be less conspicuous.

During a night patrol, Sheffloe and his men were in a shallow ditch next to a road when Sheffloe heard hobnailed boots crunching along the road. It was a German carrying a bucket of food. Sheffloe put his face down and heard the German whistling. He passed by without noticing the Americans. Once he was gone, Sheffloe and the others headed back to their lines.

On August 11, the platoon was near the town of Pleurtuit, working its way closer to Dinard, when the men came across a series of linked iron fences called Belgian Gates that blocked their progress. They found an opening, and Sheffloe began ordering men through. "Get moving!" he encouraged, but one man didn't appreciate Sheffloe's efforts. He pointed his rifle at Sheffloe and said, "Watch your back," before squeezing through. Sheffloe speculated that the soldier, an old veteran of the Georgia National Guard, did not appreciate his young scout telling him what to do.

The company reached Dinard, but it was a ghost town. The Germans had abandoned it for St. Malo. "We just roamed around at will," recalled Sheffloe. He stepped into a department store that was burning on one end, looked around, and left. He later watched as Martin B-26 Marauder bombers dropped their loads on

one of the islands off St. Malo. "They were flying at less than 10,000 feet," he said. "I could see the planes, not the pilots."

The Germans in St. Malo surrendered to the 83rd Infantry Division on August 17, so the 121st was trucked back to Dinan for a rest. Sheffloe had noticed during the campaign that his 38-year-old squad sergeant was frequently missing from the unit. "I think he was suffering some sort of mental strain," he explained. "He couldn't handle the job." To fill the gap, Lieutenant Kapuscinski promoted Sheffloe to sergeant.

While Sheffloe and his regiment were outside Dinan, a United Service Organization (USO) troupe performed songs, juggled, and told jokes from the back of a truck. As another treat, the company was trucked to a series of tents for showers.

"Take off all your clothes," someone ordered. The naked men then filed into the showers, where they were given a bar of soap. Upon exiting they were issued new underwear and socks. They were given no towels, but by the time they made it back to their dirty shirts and pants they were dry.

"It felt good," said Sheffloe. "It was the only shower I had." The men returned to the bivouac area and were surprised to find an ambulance. Another company had had an arms inspection during which one man pulled out his pistol and accidentally shot the man in front of him.

Since Dinan was designated off limits to soldiers, Lieutenant Kapuscinski appointed Sheffloe and another soldier as military policemen for two nights. They patrolled the town in a jeep with a driver. Their only action came one night when a bordello madam burst into the café where Sheffloe and his partners were drinking wine with the proprietor's family and complained that drunken soldiers were looking for her place. She wanted nothing to do with them, so the two temporary MPs confronted what turned out to be two drunk medics and told them to return to their unit.

While Sheffloe and his colleagues rested, the Army made plans. On August 18, Maj. Gen. Troy Middleton, the VIII Corps commander, tasked the 8th, 2nd, and 29th Infantry Divisions and a detachment of the 6th Armored Division to attack the port city of Brest, the westernmost port in Brittany, which the 6th Armored had surrounded 10 days earlier. Only a trickle of supplies was making it through the port of Cherbourg, and the newly liberated port of St. Malo was not ready to handle operations. The Americans needed another port. Middleton needed to open Brest. The irony of the battle for St. Malo and Brest was that the ports were too far from the front after the rapid advance to the

German borders and were never used.

After three days of rest, the 121st trucked to an area 20 miles north of Brest. As the men dismounted, Lieutenant Kapuscinski told Sheffloe the lieutenant colonel wanted to see him. Sheffloe found him atop a haystack. The lieutenant colonel pointed to the distance.

"I want you to lead a patrol out there a couple thousand yards to see what you can see," he told Sheffloe, who gathered up five men and headed toward Brest over a grassy field.

Sheffloe led his squad over a rise and spotted a young lady washing clothes in a stream. The Americans surprised her, but fortunately one man, Pfc. Michael Klein, spoke French. The

Bundesarchiv Bild 1011-586-2215-25A; Photo: Reich



German parachute troops occupy a dugout in the French hedgerows in the presence of a dead American soldier.

young lady said that the Germans had left a day or two earlier and then led them to her house where two families were staying.

"Stupidly," recalled Sheffloe, "all six of us went in and drank wine and accepted hugs and kisses." When a Frenchman asked, "Qui est le chef (Who is the leader)?" Klein replied that he was, but Sheffloe interrupted him. "I am the chef. Chef-loe!" The Frenchmen understood who was in charge. Fortified by the wine and with intelligence on the enemy, Sheffloe reported to Lieutenant Kapuscinski what he had discovered about the Germans.

The Americans slowly pushed the Germans deeper into Brest. Key to the American advance was control of the skies. "All the way through we had four airplanes lazing above us," recalled Sheffloe. "We were grateful we had them over us."

Fighter bombers would peel out of the sky one after the other and strafe targets. The men never cheered when the planes blew up ground targets. While the 2nd Battalion log book referenced several incidents of the fighters strafing friendly lines, Sheffloe never witnessed any.

On the morning of September 10, Sheffloe's 2nd Battalion attacked the Germans. In preparation, men laid out fluorescent panels to signal their locations to the circling fighter planes while American Sherman and British Churchill tanks, as well as tank destroyers, moved up.

"I was made aware of the British tanks supporting us," said Sheffloe, "but I never saw them."

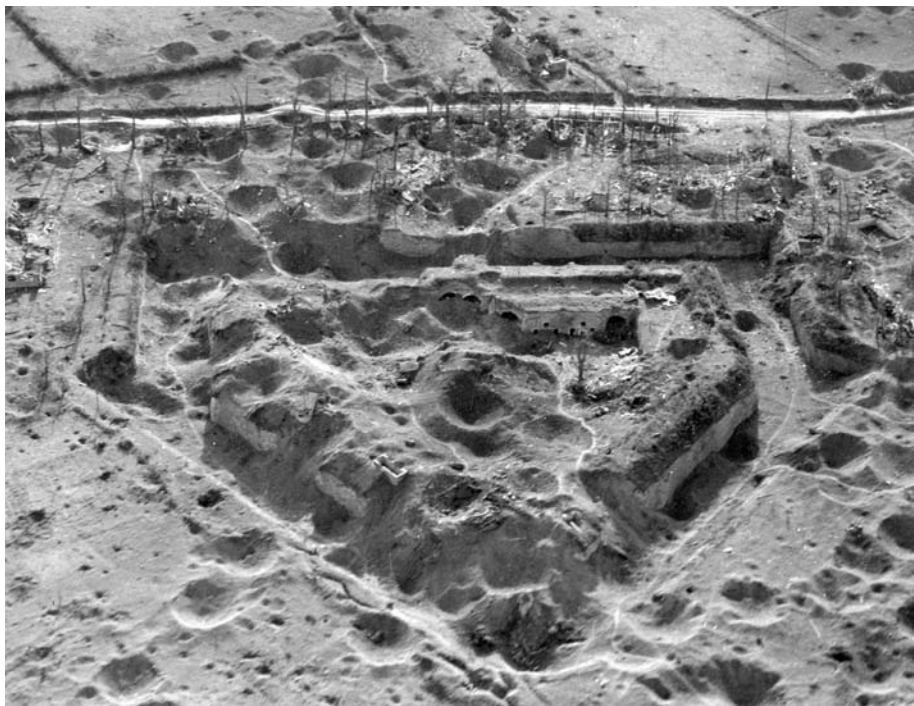
Sheffloe's squad came out of a wooded area near the Penfeld River and spotted Fort Boughan, a 20-foot-high, cross-shaped blockhouse surrounded by a moat. Deep craters from American bombing pocked the gravelly earth.

Once the men dispersed into the craters, Sheffloe heard the company commander order the platoon to move out over Lieutenant Kapuscinski's SRC-536 radio (known as a handie-talkie, but which Sheffloe and his men referred to as a walkie-talkie). Just then a shot rang out. A sniper's bullet tore through Kapuscinski's bicep and cut a three-inch gash across his chest. By the time Sheffloe made his way over to Kapuscinski, the lieutenant was going into shock as a medic bandaged him. The captain then radioed for the platoon to hold its position, but 10 men had already moved out. Kapuscinski gave Sheffloe the map and told





**ABOVE:** A watercolor sketch by George Cape, a friend of Sheffloe's, depicts the day Sheffloe was wounded outside Fort Boughan on September 10, 1944. **BELOW:** The multiple craters surrounding this French fort outside Brest were similar to the terrain around Fort Boughan. Sheffloe spent most of the day in a crater with a bullet wound in his chest.



National Archives

him, "Bring them back."

The time was about noon.

Sheffloe ran 50 yards from bomb crater to bomb crater and told each group to move back. Then he ran back to his lieutenant, but the men had not followed. Kapuscinski told him to go back, so Sheffloe repeated his round. As he headed back to Kapuscinski the second time, Sheffloe ducked into a crater and climbed out. Just as he cleared the rim, the German bullet struck him in his lower right back. Someone

yelled, "Get down!" but they were too late. Sheffloe fell into the crater.

"It was like a baseball bat to my ribcage," Sheffloe recalled.

The bullet had entered his lower chest cavity, destroying ribs and tearing his lung and liver before exiting through the right side of his chest. He lay with his head at the bottom of the crater and his feet elevated. As he breathed, he could hear a sucking sound as air and blood were drawn into his lung. Sheffloe's mind began an

instant replay of his entire life. Soon his respiration rate increased and his breathing became short. No one came to his immediate aid. Fearful of the sniper, the men stayed in their craters. Sheffloe was alone.

After a little while, an aid man jumped into Sheffloe's crater, showering him with rocks and gravel. The medic cut off Sheffloe's field jacket and shirt, sprinkled sulfa powder over the wound, and applied a compress. He prepared a shot of morphine but stopped.

"I can't give you morphine," he explained. "It slows down your respiration."

Instead, the medic unscrewed a canteen, removed a folded spoon out of its cap, poured water into it, and placed it on Sheffloe's lips. The medic then put a raincoat over Sheffloe and placed his helmet over his face.

The medic and Sheffloe remained in the crater for almost four hours. Sometime after 4 PM, two medics, one holding a litter and the other a Red Cross flag, descended into the crater. They got Sheffloe onto the litter and somehow hauled him up the steep slope. They carried him a quarter mile to a waiting jeep for a rough ride back to an aid station.

The jeep arrived at a house used as the battalion aid station, and the medics carried Sheffloe's stretcher into the basement. They were bringing him down the stairs feet first when the blood that collected in his chest cavity suddenly poured out of the litter, showering the steps in red liquid.

Downstairs, a medic filling out tags asked, "Are you spitting out tobacco juice?" The little bit of levity made Sheffloe smile. "He was trying to make me feel like everything would be okay," explained Sheffloe. It worked. A doctor gave Sheffloe plasma and put a Vaseline gauze bandage on the wound.

His injury addressed, Sheffloe was put in an ambulance headed to a regimental collecting point. He was then transported to the 100th Evacuation Hospital. When he arrived after dark, a nurse told him that Lieutenant Kapuscinski had been asking about him. That meant a lot to Sheffloe.

"I'm proud to say I was his favorite," Sheffloe explained, "because he selected me for the good and the bad. When he drew patrols I got them because he could rely on me."

Later that night, Sheffloe was taken to a surgery tent, where doctors removed debris from his wounds. They also performed a phrenic nerve crush on the right side of his throat that paralyzed his diaphragm, diminishing the respiratory movements of his injured lung. They finished by replacing his Vaseline gauze bandage.

Medical protocol dictated that soldiers with chest wounds could not be transported by air for seven days. Once Sheffloe passed that mark on September 17, he was loaded onto a C-47 and flown back to England. Upon arrival at the 121st U.S. Army General Hospital, he was wheeled into surgery and woke up in a private room. A nurse cared for him as he went in and out of consciousness. When he awoke, he would ask for water, and she would give him a piece of water soaked gauze to suck on.

Eventually, Sheffloe improved enough to be placed in a special ward for chest wounds. It was there that he realized the private room was for patients who were not expected to survive. “The only time I saw that room used was when a guy died in it,” he said.

At the end of September, Sheffloe was transferred to the 140th General Hospital in southern England, where he would remain for the rest of the war, going in and out of surgery.

“The first month I didn’t do much but try to live,” he explained.



National Archives

Doctors eventually put a patch over the hole in his lung. He developed an empyema, an infectious pocket of pus between his lung and chest cavity. Doctors had to insert a tube into his chest to drain the fluid. It took six months to heal. At Christmastime, he was running a fever when a small British band came through the ward. Although he was a Protestant, he requested the Catholic hymn “Ave Maria.” The band’s violinist played the song and moved on.

Sheffloe saw a lot of people wheeled in and out of the ward. Most had suffered artillery or mortar wounds. He made friends with Private Harry Kornfeld, previously a jeweler from Brooklyn, who spent months in the ward. He also became friends with a 5th Infantry Division soldier named Private E.G. Simpkins from Kansas City, Missouri who had been shot by one of his own soldiers at night when he

National Archives



**ABOVE:** Red Cross markers denote this hospital evacuation center in France. Sheffloe received his first surgery in a tent hospital like this. **LEFT:** Wounded soldiers check out the day’s Christmas events at the 140th U.S. Army General Hospital. The soldier standing on the right is Private Harry Kornfeld, who became friends with Sheffloe during their stay at the hospital.

returned from a patrol at St. Nazaire. Simpkins and the man who fired the shot had been new to combat. It reminded Sheffloe why he always departed and returned to the same spot when on patrol. “I always did that,” he said.

Sheffloe spent most of his time in bed, recovering from surgeries and reading books. Once he became ambulatory, he could put on slippers and walk himself to the bathroom. He rarely went outside. One day in March, a nurse and a ward sergeant took him outside to walk in the snow.

Sheffloe was finally scheduled to return to the United States on May 8, 1945, but peace got in the way. In Reims, France, the Germans surrendered. Sheffloe was issued his uniform and bussed to another building in the hospital complex, where some girls came out to greet him. They all went to a dance in a mess hall and stayed out until 10 PM.

When Sheffloe returned to his ward, he learned he would not be going home until May 10. That day he boarded the troopship *SS Brazil* along with many other wounded men and returning Eighth Air Force crewmen. He got an unpleasant shock as he boarded. The soldier who had threatened to shoot him back near Dinard walked up to him and said, “I heard you got shot in the ass.” Sheffloe never saw him again.

After the journey across the Atlantic Ocean,

Sheffloe’s first stop was Halloran General Hospital on Staten Island, New York, then a five-day train ride to McCaw General Hospital in Walla Walla, Washington, where he received a 60-day convalescent furlough.

Sheffloe took a series of trains to his home in Crookston, Minnesota. While there he learned that the first atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. He hoped this meant the war was over and he could stay home longer, but the Japanese resisted. Soon, he boarded a train to begin the journey back to Walla Walla. When he changed trains in Spokane, Washington, on August 14, he learned that Japan had finally surrendered. He got back to the hospital six hours late, at 6 AM, and turned in his uniform. No one cared that he was officially AWOL.

At the end of August 1945, Sergeant Mortimer Sheffloe, who had come close to losing his life on a foreign battlefield at the age of 19, became Mort Sheffloe, civilian and proud combat veteran—aged 20.

*Frequent contributor Kevin M. Hymel is the research director for Sovereign Media and author of Patton’s Photographs: War as He Saw It. He also leads tours of General George S. Patton’s battlefields for Stephen Ambrose Historical Tours, which include some of the places where Mort Sheffloe fought.*



# Midnight in **Iron Bottom Sound**

AMERICAN PT-BOATS THWARTED A TOKYO EXPRESS RUN  
ON DECEMBER 7, 1942, NEAR EMBATTLED GUADALCANAL.

BY JOHN DOMAGALSKI



Shortland Harbor was bustling with activity during the late morning hours of December 7, 1942. A group of warships were slowly getting underway, making for the open sea. The anchorage, positioned in the northern portion of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, was the home to a forward operating base of the Imperial Japanese Navy.

Eleven destroyers departed by 11 AM under the command of Captain Torajiro Sato. Their destination was the embattled island of Guadalcanal, located more than 300 miles to the southeast. American and Japanese forces had been struggling for control of Guadalcanal since American

Sato's force was known as the Reinforcement Unit because of the nature of its mission. He had to rely on the speed of his destroyers to make the run to Guadalcanal, hopefully undetected, arriving under the cover of darkness. The drum clusters were then to be tossed over the side in the direction of land once at a designated drop point on the western end of Guadalcanal. Personnel ashore were to use ropes to pull the drums to the beach. Sato's force would then depart the area at high speed for the return trip to Shortland.

Much of the voyage south was through a narrow body

National Archives



**ABOVE:** The Japanese destroyer *Ariaka* was one of the fast destroyers of the Imperial Japanese Navy that attempted a supply run down the Slot in the Solomon Islands but was turned back by aggressive U.S. Navy PT boats on the night of December 7, 1942. **LEFT:** U.S. Navy PT boats were small but swift and armed to the teeth with machine guns, cannons, and torpedo tubes. This PT boat was photographed during a night training exercise.

Marines landed on the island in early August. The intense battle raged on land, in the air, at sea, and in supply chain logistics.

The Japanese were slowly losing the fight in all aspects of the campaign. The Imperial Navy, reeling from a series of disastrous naval defeats in November, had been unable to deliver supplies to the beleaguered soldiers on the island using traditional transportation methods. Naval commanders instead devised an innovative plan using destroyers and drums to transport supplies. American sailors dubbed the supply runs the "Tokyo Express."

Heavy metal drums, normally used for oil or gasoline, were cleaned and sterilized before being partially loaded with food and medical supplies. An internal air pocket was left in place to ensure buoyancy. The containers were placed on the decks of destroyers for the voyage south and tied together in clusters of up to 10. Each warship could hold between 200 and 240 drums. Three destroyers, carrying no drums, served as escorts for the night.

of water known as the Slot. Lined with parallel rows of islands on each side, the passage led directly to Guadalcanal. American planes regularly roamed the area looking for targets, while coastwatchers—Allied spies—were positioned on various islands on the lookout for Japanese ships.

Sato hoped to be able to slip through the area undetected. Twelve land-based Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighter planes and eight seaplanes provided an umbrella of air protection part of the way down the Slot. An alert coastwatcher, however, spotted the ship movement and radioed the information to the Allied command.

The warning sent American airmen on Guadalcanal scrambling to get planes into the air. The Japanese fighters turned back at 4:25 PM, leaving only the eight floatplanes for air cover. The Reinforcement Unit was attacked by 13 American dive bombers a mere 15 minutes later. The strike was beaten back with the loss of several attackers, but not before one Japanese warship sustained damage.

A near miss bomb killed 17 sailors aboard *Nowaki*. It left



the destroyer with a flooded engine room and dead in the water without power. She left the formation under tow by *Naganami* with *Ariake* and *Arashi* acting as escorts for the return trip to Shortland. Sato pressed on toward Guadalcanal with his remaining seven ships.

As the planes tangled with the Tokyo Express over the Slot, American sailors on the small island of Tulagi near Guadalcanal began formulating a plan of action. No large warships were in the area to meet the approaching enemy ships. The only available weapons were PT boats.

The patrol torpedo boats—PT boats for short—were among the newest and smallest warships in the United States Navy. Measuring just 80 feet in length and weighing about 50 tons, the boats' main weapons were torpedoes and speed. The first contingent of boats arrived at Guadalcanal in October 1942. Their mission was to patrol the waters of Iron Bottom Sound in search of Japanese ships. The body of water, located just off Guadalcanal, had been the scene of a series of fierce naval battles in recent months.

Officers at the Tulagi PT base worked quickly to devise an operational plan for the night. The coastwatcher's warning, coupled with the air attack and additional aerial reconnaissance reports, helped to narrow the Japanese estimated time of arrival. The situation on land dictated that the supply drop point would likely be somewhere between Cape Esperance on the northwestern tip of Guadalcanal and Tassafaronga to the east.

Eight PT boats were available for the night's mission. The boats were commanded by Lieutenant Rollin Westholm. The leader of Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Two, Westholm had arrived in the area only weeks earlier. This would be the first action for Westholm and his flagship, *PT-109*. Although the PT boat would later become famous for her final skipper—future President John F. Kennedy—she was currently just one of many small torpedo boats operating on the front lines of the South Pacific.

The PT boats moved across Iron Bottom Sound toward the west end of Guadalcanal as complete darkness overtook the fading daylight. At the same time, Captain Sato was approaching the area from the north at a high rate of speed. With the Japanese destroyers and American PT boats on a collision course, the setup for the evening battle was complete.

Westholm divided his PT boats into three groups, two patrol and one strike force. Each group would be in a position to provide mutual support to the others once the enemy was located.

The boats were to use radios to stay in con-

USSBush.com and Ted Mayhugh



PT-king.gdinc.com



**Lieutenant Rollin Westholm (left) and Lieutenant John Searles led the coordinated attack against the Japanese destroyers attempting to deliver supplies through the Slot. Westholm sailed in *PT-109*.**



**An American sailor shoulders .50-caliber ammunition as he reloads one of the heavy machine guns aboard a PT boat somewhere in the Pacific.**

tact and report Japanese movements. However, the communication had to be clear and effective if Westholm's plan was to work. Each PT was equipped with a radio unit mounted in the charthouse. The equipment operated at a very high frequency. The set could transmit voice or Morse code the distance of the horizon or about 70 miles using a 20-foot whip antenna.

The equipment, however, was originally designed for planes and was plagued with problems when used by PTs. Atmospheric conditions, the Japanese use of the same frequencies, and the constant pounding endured by the sets when the boats ran at high speed all combined to make radio communication unreliable. Lacking radar and more advanced radio instruments, the PT boat captains had no choice but to make it work.

The first patrol group, comprised of *PT-109* and *PT-43*, commanded by Lieutenant Charles Tilden, would idle along a line paralleling the Guadalcanal coast from Kokumbona (located

just east of Tassafaronga) to Cape Esperance. The second patrol group of two PTs was assigned to the area off the northwest tip of Guadalcanal. This force consisted of Lieutenant Robert Searles in *PT-48* and Lieutenant Henry "Stilly" Taylor in *PT-40*. Both were veteran PT skippers who had arrived at Tulagi with the first boats in October and had since seen plenty of action. The two units were positioned to locate the Japanese either during their initial approach to the area or during their final run to the suspected dropoff point.

The remaining four boats comprised the strike group. Positioned to the south of Savo Island, out of sight of the approaching Japanese, it included Lieutenant John Searles in *PT-59*, Lieutenant Frank Freeland in *PT-44*, Lieutenant (j.g.) Marvin Pettit in *PT-36*, and Lieutenant (j.g.) Lester Gamble in *PT-37*.

Westholm was comfortable that the plan offered a good chance of success. "The disposition of the boats at the time was considered the best possible to meet all possible approaches of the enemy," he commented. The squadron commander felt that none of the groups could be outflanked by the Japanese destroyers. The PT boats also had help from above in the form of a float-plane. "One SOC was in air from 11:00 PM to 2:45 AM to drop flares as requested."

The blanket of darkness shrouded the final movements of the Japanese ships. With no additional information available on the approaching enemy, Westholm's plan remained unchanged in the final hours before the encounter.

The second patrol group and strike force proceeded directly to their assigned positions. Westholm carefully planned the route of his group to maximize its chances of contacting the enemy. "The two boats on the Kokumbona to Esperance patrol had deliberately timed their run to be just east of Tassafaronga headed west at midnight in order that nothing would outflank the boats and to be able to go up the coast and intercept any ships which had slipped by Esperance and were proceeding east along the Guadalcanal coast," he later wrote.

Westholm stood patiently in the small bridge area of *PT-109*, known as the conn, waiting for the enemy to arrive. His executive officer, Ensign Bryant Larson, was at his side. They looked out into the pitch black night searching for any movement in Iron Bottom Sound. Tension was thick as the pair faced the real possibility of encountering the enemy for the first time. They hoped the enemy would not slip through the various patrol groups.

"The night actions meant limited visibility with patrol sections scattered over a wide area," Larson later recalled. "Anything we

could do to get a better track on the Express and so bring maximum boats to the attack was worth trying.”

The bridge area was small and cramped with a wheel centrally located. An angled instrument panel just above the wheel contained a variety of gauges, including three sets of tachometers and a compass. The area to the right of the control station was dominated by the forward .50-caliber machine-gun tub, but a small open hatch leading to the chartroom below marked the end of the conn area.

By 11 PM, Captain Sato was making his final approach to Guadalcanal. His destroyers were pointed toward the passageway between Savo Island and the tip of Cape Esperance. He unknowingly was on a collision course with at least one group of PT boats.

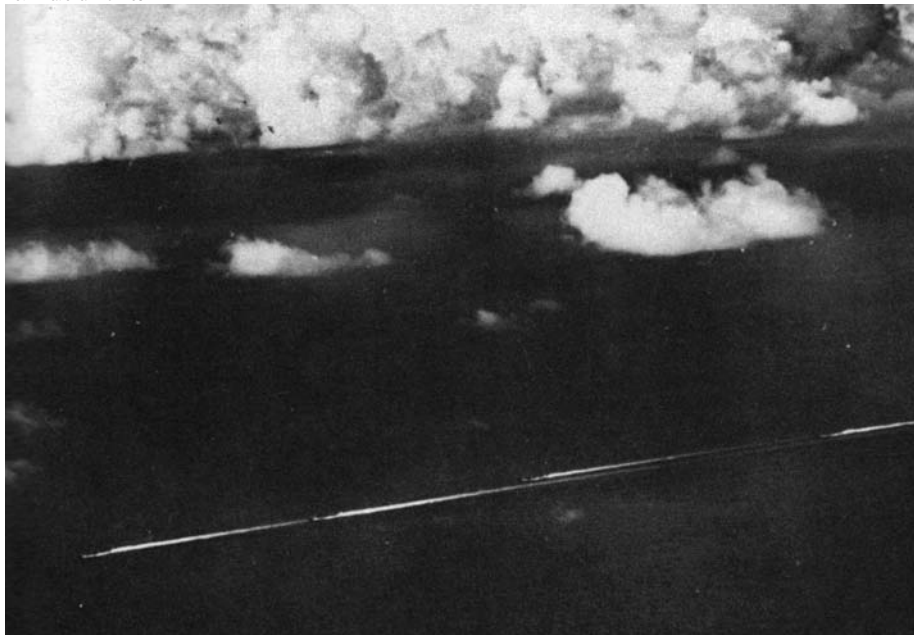
The action started off the northwest end of Guadalcanal at 11:20 PM when lookouts aboard *PT-40* and *PT-48* spotted a group of ships coming directly toward their position. “These boats at that time were about three miles north-northwest of Cape Esperance and the enemy ships were on a line of bearing, distance one and a half to two miles on a course about 130 degrees true,” Westholm wrote of the initial contact. The course put the enemy ships on a southeasterly heading.

The confrontation that followed developed quickly and then moved at a fast pace. As happened with many PT-boat battles, events often occurred simultaneously or in rapid succession. This battle was fought in the dark of night with occasional flashes of gunfire appearing as speckles against the black backdrop.

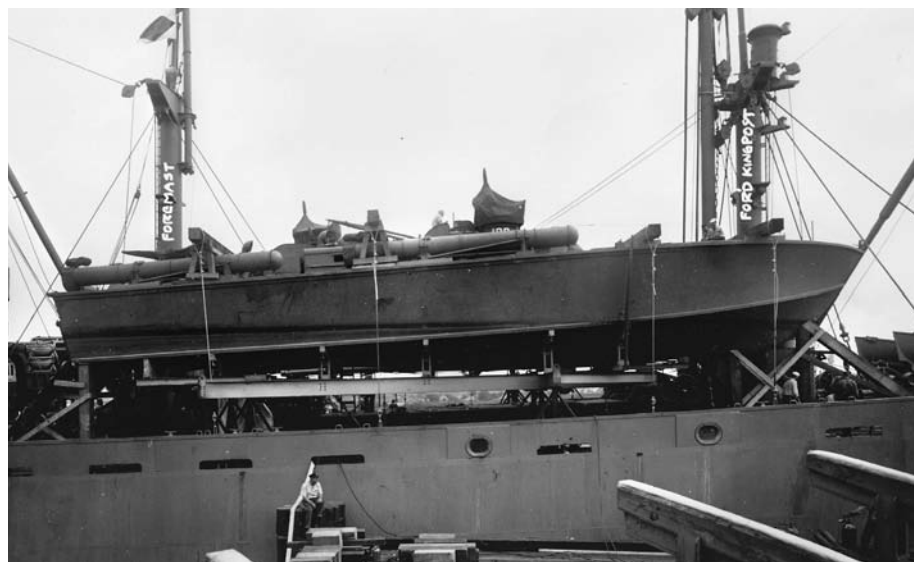
Veteran captains Searles and Taylor knew exactly what to do after sighting the enemy. Both immediately turned and added speed in an attempt to gain a firing position ahead of the Japanese ships. One of the engines on *PT-48* abruptly failed. The malfunction could not have happened at a worse time. The PT was quickly spotted by alert Japanese lookouts just as the boat started to slow. The lead destroyers immediately opened fire as Searles struggled to get his boat out of harm’s way. He barely cleared the bow of one enemy warship when a second engine failed, slowing *PT-48* down to a mere idle. With his main advantage of speed gone, Searles became an easy and inviting target for Japanese gunners.

Alert to his comrade’s predicament, Taylor swung *PT-40* around in a tight circle to reverse course. He then ran his boat between the idling *PT-48* and the approaching destroyers in a daring maneuver to take the attention away from his ailing companion. Taylor ordered smoke as he opened the throttles to gain speed. *PT-40*

Both: National Archives



**ABOVE:** Photographed in 1942, four Japanese destroyers head down the Slot to reinforce and resupply troops on the island of Guadalcanal in the Solomons. The fight for Guadalcanal exhausted both the U.S. and Japanese navies and lasted for seven months. **BELOW:** A navy photographer snapped a series of pictures on August 20, 1942 of *PT-109* sitting on the deck of the Liberty ship *Joseph Stanton* in preparation for the voyage to Panama. The photo was taken at the Norfolk Navy Yard in Virginia.



was headed back into Iron Bottom Sound.

The ruse worked as the two leading Japanese destroyers turned to follow *PT-40*. Occasional inaccurate gunfire fell close by, but *PT-40* was not hit. Taylor poured on speed and soon lost his pursuers as the two destroyers reversed course to rejoin the main group. Searles took advantage of the situation to slowly move to the opposite side of Savo Island, where he dropped anchor close to shore.

The captains of the first patrol group successfully radioed out a contact report enabling others to join the action. “The striking force after hearing of the contact deployed and them-

selves made contact at 11:35 PM,” Westholm later reported. “The enemy force which had originally been coming in fast slowed down at about that time.”

All four boats of the strike force moved toward the enemy for a torpedo attack. Lester Gamble pulled *PT-37* into the lead and after closing on the Japanese formation unleashed two torpedoes toward the first destroyer. He was unable to observe any results after turning for cover.

Right behind Gamble was *PT-59*, which closed and fired two torpedoes. The target ship turned sharply to avoid the fish, but in the





Crewmen aboard the *PT-59*, one of the swift U.S. Navy craft that took part in the December 7, 1942, action against Japanese destroyers, inspect the wreckage of a Japanese submarine in February 1943. During that month the Japanese abandoned Guadalcanal and acknowledged a significant defeat during World War II in the Pacific.

process exposed other vessels behind her. Searles believed his torpedoes might have hit one of the distant warships.

*PT-59* passed within 100 yards of the destroyer *Kuroshio* as Searles turned to make his getaway. It was extremely dangerous for the wooden PT-boat to be so close to a powerful warship. Searles told his crew to get ready to fire every available weapon. The PT and destroyer opened fire simultaneously. It was anything but a fair fight as *Kuroshio* was well over 300 feet long and displaced more than 2,000 tons. Her 5-inch guns could easily blast the PT to pieces with a single hit.

The little torpedo boat could only muster meager firepower in comparison. Bullets from the PT's machine guns and 20mm cannon raked the destroyer's deck, gun enclosures, and bridge area. A motor machinist's mate helped the cause when he leaned out of the engine room hatch to take a few shots with a rifle at the destroyer's bridge. The barrage of gunfire caused 10 Japanese casualties but no substantial damage.

Gunners aboard the destroyer returned fire at a range so close they could not miss. The PT boat was hit at least 10 times by heavy caliber machine-gun fire. Two bullets pierced one of the gun tubs, setting fire to a belt of .50-caliber ammunition. Gunners Mate 2nd Class Cletus Osborne stayed in the tub and calmly detached the flaming belt of bullets. He tossed it on deck, where the fire was extinguished. The encounter was short and furious, but Searles was able to clear the area. *PT-59* miraculously survived the frightening encounter with no casualties, although the captain of *Kuroshio* reported that

he had sunk the intrepid little boat.

A short three minutes after the first boat of the strike force attacked, the last two PTs of the group moved in for their torpedo runs. Marvin Pettit conned *PT-36* close enough to fire a four torpedo spread at one of the leading destroyers. He sped away untouched believing he scored at least one hit. *PT-44* then took aim at one of the last destroyers in formation and fired four torpedoes. Frank Freeland was certain that two torpedoes scored direct hits as he turned his boat away. A destroyer was thought to have been sunk as a result of the encounter after a series of tremendous explosions were observed.

Westholm's boat was far from the action when the battle started, but it did not take long for *PT-109* to speed to the area. "When contact was reported by the boats off Northwest [Guadalcanal] they increased speed to about sixteen knots and proceeded westward up the Guadalcanal coast close in to shore," Westholm reported of his patrol group's action. He monitored radio reports from the various PT boats as he moved northwest toward the sounds and flashes of the fight.

After tangling with torpedo boats for almost 25 minutes, Captain Sato attempted to reassemble his destroyers for the final run to the Guadalcanal coast to drop off the supply drums. The two approaching PT boats of Westholm's group and the sighting of the SOC plane patrolling above were enough to force him to abort the supply mission. Sato ordered his force to withdraw and immediately set a course for the Slot.

Westholm had no way of knowing the Japanese force was already withdrawing as his pair

of PT boats continued to move toward the reported action. "The *PT's* 109 and 43 continued up the coast and arrived off Esperance about 12:15 AM having sighted no enemy ships," he reported. "At this time the SOC reported a group of enemy ships about seven miles northwest of Esperance." Westholm gave the order to increase speed and give chase, hoping to get a shot off at the fleeing enemy.

One of *PT-109's* three machinist's mates was stationed in the small engine room near the stern as the boat sped toward the departing enemy. The cramped quarters were loaded with all the machinery needed to keep the boat moving. Westholm's order to increase speed kept the sailor busy shifting gears to make sure each of the three engines poured on continuous power.

National Archives



PT boat crewmen ready torpedoes for firing. Early in World War II, the U.S. Navy experienced great frustration with torpedoes that often malfunctioned.

The extra speed did not help. "At about 12:25 AM the SOC reported the enemy ships were about 15 miles northwest of Esperance and headed away at high speed," Westholm reported. It was clear to him the escaping enemy was beyond reach, and the two PT boats returned to their original patrol route.

At about the same time Westholm was giving up the chase, *PT-37* was retiring southeast when lookouts spotted a light on land about five miles southeast of Cape Esperance. Lester Gamble requested illumination from above.

"The flare showed a large ship, bow on the beach, and the *PT-37* fired her two remaining torpedoes at it," Westholm explained. "The ship was hit, but it is almost certain that this ship was one which was previously aground."

The squadron commander's conclusion was probably correct as four Japanese transports had been run aground several weeks earlier in the area in a futile attempt to deliver reinforce-

ments during the naval Battle of Guadalcanal.

After returning to the Kokumbona-Cape Esperance patrol line, crewmen on *PT-109* and *PT-43* also saw something on land. "At about 1:15 AM a light was observed on the beach one mile southeast of Esperance. Another flare was requested," a cautious Westholm recalled. It was worthy of further investigation because American sailors had no way of knowing if a supply drop had actually been made during the confusion of the night battle.

"It revealed nothing except some tents or grass huts," he said of the flare. Westholm decided to leave it for an aircraft to further investigate later. "The plane strafed these but no activity was noted."

Iron Bottom Sound reverted to silence after the Japanese force escaped to the north. "Nothing more was sighted during the night," Westholm reported.

The PT boats were scattered among various positions across the area in the immediate aftermath of the action. Westholm tried to keep track of each boat as best he could. *PTs* 36, 44, and 59 returned to Tulagi after making their torpedo runs.

"The *PT-40* reported having trouble with gasoline suction and requested permission to take station southeast of Savo," Westholm noted. "This was granted." The boat eventually made her way back to base without assistance.

There was one boat whose position was unknown. "At 4:00 AM the *PT-48* revealed her position and requested assistance," Westholm recalled. He was by now certain the Japanese were gone for the night. "The *PT-109* and *PT-43* proceeded to her position."

*PT-48* suffered engine trouble and fled to the far side of Savo Island and beached early in the skirmish. At about 4:15 AM, *PT-109* arrived on the scene and pulled the stranded boat free. The three PT boats then returned to Tulagi.

*PT-109* moored at the base at 5:20 AM. The long night was over for the exhausted crew. Rollin Westholm and Bryant Larson were now combat veterans after experiencing a full-fledged sea battle. Westholm began work on the required report. He gathered information from his boat captains to determine the sequence of events and the probable damage inflicted on the enemy. Sorting out the facts was a difficult undertaking, but he concluded that one Japanese destroyer was probably sunk and some torpedoes may have hit other ships.

The sinking claim was based on reports and observations from various boats. Of particular note were the two explosions reported by *PT-44* in the aftermath of her torpedo run. The timing seemed to be supported by two other

National Archives



**PT-105 is seen among a group of PT boats on maneuvers in the Atlantic shortly after completion in July 1942. The initial group of boats had no armament forward of the conn area, but the space was used later in the war for more firepower.**

observations, including one from Westholm's own boat. At about 11:50 PM crewmen aboard *PT-109* heard "a terrific explosion" to the north, which they attributed to a torpedo hit on a Japanese destroyer. At about the same time, *PT-40* was returning to the battle area after slipping away from two chasing destroyers. Her crewmen reported seeing three flashes thought to be torpedo hits in the area between Cape Esperance and Savo Island.

Westholm praised the efforts of three crewmen on *PT-59* for their exploits during their close brush with the enemy destroyer. For Cletus Osborne, whose actions with a burning ammunition belt were nothing short of heroic, he called for high commendation. Osborne was later awarded the Silver Star. Westholm also highlighted the actions of two additional sailors who were manning guns during the encounter. "They maintained a high rate of fire on [a destroyer] at close range for a period of several minutes," he wrote. Westholm thought the pair "should be commended for their skill and valor."

Contrary to what was reported by the individual boat captains and concluded by Westholm in his official report, none of the 12 torpedoes fired by the PTs hit Japanese ships. A variety of circumstances could explain the explosions reported by the various torpedo boat crews. Some of the weapons may have exploded prematurely, while others could have detonated at the end of their runs. Flashes from enemy guns may also have been mistaken for torpedo hits. An examination of postwar records reveals that no Japanese destroyers were seriously damaged or sunk as a result of the encounter.

The December 7, 1942, battle in which Rollin Westholm led *PT-109* and seven other boats against a group of Japanese destroyers did not change the course of the Guadalcanal campaign. The encounter was, however, clearly an American victory. Facing great odds, the brave PT sailors turned back a Japanese supply run that otherwise would have succeeded. It was accomplished without suffering the loss of a single man. Decades later, an American historian wrote that the battle had "cast a different light over the date of December 7 in American naval annals." As a result of the heroic effort on the part of the PT men, the Japanese supply situation on Guadalcanal remained serious.

Admiral William Halsey, commanding U.S. operations during the Guadalcanal campaign, later reviewed Westholm's action report and sent a short note to Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet. "They are performing heroic services and it is confidently expected that they will set a high record of valor and achievement in the service of their country."

It was a small victory in the ongoing Guadalcanal campaign fought by brave sailors manning small boats.

---

*John J. Domagalski is the author of three books on World War II. Into the Dark Water: The Story of Three Officers and PT-109 (Casemate, 2014), Sunk in Kula Gulf (Potomac Books, 2012), and Lost at Guadalcanal (McFarland, 2010). His articles have appeared in WWII History, Naval History, and WWII Quarterly magazines. He is a graduate of Northern Illinois University and lives near Chicago.*



# TRIAL OF THE Nazi Ministers

A DISILLUSIONED PROSECUTOR LOOKS BACK AT  
COURT PROCEEDINGS THAT GAINED WORLD ATTENTION.

BY ALAN WAITE

Following the occupation of a defeated Nazi Germany, the victorious Allies initiated a prearranged plan for prosecuting captured Axis officials for war crimes. Throughout Europe, British, French, Soviet, and American military courts, along with various civilian courts and high-level Allied tribunals, tried hundreds of Axis leaders and underlings. Scores were executed and hundreds imprisoned. Few were exonerated or released, at least in the initial postwar years from 1946 to 1947.

After the trial of the major Nazi leaders under a multinational tribunal at Nuremberg (the IMT or International Military Tribunal Case) in 1945-1946, the Americans tried dozens of second-level officials in a series of 12 trials. The law authorizing these trials was known as Control Council Law No. 10 (CCL10). The 11th of the CCL10 trials to be organized but last to conclude was the so-called Wilhelmstrasse or Ministries Case (*U.S. vs. Ernst Von Weizsacker, et. al., 1947-49*).

In the early 1980s while completing a graduate degree, I wrote a thesis on the leniency given defendants in the Ministries Case. My research led to a brief correspondence with Hitler's architect and Reich Minister for War Production, Nuremberg defendant and author Albert Speer, along with dozens of interviews with Holocaust survivors, former Nazi Party members, former members of the SS, and ultimately a former Ministries Case prosecutor, Alvin Landis.

I spoke with Landis on two occasions, once in 1981 and again in 1983 for a combined total of 7½ hours, resulting in nearly 100 pages of transcription. The bulk of the inter-

Author's Collection



**ABOVE: Alvin Landis served as a prosecutor during the Ministries Case against war criminals of the defeated Third Reich. RIGHT: British war artist Dame Laura Knight painted this stark image of defendants in the docket during the International War Crimes Tribunal that convened in Nuremberg, Germany, to prosecute the leaders of the Nazi regime. The walls of the courtroom have been removed to reveal a glimpse of the war-ravaged city of Berlin.**

views dealt with the intricacies of the Ministries Case and controversies that had dogged the Nuremberg Trials over the years, controversies that in some areas continue today. However, some of the discussions covered topics of general historical interest, creating a fascinating picture of the time and place and the people who fought for justice, as well as those who sought to avoid it.

**AW: What's your life story before joining the prosecution at Nuremberg?**

Landis: We are Russian Jews, my family that is. I was born in Kiev, Russia (Ukraine), in 1907. My father, Oskar, immigrated to Chicago alone that same year, then sent for our family in 1909. He sold coal from a horse and wagon until he could afford to open a small clothing business. I had six brothers and sisters, and growing up in Chicago in the early part of this [20th] century toughened you up. It was in the 1920s that I acquired my progressive social and political views, which eventually led me to the Lewis Institute and the University of Chicago, and from there to the University of Illinois Law School, where I took my LLD in 1930.

The City of Chicago was looking for prosecutors in 1930, so I applied and got hired and worked in the D.A.'s office until 1933, when I became city corporate counsel. In 1937, I became assistant attorney general for Illinois and was part of the team that took down Al Capone and his mob, which gave me a small reputation in the law enforcement world.... During the war [World War II] I moved to D.C. upon my appointment as regional counsel for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, and in 1945, I took a position in the U.S. Department of the Interior's Solicitor's Office.

**How did you end up as a prosecutor at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials?**

Well, when I was with the Solicitor's Office, I shared an office with Paul Gantt, an Austrian by birth and a real up-and-comer who was selected by Brig. Gen. Telford Taylor to join one of the prosecuting teams for the 12 CCL10 tri-







als held by the United States after the big IMT (International Military Tribunal) deal was over. Taylor had become chief prosecutor for those trials—he replaced Bob Jackson, who’d handled the IMT case—and Taylor liked Gantt because Paul had a great reputation as a lawyer, spoke German, and hated what the Nazis did to Austria. Both men were young, in their 30s, and took a liking to each other right away.

When Taylor hired Gantt, he asked, “Know any other good lawyers back in the States with criminal prosecution experience?” Gantt knew about my experience in nailing Capone and his gang back in my Chicago days, so he gave Taylor my name. I found out later Paul said to Taylor, “By the way, Landis is Jewish,” and Taylor

and Americans don’t go in for things like Nazism and genocide. Did we lose relatives in the war? You bet, and it sure as hell didn’t make me love ‘em [the defendants], but being Jewish never came up while I was over there.

#### So who contacted you?

Some Army colonel called and left a message with my wife, and when I got home she looked really worried and told me, “Alvin, the Army called for you.” I said, “What the hell for? I’m over age and the war is over?” So the next day I called back, and the officer said, “Mr. Landis, General Taylor has asked personally if you will join the prosecuting team at the Nuremberg trials ... you would be in Germany for

Germans were still buried in those ruins, and dozens of remains were being hauled out of the debris each week. The taxis and streetcars were running, and the Old City walls were mostly in place—and we were surprised at how almost all of the Nazi Party rally grounds were untouched ... just outside the city. The Zeppelin field was impressive—the arena where they had the searchlights all around the rim pointing straight up into the sky ... those fellows knew how to control their people.

Now, there was no heating and no cooling, and our offices were either too cold or too hot. A lot of our people stayed with local Germans, but some of us stayed in the Grand Hotel, which the Army rebuilt for the trials in 1945–1946 to the tune of over a million bucks. This was the hotel where Hitler stayed when he attended the Nuremberg Party rallies.

We were short of office supplies—couldn’t find paper clips and staples, for example. During the entire year I was there I had milk once—it was rationed for German women with babies and small kids or Americans who’d brought their families over. But the ration for whiskey was a case a month, and you could get all the wine and beer you wanted ... which led to some interesting pretrial conferences.

You could get about 20 German marks for a buck, but few Germans wanted marks, just American dollars or even more valuable cartons of cigarettes. Cigarettes were the real currency at that time. With American cigarettes, you could get anything that you wanted, from food to anything else. One carton, for example, might get you merchandise priced at say, 500 or 600 marks.

#### Nuremberg was the “spiritual home” of Nazism, and most residents supported Hitler fanatically. How did the place feel while you were there?

You mean the people? How they felt about Hitler? Mostly the Germans would not talk to us or look us in the eye unless they had to ... they were a conquered people and acted like it, and no one talked about Hitler one way or the other; they were afraid. The only one I remember saying anything about Hitler was a former party member who cleaned our rooms each day. One day I asked him why he joined the [Nazi] party, and he said, “We had to or we couldn’t work here.” He was probably right about that, considering Nuremberg was “Hitler’s Vatican.”

#### Vatican?

The religious center of the Nazi Party ...

National Archives



During the months and even years following World War II, German civilians, such as these seen gathering anything of potential value along a destroyed boulevard, were forced to endure privations never before experienced by the German people.

said, “I don’t care if he believes in Santa Claus. Is he a good lawyer?” You see, being Jewish in America in those days was not always easy. You got hassled at times and excluded from groups and clubs and such, but I never forgot what Taylor said.

#### Was your Jewish faith brought up at all in the hiring process?

Not by the Army, but I told the colonel who first called me and he said, “So what? Military cemeteries in Europe are filled with Jews—soldiers and pilots—buried right next to Christians.”

Did it matter to you?

Well, above everything else I’m an American,

approximately one year but you can’t bring your family. Your experience and skills are just what we need.” I told him I needed to think it over and talked with my wife that night, and we decided in the end that I had to answer my country’s call ... plus we knew I would be a part of a rare moment in world history, so I agreed to go. I left for Germany in July 1947.

#### What was it like when you first set foot in Nuremberg?

The trials were held at the Palace of Justice ... most of it had survived the bombs but the city was still in ruins—just piles and piles of bricks and burned out walls. Hundreds of

### How did the Germans treat you?

That is very interesting. Overall, I was treated well, now and then smiles and pleasant nods, but mostly just ignored as if we weren't even there. Remember, those people had been reduced to poverty and mostly were just trying to stay alive one more day. You saw old women pushing carts full of wood and kids picking through bombed-out buildings that hadn't been cleared yet. Some even scooped up horse droppings to use for heating and fuel. You can't imagine what they were reduced to even two years after the end of the war.

You know, I don't think I saw one fat German in Nuremberg, too many years of not having enough good food. They were all skinny and hollow looking—wearing old clothes, a lot of them torn or sewn up several times. These people were still a world apart from us. The Germans at the Grand Hotel treated us like conquerors ... *ja bitte* this and *ja bitte* that ... but you couldn't read them at all, whether they were angry or just detached. Now, if the topic of the trials came up and you were talking with a German in the hotel, they would just clam up and the conversation would end, except for that one fellow.

Ironically, some of the men we saw cleaning up the debris were former Nazi officials—the little fish who didn't pull off big crimes but ran the show for Hitler at the local level.... These guys had been sent before German de-Nazification courts, if you want to call them courts, and sentenced to labor service cleaning up Germany.... For example, one fellow outside the Palace of Justice who had clerked in the local Nazi Party offices was sentenced to six months, five days a week, and eight hours a day clean-up duties by a de-Nazification court ... some justice in that I imagine.

### Your courts, however, handled the top officials of the German nation?

Right, the big shots—Hitler's lieutenants. We had 12 trials. The Brits, French, and the Russians ... well ... who really knows how many? I can't remember them all offhand, but we tried the doctors, the industrialists, the Army high command, the SS mobile killing squads, the judges, the guys at the top. At the same time, military courts tried the small-fry criminals, the guys who worked in the concentration camps, or the guys who murdered downed pilots, or the ones who massacred unarmed civilians. The lower level defendants had military trials and military judges. Things generally did not go well for them in those circumstances.

### How soon did you start work?

Right away. There was a stack of casebooks



National Archives

**After World War II, 23 German physicians were put on trial in Courtroom No. 1 at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg. A variety of charges against the defendants included conducting heinous medical tests on human patients.**

from prior Nuremberg trials to go through, and briefings, staff meetings, and mountains of evidence to read. Our team was divided up, and we were individually assigned to three or four defendants for prosecution. There were 16 [defendants] altogether. Generally, if we wanted something we got it, though getting requests fulfilled by the Army was at times like sprinting through snow drifts.

### Which defendants did you prosecute?

Von Krosigk [Lutz Graf Schwerin Von Krosigk, Reich Minister of Finance 1932-1945, Reich Chancellor May 1-23 1945], Stuckart [Dr. Wilhelm Stuckart, Interior Ministry State Secretary], and Lammers [Hans Lammers, Chief of the Reich Chancellery].

### Why was your trial called the Wilhelmstrasse or Ministries Case?

Because we tried the state secretaries of the major German ministries—the guys who were the real heads of the Nazi government. The fellas who drafted most of the orders and decrees, based on what their bosses told them, then saw that they were carried out. Most of their ministries were located on the Wilhelmstrasse, the street that was the seat of the German government, where Hitler's Reich Chancellery was located. So you had guys like Stuckart in the dock instead of his boss, Himmler or Dietrich [Otto Dietrich, Reich press chief] instead of Goebbels, or Lammers instead of Bormann. Without these officials,

nothing Hitler ordered could have happened. It required full cooperation from their ministries, and these guys made sure it happened the way "Der Fuhrer" ordered.

### Where was the Ministries Case trial held?

Interestingly enough, our trial was in the same courtroom as the IMT trial—where the big bosses like Göring and Hess were tried. I hoped to be able to see some of the big names from the IMT trial, Hess and Speer and Dönitz, but they were all moved to Spandau Prison in Berlin before I visited the Nuremberg prison. There were still some interesting prisoners there, though, in the prison right behind the Palace of Justice, like Hitler's personal secretary, Wolfe [Joanna Wolfe—who remained a defiantly unrepentant Hitler apologist].

### Did each defendant have competent counsel?

Absolutely—and impressive too. Those guys were on top of their game and had a great network that always knew what we were up to.

Once I went to a small town and picked up a witness we discovered who had good information about Stuckart's complicity in crimes against humanity. So I picked him up at midnight and had him in our witness safe house by 3 AM. I go to the courthouse at 8:30 AM, and Stuckart's attorney comes up to me and says, "I understand that you brought in a new witness. When can I talk to him?" I say, "I'm not certain exactly who you mean?" He smiles and says,





**ABOVE:** Lutz Graf Schwerin Von Krosigk (left) served as the Third Reich's Minister of Finance from 1923 to 1945. Dr. Wilhelm Stuckart (right) was Interior Ministry State Secretary for the Nazi regime. **TOP:** SS General Walter Schellenberg (left) served as chief of the SD Foreign Intelligence Service. SS Lt. Col. Otto Skorzeny is on the right. **LEFT:** Shortly after their liberation from a Nazi death camp, emaciated former inmates are moved from the camp to a hospital for treatment. Millions died in the concentration camps during the war, many of them murdered by the Nazis.

"No, of course not. Let me help you."

He proceeds to tell me, "His name is so-and-so, he is a lawyer and he has brown hair and blue eyes, was taken into your custody at such-and-such strasse in Aschaffenberg, and is wearing such-and-such pants and shirt with a gray sweater. He is still asleep at the moment, I understand. Does that help, Herr Landis?" That's how good they were.

#### Did you think people on your team were leaking information?

Our team? Hell no. Someone somewhere down the chain. We were a need-to-know operation but very little was confidential on so big a prosecution.

#### How well did the translation process during the trial work?

Like a top. We had some problems when people talked too fast, but those translators, I think

we had four of them working at one time, were the best. A German witness would be asked a question in English, say, and he'd answer in German, and before he was finished the translation was in our headsets. And as soon as he stopped, the translator had caught up.

#### What was the presiding judge like?

Christianson [William C. Christianson]? Nice man but sort of a weakling—not as strong as we'd hoped. Came from the Minnesota Supreme Court and had been on one of the earlier Nuremberg tribunals but not as presiding judge [Industrialists Case]. Seemed more concerned about the defendants' rights, we thought, than what those guys had actually done. But he knew the law and was fair to both sides, no doubt about that.

#### How about your prosecuting team? Who was the toughest?

That would be Bob Kempner, a great and gutsy guy who was a German who had joined our prosecuting team. Before Hitler came to power Bob had openly opposed the Nazi Party and nearly paid for it with his life. He had two doctoral degrees and was so proud about it that you could not call him "Dr. Kempner," you had to call him "Dr. Dr. Kempner." The German people were tired of the trials by the time ours started in 1947, and Bob took a lot of heat—even threats—but he worked all the harder. After what his country had been through, he believed that the rule of law was its only hope for the future, and his example inspired us all.

#### How did the defendants behave during the trial?

For the most part, they all just sat there and listened. It was nothing like the movie *Judgment at Nuremberg*. Nothing like that at all; a complete distortion ... lawyers raising hell with the

tribunal, defendants acting up like that. You couldn't even raise your voice or they came down on you like a ton of bricks. It was all according to military discipline and formal right down the line. Even when the tribunal read the sentences the defendants just stood there and stared, didn't react at all. I watched every one of them.

Same with the German defense attorneys. You could not tell at all what they thought about the things their clients did, if they approved or disapproved. They were mechanical, almost expressionless. For that matter, the German people showed no reaction during the trial either. They filled the courtroom most of the time, but they just sat there and stared no matter what crime or atrocity was being shown. Never a word, just sat in silence. I never understood any of that.

### Of all the defendants in your dock, who was the most interesting?

Schellenberg [Walter Schellenberg, SS General and Chief of the SD Foreign Intelligence Service], no question. Paul Gantt prosecuted him. We used to talk a lot about how slippery this fellow was. Schellenberg was likable, smooth, and very sharp, very handsome and personable and a skilled master spy, like the guy in the spy movies, what's his name? The Bond character? James Bond. Only Schellenberg was the one in charge and always one step ahead of everybody. He had a string of girlfriends stashed all over Europe, even the big French perfume maker, hmmm, who was she? Right, Coco Chanel. Schellenberg arranged the famous kidnapping of those British officers in Holland in 1939—the Venlo Affair—and he personally tried to bring the Duke and Duchess of Windsor to Germany from Portugal in, what, 1940? He managed to play all sides, and he survived when everyone else in the SS at his level either killed themselves or were hanged; he even talked Himmler into trying to work out a separate deal with the Allies at the end of the war. That guy was one cool customer.

### Was he a convinced Nazi?

Said he wasn't political or anti-Semitic, but the evidence proved the opposite, the letters and memos he wrote, and his interviews right after he was arrested. Yeah, he was a Nazi like the rest, or at least he played the part up and until the Third Reich was collapsing, then surprise! He was working secretly against Hitler all along! You cannot imagine how many of these guys made the same claim. Makes you wonder how, with so many high-level officials all secretly working against Hitler, just how the



**Adolf Hitler congratulates Hans Lammers, Chief of the Reich Chancellery, on the occasion of Lammers' 60th birthday, May 27, 1939. Lammers was convicted of war crimes by a 1949 tribunal and served approximately 10 percent of his 20-year sentence.**

Nazis were able to do what they did.

### How would you describe Schellenberg using just one word?

Dangerous. Complicated. Two words.

### Who did you most want to convict? Schellenberg?

Nope. All of 'em. The whole damn bunch. They were all involved in war crimes and crimes against humanity, and they knew exactly what they were doing. They did it either because they thought they were saving the world or just for themselves, for the money, the power, and the spoils of war.

### But if you had to choose just one defendant?

Well, if I had to choose one above the rest... Yeah, no question, it was Stuckart.

### Why him?

Because that fine fellow was there when the whole Final Solution was planned. He sat in that conference on Wannsee Lake in January 1941, when Heydrich and his SS boys told all of the ministry officials what they were about to do and how they would do it—arrests, trains to Poland, the gassings, working the rest of 'em

to death. [Heydrich] laid out the whole plan, and Stuckart sat there and listened, then tried to tie a string around the definition of who was going to die and who wasn't—who was and wasn't a Jew.

Geez, he [Stuckart] was the guy who wrote the Nuremberg Laws, the laws that stripped Jews of their professions, property, and citizenship—and then he claims at his trial that he was working against Hitler trying to save lives. The man was a lawyer for crying out loud.

### So what was the basic line of defense?

The litany of excuses ... "I didn't know it ["it" refers to the torture, medical experimentation, murder, mass executions, and gassing of innocents] was going on, and if I did, I didn't know it was wrong—if I did, I didn't issue the orders. If I did [issue the orders], the translation isn't accurate. If it is [accurate] I was actually trying to limit the extent of the damage." Documents weren't a problem either, explained away with even more excuses. "If it was written to me, I didn't see it. If my initials were on it, it was my subordinate [who] initialed it on my behalf. If I signed it, I didn't read it, and if I did read it I didn't understand it—and the excuse most used—what could I do, I was just following



orders?” But that whole line of baloney collapsed under the weight of the paper.

### What do you mean?

The Nazis were great record keepers. Everything they did they documented, probably to cover their rear ends—authority was everything in the Third Reich, and you were always under suspicion or being challenged or set up for a fall. Anyway, there were tons and tons of documents to choose from. Most of the mountains of documents had already been translated and used in other war crimes trials cases. Our problem was one of riches. We had to sift through and use the most damning documents to build our case. Only problem was, even then it was not always crystal clear to the judges how much guilt to assign to individual defendants because we were plowing new ground here.

### How so?

Well, let me explain it this way. You had a governmental complex with competing ministries

National Archives



destroyed. Now you have war crimes and crimes against humanity.

So the Russians prosecute the Ukrainians and the SS guys they captured, and we go after Göring and Lammers and Darré, but just who is really responsible? Göring? Darré? The Army high command? The SS? How far does guilt extend? Who should hang? Who should go to prison? Göring issued the orders, but the Army asked him to. Lammers was involved to provide Hitler's authority, but he personally didn't have a stake in the action, see? Darré passed the orders on, but he didn't know the SS and Ukrainians would slaughter those farmers, right? The Ukrainians killed the farmers, but only because the farmers tried to stop the process. What is legal? What is illegal if you are occupied by another country? Did you know, for example, that it is perfectly legal under international law to take hostages and shoot them as reprisal against attacks on your occupying troops? It has to be done a certain way, which the Germans always ignored, but it is

Paul Gantt Collection, Towson University



**ABOVE LEFT:** Dr. Wilhelm Stuckart confers with his defense team during his trial. Stuckart was a principal author of the Nuremberg Laws against German Jews and was present at the infamous Wannsee Conference, during which the Final Solution was discussed. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Hans Lammers gestures from the witness box while testifying in his own defense. Lammers received a lengthy prison sentence but served only a fraction of it. **LEFT:** Johanna Wolf (left), one of Adolf Hitler's secretaries, confers with Ingeberg Bremen, a secretary to one-time Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess during a break in courtroom proceedings at Nuremberg.

By 1949, when our trial finished, the Cold War was a hot war, and Germany was ground zero. After they'd killed the ones they wanted, the Russians threw away the rope to influence German public opinion, which had turned against the trials.

We became the bad guys because we were still trying their leaders, you know, the judges and industrialists and ministers, and sending them to prison. Stalin found that if they let up on the important ones they had in Russian custody, those Germans—scientists, financiers, administrators, and the like, all smart cookies—would join the Communist Party and work very ardently for old Papa Joe as long as their lives and properties were restored.

### Did your team think that pressure was put on your tribunal to go lightly on Nuremberg defendants?

Absolutely. We didn't know who specifically applied the pressure, but we knew it had happened, and the sentencing bore that out. We

National Archives



and intentionally overlapping authorities. Hitler wanted it that way so no one became too powerful and could challenge his position. So, say Lammers, who was vice chancellor, and Göring and some other muck-a-mucks in the Army get together and say, “We want all the wheat and corn from this part of the Ukraine to feed the troops fighting nearby.” So Darré [Richard Darré, Reich Minister for Agriculture] is given the job by Göring, and he turns to the SS who run the police, and they go in and take the wheat and corn using Ukrainian collaborators. In the process, hundreds of farmers who protest are shot, and some small towns are

legal if done right.

So who is truly guilty? Everyone? Pick your trial. There were different opinions among the justices. In the early trials, very few guys got around long prison terms or execution. By the time our trial was over, it was the other way around.

### Which takes us back to Stuckart. Why did he get off with basically time served?

It was political ... political. Most likely he'd have hanged in 1946, but he was out of prison in 1950. It was political.

How so?

had these guys dead to rights, but if Stuckart was going to get a light sentence, you can imagine what happened to the rest of them.

### Some researchers write about how a few of the justices in the U.S. Nuremberg trials privately held anti-Semitic views, which might have led them to err on the side of lenient sentencing.

If that happened, we never knew about it, and I am Jewish so I would have said something. Some justices seemed to disagree with the IMT ruling that “just following orders” could not mitigate a defendant's guilt. I know of one or

two who thought that these guys had to follow orders or be executed, so what choice did they have, right? But that was rarely the case. If you didn't play ball the Nazi way, you might lose your job and be black balled, but the defense never proved that anyone was shot for refusing a criminal order.

In fact, we were able to show cases where people who refused an order were not shot or put in prison. One case I remember was this fellow Graf, who was an SS sergeant who was asked to command a killing squad in Russia and refused—and he was arrested, then sent back to Germany and reassigned. No, no, no, it was politics, pure and simple. I remember one [U.S.] Army captain told us one day that if the Russians wanted to take Germany, they could bust through to the French coast in three or four days. There was nothing there to stop them, not enough troops, tanks, or planes, just the [atomic] bomb. We needed the Germans and Germany to stop the Soviets, and so the word came down, “No more life sentences and no more rope.”

#### What did that feel like to you?

Do you think mass murderers should get the death penalty? You do? Well, how would it feel if you put a year of your life into prosecuting several mass murderers who were up to their necks in the deaths of millions of people, and they got a slap on the wrist?

#### Disillusioned.

To put it mildly. What's worse, some of them really believed that they were doing the world a great service, like in the Medical Case, and they never repented. Outstanding, accomplished physicians at the top of their profession—they'd taken the Hippocratic Oath. How could they experiment on helpless men, women, and children? Because they saw them as mice, not people—sub-humans, *untersmenschen*. Can you imagine how it felt seeing them get a few years in prison, then go back into society a couple of years later?

#### Well, Stuckart's freedom was short lived, yes? He was killed in a car crash right after he walked, wasn't he?

A couple of years later, I think. I heard through very reliable sources that he was one of the first targets of the Mossad [the Secret Intelligence Service of Israel]. I know I didn't shed a tear.

#### So how do you see the Nuremberg Trials in terms of establishing new and binding international law?

A total failure.

National Archives



**ABOVE:** Brigadier General Telford Taylor, seated at right, led teams of U.S. prosecutors during the series of war crimes trials that followed the main International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. The trials of lesser Nazi officials and former soldiers took years to conclude. **BELOW LEFT:** Presiding Judge William C. Christianson (left) guided the proceedings during Tribunal IX in Nuremberg. He is pictured with Judge Robert F. McGuire. **BELOW RIGHT:** Emmy Göring, widow of Luftwaffe Chief Hermann Göring, who committed suicide to cheat the gallows at Nuremberg, testifies during the war crimes trial of Paul Koerner, who had been an associate of her late husband.



Paul Gantt Collection, Towson University



Paul Gantt Collection, Towson University

#### Really? Total failure?

Look at what's happened since. The Soviets go into Afghanistan and slaughter the Afghans. Or how about the Ayatollah and all the international laws he broke? Look at what's happened in China, Vietnam, and Cambodia—everywhere there's crimes against humanity and war crimes. What's stopped them? Did the Nuremberg precedent stop them? Has the World Court stopped them?

#### How was the Nuremberg precedent supposed to stop those things?

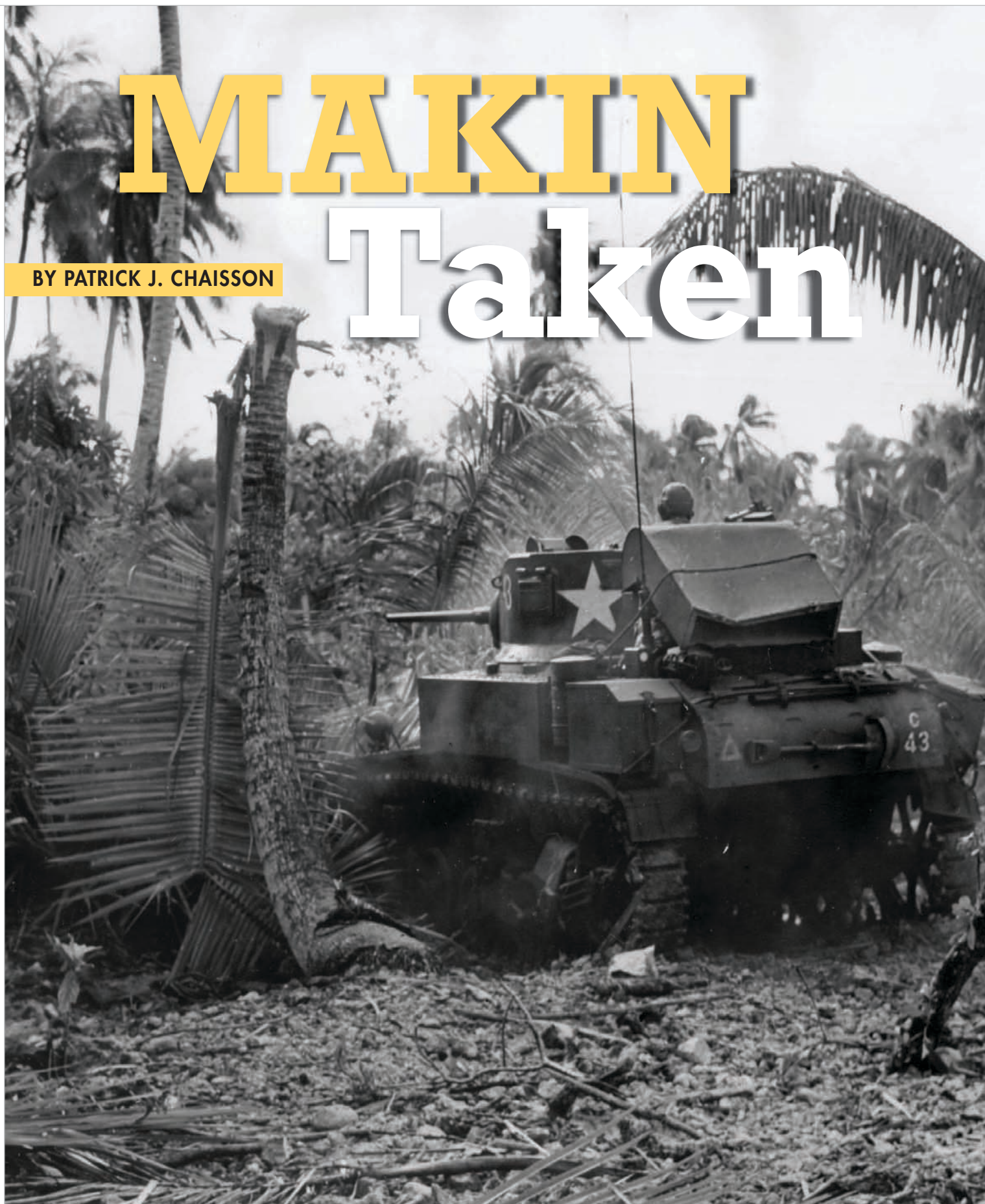
By the nations of the world doing what's right—coming together with the muscle to intervene. You gotta have a court and a tribunal, then the muscle to bring international criminals to the bar of justice. In small scale situations the United Nations can do that, but with larger nations, it is powerless. Politics overwhelm initiative and result only in rhetoric,

*Continued on page 77*



# MAKIN Taken

BY PATRICK J. CHAISSON







## THE AMERICAN 193RD TANK BATTALION PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE CAPTURE OF MAKIN IN THE PACIFIC IN 1943.

Makin should have been a pushover.

On November 20, 1943, a force of 3,500 highly trained American soldiers invaded this Central Pacific atoll located 2,000 miles southwest of Hawaii in the Gilbert Islands. Opposing them were a mere 284 Japanese naval infantrymen along with some 500 support personnel and civilian laborers.

The plan was to overwhelm Makin's defenders with crushing air and naval barrages followed by an amphibious landing intended to mop up any lingering enemy resistance. Senior U.S. commanders estimated it would take about two days to accomplish this mission. In reality, almost nothing went right for the Americans. Their wood-hulled landing craft could not cross Makin's barrier reef, so riflemen had to wade 250 yards to shore under heavy machine-gun fire. Critical items such as flamethrowers, rocket launchers, and radio sets all got soaked—with soldiers later paying a heavy price for this ruined equipment.

Japanese snipers, hidden within a tangle of fallen trees and shell craters, took an alarming toll on the attackers. Leaders made excellent targets—the American regimental commander was shot between the eyes while rallying his troops. Shocked by the loss of their colonel, raw U.S. infantrymen stopped advancing and took cover.

Makin's invasion was in danger of stalling on the beach.

Amid this chaos, soldiers began hearing the deep bark of tank cannons. American armored vehicles had finally made it ashore and were joining the fight. Enemy bunkers began disintegrating under a hail of 75mm shells, while well-placed canister rounds silenced stubborn snipers. No longer pinned down, the GLs continued their attack into Makin's main defensive area.

Makin has been eclipsed in popular memory by the maelstrom of Tarawa, which was seized by troops of the 2nd Marine Division after three days of vicious fighting. The invasions took place simultaneously, but it was the Marines' bloody assault of Tarawa Atoll's primary islet, Betio, that made headlines back home. Indeed, Tarawa was a bigger battle. More than 1,600 Americans and 4,600 Japanese perished there compared to relatively light casualties sustained during the Makin landings.

Yet Makin distinguished itself as the first amphibious assault conducted by U.S. Army forces in the Central Pacific during World War

II. Lessons learned there paved the way for larger operations on Saipan, the Philippines, and Okinawa. Makin also marked the combat debut of armor in an Army-led Pacific landing and was the only time American-crewed Lee medium tanks entered battle against Japan. The Lee was actually a stopgap medium tank equipped with a 37mm cannon in a small traversing turret and a hull-mounted 75mm gun. It was something of an anachronism, harkening back to the days of World War I tank design and put together with a minimum of innovation since the M4 Sherman medium tank was still unavailable in great numbers.

The Lee tank appeared ponderous and presented a handsome target to enemy gunners with its high silhouette. However, at the time of its debut no turret was available in the American arsenal that could accommodate a gun heavier than 37mm.

These vehicles belonged to the 193rd Tank Battalion (TB). Organized in January 1941, the 193rd was created out of four Federalized National Guard tank companies—the 30th from Forsyth, Georgia (Company A); the 31st from Ozark, Alabama (Company B); the 36th from Houston, Texas (Company C); and the 45th Tank Company from Denver, Colorado (Company D).

When Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor, the outfit was stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia. Within nine days, remembered Staff Sergeant James Leach, "The 193rd tankers, reequipped with maneuver worn M3 light tanks repossessed from the 2nd Armored Division, were on a troop train headed west to San Francisco's Angel Island." Their destination: Hawaii.

So unprepared was the Army for war that only a few of the 193rd's tank crewmen had ever seen, let alone trained on, an M3 Stuart light tank (not to be confused with the Lee designation, which was also M3) before deploying. Nevertheless, the battalion set off for Oahu a few days after Christmas 1941. The 193rd men arrived in Honolulu on January 7, among the first reinforcements to reach Hawaii at a time when the threat of Japanese invasion was very real.

Fears eased once additional American forces arrived, especially after February 1942 when the 27th Infantry Division shipped over. Like the 193rd TB, the 27th "Orion" Division was a former National Guard organization, mobilized for Federal duty since 1940. For several months,

**This U.S. Army M3 Stuart light tank moves cautiously from Red Beach on Makin atoll into a grove of palm trees. When American infantrymen hit the beaches on Makin on November 20, 1943, the Japanese withdrew to strongholds inland from the beaches after posting snipers to harass the Americans and impede their progress. The armor of the 193rd Tank Battalion was there to assist the troops in capturing Makin.**





The 69th Regiment Historical Archive, Lexington Avenue Armory



**TOP:** American soldiers of the 27th Infantry Division wade ashore on Makin atoll in the Gilbert Islands on November 20, 1943, while a tank makes its way along the beach in the distance. **ABOVE:** U.S. soldiers move forward on Makin as their amphibious LVT-1 tracked landing craft, nicknamed the Alligator, sits in the foreground. Troops of the 193rd Tank Battalion were detailed to operate the Alligators during the Makin landings. **OPPOSITE:** While smoke billows from stricken Japanese positions on Makin, American combat engineers lay a metal mat across the soft sand to allow tracked and wheeled vehicles to move forward without becoming mired in the terrain.

27th Division soldiers garrisoned Hawaii's outer islands. Beginning in November, though, the 27th underwent a relentless training program designed to prepare its troops for jungle warfare.

The 193rd TB also underwent intense training while adapting to several changes in organization and equipment. By 1943 it had converted from a light M3 Stuart tank battalion to one equipped with both light and medium tanks. Many crewmen who had just learned to operate their nimble M3 lights now found themselves on the ponderous M3A5 Lee medium tank.

Weighing in at 30 tons, the diesel-engined

M3A5 came armed, in addition to the 37mm and 75mm guns, with a .30-caliber machine gun located in its turret. Another .30-caliber could be fired by the driver from his position in the hull. It took seven men to crew the Lee, including three in the turret (tank commander, 37mm gunner, and loader) plus four in the hull (driver, radio operator, 75mm gunner, and loader). The M3A5 was by 1943 an obsolete design, but it still possessed impressive firepower. In the 193rd, Companies A and B fought with mediums.

Only four tankers (commander, gunner, driver, and co-driver/radioman) manned the M3A1

light tanks operated by Company C of the 193rd TB. Much smaller than an M3A5 medium, the light tank weighed 16 tons. Its armament included a 37mm cannon and coaxial .30-caliber machine gun in the two-man turret, plus one hull-mounted .30-caliber for the co-driver. Another externally fitted machine gun provided antiaircraft protection.

Whether equipped with light tanks or mediums, a tank company in the 193rd possessed considerable battlefield muscle. Organized into three platoons of five tanks apiece plus one tank for the company commander and another for his executive officer, each company rode into combat packing a lethal combination of armor protection, firepower, and mobility.

Another tracked vehicle with which the 193rd would soon become intimately familiar was the LVT-1 Alligator. This 14-ton amphibious tractor could deliver up to 24 soldiers or 4,500 pounds of cargo right onto the beach. Typical armament was one .50-caliber and one .30-caliber machine gun. The early model LVT-1 lacked armor plating but was prized by invasion commanders for its impressive handling characteristics both in and out of the water.

While the 193rd TB worked to organize and train for combat, senior leaders in Hawaii set their sights on a Central Pacific counterattack against Japan. During the summer of 1943, Allied victories in the Southwest Pacific and Aleutian Islands signaled a turning of the tide. Having checked Japanese expansion, American commanders now sought to retake island bases that had been overrun during the war's first weeks.

The Gilbert Islands, 13 coral atolls straddling the Equator, represented Japan's outer defensive belt in the Central Pacific. From bases at Makin, Tarawa, and Nauru the enemy could launch long-distance Kawanishi H8K Emily flying boats to attack U.S. supply convoys. This threat had to be neutralized.

Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief Pacific Ocean Areas, also saw an invasion of the Gilberts as the first step in his "island-hopping" campaign across the Central Pacific. He envisioned these atolls serving as stepping stones to the next set of island bases, eventually bringing Allied forces to within striking distance of the Japanese homeland.

By August an overall plan for invading the Gilberts—codenamed Operation Galvanic—had taken shape. In overall command was Vice Admiral Raymond A. Spruance of the U.S. Central Pacific Force. The landing force commander, Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner, had the task of putting ashore two simultaneous amphibious assaults, one at Tarawa and another

on the phosphate-rich isle of Nauru. Controlling ground operations was the V Amphibious Corps, commanded by Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Holland M. Smith.

For Galvanic, the 2nd Marine Division was assigned to seize Tarawa while an element of the Army's 27th Infantry Division got Nauru as its mission. The operation was tentatively scheduled for November 15, 1943.

In late September, Galvanic planners scrapped Nauru as an invasion objective, stating it was too far away from Tarawa for naval vessels to support each other in case of a Japanese air or sea counterattack. Makin Atoll, 105 miles north of Tarawa, would be the 27th's new target.

It was not the first time that American forces had visited Makin. Marine Raiders under Lt. Col. Evans Carlson landed there on August 17, 1942, from the submarines USS *Nautilus* and USS *Argonaut*. The Raiders battled Makin's surprised garrison for two days before withdrawing with valuable intelligence. This information later became useful to Orion Division planners.

Makin Atoll is a triangle-shaped formation of reefs and islands, the largest of which is named Butaritari. Resembling a crutch, Butaritari stretches out for 13 miles although its average width measures just 500 yards. Heavily vegetated, the island contains many shallow ponds, hidden marshes, and copra plantations. Thousands of bobai pits, deep holes in which a taro-like foodstuff is cultivated, further restrict cross-country mobility.

Aerial reconnaissance revealed an active enemy presence on Butaritari. Photo interpreters counted ramps and maintenance structures for five Emily seaplanes, a headquarters complex, radio transmitter facilities, and numerous gun emplacements concentrated in the center of the

island. Most of these fortifications, analysts noted, were pointed out to sea in the direction from which Carlson's Raiders struck. The lagoon side, segmented by four piers or wharves, appeared lightly defended.

Protecting the flanks of Butaritari's main defensive area, nicknamed The Citadel, were two zigzag trenches. Known as the West Tank Barrier System and the East Tank Barrier System, these barricades figured greatly in the assault force's tactical plan.

Intelligence officers estimated Makin's garrison at 280 naval infantrymen of the 3rd Special Base Force under Lieutenant Seizo Ishikawa. Including marooned air personnel and civilian construction laborers, approximate enemy strength totaled 800 men. Several howitzers, dual-purpose antiaircraft/antitank guns, and even two Type 95 light tanks formed the backbone of Ishikawa's defenses. Butaritari also bristled with dozens of machine-gun bunkers and rifle pits.

Major General Ralph C. Smith, 27th Division commander, assigned the Makin assault to his 165th Regimental Combat Team (RCT). Led by Colonel Gardiner J. Conroy, the 165th Infantry could trace its lineage back to the "Fighting 69th" of Civil War fame. Reinforcing Conroy's RCT were several support units, including a field artillery battalion, signal, engineer, and medical detachments plus the entire 3rd Battalion, 105th Infantry Regiment for use as a special landing party.

Late in September, the 193rd TB also received orders attaching it to the Orion Division. The battalion commander, Lt. Col. Harmon L. Edmonson, learned his mediums from Company A and lights belonging to Company C were now part of the Makin operation sched-

uled to begin in six short weeks.

Edmonson received another startling request. The 27th wanted to use LVT-1s to put ashore its special landing detachments, but no one knew how to operate these amphibious tractors. Could the 193rd crew them?

Using the one available Alligator on Oahu, 193rd Battalion Executive Officer Major M.L. Inskeep formed a detail of Headquarters Company soldiers and within two weeks turned them into LVT drivers. Later, 48 factory-new LVT-1s would show up just in time to load into the Landing Ships, Tank (LSTs) bound for Makin.

Meanwhile, the rest of the landing force began making frantic preparations for battle. Unfortunately, all this activity left little opportunity for tank-infantry familiarization. The tankers also discovered their radios were incompatible with those used by the 165th RCT. Pre-combat rehearsals would have straightened out these issues, but there simply was not enough time for proper training.

On November 10, Company A of the 193rd loaded its medium tanks onto Landing Craft, Tank (LCTs), which then steered into the cavernous USS *Belle Grove*. Known as a Landing Ship, Dock, this strange vessel could flood its well deck to float out the LCTs with their medium tanks aboard. Company C's light tanks were driven onto smaller Landing Craft, Mechanized (LCMs) and distributed among the invasion fleet.

The Northern Task Force (minus five slow-moving LSTs carrying Major Inskeep's LVT-1s, which had left five days earlier) then set sail to rendezvous off Makin. During its passage, Consolidated B-24 Liberator heavy bombers of the Seventh Air Force saturated Butaritari with tons

National Archives





of demolition bombs. Betio, the main enemy stronghold on Tarawa, received an even more extensive preinvasion “softening” by Army Air Forces and Navy aircraft.

Operation Galvanic had begun. Heading for the Gilberts were thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, all determined to initiate Admiral Nimitz’s Central Pacific island-hopping campaign. D-day was now set for Saturday, November 20, 1943.

The Makin operation would open at 0830 hours with two Battalion Landing Teams (BLTs) landing along Butaritari’s western shore—the “arm” of the crutch—on beaches designated Red One and Red Two. Also set to hit the Red Beaches were the 1st and 2nd Platoons of Company C, 193rd TB, riding M3A1 light tanks. This force was then to advance on the West Tank Barrier System, two miles to the east.

Providing the Red Beach landings went well, at 1030 an additional BLT would enter Butaritari’s lagoon and assault the island center on Yellow Beach between On Chong’s Wharf and King’s Wharf. Accompanied by 17 M3A5 Lee medium tanks of Company A, 193rd TB and five Stuarts from Company C, this BLT was to strike across Butaritari before wheeling to the west. The Americans would then advance

through the Main Defensive Area to link up with other elements moving eastward from the Red Beaches.

Special landing detachments from the 3/105 Infantry, riding in LVT-1s, were to form the first assault wave for all beachheads. After securing the landing areas, these riflemen would establish blocking positions intended to cut off any Japanese defenders trying to escape from or counterattack the main invasion force.

If performed correctly, this complicated maneuver promised to pin the enemy between two powerful U.S. assaults. Yet the plan was fraught with problems not apparent to the inexperienced Orion Division. The danger of fratricide—friendly fire—increases markedly whenever two units approach the same objective from opposite directions. Superb radio communications, fire discipline, and small unit leadership were crucial to the success of such a scheme, and the untested 165th RCT did not then possess these battlefield skills.

An uncooperative enemy further disrupted the 27th’s plan. Simply put, most of the Japanese on Butaritari had taken shelter far from where American intelligence officers believed they would be. The massive preinvasion bombardment—an estimated four million pounds of high explosives—did little more than to momentarily stun Makin’s defenders and leave them a perfect warren of downed palm trees, shell craters, and rubble in which to hide.

Still, one could not ignore the overwhelm-

ing U.S. advantage in combat troops, armored firepower, and naval gunfire support. Observers offshore certainly felt a sense of confidence in the predawn hours of November 20 when those big guns opened fire. Meanwhile, a flotilla of landing craft, led by the ungainly LVT-1s, began assembling in the calm waters west of Makin Atoll. Jockeying into assault formations, waves of boats and tractors then headed toward the beach.

Finally, after a flight of U.S. Navy fighters strafed Butaritari end to end, the invasion began. At 0829 hours, one minute ahead of schedule, the first Alligators rolled out of the water onto Red Beaches One and Two. As soldiers of the 3/105 Infantry leaped out and took cover, only an eerie silence greeted them. Makin, they thought, was going to be a pushover.

Five minutes behind them were LCMs carrying the light tanks of Company C, 193rd TB. The First Platoon Leader, 2nd Lt. Murray C. Engle, remembered, “When [the] line of departure was reached and [the LCMs] started moving in, the tanks were buttoned up with the exception of the tank commander’s turret lid. The tank commander kept his lid open and observed the beach through field glasses.... About 100 yards from shore the tanks were completely buttoned up and ready to leave the LCM.”

An unexpected reef forced Engle’s LCM to drop its ramp 40 feet off the beach, but his M3A1 had been fitted with a deep water ford-

**Although Makin atoll was a small spit of land in the Gilbert Islands of the Central Pacific, it was extensively fortified by its Japanese occupiers. The Japanese built strongpoints of coconut logs, sand, and concrete.**



Map © 2015 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



**ABOVE:** An American M3 light tank lies immobilized in a large shell crater on Makin. The tank soldiers nearby appear to be considering options to remedy the situation that occurred on the first day of the fight. **BELOW:** After Makin has been secured, American soldiers inspect the wreckage of a Japanese Kawanishi H8K flying boat that lies in the surf. The aircraft was damaged during the preinvasion bombardment and then used by the Japanese defenders as a machine-gun position.



National Archives

ing trunk and waded in with little difficulty. The other tanks also successfully made it ashore, moving inland to predesignated assembly areas.

In the meantime, American infantrymen advanced eastward against growing resistance. Butaritari's defenders had shaken off their initial shock and were beginning to fight back. Snipers hidden in treetops picked off unwary GIs while the chatter of well-camouflaged Nambu machine guns drove entire platoons to cover.

Stalled by Japanese sharpshooters and the torn up terrain, infantry commanders began

pushing their riflemen forward. This exposed those leaders to deadly enemy fire. On the north (lagoon) side of Butaritari, 2nd Lt. Daniel T. Nunnery of the 1st BLT was killed in an ambush that also injured several of his men. When chaplain Captain Stephen J. Meany went out to render aid, he took a serious wound to the chest.

The regimental commander, Colonel Conroy, saw it all. Stating he was going back for a tank, Conroy stood up in full view of the Japanese position. A rifle cracked, and the colonel fell dead. Command of the 165th Infantry passed to

Lt. Col. Gerard W. Kelley of the 1st BLT.

Those light tanks so desperately needed on the front lines instead remained parked in their assembly areas. It took three hours for the armor to organize along Red Beach's rocky shore and more time to sort out command authority. Initially, the tankers refused to obey orders from infantry officers. Captain Charles B. Tobin, commanding Company C, eventually got them on the road, but precious hours had already been wasted.

Progress was slow along the single coral-surfaced path leading forward. Lieutenant Engle said his tanks "moved in column formation along the main road to catch up with the [infantry]. As there was no engineer equipment available, tank crews had to fill in shell craters with logs, rocks, etc. to enable them to get through. Finally about 1400 [hours] the tanks caught up with [the infantry]."

Engle's light tanks then advanced on the enemy's positions. "We were fired on by snipers and machine guns," reported Technician 4th Grade Frank C. Kulaga, a driver with 1st Platoon. "Our gunner knocked out a machine gun which had been firing on Tank No. 40. We then advanced about 200 yards where Tank No. 40 ran into a shell hole and had to be pulled out."

Under occasional sniper fire, crewmen extricated the stuck M3A1 and continued on their way. By 1600 hours the platoon was nearing its objective, the West Tank Barrier System. "When about 300 yards from [the] tank trap, [American] medium tanks were sighted," reported Lieutenant Engle. "We moved up and met them."

Despite considerable confusion and the loss of their regimental commander, U.S. forces advancing from the Red Beaches had performed well. As of midafternoon they controlled Butaritari's main road and were busy wiping out one last pocket of resistance along the West Tank Barrier.

The assault on Yellow Beach faced stiffer opposition. Following another furious naval barrage, American landing craft entered Makin's lagoon at 0952 hours and headed toward shore. First in were the LVT-1s, driven by 193rd TB personnel. A line of barges followed 900 yards back, carrying the M3A5 mediums of Company A, a platoon of light tanks, and Lt. Col. Edmonson's two headquarters tanks. Behind them rode wooden-hulled LCVs loaded with infantrymen from the 2nd BLT.

As the first wave approached, enemy machine guns from King's Wharf and several half-sunken ships caught the Alligators in a lethal crossfire. LVT crewmen shot back with their .50-caliber machine guns. The tractors then clattered up on





As a Japanese sniper opens fire on American soldiers GIs take cover behind the remains of a downed Japanese plane and watch their armored support, an M3 Stuart light tank, rumble forward to dislodge the enemy.

land, where riflemen from the 3/105 Infantry dismounted to clear out the threat.

Company A's medium tanks, still aboard their LCTs, joined the fight. "On my right was two old enemy hulks," remembered Sergeant Wilbur R. Johnson. "I cleared my 37mm by firing into these hulks. I also put several bursts of machine-gun fire on the wharf where enemy guns could be seen."

What could not be seen was an underwater coral reef extending 250 yards into the lagoon that blocked passage for flat-bottomed landing craft. It forced the infantrymen to wade through waist-deep water, ruining their poorly waterproofed radios, bazookas, and flamethrowers. Worse, they were lashed by Japanese automatic weapons fire all the way into shore.

The tanks, although fitted with wading stacks, faced an even more daunting obstacle hidden in Butaritari's lagoon. Preinvasion bombardment had left deep shell holes under the water's surface, invisible to tank drivers. Captain Robert S. Brown, Company A's commanding officer, lost his M3A5 to an unseen crater, as did Sergeant Jean O. Newby, commander of Medium No. 17.

Newby recalled, "We left the barge, went forward about 25 yards and hit a shell hole. We got out of that and went about 15 yards more and hit another. The water was about 7 feet deep, and our tank drowned out. The tank immediately filled with smoke after hitting the second shell hole. My driver said the tank was

National Archives



After its original occupants have been killed, an American soldier stands in the entrance to a Japanese bunker on Butaritari. Heavy coconut logs that were used to reinforce the enemy strongpoint.

on fire. The crew dismounted right there with great speed through the right sponson door. I remained inside the tank. As soon as the crew got out of the tank they were machine gunned from shore and with more speed they came back inside the tank."

Those vehicles managing to make it on land were hardly out of danger. Lt. Col. Edmonson remarked, "After reaching the beach we were held up by [bobai] pits and shell holes, in addition to the coconut trees and a fuel dump that was on fire." Sergeant Henry F. Knetter, commanding Medium No. 20, was working his

M3A5 off a stump when the enemy appeared. "I fired about 100 rounds with the .30 at a bunch of Japs running west on the ocean side," Knetter reported. "Hung up as we were no other gun could be brought to bear."

Twelve medium and four light tanks survived the landing, immediately going to work against Japanese fortifications. The tanks' incompatible communications systems, however, made cooperation with the infantry an almost impossible task. Fighting buttoned up, crewmen could only see the battlefield through glass periscopes. Disoriented tankers were forced to hold their fire, unable to tell friend from foe amid the chaos of battle.

Into this crisis stepped Captain Wayne C. Sikes, the 193rd TB's operations officer. Using arm and hand signals, he directed a platoon of medium tanks forward against the enemy's network of rifle pits. Their 75mm high-explosive shells made short work of these log dugouts.

As American troops advanced into the heavily fortified Citadel area, they encountered several concrete pillboxes that remained impervious to the tanks' cannon fire. On the fly, infantrymen, armor crews, and combat engineers improvised a tactic for reducing these dangerous strongpoints.

Lieutenant Colonel John F. McDonough, the 2nd BLT commander, described their method of operation: "We run a tank up to a revetment and blast it with the 75mm guns. Then engineers run in with a TNT charge, poking it into

the revetment with a long pole.” By 1700 hours, the GIs had eliminated 10 to 15 enemy positions in this manner.

Japanese resistance throughout the Main Defensive Area crumbled rapidly. One section of medium tanks bypassed The Citadel to link up with Lt. Engle’s light tanks approaching from Red Beach. Another platoon reached the ocean side of Butaritari, where it found several abandoned dual-purpose gun emplacements. More tanks headed east but were forced to withdraw when they encountered unexpectedly heavy enemy fire near King’s Wharf.

Nightfall brought on a lull in the action. The 193rd TB gathered its tanks and LVT-1s into assembly areas, where crewmen performed much needed maintenance. Normally they would have refueled and rearmed here as well, but poor landing conditions on the Red Beaches prevented much needed supplies from reaching shore.

The enemy became increasingly active after dark. Snipers took up hiding positions while other Japanese troops probed the American perimeter. Jittery sentries kept everyone awake with a nearly continuous fusillade of rifle fire. Second Lieutenant George P. Evans of Company C recalled, “Many of our own troops fired at each other throughout the remainder of the night.”

One tanker from Company A and another belonging to Company C were killed that first night when they left their foxholes to pursue enemy infiltrators. It remains unknown whether these men died as a result of friendly fire. Another tank commander was shot in his hatch by a Japanese sharpshooter.

Dawn on November 21 revealed new problems. Enemy gunners had managed to reoccupy King’s Wharf and were sweeping Yellow Beach with deadly automatic weapons fire. Four medium tanks rolled up on shore and silenced them with 75mm shells. The mediums then shifted their fire to a ruined Emily seaplane, from which another machine gun threatened beach operations. Eighteen Japanese bodies were later found in the wreckage.

Due to sniper activity, light tanks were employed to drag supply pallets from dumps on Red Beach to troops fighting in the center of Butaritari. Bad luck plagued this effort as a Navy dive bomber accidentally dropped its payload on four M3A1s, killing several nearby infantrymen.

By 1100 hours the tanks on Makin had been fueled and rearmed. They then joined Lt. Col. McDonough’s battalion in a frontal attack on Japanese positions covering the East Tank Barrier System. Rough terrain restricted mobility, but the Americans were learning to

fight as a team.

Sergeant Johnson, in Medium No. 8, later wrote: “We had complete infantry support so we moved up slowly, encountering enemy rifle and machine-gun fire. A few snipers were soon wiped out. We encountered a machine gun on the right, so [the] infantry moved back and we blasted it out with a 75mm HE (high explosive round).”

Light tanks operating on the lagoon side of Butaritari helped U.S. riflemen gain 1,000 yards of hotly contested ground that day, yet the foe showed he was still full of fight. The East Tank Barrier System remained in Japanese hands; to seize it would require a concentrated effort. Nevertheless, American commanders felt one more day of vigorous action should wrap things up on Makin.

At 0700 hours on November 22, a U.S. artillery barrage pounded enemy positions along the East Tank Barrier. The fresh 3rd BLT, joined by light and medium tanks, surged forward to finish the job. A captured map found the day before helped tank crews pinpoint and eliminate enemy emplacements.

The 69th Regiment Historical Archive, Lexington Avenue Armory



**Two Lee medium tanks shell King’s Wharf on Butaritari during the second day of combat. Japanese troops had set up machine gun positions near the wharf during the night, to fire on landing barges unloading supplies.**

By 0920, advancing U.S. troops had reached the barrier line, where they discovered two derelict Type 95 tankettes. Once across the tank trap, however, attacking armored vehicles were again frustrated by fallen trees, bobai pits, and stumps. Sergeant Johnson remembered, “The going was tough, so every tank followed to cover the leading tanks.... We traveled slow with the infantry spread out in a complete line across the island.”

Meanwhile, other 193rd TB soldiers were making a daring amphibious end run in their LVT-1s. Carrying a company of riflemen, these raiders cruised far up along Butaritari’s shoreline in an attempt to cut off the enemy’s retreat. The effort went for naught, though, as friendly

natives informed U.S. officers they were too late—the Japanese had already escaped to neighboring atolls.

Another detachment of Alligator-borne GIs swung wide to occupy the island of Kuma off Butaritari’s eastern tip. There they encountered and killed 10 enemy combatants trying to flee the battlefield.

Across Butaritari the mood was one of cautious optimism. American forces had advanced three miles that day while encountering only sporadic opposition. Tankers of the 193rd returned to their assembly areas for the night, confident their job was nearly done. Headquarters had already issued orders for some units to begin reembarking come morning.

To the east, Lt. Col. Joseph T. Hart’s 3rd BLT dug in 5,000 yards from the tip of Butaritari. Shortly after dark a party of fleeing natives ran into Hart’s front lines, followed immediately by the first of several Japanese suicide attacks. There appeared to be no organization to these saké fueled bayonet charges. Still, they went on all night and caused numerous American casualties. Hart’s infantrymen held their ground, however,

and after daybreak U.S. patrols counted 51 enemy dead in front of their positions.

Final combat operations occurred on the morning of November 23. Five light and 16 medium tanks accompanied Lt. Col. Hart’s battalion to the village of Tanimaiki, on Butaritari’s eastern point. This task force encountered several sniper nests along the way, all of which were quickly eliminated by shotgun-like blasts of canister ammunition from the tanks’ 37mm guns. Tank fire also destroyed an air raid shelter near the island’s tip, killing two Japanese holdouts.

Butaritari had been secured. At 1130 hours the 27th Division commander, Maj. Gen. Smith, radioed “Makin Taken” to Admiral Turner. A

*Continued on page 77*





Paratroopers of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, photographed in their transport plane wait for their D-Day drop.

ging fight into the heart of Germany, part of the massive effort to bring that nation to its knees and end the war. The battalion's journey from the Ardennes to Austria is covered in great detail in *No Victory in Valhalla: The Untold Story of Third Battalion 506 Parachute Infantry Regiment from Bastogne to Berchtesgaden* (Ian Gardner, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2014, 352pp, maps, photographs, bibliography, index, \$27.95, hardcover).

The book brings together the disparate range of individuals who made up the battalion and relays their experiences of war. A supply sergeant from West Virginia, a Japanese American who transferred from the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team to become a paratrooper, a former high school football star—these were just a few of the men who formed one of America's fighting units. By the time of the Bulge, many of the unit's original infantrymen were gone, dead or wounded. Replacements made up the remainder, and many subunits were commanded by junior officers and NCOs who had to fill larger shoes.

Beginning in Bastogne, the book covers the movement of the battalion into the town just ahead of the advancing Germans. At first the combat was a confused and swirling melee as both sides made their first encounters with the enemy. Soon the defense settled into a tentative perimeter and stiff resistance to all attackers. The unit's positions overlooked the town of Foy, later made famous in other books and films. There were also patrols punctuated by close combat amid a horribly cold winter.

After the Bulge, the war continued. The division fought until February 1945, when it returned to France to reconstitute. After a short time there the paratroopers went back into action, first in the Ruhr and then in Bavaria. This was unique for airborne units; after a period of combat they would typically return to a secure base to prepare for the next drop. In this case, the need for a final drop ended, so the battalion found itself acting as regular infantry, slogging forward toward the war's inevitable end. Like the rest of the regiment, the 3/506 ended the war in Berchtesgaden, a hotbed of the Nazi Party.

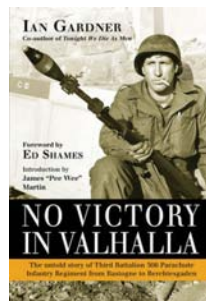
The greatest strength of this book is the extreme level of detail poured into it. The words of literally hundreds of veterans of the 3/506 were used to make up this account, and it shows. Each action is a blend of several survivors matched with historical records and written accounts,

## From the Ardennes to Austria

The Third Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry faced a horrible test of combat from the seige of Bastogne to war's end.

**THE PARATROOPERS OF THE 3RD BATTALION, 506TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY** Regiment (3/506), 101st Airborne Division fought long and hard during Operation Market-Garden, the Allied assault through Holland aimed at piercing into northern Germany and ending the war. After their parachute drop in mid-September, they had struggled against the unexpected presence of SS panzer divisions and fought a much longer campaign than expected. Casualties had been heavy, so the battalion had been moved to a camp in France to recuperate and absorb replacements. The paratroopers expected a period of rest, including leaves in Paris, before preparing for the next drop, perhaps into Germany itself.

Their reprieve was not to be, however. On December 16, 1944, the Nazis launched their last great offensive in the West, known ever after as the Battle of the Bulge. The situation quickly became desperate, and the 3/506, along with the rest of the division, was rushed to the defense of the vital crossroads town of Bastogne. Once there, they entered another deadly period of combat, fighting off numerous attacks until they could turn to the offensive and push the Germans back. Afterward, they began a long, slog-





# World Leading Expert Unveils Exciting News for People with Memory Loss

JFK Award Winner, Dr. Meir Shinitzky Uncovers Shocking New Nutrient that Restores Mental Clarity, Improves Focus and Impaired Memory

BY STEVEN WUZUBIA  
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT;

**C**learwater, Florida: Dr. Meir Shinitzky, Ph.D., is a former visiting professor at Duke University, recipient of the prestigious J.F. Kennedy Prize and author of more than 200 international scientific papers on human body cells. But now he's come up with what the medical world considers his greatest accomplishment-- A vital compound, so powerful, it's reported to repair... even regrow damaged brain cells. In layman's terms -- Bring back your memory power. And leave you feeling more focused and clear-headed than you have in years!

Dr. Shinitzky explains this phenomenon in simple terms; "Science has shown when your brain nutrient levels drop, you can start to experience memory problems and overall mental fatigue. Your ability to concentrate and stay focused becomes compromised. And gradually, a "mental fog" sets in. It can damage every aspect of your life". Not only do brain cells die but they become dysfunctional as if they begin to fade away as we age. This affects our ability to have mental clarity and focus and impacts our ability to remember things that were easy for us to do in our 20's and 30's.

## Why Now, Why So Fuzzy?

Scientists think the biggest cause of brain deterioration in older people is the decreased functioning of membranes and molecules that surround the brain cells. These really are the transmitters that connect the tissues or the brain cells to one another that help us with our sharp memory, clear thinking and mental focus, even our powers to reason well. "When we are in our 20's" according to Dr. Shinitzky "our body produces key substances like phosphatidylserine and phosphatidic acid" ....unfortunately they are believed to be critical essential nutrients that just fade away with age, much like our memories often do leading to further mental deterioration.

As we get older it becomes more frustrating as there is little comfort when you forget names... misplace your keys... or just feel "a little confused". And even though your foggy memory gets laughed off as just another "senior moment", it's not very funny when it keeps happening to you.

## The Missing Link is Found and Tested

It's hard to pronounce that's for sure, but it certainly appears from the astounding clinical research that this one vital nutrient phosphatidylserine (PS) can really make a huge difference in our mental wellness. 17 different double blind studies with placebo controlled groups have been involved in the clinical research of PS with patients between the ages of 55-80 years of age. Periodically the researchers gave these patients memory and cognitive tests and the results were simply amazing:

- 1) *PS patients outperformed placebo patients in All 5 Tests - 100% Success Rate*
- 2) *After only 45 days there was a measurable improvement in mental function*
- 3) *After 90 days, there was an impressive and amazing improvement in mental function*

The group taking phosphatidylserine, not only enjoyed sharper memory, but listen to this... they were also more upbeat and remarkably more happy. In contrast, the moods of the individuals who took the placebo (starch pill), remained unaffected....no mental or mood improvement at all.

## Unblock Your Brain

This incredible PS nutrient feeds your brain the vital nutrient it needs to stay healthy... PS now has the attention of some of the world's most prominent brain experts. It has been written up and published in leading science and medical journals and its findings have electrified the International scientific community.

## My Memory Was Starting to Fail Me.

I would forget all kinds of things and something that I just said earlier in the day would have completely slipped my mind. Over the last several months my memory was getting pretty unreliable and I was worried about it. I thought I'd better do something about it now. I read about Lipogen and wanted to try it. It's great! I have actual recall now, which is super. I began to notice that I wasn't forgetting things anymore. Thanks Lipogen for giving me my memory back. It's given me back self-confidence and self-esteem. I would not trust my memory without it.

- Ethel Macagnoney



*Dr. Meir Shinitzky, Ph.D. a former visiting professor at Duke University and a recipient of the prestigious J.F. Kennedy Prize*

## Earth-shaking Science

Published, clinical reports show replenishing your body's natural supply of Phosphatidylserine, not only helps sharpen your memory and concentration— but also helps "perk you up" and put you in a better mood. PS as it turns out also helps to reduce everyday stress and elevate your mood by lowering your body's production of the hormone cortisol. When cortisol levels are too high for too long you experience fatigue, bad moods and weakness. This drug-free brain-boosting formula enters your bloodstream fast (in as little as thirty minutes).

Officially Reviewed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration: Lipogen PS Plus is the ONLY Health Supplement that has a "Qualified Health Claim for both Cognitive Dysfunction and Dementia".

## Special "See For Yourself" Risk-Free Supply

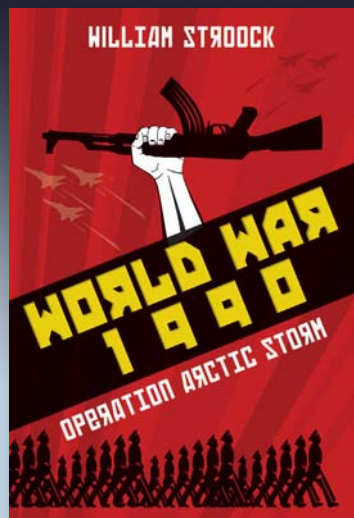
We've made arrangements with the distributor of this proprietary blend of PS, which combines with several other proven special brain boosting natural ingredients to give you the mental clarity and memory gain that you need, to give you a Risk-Free trial supply. This is a special "Readers Only Discount". This trial is 100% risk-free.

It's a terrific deal. If Lipogen PS Plus doesn't help you think better, remember more... and improve your mind, clarity and mood – you won't pay a penny! (less s&h). But you must act fast. Your order can only be guaranteed if it comes in within the next 7-days. After that, supplies could run out. And your order may not be fulfilled until they are replenished.

So don't wait. Now you can join the thousands of people who think better, remember more—and enjoy clear, "fog-free" memory. Call today, toll-free at 1-800-789-8589. Think of it as making a "wake-up call" to your brain.



# IN A DIFFERENT 1990...



- ★ In West Germany, NATO will win the greatest tank battle in history
- ★ In London, Prime Minister Thatcher will urge the continuation of the war
- ★ In Alaska, Americans will defend their homes against Soviet invaders
- ★ In the North Sea, the United States and Royal Navies will begin the campaign to liberate Norway
- ★ Its World War Three: Operation Arctic Storm



## WORLD WAR 1990

### OPERATION ARCTIC STORM

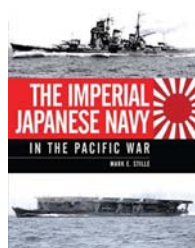
By William Stroock

Available On



giving the reader a thorough understanding of what this particular unit endured during its war. One chapter details the experiences of those members of the unit who were captured and spent time as POWs.

This volume is actually the third in trilogy about the 3/506, the previous books, *Tonight We Die as Men* and *Deliver Us from Darkness*, covering the battalion's history up to the Ardennes. In total they give the full story of a paratrooper's experience in Europe from the soldier's level. Readers interested in airborne units specifically or the war in the European Theater in general will find value in this book.



*The Imperial Japanese Navy in the Pacific War* (Mark E. Stille, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2014, 392pp, maps, photographs, illustrations, bibliography, index, \$40.00, hardcover)

For a brief period in 1941-1942, the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) was the dominant fighting force in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. It enjoyed a series of successes ranging from the Bay of Bengal to the Hawaiian Islands to the seas around Australia. Then came Midway, and soon after the bitter fighting around Guadalcanal. During this period the Japanese maintained an edge in areas such as surface warfare and parity in others, but their tide had ebbed. Afterward, the Japanese Navy was on the defensive for the rest of the war, its resources stretched thin and fighting ever more desperate battles against overwhelming odds. Finally, it lay defeated, its sailors surrendered, and once proud ships wrecked and sunk.

The author is an acknowledged authority on the Japanese Navy in World War II and brings all his expertise to this book. He begins with an overview of the IJN's conduct of the war before beginning a detailed look at each of the major combat ship types: carriers, battleships, heavy and light cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. Detailed information is given for each class of ship within these types. A final chapter evaluates the IJN's ships, doctrine, and actions, pointing out their successes and failures. Readers interested in the war in the Pacific will find much of interest in this book.

*No Greater Valor: The Siege of Bastogne, and the Miracle that Sealed Allied Victory* (Jerome Corsi, Thomas Nelson Books, Nashville, TN, 2014, 352pp, notes, index, \$26.99, hardcover)

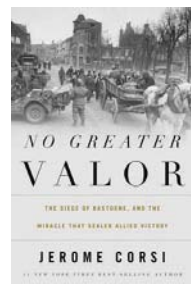
The town of Bastogne contained a vital crossroads, making it an important objective for the



Nazi Ardennes offensive. This made it equally important for the Americans to hold the Belgian village. Doing so would upset the German timetable, perhaps fatally. The 101st Airborne Division was rushed from its

winter camp in France to Bastogne, where the Screaming Eagles famously stood against everything the enemy could throw at them. It was a confused and at times desperate battle, but one which provided great inspiration then and now.

Inspiration of a higher order is the point of this new examination of one of the most famous battles in American history. The author examines the effect of religion on how GIs found the motivation to continue fighting against extreme odds and under difficult conditions. From the prayers and beliefs of soldiers in frozen foxholes to generals encouraging their troops to chaplains carrying out their sworn duties, all are considered to demonstrate the effect of faith on victory. The military details of the defense of Bastogne are blended with the religious examples the author uses to present his case. This provides an overall history of the battle for the reader.



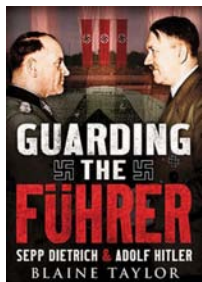
*Pacific Payback: The Carrier Aviators Who Avenged Pearl Harbor at the Battle of Midway* (Stephen L. Moore, NAL Caliber, New York, 2014, 436pp, maps, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, \$26.95, hardcover)

The aircraft carrier USS *Enterprise* had a busy time of it in the days after Pearl Harbor, and the aircrews of the ship's Douglas Dauntless dive bombers were perhaps the busiest. Some of them had been en route to Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941, and flown straight into the battle, losing a third of their number. It was a grim opening to World War II for them.

In the next six months, however, the dive bombers and their crews began to pay back Japan for its attack. They became the first to send a Japanese warship to the bottom of the sea when they sank the submarine *I-70* on December 10. Two months later they raided the Marshall Islands. The *Enterprise* escorted the Doolittle Raiders to and from Tokyo in April 1942 before taking part in the decisive Battle of Midway in June. There the Dauntless crews

risked all and paid heavily to strike a blow that radically altered the course of the war.

Well researched and detailed, this book tells the story of the officers and enlisted sailors who made up the Dauntless crews. Each sailor's story is incorporated into the whole, giving the reader a very full and well rounded view of their missions and duties during the critical first six months of the war.



*Guarding the Führer: Sepp Dietrich and Adolf Hitler* (Blaine Taylor, Casemate Publishers, Havertown PA, 2014, 192pp, photographs, bibliography, \$32.95, hardcover)

Hitler survived a number of attempts on his life both before the war and after. His security arrangements were extensive. Sepp Dietrich, a World War I veteran and early member of the Nazi Party, acted as chief of the Führer's bodyguard service, though he eventually went on to command German troops in the field. Another official, Johann Rattenhuber, headed the Reich Security Service, which also protected the Third Reich's leader. Their jobs were to keep Hitler alive when many people were actively trying to kill him. The bodyguards succeeded in this only to have Hitler take his own life when the war was lost.

The author presents an excellent written summary of Hitler's bodyguards, including numerous examples of his protectors in action. The strength of this work, however, is in its large collection of photographs. More a photo book than anything, it contains hundreds of images of Hitler at various functions and meetings along with those sworn to protect him. Many are rare, and a few have never before been published. Together they give an inside look at the protective services of the Third Reich and the lengths these services went to while protecting one of history's most hated figures in the midst of a world war.



*Fight On! A GI's Odyssey Back to Nazi Germany* (Bernard L. Kahn, Cable Publishing, Brule, WI, 2014, 273pp, maps, photographs, index, \$24.95, hardcover)

One day in 1936, young Bernard Kahn was walking home from school with his close friend Erno Schmid. They were in Munich, Germany, and Erno had discovered

**EXPERIENCE THE ACTION OF WORLD WAR II AFLOAT!**

**Sail Aboard the Liberty Ship**

# JOHN W. BROWN

**2015 Living History Cruises** ★ May 9 ★ June 13 ★ October 3

★ FROM BALTIMORE ON THE CHESAPEAKE BAY ★

**You're in 1944**, the world is at war, and you've just set sail across the Atlantic on the S.S. John W. Brown — who knows what adventures lie in wait as you experience a sea and air adventure on this six-hour day cruise aboard a fully restored WWII Liberty Ship. Last day to order tickets is 14 days before the cruise. Conditions and penalties apply to cancellations.

**Includes:**

- ★ Tour the Ship from Bridge to Engine Room
- ★ Lunch
- ★ See Wartime Aircraft Attack & Battle\*
- ★ Live Music & Entertainment of the '40s

• Order your tickets online at:  
[www.ssjohnwbrown.org](http://www.ssjohnwbrown.org)

• Information call: 410-558-0164

Project Liberty Ship is a Baltimore based, all volunteer, nonprofit organization.

**SS John W. Brown**

SS John W. Brown is maintained in her WWII configuration, visitors must be able to climb steps to board.

\* Weather permitting

## USS SLATER

**Albany, New York**

**Tour the only restored WWII Destroyer Escort afloat in America.**

518-431-1943

[www.uss Slater.org](http://www.uss Slater.org)

**Ron Wolin**

Collector-Dealer ■ Military Curios

BUY ■ SELL ■ TRADE

**Specializing in**

Original WWII American and Third Reich Military Souvenirs of all types.

437 Bartell Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23322

757-547-2764

[www.ronwolin.com](http://www.ronwolin.com) ■ [ronwolin@cox.net](mailto:ronwolin@cox.net)

**SEABEE MUSEUM Store**

**CAN DO!**

Read a good book lately?

Check out our selection!

Seabee Museum Store

Port Hueneme, CA

[www.seabeesmuseumstore.org](http://www.seabeesmuseumstore.org)

805 382-2585



the Nazi Party. He looked at Bernard, whose father was a non-practicing Jew, and said, "You are the son of a Jew. You will never wear a uniform except the striped one of Dachau." For Bernard it was a horrible sign of things to come in Germany. A year later he was in America, a move that may well have saved his life.

Six years later he was a soldier for his new country. He came to be assigned to the 157th Infantry Regiment, part of the 45th "Thunderbird" Division. The 157th fought in a number of difficult actions, seeing extensive combat. Later, they liberated the Dachau concentration camp before moving on capture Munich at war's end. Bernard found himself back in the city of his childhood, walking familiar streets that were now covered in rubble.

This is a fascinating look at a German émigré's journey back to his homeland. A number of former Germans did this, often serving as translators, but relatively few accounts of their experiences exist. His personal look at the war in Europe covers the front lines as well as the mundane day to day activities that form the bulk of a soldier's time in clear prose. It is also well illustrated with both official and personal photographs.



*Why the Japanese Lost: The Red Sun's Setting* (Bryan Perrett, Pen and Sword Publishing, South Yorkshire, United Kingdom, 2014, 234pp, maps, photographs, bibliography, index, \$36.95, hardcover)

The road to war for Imperial Japan was a complex one. The nation had been closed and isolationist only a century before. In a stunningly rapid transition Japan industrialized and militarized, making it capable of fighting several wars by the beginning of the 20th century. This militarism continued, and by the 1930s Japan was ready to seize an empire in Asia. By 1942, it had largely done so, carving out a vast resource laden zone for itself.

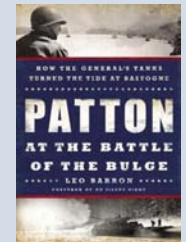
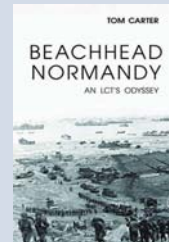
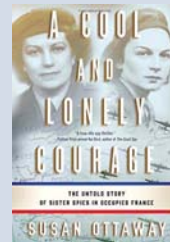
At the same time, Japan had latent weaknesses that would doom it to defeat. Its industry could not produce everything it needed, forcing it to make choices about production. This left gaps in the development and production of war matériel and meant that Japan could not replace lost ships fast enough or improve armored vehicles, for example. Japan's string of military successes had led to "Victory Disease," making the Japanese military establishment vulnerable to hubris and an underestimation of their opponents' determination and abilities. Japan's own domestic political situa-

tion also led to difficulties prosecuting the war.

The author is well known for his thoughtful analysis and attention to the smallest detail. His writing takes the myriad reasons for Japan's defeat and weaves them all together into a logical narrative that clearly explains his thesis. The book evaluates Japanese military history from the Shogun era to World War II and effec-

tively shows how this history led Japan from a growing power to a shattered nation in less than a century.

*Rommel Reconsidered* (Edited by Ian F.W. Beckett, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2014, 184pp, maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, \$19.95, softcover)



## New and Noteworthy

**Project 9: The Birth of the Air Commandos in World War II** (Dennis R. Okerstrom, University of Missouri Press, 2014, \$29.95, hardcover). This is the story of the Allied plan to invade Burma by air in 1944. The aircraft, training, and actual assault are all included.

**A Cool and Lonely Courage: The Untold Story of Sister Spies in Occupied France** (Susan Ottaway, Little, Brown, 2014, \$27.00, hardcover) This is the true story of two sisters who worked for the French Resistance and British SOE during World War II. One of them was captured and sent to a concentration camp.

**Beachhead Normandy: An LCT's Odyssey** (Tom Carter, Potomac Books, 2014, \$29.95, hardcover). This landing craft, tank (LCT) made the assault landing at Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. The ship later went on to serve in China.

**Ministers at War: Winston Churchill and His War Cabinet** (Jonathan Schneer, Basic Books, 2014, \$29.99, hardcover) British Prime Minister Winston Churchill relied on a team of ministers to get Britain through the war. This war cabinet took the nation to eventual victory.

**Patton at the Battle of the Bulge: How the General's Tanks Turned the Tide at Bastogne** (Leo Barron, NAL Caliber, 2014, \$27.95, hardcover). Patton's 4th Armored Division fought its way into Bastogne during the Ardennes fighting. The story of its fight is a race against time and the enemy.



**The Last Escaper: The Untold First-Hand Story of the Legendary Bomber Pilot, 'Cooler King' and Arch Escape Artist** (Peter Tunstall, Overlook Press, 2015, \$27.95, hardcover) This autobiographical tale tells of the author's time as a POW. He became a celebrated escape artist.

**Killing Patton: The Strange Death of World War II's Most Audacious General** (Bill O'Reilly, Henry Holt and Company, 2014, \$30.00, hardcover) This book presents the death of Patton as a possible assassination. It attempts to lay out the facts surrounding the event along with a summary of those who might have wanted him dead.

**My Battle Against Hitler: Faith, Truth and Defiance in the Shadow of the Third Reich** (Dietrich Von Hildebrand, Image Publishing, 2014, \$28.00, hardcover) Hildebrand was a Catholic who opposed Hitler and the Nazis. His outspoken efforts made him one of the Third Reich's main enemies.

**The Lady Gangster: The True Story of WWII's Most Amazing Ship and Her Heroic Crew** (Del Staecker, Cable Publishing, 2014, \$23.95, hardcover) The USS *Fuller* was one of the most active attack transports in the Navy. It saw service from Iceland to Okinawa.

# Warfare History Network's Special Issue

# BLITZKRIEG on the Russian Front



Early on the morning of June 22, 1941, Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union. What followed was the largest military invasion the world had ever seen, and perhaps the most important.

The Russian Front spanned 1,800 miles, and led to a loss of 750,000 horses, 600,000 vehicles, over 10 million soldiers, and countless civilians—and this special report is your guide to how it all began.

Follow Hitler's Nazi forces and Stalin's Red Army as they battle along the entire length of the Soviet Union, engaged in some of the most desperate and horrific combat in the history of warfare.

BLITZKRIEG ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT has over 125 pages of fully detailed features that'll be sure to keep you occupied and well-informed on this fascinating military operation.

From large-scale German panzer attacks to the Red Army's massive counteroffensives, from Stalin's miscalculations to Hitler's strategic shortcomings, you won't find a more gripping account of Hitler's Soviet invasion.

Your personal guide to the ferocious battles, heroic sacrifices and disastrous allegiances is just one click away, so don't delay! Experience the Eastern Front like never before.

## DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY NOW!

This Special e-Book is available for immediate download in digital format only from Warfare History Network.

**WARFARE**HISTORYNETWORK

Use the web address below and get reading about one of the most important battles in history.

[www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com/store/Blitzkrieg](http://www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com/store/Blitzkrieg)



**PzG - Your Third Reich HQ!**  
Books • CDs • Videos • Flags • Pins  
T-shirts • Posters • Daggers & more

---

**SS Mans Reproduction Dagger**

Exact life size replica with inlaidommel, SS motto on blade, and over 13 inches in length.

*Only \$40.00 +s/h*

---

**Fuehrer Standard**

*This flag could only be raised in his presence.*  
Made from durable polyester approximately 3' x 3'. No grommets or pole pocket.

*Only \$35.00 +s/h*

---

shipping / handling just \$8.00 per order  
**CATALOG / COLOR FLYER SHEETS**  
send \$1.00

 **PzG Inc.**  
P.O. Box 3972  
Rapid City, SD 57709-3972  
[www.pzg.biz](http://www.pzg.biz)

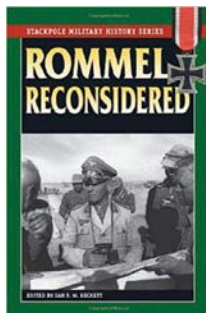
## WWII HISTORY

### Attention Subscribers

#### Important Note From the Publisher Suspicious Phone Calls/Letters

Some of our readers have received suspicious phone calls or offers in the mail to renew their subscription to this magazine. Follow these steps to make sure your renewal is legitimate:

1. Make sure the renewal notice sent to you lists the date your subscription expires. Check that date against the label on your magazine, which also lists your expiration date. The dates should match.
2. Do not respond to a telephone solicitation for a renewal unless your subscription has expired. We do not phone subscribers until their subscription expires.
3. Make sure the return envelopes in your renewal notice go to this magazine in Williamsport, PA.
4. If you are uncertain about any offer you receive, call us at **1-800-219-1187** (toll free).



involved in the failed July 1944 plot to kill Hitler, and paid for it with his life. Even his enemies respected him. He was brave, daring, and resourceful. Rommel led from the front and could inspire his soldiers to great efforts.

Was he as great as his legacy suggests, however? He was willing to take risks, but many of them did not pay off. His daring could turn to recklessness. While he is lauded for plotting against Hitler, Rommel's rise to high command was largely due to his affiliation with the Nazis. Was his postwar fame part of a need to provide an example of a good German amid the evil of the Third Reich? In the end, Rommel was just a man; like most he had his strengths and faults, and these were exhibited in his performance on the battlefield. He deserved his fame, but his story is not one sided.

The editor of this volume has collected seven essays summarizing Rommel's actions and achievements through an objective lens, trying to discover the real Rommel devoid of the myths and propaganda that have risen around him. Each focuses on a different part of the war, with many details on his operations, successes, and failures. The result is to give a balanced view of one of Germany's most famous soldiers.



208pp, maps, photographs, bibliography, index, \$30.00, hardcover)

This book tells the story of both Axis and Allied photoreconnaissance aircrews and their struggles to obtain much-needed intelligence. Planners on both sides required information to make decisions about pending operations and target selection. Just as these efforts were made to get the photographs, the opposing side tried to either intercept the reconnaissance planes or fool them through camouflage or misdirection. Once the pilots obtained the imagery, photo interpreters had to determine what, if anything, the pictures revealed. This in itself was a com-

German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel is widely viewed as one of history's greatest war leaders. His reputation was largely built in France and North Africa from 1940-1943. Later, he prepared the defenses of Normandy, became

bination of art and science as the interpreters learned to distinguish between real and dummy aircraft and even entirely faked airfields or factories.

All this work yielded carnage and destruction on a vast scale. One French journalist in Tokyo described hundreds of Japanese boiled alive after they jumped into a canal to escape the firebombing attack of March 9, 1945. Further such attacks only increased the damage; bodies were reduced to ashes that blew away in the breeze.

This book contains many photographs never before published along with numerous diagrams and maps demonstrating aircraft, techniques, and specific missions. The words of participants are included in most sections, adding a first person view of the dangerous work these pilots did and the deadly results of their labor.



**Hunting Tito: A History of Nachtschlachtgruppe 7 in World War II** (Lovro Persen, Schiffer Publishing, Atglen, PA, 2014, 192pp, maps, photographs, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, \$35.00, hardcover)

The Nazi juggernaut swept through Yugoslavia in just a few short weeks in April 1941. Taking the Balkan country with its mix of nationalistic subgroups proved easier in the long run than holding it. Soon after the initial conquest was complete, partisan groups began to spring forth, determined to resist domination by either the Nazis or other ethnic groups and movements. The situation quickly became both complex and brutal as old animosities and the new occupation by the Germans created a volatile mix.

Supporting German ground troops in Yugoslavia was a scratch force of aircraft and crews formed into a special air wing designed to take the fight to the partisans. Using mostly obsolete aircraft, Nachtschlachtgruppe 7 bombed their strongholds and sought the guerrillas as they moved and when they attempted to pick up supplies from the Allies. This was one of the lesser known Luftwaffe units of the war, and it fought straight through to the end.

The German military in World War II is the specialty of Schiffer Publishing. This book contains all the details, charts, and illustrations Schiffer is known for. The author did exhaustive research; there are even charts listing every individual aircraft of the wing known to have been lost.



*You deserve a factual look at . . .*

## How Will We Stop Iran?

**Iran's global jihad seizes new ground, fortified by an obsessive quest for nuclear arms. Negotiations are failing. Do we need tougher sanctions?**

*Iran's Islamic fundamentalist leaders are sworn by their nation's constitution to pursue world conquest through jihad. Through global terror campaigns, Iran has already achieved dominance in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen. It openly threatens to destroy Israel. Despite decades of Western-imposed trade embargos and sanctions, as well as recent U.S.-led negotiations, Iran's drive to amass nuclear arms continues unabated, and its leaders vow not to give up their quest. What more must the U.S. and the world do to stop Iran's apocalyptic nuclear threat?*

### What are the facts?

Iran is by far the world's most aggressive perpetrator of terrorist acts. It provides direct funding and leadership to Islamic terror groups Hizbollah, Hamas, Houthi rebels in Yemen, and Shiite militias in Iraq, as well as the ruthless Assad regime in Syria. The Islamic republic also has been tied to bloody attacks on civilians in nations as far flung as India, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Bulgaria, as well as an attempted assassination of the Saudi Ambassador in Washington, DC. Iran was recently implicated in the 1994 bombing of a Jewish center in Argentina and a murderous cover-up attempt. But Iran's most belligerent threats have been directed at Israel, which Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei vows to "annihilate."

**Iran's terrorist tactics are motivated by its drive** to become the dominant power in the Middle East. The Shiite ideology of Iran's leaders commands Muslims to wage global jihad, and their constitution commits them to "the establishment of a universal holy government and the downfall of all others." So far Iran's strategy has been successful, as its controlling influence now spreads over Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and most recently Yemen. More critically, Iran has an effective chokehold over the Gulf of Hormuz, through which much of the world's oil travels.

No wonder most of the world's nations, especially Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt, are horrified at the prospect of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. In fact, a nuclear Iran threatens the worldwide balance of power, particularly in the inflammable Middle East. For Israel, a nuclear-armed Iran poses an imminent threat to its very existence.

**Unfortunately, the West, and particularly the United States,** must share the blame for allowing Iran to increase its hegemony and acquire nuclear weapons capability. The U.S. pulled out of Lebanon in 1983 after an Iranian-engineered bomb killed 241 Marines, facilitating the rise of Shiite Hizbollah terrorists. When the U.S. pulled out of Iraq in 2011, Iran stepped in, seizing control of Shiite militias and exerting decisive influence on the Iraqi government. Syria's

President Bashar Assad, roiled in a bloody civil war, has essentially become a proxy for Iran, and the Houthis, who just violently took control of former U.S. ally Yemen, are also on Iran's payroll. While the U.S. has designated Iran a state sponsor of terrorism and instituted a trade embargo in 1995, the Islamic republic's warlike acts against the U.S., Israel and many other nations have only increased. To halt Iran's

nuclear weapons development, the West imposed sanctions in 2006, but Iran's centrifuges continue to spin defiantly.

**"Of course we bypass the sanctions, and we take pride in it."**

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani

**Despite intense recent negotiations between the U.S. and**

**Iran** to reach a peaceful resolution, several deadlines for settlement have passed, and Iran still refuses to cease nuclear weapons development. Indeed, recent investigations indicate that Iran has already violated existing agreements by establishing secret nuclear supply networks. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani boasts, "Of course we bypass the sanctions, and we take pride in it." No wonder a majority of the U.S. Congress urgently supports harsh new sanctions on Iran unless it immediately agrees to give up weapons-grade nuclear enrichment and ballistic missile programs. President Obama, however, promises to veto any such measure, arguing that increased sanction threats will frighten the Iranians from further negotiations.

**What is the solution?** Most Americans share the President's hopes that Iran can be persuaded to set aside its nuclear ambitions—and its vendetta against Israel—through diplomacy. But one thing is certain: *Iran is our enemy.* Appeasement will not work. It is only crippling Western economic sanctions, backed by the threat of force, that have driven Iran to the negotiating table.

Above all, Iran must decommission its nuclear weapons infrastructure now. To this end, Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) have introduced the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2015, which toughens sanctions if Iran refuses to comply, thus strengthening the U.S. hand in forging an agreement that peacefully eliminates the Iranian nuclear threat.

*Since sanctions brought the Iranians to the table, sanctions are the most powerful, peaceful means for convincing them to abandon plans to acquire nuclear weapons. But because the Iranians continue to declare themselves implacably committed to nuclear development, it's time to ratchet up economic pressure. The Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act should be passed now. The survival of the world is at stake.*

This message has been published and paid for by

# FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East  
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

Gerardo Joffe, President ■ James Sinkinson, Vice President

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501 (c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

146

**To receive free FLAME updates, visit our website: [www.factsandlogic.org](http://www.factsandlogic.org)**



## MACHINEGAMES AND BETHESDA SOFTWARES PREPARE TO TAKE US EVEN DEEPER INTO THE WORLD OF WOLFENSTEIN WITH STAND-ALONE PREQUEL "THE OLD BLOOD."

### WOLFENSTEIN: THE OLD BLOOD

**PUBLISHER** MACHINEGAMES • **DEVELOPER** BETHESDA SOFTWARES

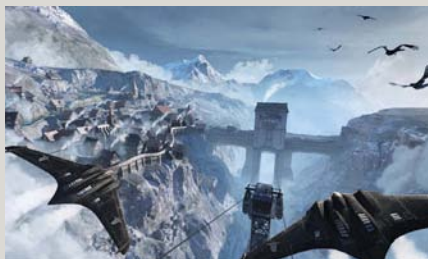
**PLATFORM** XBOX ONE, PLAYSTATION 4, PC • **AVAILABLE** MAY



The twisted World War II-themed *Wolfenstein 3D* came screaming back to life last year when developer MachineGames teamed up with Bethesda Softworks to release *Wolfenstein: The New Order*. It was one of those releases that ended up being way more than anyone bargained or hoped for, offering up a bombastic campaign and eschewing superfluous multiplayer in favor of making certain the single-player fully delivered. While many developers desperately attempt to shoehorn multiplayer in to help boost



sales—or perhaps offer the illusion of longevity regardless of quality—MachineGames' gamble paid off, and *The New Order* ended up garnering plenty of praise and landing in more than a few "Best of 2014" spots.



Despite the success of *The New Order*, it was still a pleasant surprise when a trailer suddenly trumpeted out the announcement of *Wolfenstein: The Old Blood*. Rather than being a full-fledged sequel, *The Old Blood* serves as an expansion to the series and a prequel to the events of *The New Order*. The single-player campaign once again stars the burly William "B.J." Blazkowicz as he attempts to find the location of a Nazi compound, setting us up for another potentially thrilling first-person action-adventure.

*Wolfenstein: The Old Blood* takes place in 1946 and features two interconnected stories with their own unique objectives. First up is *Rudi Jäger and the Den of Wolves*, in which B.J.—played by Brian Bloom, who reprises his role and has provided voices for plenty of other war games, including *Call of Duty: World at War* and, more recently, *Call of Duty: Ghosts*—is tasked with breaking into the infamous Castle Wolfenstein to steal coordinates to General Wilhelm "Deathshead" Strasse's compound. After that mission, *The Dark Secrets of Helga von Schabbs* finds B.J. traveling to Wulfburg, where he runs into a Nazi archaeologist in the middle of uncov-

ering artifacts that threaten to release a "dark and ancient power."

Yep, we're firmly in the realm of nefarious Nazi experiments and other foreboding explorations of the dark arts, which is precisely where we want to be when it comes to the *Wolfenstein* franchise. Gameplay will be familiar to anyone who played *Wolfenstein: The New Order*, as MachineGames is sticking close to the first-person action established in the last outing. In addition to the standard run-and-gun combat and the occasional bit of stealth, there's a cover system that can assist players in either situation. Thus the big thing here is, of course, new weapons and upgrades. *The Old Blood* will have a variety of new weapons that didn't make their way into the previous game, and it should be interesting to see what kind of over-the-top, upgradeable combinations the developers end up creating.

Perhaps the best feature of *Wolfenstein: The Old Blood* is the fact that you needn't have played *The New Order* to enjoy it. MachineGames made it a prequel in the first place so newcomers wouldn't feel like they were missing out on anything, so get ready for some more intense action regardless of whether or not you passed on it the first time around. Still, you should give *Wolfenstein: The New Order* a spin if you fall into the "missed it category"; it's a doozy.

### WORLD OF TANKS: XBOX 360 EDITION ADDS JAPANESE STEEL

**PUBLISHER** WARGAMING.NET • **DEVELOPER** WARGAMING.NET

**PLATFORM** XBOX 360 • **AVAILABLE** NOW

*World of Tanks: Xbox 360 Edition* continues to roll out updates of its own, and one of the recent additions introduced a bunch of new Japanese vehicles along with a brand new map. The Imperial Steel update finally allows console players to make their way through the Japanese Tech Tree with their fresh arsenal of vehicles, and they can do so on a map called Sacred Valley.

The Imperial Steel update introduces 13 new tanks, including light tanks R. Otsu, Ha-Go, Ke-Ni, and Ke-Ho; as well as medium tanks Chi-Ni, STA-1, Type 61 Chi-Ri, and more. The Japanese Tech Tree will start out fielding the previously mentioned four light tanks in addition to a total of nine medium tanks.

As for the Sacred Valley map, it puts players in an abandoned village at the bottom of an otherwise serene valley. There's cover available for all tank sizes, offering up plenty of opportunities for close-up battles, while long-range gunners can take advantage of the high ground of the cliffs that border the map. *World of Tanks: Xbox 360 Edition* has done a fine job of keeping players relatively up to date with new content, so anyone looking for further reason to continue playing should go ahead and download the latest update if they haven't done so already. Hopefully we'll see some of you on the battlefield!



## profiles

*Continued from page 25*

would be available from India for flying in: all hands and the cook, it seemed, were tied up in the great battle for Manipur. We were to capture the field for two or three days and then to abandon it.... Secondly, it was early apparent that the birds had flown. The Queen's got right on to the airfield without a shot being fired."

Fergusson was later ordered to fly out to India from either Aberdeen or Broadway, the latter of which was the initial Chindit landing field in early March. Fergusson arrived by plane in India on May 3, 1944.

On which side of the postwar literary debate over Wingate does Fergusson rest? In the book *Beyond the Chindwin*, his sentiments are quite unambiguous: "By some, chiefly journalists, he has been idealized; by others, chiefly professional rivals, he has been decried. His was a complex character, but two things are sure. First, he was a military genius of a grandeur and stature seen not more than once or twice in a century. Secondly, no other officer I have heard of could have dreamed the dream, planned the plan, obtained, trained, inspired and led the force. There are men who shine at planning, or at training, or at leading: here was a man who excelled at all three, and whose vision at the council-table matched his genius in the field."

Fergusson became the Director of Combined Operations from 1945 to 1946. After a failed attempt in a Parliamentary election, he returned to Palestine in 1946 as a brigadier in a paramilitary capacity to confront a Jewish insurrection there. While in Palestine, he became implicated in the investigation of the death of a Jewish dissident and the possible cover-up that followed, leading to his return to Britain.

During the Suez Crisis in the mid-1950s, Fergusson was put in charge of the psychological warfare component of Britain's plan to retake the Suez Canal after Egypt's President Gamal Nasser nationalized it. In 1962, Fergusson was appointed Governor-General of New Zealand. He served there for five years as the last British-born Governor-General. His father and both of his grandfathers had been governors of New Zealand. In 1972, Fergusson was granted a life peerage as Baron Ballantrae. He died on November 28, 1980, after serving as chancellor of the University of St. Andrews for seven years.

---

*Jon Diamond practices medicine and resides in Hershey, Pennsylvania. He has contributed many articles to WWII History. His Osprey Command Series (#28) book on Field Marshal Archibald Wavell was released in July 2012.*

## Makin

*Continued from page 67*

few hours later, Orion Division troops began moving back to their transport ships. The 193rd's Company C left behind its 3rd Platoon to assist with mopping-up operations.

Capturing Butaritari took 75 hours and the lives of 218 Americans. For its part, the 193rd TB suffered four men killed in action and 16 wounded. These comparatively minor losses cause many observers to believe that Makin was an "easy" invasion. The facts tell a far different story.

Many mistakes were made, from the 27th's overly complex scheme of maneuver to a logistics nightmare caused by Butaritari's hopelessly inadequate landing beaches. Commanders also realized that tank-infantry coordination needed improvement. General Smith later reported, "The problem of reliable means of communication between the tanks and the close support infantry is not yet solved. It was extremely difficult to transmit information from outside the tank to the tank crew."

Tank Platoon Leader 2nd Lt. Murray Engle agreed. "There is a great lack of communications between tanks and front line troops. In the tanks, vision is so limited that the crew can't pick out any targets." Engle concluded by stating that small unit training should improve this situation.

Despite the problems, much went right at Makin. Overwhelming U.S. firepower dominated the battlefield, pulverizing enemy defenders who chose death before surrender. The tank-infantry-engineer team quickly mastered bunker-busting operations. Technological innovations like the LVT-1 also provided a tactical edge that contributed to the ultimate American victory in the Pacific.

There were many lessons learned during this first amphibious assault undertaken by U.S. Army forces in the Central Pacific. Chief among them was the need for armor in an invasion's first wave. Maj. Gen. Smith summed it up. "Light and medium tanks were employed continuously throughout the operation, and are considered invaluable both for their combat strength and the morale effect on the troops."

Starting with the Gilbert Islands, tanks participated in every American offensive action across the Pacific. Their armored power proved decisive on many island battlefields and helped win the war against Japan.

---

*Patrick J. Chaisson is a retired U.S. Army officer and veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He writes from his home in Scotia, New York.*

## nazi trials

*Continued from page 59*

but no action.

Back in 1947, we believed we were building a United Nations structure that could prevent future aggressive war, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Every nation that joins the United Nations signs its charter, Section 227 I think, that says you must respect human rights, can't wage wars, and can't run a police state. You can't do it. Everyone signed it, and that has stopped it from happening, right?

### You had high hopes at first.

Hell yes! I made a lot of speeches to dozens of groups. When I came home, the *LA Times* wrote an article about me, and I was a little bit of a celebrity for a time. I talked to a lot of church groups and schools and talked about how the example of Nuremberg would help prevent another Nazi regime in the future. Now, I know that a lot of what our tribunals decided has been used since then in the few war crimes trials that have been held. So at least we created precedents, but those trials have only been small scale.

### So is that the only legacy of the Nuremberg Trials?

Well, maybe one other thing. Because of what we did at Nuremberg, it can be said that at one point in human history, and maybe only then, everyone agreed about what was right and what was wrong for nations, governments, and people to do to each other, that laws are laws and must be respected and enforced or millions die. And everyone agreed that the rights we believe in here in America apply to everyone, everywhere. They call them human rights now, not just inalienable rights. So, for just a few years, those who broke those laws in inconceivable ways were eventually hauled before the bar of justice, and many of them were punished.

Our prosecuting teams were made up of good men who believed in what we were doing, and we did our jobs by the letter of the law. In the end, there will always be leaders and nations like Hitler and Nazi Germany. I just hope we keep our muscles strong enough to stop them, and maybe that in itself is legacy enough and justice enough for those who died under the Third Reich.

---

*Author Alan Waite is the chief executive officer of PRAXIS, Inc., and teaches project management at the University of Wisconsin at Madison's School of Continuing Education. He resides in Sacramento, California.*



number of aircraft the Russians kept throwing at them was beginning to wipe away some of the Luftwaffe's best.

This very month, November 1943, the Americans were beginning to field a new fighter that they had not planned for, had not wanted at first, and did not yet quite know how to use. The North American P-51 Mustang was not a wonder weapon, but it was an accidental triumph of engineering. Galland watched the Insterburg display, saw the Führer's smile, and was quietly grim.

Gifted with a more cheerful personality was Hans Baur, the air ace from the Great War who was Hitler's personal pilot. A lifelong aircraft fanatic, Baur was savoring the display of new flying machines.

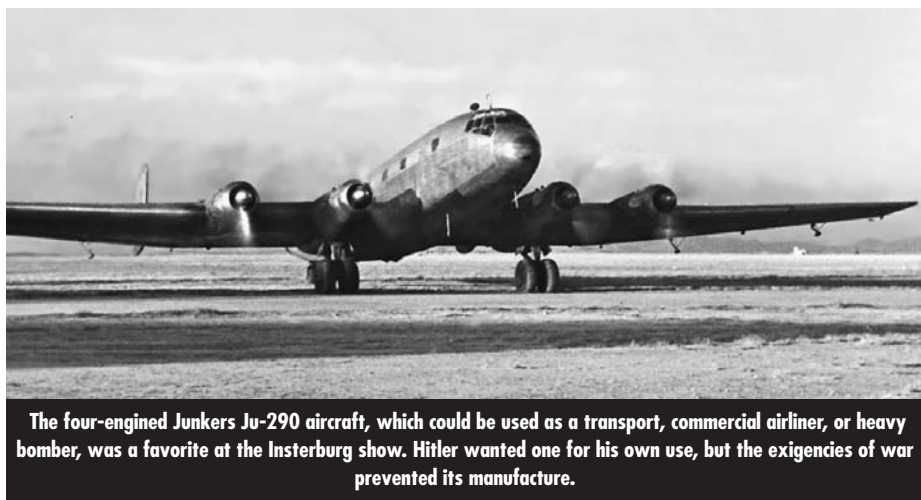
"Baur was a decent person in many ways," said his biographer, G.G. Sweeting, in an interview for this article. "He was a good husband and loyal family man with a pleasant disposition, but he never wavered in his stalwart support for National Socialism and for Hitler. He was busy running his private squadron, which was not a part of the Luftwaffe. He told me he was really impressed by the jets, especially the Me-262, but also by the Ju 290A-5 transport."

Baur's outfit was dubbed Die Fliegerstaffel des Führers, or the Führer's personal squadron, and was marked with a special insignia that was painted on the nose of all planes, a black eagle head on a white background, surrounded by a narrow red ring. Unlike Galland, Baur was still optimistic about the war. He pictured himself squiring Hitler about in the transport in a sky made safe by the shark-like, jet-propelled Me-262s.

In *The Me-262 Stormbird*, authors Colin D. Heaton and Anne-Marie Louis recount what Baur told them. "Hitler was always excited about new things, like a child at Christmas, you could say. If there were any new ideas in tank, U-boat, or aircraft designs, he wanted to see all the blueprints and have them explained to him. His memory was photographic and he forgot nothing."

As the event at Insterburg drew to a close, Hitler returned with Baur and Axmann to the Ju-52 for the flight back to Berlin. Before turning to the plane, Hitler chatted with Speer on possible production figures, and Speer told him that he would have to research that. Hitler told him to make it quick and appointed Speer as overseer on the Me-262 project.

In the meeting, Göring expressed support for the Me-262 and named some prominent Ger-



**The four-engined Junkers Ju-290 aircraft, which could be used as a transport, commercial airliner, or heavy bomber, was a favorite at the Insterburg show. Hitler wanted one for his own use, but the exigencies of war prevented its manufacture.**

man pilots who might conduct test flying of the revolutionary jet. Speer pointed out that the Reich was facing a shortage of raw materials for war projects. There was a particular concern about the supply of nickel, needed in jet engines. It would probably not have occurred to Speer to mention the American daylight bombing campaign, which, so far, was achieving little in its own efforts to stymie aircraft production. Hitler told Speer that he would have a letter prepared authorizing procurement of whatever was needed to acquire the materials. Speer concurred.

As Bauer recalled, "I then remembered that the next day Hitler called his secretary, Fraulein [Traudl] Junge, into his study where he composed the letter. Later Speer came by, picked up the letter, gave the party salute and left. The funny thing was that later that day some gauleiter [district leader] from somewhere had called, demanding to speak with the Führer. Well, Bormann took the call and I remember him telling the man on the other end of the line to just 'shut his mouth and give Herr Professor Speer whatever the hell he wanted,' and his life would be much easier. 'Bothering the Führer with this complaint would not be advised.' And then he hung up the phone."

In a Monday, December 20, 1943, speech to Wehrmacht officers, Hitler revealed the priority he placed on the Me-262 as an anti-invasion weapon: "Every month that passes makes it more and more probable that we will get at least one group of jet aircraft. The important thing is that they [the enemy] get some bombs on top of them just as they try to invade. That will force them to take cover, and in this way they will waste hour after hour! But after half a day our reserves will already be on their way. So if we can pin them down on the beaches for just six or eight hours, you can see what that will mean to us."

This was the speech in which Hitler predicted an Allied invasion two or three months hence, much sooner than it actually happened. This was also the date of a letter in which President Franklin D. Roosevelt agreed with Prime Minister Winston Churchill that an announcement could be made at the first of the year that General Dwight D. Eisenhower would command Operation Overlord, the code name of the invasion for which the Führer was preparing.

Hitler's fixation on using the Me-262 to carry bombs may have delayed the jet's entering service, but technical glitches with its jet engines were probably equally responsible. Galland believed that if the Me-262 could have been gotten into battle a year earlier (its first combat mission was on July 25, 1944), it would have swept the skies of Allied bombers and forced a postponement of Overlord. But was a single conversation with Willi Messerschmitt at the big weapons display the reason the Me-262 did not arrive sooner? It was not.

There were other repercussions after the big weapons display for the Führer at Insterburg. One was a difficult experience for unrepentant Nazi and personal pilot Hans Baur. Sixteen months later, one of Baur's last wartime acts was to fly the Ju-290 intended for Hitler's use to Munich-Riem airport on March 24, 1945. Baur parked the aircraft in a hangar and went to his home. The next morning, he learned that Allied bombing had destroyed the magnificent four-engined transport and its hangar.

The Third Reich soon suffered a similar fate, despite the wonder weapons that so infatuated Adolf Hitler during his big weapons display.

The merriment was over.

*Robert F. Dorr is a U.S. Air Force veteran, a retired diplomat, and author of the book *Air Force One, a look at presidential aircraft and air travel*.*

# Chicago Doctor Invents **Affordable** Hearing Aid **Outperforms** Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

Chicago: Board-certified physician Dr. S. Cherukuri has done it once again with his newest invention of a medical grade **ALL DIGITAL affordable hearing aid**.

This new digital hearing aid is packed with all the features of \$3,000 competitors at a mere fraction of the cost. **Now, most people with hearing loss are able to enjoy crystal clear, natural sound — in a crowd, on the phone, in the wind — without suffering through “whistling” and annoying background noise.**

## New Digital Hearing Aid Outperforms Expensive Competitors

This sleek, lightweight, fully programmed hearing aid is the outgrowth of the digital revolution that is changing our world. While demand for “all things digital” caused most prices to plunge (consider DVD players and computers, which originally sold for thousands of dollars and today can be purchased for less), yet the cost of a digital medical hearing aid remains out of reach.

### Satisfied Buyers Agree AIR is the Best Digital Value!

*“I am hearing things I didn't know I was missing. Really amazing. I'm wearing them all the time” —Linda I., Indiana*

*“Almost work too well. I am a teacher and hearing much better now” —Lillian B., California*

*“I have used many expensive hearing aids, some over \$5,000. The AIRs have greatly improved my enjoyment of life” —Som Y., Michigan*

*“I would definitely recommend them to my patients with hearing loss” —Amy S., Audiologist, Indiana*



Dr. Cherukuri knew that many of his patients would benefit but couldn't afford the expense of these new digital hearing aids. Generally they are *not* covered by Medicare and most private health insurance.

The doctor evaluated all the high priced digital hearing aids on the market, broke them down to their base components, and then created his own affordable version — called the **MDHearingAid®AIR** for its virtually invisible, lightweight appearance.

## Affordable Digital Technology

Using advanced digital technology, the **MDHearingAid®AIR** automatically adjusts to your listening environment — prioritizing speech and de-emphasizing background noise. Experience all of the sounds you've been missing at a price you can afford. **This doctor designed and approved hearing**

**Nearly  
Invisible!**

### Same Features As Expensive Hearing Aid Competitors

- ✓ Mini Behind-The-Ear hearing aid with thin tubing for a nearly invisible profile
- ✓ Advanced Noise Reduction to make speech clearer
- ✓ Feedback Cancellation eliminates whistling
- ✓ Wide Dynamic Range Compression makes soft sounds audible and loud sounds comfortable
- ✓ Telecoil setting for use with compatible phones, and looped environments like churches
- ✓ 3 Programs and Volume Dial to accommodate most common types of hearing loss even in challenging listening environments

aid comes with a full year's supply of long-life batteries. It delivers crisp, clear sound all day long and the soft flexible ear buds are so comfortable you won't realize you're wearing them.

### Try It Yourself At Home With Our 45-Day Risk-Free Trial

Of course, hearing is believing and we invite you to try it for yourself with our **RISK-FREE 45-Day** home trial. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within that time period for a full refund of your purchase price.

**MDHearingAid®** **AIR**

**For the Lowest Price plus  
FREE Shipping Call Today**

**800-873-0541**

**Phones open 24 Hours  
EVERY DAY**

**Use Offer Code CA22 to get  
FREE Batteries for a Full Year!**

**www.MDHearingAid.com**



  
Proudly assembled in the USA  
from Domestic & Imported Components.



©2015



## CONFLICTS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

October 20, New York

Consignments now invited

**THE FIRST PHILIPPINE  
REPUBLIC BATTLE FLAG**  
Captured September 17th 1899  
\$12,000 - 18,000

**INQUIRIES**  
+1 (917) 921 7342  
[books.us@bonhams.com](mailto:books.us@bonhams.com)



# Bonhams

NEW YORK

[bonhams.com/books](http://bonhams.com/books)

©2015 Bonhams & Butterfields Auctioneers Corp. All rights reserved. Principal Auctioneer: Patrick Meade, NYC License No. 1183066-DCA