ARMY HISTORY AND HERITAGE

General Paul E. Funk II, United States Army

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Foreword by General Paul E. Funk II, United States Army

Center of Military History
United States Army
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FOREWORD

This book is dedicated in honor and in memory of General William W. Hartzog, the ninth commanding general of the Training and Doctrine Command and a historian at heart. He wrote the initial version of this book, *American Military Heritage*, "to provide a reference that could help drill instructors and other Army leaders instill an appreciation for the lore and traditions that make up the Army's rich heritage."

The study and understanding of military history and appreciation of our proud and rich heritage are critical to personal and professional growth for soldiers. They are the foundation that allows us to expand our expertise within the profession of arms. They lay the cornerstone for our personal contribution to our Army, and give us the means to leave it in a better place than we found it.

We stand on the shoulders of the exceptional men and women, who, for nearly 250 years, have made history and forged our shared heritage. Our history is our incredible legacy. It connects the current generation of soldiers to our departed but not forgotten brethren. It demonstrates that no matter how much time has passed, we continue to be the most lethal and powerful Army in the world. History reminds us that we serve for something far greater than ourselves and that we are willing to endure incredible sacrifices for the love of our great nation.

A professional Army continuously strives for excellence and self-improvement. Learning from significant historical events can be painful, informative, and incredibly inspirational. Let us strive to learn from the lessons of those proud warriors who came before us, so that we never need to relive the trials of the past.

Victory Starts Here!

Fort Eustis, Virginia
7 January 2022

GENERAL PAUL E. FUNK II
17th Commanding General,
U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

GLOBAL WAR: THE U.S. ARMY AND WORLD WAR II, 1944–1945

by David W. Hogan Jr. and Mark L. Bradley

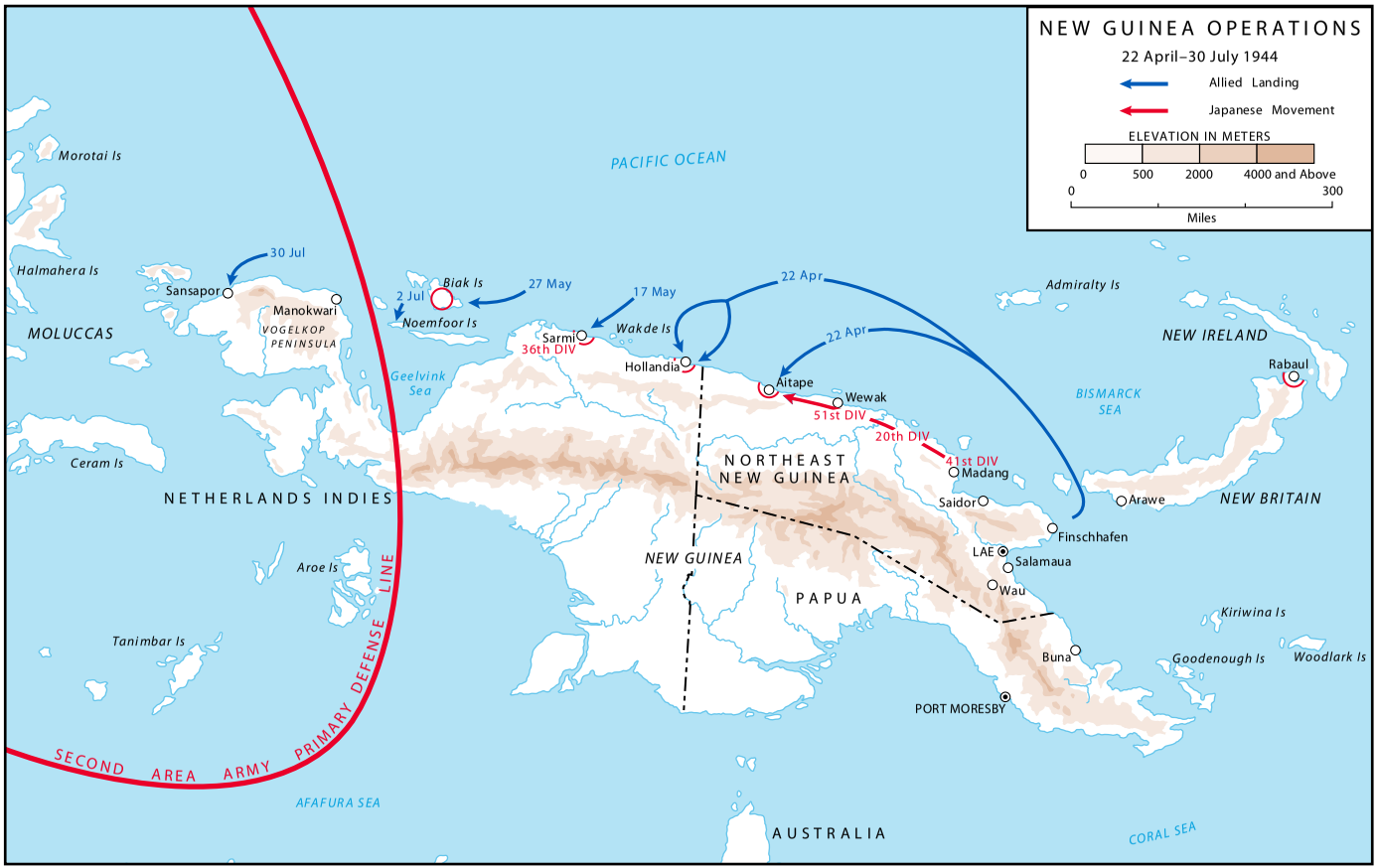
As the United States entered its third year of war, its presence was having an increasing impact around the world. In Russia, the Soviets—aided by American lend-lease supplies—were fighting the bulk of the German Army, driving them into Belorussia and Ukraine. In Italy, the Allies continued their offensive up the peninsula, although the Germans made the advance as bloody and arduous as possible. Many U.S. Army units in the Mediterranean shifted to the British Isles, where the buildup of troops, materiel, and vehicles had turned England into an armed camp. In the central and southwest Pacific, with the close of the Solomon Islands drive, the Army played a major role in the two Allied offensives converging on Japan. After years of waiting and frustration, the Chinese, British, and Americans finally advanced from India into the jungle-covered mountains of northern Burma.

Although the other Allies had larger interests in Burma and Southeast Asia, the Americans sought merely to reopen a ground supply route from India to China. Thus, the Army established a sizable logistical structure in India. It used only a few combat troops, mostly a long-range penetration group of around 3,000 soldiers led by Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill, known as Merrill's Marauders. As Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell's two Chinese divisions—under orders from Chinese Nationalist military leader Chiang Kai-shek not to risk heavy losses—drove methodically forward, the Marauders sliced deep around the Japanese flank to set roadblocks across enemy lines of communications. Kachin guerrillas from northern Burma guided their movements, and Army transport planes airdropped supplies to them into jungle landing zones. Finally, Stilwell sent the Marauders on a 65-mile trek to seize the key airfield at Myitkyina, Burma, on 17 May 1944. But the American troops, exhausted by long marches and savage combat and sick with malaria and scrub typhus, could go no farther.

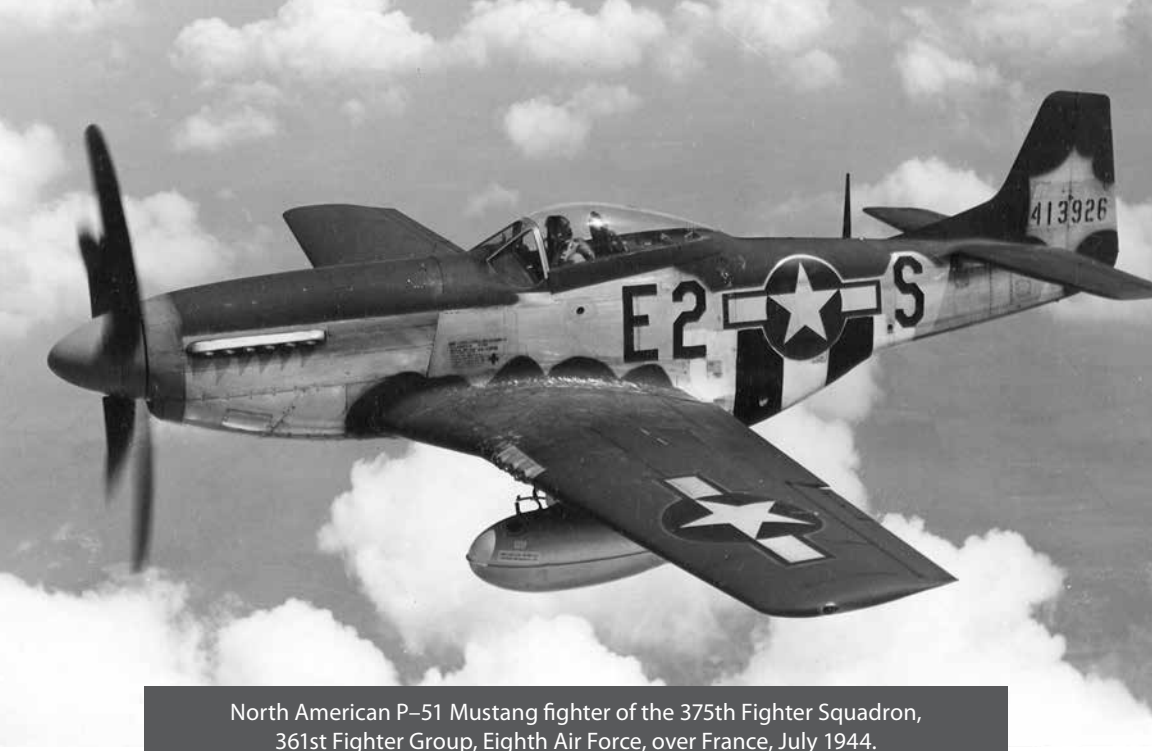
Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill (*right*) and Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell meet near Naubum, Burma. (*U.S. Army*)

Other troops finally relieved the Marauders and captured Myitkyina in August. During the rest of the year, they drove south to link up with the old Burma Road and reopen the route to China. Meanwhile, after winning a decisive battle over the Japanese at Imphal, India, in the spring of 1944, General Sir William J. Slim's Anglo-Indian Fourteenth Army advanced into central and southern Burma and retook Rangoon in May 1945. By that time, the Americans had given up on China as a major instrument of Japan's defeat and were looking entirely to the Pacific for decisive results.

During early 1944, the Pacific offensives shifted into high gear. Strengthened by the massive new *Essex*-class aircraft carriers coming out of American shipyards, joint task forces overpowered Japanese defenses at Kwajalein and Eniwetok Atolls in the central Pacific in January and February. After encircling and isolating a major Japanese base at the occupied coastal town of Rabaul, New Britain, General Douglas MacArthur's southwest Pacific forces landed in the Admiralty Islands. Then, in April, they jumped ahead to Hollandia and Aitape on the north


NEW GUINEA OPERATIONS
22 April–30 July 1944
Allied Landing
Japanese Movement
ELEVATION IN METERS
0
500
2000
4000 and Above
0
300
Miles
PACIFIC OCEAN
Morotai Is
Halmahera Is
MOLUCCAS
30 Jul
Sansapor
Manokwari
VOGELKOP PENINSULA
Biak Is
2 Jul
27 May
Noemfoor Is
17 May
Wakde Is
Sarmi
36th DIV
Hollandia
22 Apr
22 Apr
Aitape
Wewak
51st DIV
20th DIV
41st DIV
Madang
Admiralty Is
NEW IRELAND
Rabaul
BISMARCK SEA
Geelvink Sea
Ceram Is
NETHERLANDS INDIES
NORTHEAST NEW GUINEA
Saidor
Arawe
NEW BRITAIN
Finschhafen
LAE
Salamaua
Wau
NEW GUINEA
PAPUA
Aroe Is
Tanimbar Is
SECOND AREA ARMY PRIMARY DEFENSE LINE
Kiriwina Is
Buna
Goodenough Is
Woodlark Is
PORT MORESBY
AFAFURA SEA
AUSTRALIA
CORAL SEA

Map 1



North American P–51 Mustang fighter of the 375th Fighter Squadron, 361st Fighter Group, Eighth Air Force, over France, July 1944. (*National Archives*)

central coast of the island of New Guinea, far behind the outflanked Japanese main force. Supported by land-based planes flying from new airfields at Hollandia, the Americans and Australians then leapfrogged to Wakde Island in mid-May, then to Biak Island in late May, and finally to Noemfoor Island and the Vogelkop Peninsula at the western end of New Guinea in July. American soldiers faced heavy fighting in mopping up the cut-off Japanese garrisons in the steamy jungles of New Guinea, but their impressive advance left MacArthur 700 miles from the Philippines.

As the Pacific campaign proceeded, the Combined Bomber Offensive had turned a corner in Europe. Bombers flying over Germany in early 1944 no longer had to fend off the relentless German fighters unaided. New, faster, and more maneuverable P–51 Mustangs, their range increased by drop tanks, now escorted the bomber fleets and began to shoot down enemy planes in impressive numbers. During the "Big Week" of 19–25 February 1944, more than 6,000 British and American bombers, supported by more than 3,600 fighter sorties, dropped nearly 20,000 tons of bombs on German aircraft plants, airfields, and ball bearing factories. Not only did the raids severely damage German aircraft production, but they also shot down 450 Nazi fighters. With growing confidence, Allied aviators drove further into Germany, adding Berlin to their target list and largely driving the Luftwaffe from the sky. As D-Day approached, the bombers shifted their emphasis to French railroads and roads to obstruct the German

Soldiers of the U.S. 3d Infantry Division landing at Anzio in late January 1944. (*U.S. Army*)

ability to reinforce beachheads. With the beachheads secured, they went after a new target: German oil production. Despite frantic Nazi efforts—including the introduction of jet fighters in the war's last months—the air offensive inflicted such damage that Hitler's soldiers struggled to find enough fuel to run their tanks and vehicles.

Some of the American bombers came from bases in Italy, where in early 1944 Allied ground forces continued their slow progress up the Italian boot against the heavily fortified Winter Line. To speed up the advance in late January, the Allies tried to go around these barriers with an amphibious landing on the beaches of Anzio, 60 miles behind the Winter Line and only 30 miles from Rome. Although the attack surprised the Germans, they quickly rushed in reinforcements and tried to drive the invaders back into the sea. Allied troops threw back these assaults but could not expand their foothold. The situation soon devolved into a stalemate to match the one farther south. There, in conjunction with the Anzio landing, Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark's Fifth Army punched across the swollen Rapido River but could only establish a small bridgehead that it soon had to abandon after sustaining heavy losses. For the next three months, the Allies made little headway against this sector of the front, which was dominated by the high ground of Monte Cassino, a historic Benedictine abbey overlooking the valley. Even bombing raids that destroyed the abbey could not break the deadlock.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower gives the order of the day, "Full victory—nothing else," to paratroopers in England, just before they board their airplanes to participate in the first assault in Operation Overlord. (*Library of Congress*)

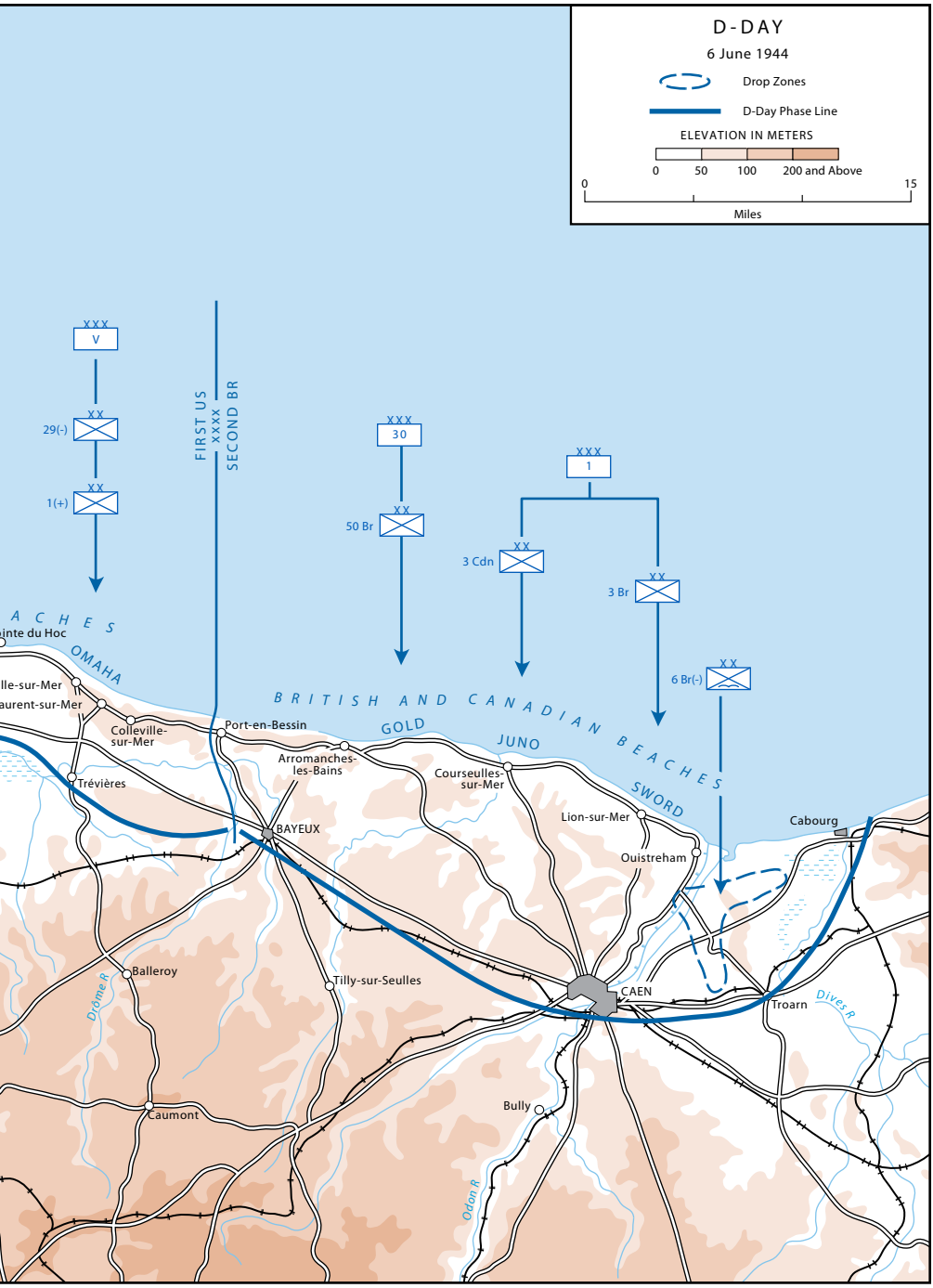
Finally, in mid-May, the Allies broke through on both fronts. A carefully coordinated attack on 11 May by the Fifth and Eighth Armies—assisted by a thrust through the mountains by French troops and valiant assaults by Polish battalions on Monte Cassino—tore open the Winter Line. As the Germans fell back, the Anglo-Americans broke out of the Anzio beachhead and looked poised to link up with the Allies advancing from the Gustav Line. Instead of cutting off the enemy lines of retreat, General Clark turned those spearheads northwest toward Rome and began a race for the Italian capital. On 4 June, the Allies entered the "Eternal City," as cheering crowds sang and threw flowers at their liberators.

Two days later came the news for which the Allies had been waiting four years. At just past dawn on 6 June 1944, American, British, and Canadian troops waded ashore under enemy fire in Normandy, France, along a line of beaches code-named Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. At the same time, airborne forces, commandos, and U.S. Army Rangers seized key points on the German flanks and rear. On four beaches, General Dwight D. Eisenhower's soldiers were able to establish footholds relatively easily, but on Omaha Beach, the First U.S. Army ran into fierce resistance from German pillboxes and machine-gun nests on the bluffs above the beaches. Amphibious tanks, which were supposed to reach the sands to support the infantry, foundered in the rough waters of the English Channel. For a time, it appeared that Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley would have to call off the assault at Omaha. But U.S. Navy battleships and destroyers laid down a blistering bombardment of the German positions. On the beaches, numerous small unit leaders inspired their soldiers to make their way up the heights, break through the defenses, and push inland. By the end of June, the First Army had overrun the key port of Cherbourg and the Cotentin Peninsula and was expanding its lodgment as more troops and supplies poured over the beaches.

Although the Germans, aided by the rugged Norman hedges and swamps, contained the beachhead through most of July, they could not do so forever. On 25 July, in Operation Cobra, American heavy bombers and artillery blasted the enemy line west of Saint-Lô, opening the way for a concentrated attack by three U.S. divisions, followed by three more divisions in exploitation. The front blew wide open as American armored spearheads raced south. Then Lt. Gen. George S. Patton Jr.'s Third Army entered the battle, turning west into Brittany and east to envelop the enemy flank. When Hitler tried to restore the front with a counterattack, Patton drove east and north to encircle almost entirely the German *Seventh Army*, as Allied planes turned this "Falaise pocket" into a killing zone. Meanwhile, Franco-American forces landed in southern France near Marseille and drove up the Rhône Valley to link up with Eisenhower's forces. By late August, the Allies had advanced east to the Seine River


Auderville
CHERBOURG
Barfleur
les Pieux
82
XX
Valognes
Quinéville
Montebourg
XXX
VII
4
XX
Merderet R
les Dunes
de Varreville
AMERICAN
UTAH
Ste. Mère-Eglise
101
XX
St. Sauveur-le-Vicomte
Douve R
Grandcamp-
les-Bains
CARENTAN
Isigny
Lessay
Taute R
Vire R
Périers
SAINT-LÔ
Coutances

Map 2


D-DAY
6 June 1944
Drop Zones
D-Day Phase Line
ELEVATION IN METERS
0
50
100
200 and Above
0
15
Miles
XXX
V
29(-)
XX
1(+)
XX
FIRST US
XXXX
SECOND BR
XXX
30
50 Br
XX
XXX
1
3 Cdn
XX
3 Br
XX
6 Br(-)
XX
A C H E S
OMAHA
BRITISH AND CANADIAN BEACHES
GOLD
JUNO
SWORD
inte du Hoc
lle-sur-Mer
aurent-sur-Mer
Colleville-
sur-Mer
Port-en-Bessin
Arromanches-
les-Bains
Courseulles-
sur-Mer
Trévières
BAYEUX
Lion-sur-Mer
Cabourg
Ouistreham
Balleroy
Drôme R.
Tilly-sur-Seulles
CAEN
Troarn
Dives R.
Caumont
Bully
Odon R.

D-Day: Troops of Company A, 16th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, wading onto Omaha Beach on the morning of 6 June 1944. (*National Archives*)

with the Germans in headlong retreat. When French resistance forces rose in revolt against the German garrison of Paris, Eisenhower and Bradley sent French and American troops to liberate the "City of Light." Parisian crowds cheered as American soldiers marched down the Champs-Élysées past the Arc de Triomphe on their way to the front. By early September 1944, the Allies had reached the German border, the Nazi armies were in tatters, and the end of the war seemed close.

The celebration was premature. The Allied forces had raced across France so rapidly that they outpaced their logisticians' ability to supply them. Armored columns approaching the German border were already running low on fuel, the bulk of which was still in Normandy supply depots far behind the spearheads. Desperate expedients like the special truck convoys of the Red Ball Express could not entirely make up the deficit. British Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery pressed Eisenhower to concentrate the available resources in his northern army group for a single thrust on Berlin, but the supreme commander instead opted for a more

conservative broad front strategy. In mid-September, Operation Market Garden—Montgomery's attempt to jump to the Rhine with airborne troops—came up short, and the Allies had to focus on restoring their supply situation. By mid-November, when the Allies could again launch a major drive, the Germans had recovered their balance. The result was a tough, slogging advance, often in cold rain, through the gloomy recesses of the Hürtgen Forest, against German fortifications in Lorraine, and over the heavily wooded terrain of the Vosges mountains in Alsace.

As American, British, and Soviet armies converged on Hitler's beleaguered Third Reich, American forces were breaching Japan's inner Pacific defensive perimeter—the Mariana Islands. In mid-June 1944, two Marine divisions and the 27th Infantry Division assaulted the island of Saipan. The joint force seized a key airfield in the southern part of the island and then turned north for a grueling three-week battle against fierce Japanese opposition. Concurrently, U.S. Navy fliers defeated their Japanese adversaries in the battle of the Philippine Sea. With the Japanese

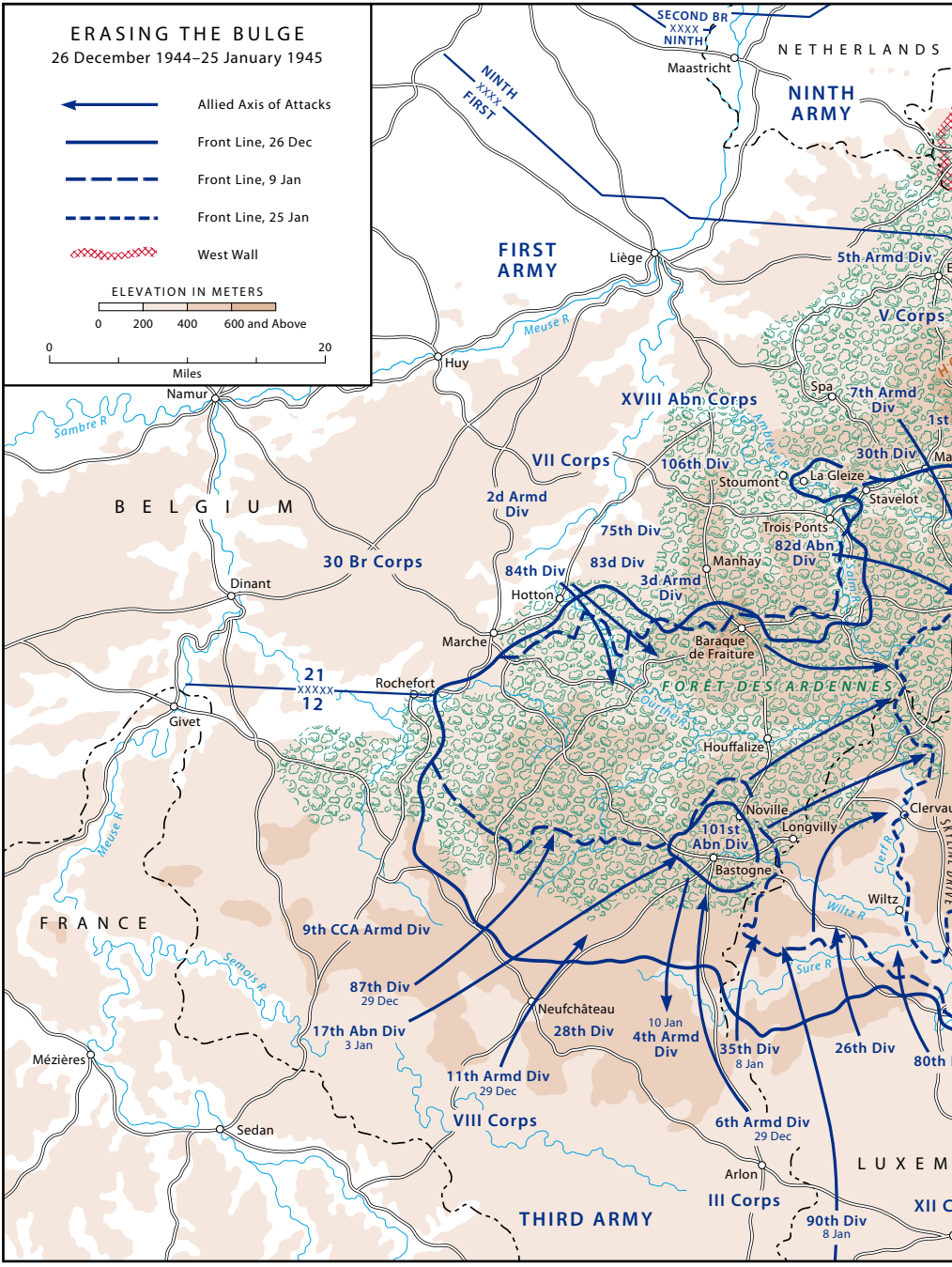
Soldiers of Company I, 181st Regiment, 8th Infantry Division, move through Hürtgen, Germany, 6 December 1944. (*National Archives*)

naval forces out of the picture, Marines and soldiers invaded the former American possession of Guam on 21 July; three days later, Marines landed on Tinian. By mid-August, Guam and Tinian were under American control, and the Japanese home islands were now within the range of the new B–29 long-range bombers, which began flying missions from the Marianas in November.

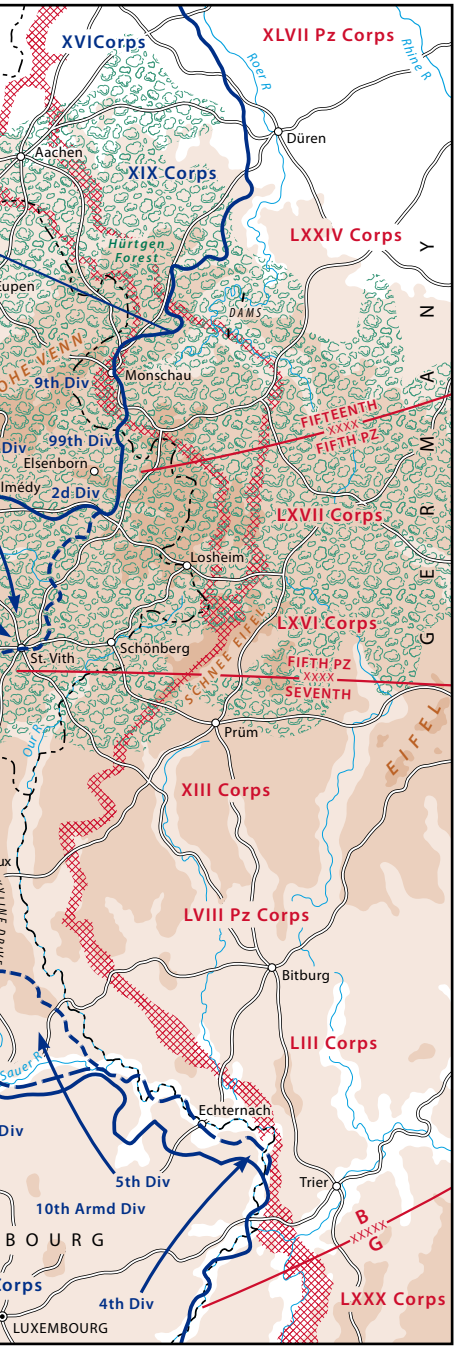
By then, the redemption of the Philippines had begun. On the morning of 20 October, four divisions of Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger's Sixth Army stormed ashore at the island of Leyte. A few hours later, General MacArthur waded ashore with his staff and, from an Army signal truck, told Filipinos, "I have returned! By the grace of Almighty God, our forces stand again on Philippine soil." While the U.S. Navy decisively defeated the Japanese fleet in the largest naval battle in history, Krueger's force still had to contend with zealous Japanese resistance as well as torrential rains that limited air support and turned roads to mud. An amphibious landing on Leyte's west coast cut off the Japanese from reinforcement, and by late December, the Americans had secured the most important parts of the island, although, as elsewhere in the Pacific, mopping-up operations would continue well into 1945.

MacArthur wades ashore at Leyte, 20 October 1944.
(*U.S. Department of Defense*)

With victory in Europe and the Pacific so close, American hopes received a rude jolt in mid-December 1944. Gambling on a massive counteroffensive that would reverse the course of the war, Hitler sent three armies in a surprise attack against an inactive sector of the front in the Ardennes Forest of Luxembourg and southern Belgium. If they reached their objective of Belgium's North Sea port of Antwerp, they would divide Eisenhower's armies and bring back dark memories of 1940. But this time, they did not succeed. Small pockets of American combat troops fought hard to delay the German advance, engineers built roadblocks, and depot detachments spirited away fuel and other supplies that the enemy badly needed. On the northern and southern shoulders of the incursion, American resistance hardened, giving the fight its name: the Battle of the Bulge. When the Germans demanded the surrender of the surrounded crossroads of Bastogne, the commander of the 101st Airborne Division derisively responded, "Nuts!" Hurrying to the rescue, Patton turned his Third Army 90 degrees to face north and hit the Bulge's southern shoulder with a counterattack, while the 2d Armored Division blunted the tip of the offensive near the Meuse River. Then in early January, the First Army


ERASING THE BULGE
26 December 1944–25 January 1945
Allied Axis of Attacks
Front Line, 26 Dec
Front Line, 9 Jan
Front Line, 25 Jan
West Wall
ELEVATION IN METERS
0 200 400 600 and Above
0 20
Miles
SECOND BR
XXXX
NINTH
NINTH
XXXX
FIRST
NETHERLANDS
Maastricht
NINTH ARMY
FIRST ARMY
Liège
5th Armd Div
V Corps
Meuse R
Huy
Namur
Sambre R
XVIII Abn Corps
Spa
7th Armd Div
1st
VII Corps
106th Div
30th Div
La Gleize
Stoumont
Stavelot
2d Armd Div
BELGIUM
Trois Ponts
75th Div
82d Abn Div
30 Br Corps
Manhay
84th Div
83d Div
3d Armd Div
Dinant
Hotton
Marche
Baraque de Fraiture
21
XXXXX
12
Rochefort
FORET DES ARDENNES
Givet
Houffalize
Noville
Clervaux
101st Abn Div
Longvilly
Bastogne
Wiltz
Meuse R
FRANCE
9th CCA Armd Div
Semois R
87th Div
29 Dec
17th Abn Div
3 Jan
Neufchâteau
28th Div
10 Jan
4th Armd Div
35th Div
8 Jan
26th Div
80th
Mézières
11th Armd Div
29 Dec
VIII Corps
6th Armd Div
29 Dec
Sedan
Arlon
LUXEM
III Corps
XII C
THIRD ARMY
90th Div
8 Jan

Map 3



attacked from the north. By late January, the Americans had regained the lost ground, inflicting heavy casualties from which the Germans could not recover.

The end in Europe was now in sight, although it still took three more months to finish the job. Eisenhower's seven armies drove the weakening German forces toward the Rhine River, which promised to present a formidable barrier as the enemy blew every bridge that the Allies could use to cross. They missed one, however. On 7 March 1945, an American platoon seized a railroad bridge at Remagen before the German engineers could set off their charges. Within two weeks, the First Army built up a formidable force in the bridgehead, even while Montgomery's army group to the north and American forces to the south were crossing the Rhine elsewhere. Finally, in late March, the Allies launched their final offensive, surrounding 325,000 Germans in the Ruhr Valley. They drove east to the Elbe River to link up with the Soviet forces pushing westward, and then turned southeast to overrun Bavaria, entered Czechoslovakia, and reached the Alps. Along the way, they liberated concentration camps that had been the instruments for Hitler's attempt to eliminate Jewish people. At the same time, in Italy, Allied forces broke through the German front in the Apennine Mountains and rolled across the fertile plains of northern Italy's Po Valley to the Alps. On 30 April, Hitler died by suicide in his Berlin bunker, and his successors surrendered to the Allies on 7 May.

While Nazi Germany collapsed in Europe, Japan's "rising sun" was setting in the Pacific. On the morning of 9 January 1945, MacArthur sent Krueger's Sixth Army of almost 175,000 soldiers ashore against

Last picture of Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr., (*right*) taken on Okinawa, 18 June 1945 (*National Park Service*)

little opposition at Lingayen Gulf on the main Philippine island of Luzon. The Americans then thrust east across the island and south to Manila, MacArthur spurring on his soldiers in his zeal to liberate the Philippine capital. But the Japanese, using concrete buildings and old Spanish stone fortresses in the inner city, fought hard into March, leaving the metropolis of 800,000 people in ruins. American columns soon overran most of the rest of Luzon, but the Japanese holed up in the mountains in the northern part of the island until the end of the war. In the interim, MacArthur sent various joint task forces to free the rest of the Philippines, liberating thousands of prisoners and civilians along the way.

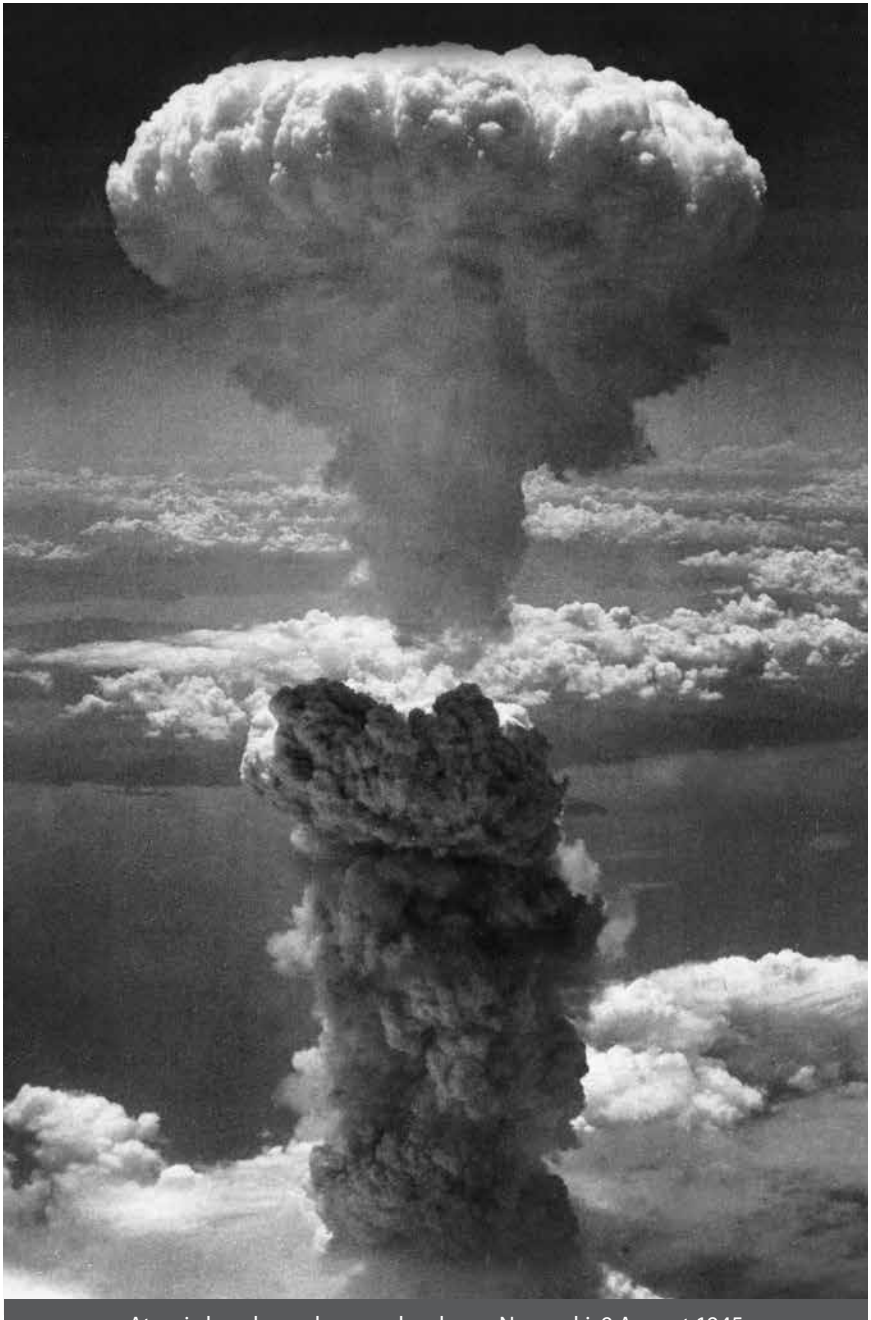
With the bloody capture of Iwo Jima by the Marines, the stage was set for the battle for Okinawa, 350 miles south of the Japanese home islands. The Americans assembled the largest amphibious assault force of the Pacific War—183,000 troops in four Army and three Marine divisions under the overall command of Lt. Gen. Simon B. Buckner Jr.'s Tenth Army, backed by an enormous invasion fleet and aerial armada. On 1 April, four of these divisions hit the beaches on the island's western shore. They met little initial opposition, for the Japanese were pulling back into the inland hills where they had built an immense complex of cave and tunnel defenses. For months, soldiers and Marines dug the enemy out of innumerable bunkers, while Japanese kamikaze planes dove into, sank,

Japanese prisoner being searched at the entrance of a cave after he has surrendered. (*U.S. Army*)

or severely damaged numerous American warships. With naval gunfire and air support, the Americans conquered the island by the end of June, but not before losing their commander, General Buckner, to an enemy antitank shell.

The fierce Japanese opposition seemed a grim precursor for the next step: the invasion of the Japanese home islands. Planning was underway for a landing in November on the western Japanese island of Kyushu, followed in early 1946 by an assault on the main island of Honshu. Under General MacArthur, the Army assembled its forces, bringing over units from Europe, and assembled mountains of supplies in the western Pacific. Meanwhile, the Navy tightened its submarine and surface blockade of Japan and bombarded the Japanese coast. The Army Air Forces raised its B–29 raids to new levels, firebombing Tokyo and other Japanese cities and leaving little more than rubble. Then, on 6 August, a B–29 dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, followed three days later by another one on Nagasaki. Faced with this formidable new weapon and Soviet entry into the war, the Japanese government finally sued for peace. On 2 September, formal ceremonies took place on the battleship, *Missouri*, in Tokyo Bay.

At the end of World War II, the United States Army had reached the highest level of power and prestige it had ever achieved. The Army contained about 8.3 million soldiers, including 2.4 million aviation



Atomic bomb mushroom cloud over Nagasaki, 9 August 1945
(*National Archives*)

Surrender ceremony aboard USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, Japan, 2 September 1945. (*National Archives*)

personnel in the Army Air Forces; never had so many American citizens served in the armed services. The Army had worked with industry, scientists, and the U.S. government to mobilize the American economy for war on an unprecedented scale, and had emerged victorious in fighting against skilled, tenacious enemies in every part of the globe. Its professional leaders were national heroes. But even as the Army endured a rapid demobilization and huge spending cuts, it would still find itself with unaccustomed responsibilities in the postwar era.

TIMELINE

Europe-Mediterranean 1944

20–22 January:	Battle of the Rapido River, Italy
22 January:	Allied forces assault Anzio, Italy
19–25 February:	"The Big Week," Army Air Forces bomb Germany
11 May:	U.S. Fifth and British Eighth Armies launch offensive against the Winter Line in Italy
4 June:	Allied troops liberate Rome
6 June:	D-Day: Allied forces invade Normandy (Operation Overlord)
25 July:	First U.S. Army launches Operation Cobra
15 August:	Operation Anvil: Invasion of southern France
25 August:	Allies liberate Paris
19 September–15 December:	Battle of the Hürtgen Forest
16 December–25 January 1945:	Battle of the Bulge

Asia-Pacific 1944

31 January:	American forces assault Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands
17 February:	American forces assault Eniwetok Atoll, Marshall Islands
24 February:	Merrill's Marauders join ground offensive in northern Burma
29 February:	American forces assault Los Negros, Admiralty Islands
22 April:	Allied forces assault Hollandia and Aitape, New Guinea
17 May:	Allied forces assault Wakde-Sarmi, New Guinea
17 May–3 August:	Battle of Myitkyina, Burma
27 May:	American forces assault Biak Island, New Guinea
15 June:	American forces assault Saipan, Mariana Islands
2 July:	Allied forces assault Noemfoor Island, New Guinea
21 July:	American forces assault Guam
30 July:	American forces assault Vogelkop Peninsula, New Guinea
20 October:	Sixth U.S. Army invades Leyte in the Philippines
23–26 October:	Battle of Leyte Gulf

Europe-Mediterranean 1945:

7 March:	First U.S. Army captures bridge over Rhine River at Remagen, Germany
2 May:	Surrender of German forces in Italy
7 May:	Germany signs unconditional surrender at Eisenhower's headquarters in Rheims, France

Asia-Pacific 1945:

9 January:	Sixth U.S. Army invades Luzon in the Philippines
28 January:	Allies reopen Burma Road
3 February–4 March:	Battle of Manila
1 April:	Allied forces assault Okinawa
28 June:	MacArthur announces end of Japanese resistance in Philippines
6 August:	A U.S. Army Air Forces B–29 drops first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan
9 August:	Second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan
14 August:	Japan agrees to unconditional surrender
2 September:	Japanese sign surrender terms aboard battleship USS *Missouri*

Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley
(*U.S. Army*)

PEOPLE, ARTIFACTS, EVENTS

For his unassuming manner and common touch with soldiers, **Omar N. Bradley** received the accolade "The GI's General" from admiring reporters. Tall, homely, long-jawed, with a high-pitched twang from his Missouri roots, Bradley was a cool, careful, and able professional, skilled in infantry tactics and the use of combined arms. A member of the famous West Point Class of 1915—"the class the stars fell on"—Bradley, like his classmate Eisenhower, never made it to France in World War I. However, he still earned notice during the interwar years for his outstanding performance in Army schools. When Bradley was an instructor at Fort Benning, Georgia, in the 1930s, he especially impressed Lt. Col. George C. Marshall. As war approached, Marshall (now Army chief of staff) assigned him as commandant of the Infantry School, where he created the Officer Candidate School that produced so many officers for the Army in World War II. Next, he turned the 82d and 28th Infantry Divisions into two of the Army's best, and then went to North Africa in February 1943 to serve as Eisenhower's "eyes and ears." Succeeding Patton in April as commander of the II Corps, he led it to final victory in Tunisia with a brilliantly planned campaign. His fine work in Sicily confirmed Marshall's high opinion of him, and in September, he went to England to take command of the First U.S. Army with responsibility for the American D-Day landings. After the Normandy breakout, he assumed command of the 12th U.S. Army Group in August, which he led through France and Germany to the end of the war. In the spring of 1945, he directed 1.3 million American troops, more than any other field commander in American history. After the war, he directed the Veterans Administration, served as Army Chief of Staff, and in 1950 became the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the rank of five-star general.

Almost Bradley's polar opposite in style, **George S. Patton Jr.** has become a familiar face not only in the history of World War II, but also in American popular culture. Patton combined outspoken exuberance, a fondness for flashy uniforms, and a penchant for profanity with a deep religious faith, serious study of military history and literature, and aristocratic gentility. A descendant of two Confederate officers, he was a California native, West Point graduate, Olympic athlete, and polo-playing cavalry soldier who married wealth and had an opulent lifestyle for a soldier. His record was illustrious. In World War I, he led the first American tank brigade until he fell wounded in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. During the interwar era, he returned to the horse cavalry but kept his interest in tanks, commanding the 2d Armored Division before Pearl Harbor. In North Africa, he led the task force that captured Casablanca, then took over the II Corps after the defeat at Kasserine Pass and whipped it back into combat shape. In Sicily, his Seventh Army showed his trademark mobility in racing to Palermo, then beating the British to Messina, but he was embroiled in controversy after slapping two soldiers suffering from combat fatigue. For a time, he sat on the sidelines. As decoy commander of the fictitious 1st U.S. Army Group in England, he duped the Germans into thinking he would lead the main D-Day attack at the Pas de Calais, rather than Normandy as planned. Instead, his Third Army spearheaded the breakout and race across France in the summer of 1944. Within two days during the Battle of the Bulge, he turned his forces 90 degrees and struck the German southern flank, relieving Bastogne. In the spring of 1945, he sprinted across southern Germany into Czechoslovakia by V-E Day. After ill-considered comments on denazification, he lost his command of Third Army and his position as military governor of Bavaria just before his death in December 1945 from an automobile accident. The Oscar-winning movie *Patton* (1970) was a dramatic portrayal of his exploits in World War II.

Lt. Gen. George S. Patton Jr.
(*U.S. Army*)

General Walter Krueger
(*U.S. Army*)

Born in Prussia in 1881, **Walter Krueger** immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of eight. He volunteered for the War with Spain and enlisted as a private in the Regular Army, rising to second lieutenant during the Philippine War. Returning to the United States, he graduated from the Infantry-Cavalry School and the General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He served with the Pennsylvania National Guard in the Mexican Punitive Expedition and in 1918, rose to colonel and chief of staff of the Tank Corps in France during World War I. Between the wars, he held several command and staff positions, serving in the War Plans Division of the General Staff; he also attended both the Army War College and the Naval War College. As an Army War College instructor, he did research in Germany and promoted German principles of decentralized command in his classes. While commanding the 2d Infantry Division, he experimented with the triangular division and mechanization. His use of mobile tactics as commander of the Third Army in the Louisiana Maneuvers of 1941 earned favorable notice. Still, when the nation entered World War II, the 60-year-old Krueger assumed that the Army would use younger generals overseas and keep him occupied with stateside training assignments. Much to his surprise, in 1943, General MacArthur summoned him to the southwest Pacific to command the Sixth Army. Competent, if colorless, Krueger managed complex operations over hundreds of miles of ocean and difficult jungle terrain. Some critics have dismissed him as slow and plodding, but during the Battle of Luzon in January–February 1945, Krueger waged a clever war of maneuver against a strong Japanese force. The former enlisted soldier also showed his concern for his troops' welfare, often popping up in the middle of the jungle to inspect their feet for signs of damage from the soggy environment. After the war, he served on occupation duty in Japan. He retired as a four-star general in July 1946 and turned to scholarly pursuits, including his memoirs, before his death in 1967.

Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt Jr.
(*U.S. Army*)

The eldest son of President Theodore Roosevelt and First Lady Edith K. Roosevelt, **Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt Jr.** followed his father as a leader in the military, business, and government. Graduating from Harvard in 1909, he built a fortune as an investment banker. In World War I, he led the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, in several engagements, notably the Battle of Cantigny. During the 1920s and 1930s, he helped found the American Legion and served as assistant secretary of the Navy, governor of Puerto Rico, and governor-general of the Philippines. He then resumed his business career but remained active as an Army reservist, completing the Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses and graduating from the Army Command and General Staff College. After Pearl Harbor, he returned to active duty as a colonel but soon became a brigadier general and assistant commander of the 1st Infantry Division. He was beloved in the "Big Red One" for his camaraderie, foghorn voice, and desire to lead from the front, but concern about his ability to maintain discipline led to his relief in Sicily in August 1943. He then became the assistant commander of the 4th Infantry Division and played a crucial role in the D-Day landings. Suffering from heart disease and arthritis so severe that he had to walk with a cane, the 56-year-old Roosevelt led the first wave of troops ashore on Utah Beach. When told that his command had drifted off-course and landed far from its assigned position, he declared, "We'll start the war from right here!" His decisive leadership earned him what became a posthumous Medal of Honor. Just over a month after D-Day, he died of a heart attack, unaware that General Bradley had just slated him for promotion to major general and command of the 90th Infantry Division.

Maj. Richard D. Winters
(*U.S. Army*)

Thanks to *Band of Brothers* (2001)—the television miniseries based on Stephen E. Ambrose's book of the same name—**Maj. Richard D. "Dick" Winters** became famous. After enlisting in the Army on 25 August 1941 and graduating from Officer Candidate School, Winters volunteered for the airborne forces and, in August 1942, received orders to report to the 506th Parachute Infantry at Camp Toccoa, Georgia. He passed the rugged training course, which forced 350 of his 500 fellow officer volunteers to withdraw. In October, he became a platoon leader in Company E of the 2d Battalion, known as "Easy Company." Later in 1943, the 506th and the rest of the 101st Airborne Division sailed to England, where they trained for Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of France. Early on D-Day, Winters parachuted into Normandy with his platoon, and later in the day, he led thirteen of his soldiers in destroying a German artillery battery at Brécourt Manor—a daring feat for which he earned a Distinguished Service Cross, promotion to captain, and command of Easy Company. He later took part in Operation Market-Garden, the Allied airborne and armor offensive that attempted to force a Rhine crossing in September 1944. He became the 2d Battalion's executive officer, a role he held during the Battle of the Bulge. In March 1945, he took command of the 2d Battalion as a major. Shortly before the end of the war, on 5 May, he led his battalion through crowds of surrendering German soldiers to reach Berchtesgaden, Hitler's Alpine retreat. For all his fame from *Band of Brothers*, Winters remained modest and unassuming. He only agreed to a 12-foot statue in his likeness on Utah Beach on the condition that it bore a dedication to all American junior officers who served in the Normandy invasion on 6 June 1944.

1st Lt. Audie L. Murphy
(*U.S. Army*)

One of the most decorated American soldiers of World War II, **Audie L. Murphy** lied about his age—he was 17 at the time—to enlist in the Army in 1942. He fought in Sicily, Italy, and France with the 3d Infantry Division, rising from private to lieutenant. On 26 January 1945, in the Colmar Pocket in eastern France, his company held an advanced position that came under attack from six German tanks and a strong infantry force. Murphy ordered his company to take cover in the woods while he remained at his forward command post to call in artillery fire by telephone. To halt the German advance, he mounted a burning tank destroyer and opened fire on the enemy with a .50-caliber machine gun. He held this exposed position for an hour despite a severe leg wound and killed about fifty enemy soldiers. Returning to his company after running out of ammunition, he led a counterattack that drove off the remaining Germans. When asked after the war why he had taken on an entire German company by himself, he replied, "They were killing my friends." Murphy received the Medal of Honor for his actions that day. In all, he fought in 9 major campaigns, killed more than 240 enemy troops, was wounded 3 times, and earned 33 medals. After the war, he became an actor and appeared in numerous films, playing himself in *To Hell and Back* (1955), a movie based on his 1949 war memoir of the same name. His combat experience haunted him long after the guns had fallen silent. He publicized his longtime struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and called on the government to come to the aid of veterans with PTSD. In 1973, two years after his death in a plane crash at the age of 45, the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans' Hospital opened in San Antonio, Texas.

President Truman presents Desmond T. Doss with the Medal of Honor.
(*U.S. Government*)

When the Army drafted **Desmond T. Doss** in the spring of 1942, he was working at the naval shipyard in Newport News, Virginia. He probably could have obtained a deferment, given his job in a war industry, but he accepted induction. A devout Seventh-day Adventist, the soft-spoken Doss would not bear arms, so he became a medic in a rifle company attached to the 307th Infantry, 77th Infantry Division. Eschewing the term conscientious objector, he called himself a "conscientious cooperator," but he still endured bullying and other soldiers' efforts to drive him from the Army. In 1944, he went overseas with his unit. For his bravery in treating wounded soldiers when under fire at Guam and Leyte in 1944, he earned two Bronze Stars. By the time the 307th arrived on Okinawa in the spring of 1945, his comrades had repeatedly witnessed him run into enemy fire at the risk of his own life to save a fallen comrade, and their belief in him was unshakeable. In May 1945, they found themselves on top of the Maeda Escarpment, a jagged, 400-foot-tall cliff the soldiers dubbed "Hacksaw Ridge." For several days, Doss treated the wounded while under fire. On 5 May, his unit received orders to retreat, but seventy-five fallen soldiers remained behind, too severely injured to move under their own power. Doss rescued every one of the wounded on the ridge by lowering them to safety with a rope. On 21 May, he himself became a casualty, sustaining multiple wounds from grenade fragments and a bullet that shattered his left arm. Yet, he refused evacuation before more severely wounded comrades. Doss returned home but spent years in and out of hospitals, recovering from his injuries and a case of tuberculosis. On 12 October 1945 on the White House lawn, President Harry S. Truman presented the Medal of Honor to Corporal Doss, the only conscientious objector to receive the award for World War II service. His heroism was the subject of the 2016 Oscar-winning film *Hacksaw Ridge*.

Dr. Margaret D. Craighill was serving as dean of the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania when, on 16 April 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Sparkman-Johnson Bill, enabling women to enter the Army and Navy Medical Corps. One month later, she became the first female doctor to receive an Army commission. Major Craighill assumed her duties as a liaison with the newly formed Women's Army Corps (WAC). During her service, she traveled 56,000 miles, her work often taking her into war zones stretching from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East to Asia and the South Pacific. Her reports from the field on the condition of 160,000 Army nurses and WAC personnel challenged the stubborn notion that women were unequal to military service; she observed that they performed capably in extreme climates and under harsh working conditions. In recognition of her excellent wartime service, the Army promoted Craighill to lieutenant colonel and presented her with the Legion of Merit. After the war, she became a consultant on women veterans' medical care, the first position of its kind in the Veterans Administration.

Maj. Margaret D. Craighill
(*U.S. National Library of Medicine*)

1st Lt. Vernon Baker
(U.S. Army)

Vernon J. Baker enlisted in the U.S. Army in June 1941, a few months after a recruiter had turned him away because he was Black. Assigned to the infantry, his excellence as a company supply sergeant earned him a slot in Officer Candidate School, and he received a second lieutenant's commission upon graduation. Baker became a member of the 370th Infantry in the predominantly Black 92d Infantry Division (Buffalo). In July 1944, the Buffalo Division deployed to Italy, where it joined the Fifth U.S. Army. While leading his platoon on a patrol in October, Baker suffered a wound that confined him to a field hospital through December. Upon his return to duty, Baker found himself the senior company officer until three White officers arrived in March 1945 to occupy the senior leadership positions. He reverted to command of the heavy weapons platoon, consisting of 60-mm. mortars and .30-caliber machine guns. About 70 percent of Baker's platoon were replacements with little or no combat experience. He soon learned that his company would lead the next attack on Castle Aghinolfi, a German stronghold that had so far thrown back three American assaults with heavy losses. The assault began at 0500 on 5 April 1945. Moving faster than the rest of the company, Baker and twenty-five other soldiers approached to within a few hundred yards of the castle despite heavy machine gun and mortar fire. The fighting was intense and lasted for twelve hours, during which Baker killed nine enemy soldiers and eliminated three machine gun positions, an observation post, and a dugout. About two-thirds of Baker's soldiers fell, either killed or wounded. Heavily outnumbered and running out of ammunition, Baker ordered the survivors to retreat while he provided cover fire. The next day, he led a company from another regiment to the castle. Along the way, dead American and German soldiers littered the field, but not a shot broke the silence. The enemy had abandoned the castle. This marked Baker's last battle. Nevertheless, he remained in the Army until his retirement on 31 August 1968. For Baker's extraordinary display of "fighting spirit and daring leadership" at Castle Aghinolfi, President William J. "Bill" Clinton presented him with the Medal of Honor on 13 January 1997. Baker was one of just seven Black World War II soldiers to receive the Medal of Honor.

Higgins boat transporting soldiers at Okinawa, April 1945.
(*U.S. Navy*)

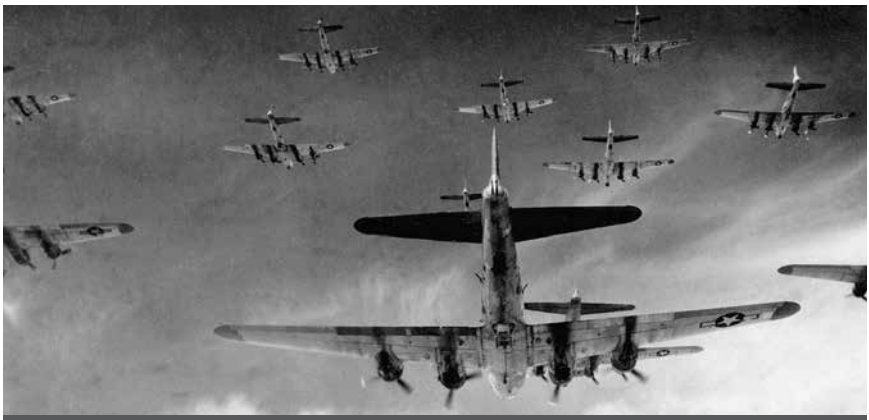
The **Higgins boat** was the brainchild of Andrew J. Higgins, the owner of a New Orleans–based shipbuilding firm that manufactured amphibious vessels. By far his most famous model was the Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel (LCVP), or Higgins boat. Measuring 36 feet long by 11 feet wide, its sides consisted of laminated plywood, and it had a steel bow ramp. The mostly wooden frame reduced the boat's weight and resulted in a shallow draft—the distance from the waterline to the bottom of the hull—that enabled the boat to carry a maximum of thirty-six soldiers or a two-ton vehicle close to shore. Higgins Industries became a major wartime U.S. employer, expanding from a labor force of 75 in a single plant in 1938 to 20,000 workers in 7 factories by 1943. Higgins racially integrated his workforce, a rarity in the Jim Crow South. Workers earned equal pay according to the jobs they did, regardless of race or gender. By the end of the war, the company had produced more than 20,000 boats. Higgins boats made it possible for Allied armies to land on beaches in North Africa, Europe, and the Pacific once deemed inaccessible to watercraft. General Eisenhower declared that, "Andrew Higgins won the war for us. If Higgins had not designed and built those LCVPs, we never could have landed on an open beach. The whole strategy of the war would have been different." Indeed, Steven Spielberg's famous World War II movie, *Saving Private Ryan* (1999), opens with Higgins boats in action on D-Day.

A cargo truck stuck in the mud on the Red Ball Express, 1944
(*U.S. Army*)

The **GMC CCKW 2½-ton 6 × 6 cargo truck** was the workhorse of the famed Red Ball Express. Known as the "Jimmy" or the "Deuce and a Half," the first trucks rolled off the assembly line in 1941, and by the end of World War II, GMC factories had made more than 572,500, including variants like the amphibious DUKW (see Chapter 4). Among military vehicles produced in the United States during the war, the GMC 2½-ton truck was second in quantity only to the jeep. Capable of running off-road, the CCKW version had all-wheel drive; a 6-cylinder, 91.5-horsepower engine; and a 5-speed Warner transmission. The rear cargo area had folding seats, enabling it to convert quickly from a cargo carrier to a troop carrier. The utility bed was at first built entirely of steel, but to conserve that precious alloy, GMC substituted all-wooden beds instead. When this proved inadequate, the manufacturer experimented with a wood-and-steel composite, which was also substandard. By this time, the war was nearly over, and the federal government soon lifted steel rationing, enabling GMC to resume building all-steel utility beds. Although production ceased in 1945, the Army continued to use the sturdy original Deuce and a Half during the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

C-ration
(*Defense Logistics Agency*)

In 1938, researchers at the Quartermaster Subsistence Research Laboratory in Chicago, Illinois, were devising food products that the Army could store for long periods and yet were more delicious and nutritious than the reserve rations that had sustained troops during World War I. The result was the **C-ration**, better known to soldiers as "C-rats." The containers were 12-ounce tinplate cans that incorporated an opening strip. The meals initially consisted of stews, with more meal varieties added as the war continued, including meat and spaghetti in tomato sauce; chopped ham, eggs, and potatoes; meat and noodles; pork and beans; ham and lima beans; chicken and vegetables; and beef slices and potatoes with gravy. In addition to the main courses, the designers added chocolate or other candy, gum, biscuits, and cigarettes. Three meals of C-rations in a day provided about 3,700 calories. Soldiers soon learned that although they could eat the rations cold, the meals tasted better when cooked. The Army often ignored soldiers' criticism, as in the case of the much-despised ham and lima beans, which remained on the menu long after World War II. Among other complaints, soldiers found the food choices monotonous and the rations too heavy to carry into combat.



B–17 Flying Fortresses from the 398th Bombardment Group on a bombing mission to Neumünster, Germany, 13 April 1945. (*U.S. Army Air Corps*)

On its entry into World War II, the Army Air Forces favored daytime precision bombing over the nocturnal area strikes preferred by Britain's Royal Air Force. American aviators were confident that their heavily armed Boeing **B–17 Flying Fortress** bombers, using the state-of-the-art Norden bombsight, could handle the job of bombing the target and returning home safely without a fighter escort. Flown by a crew of ten, the B–17 could carry 6,000 pounds of bombs at 300 miles per hour for up to 2,000 miles. Its iconic nickname came from the fact that it could hold as many as thirteen .50-caliber machine guns and boasted a reputation for being tough to shoot down. **B–24 Liberator** bombers soon joined the B–17s. They could carry more bombs and fly farther but had less armor and firepower. As the B–17s and B–24s flew deeper into Germany in the autumn of 1943, the bombing missions became more dangerous, and losses rose alarmingly as they encountered waves of German fighters and sophisticated antiaircraft systems. Fortunately for the Allies, the North American **P–51 Mustang** came to the rescue of the overwhelmed Eighth Air Force. The Mustang's 1,450-horsepower Rolls Royce engine gave it a top speed of 440 miles per hour. Carrying extra fuel tanks, it could fly more than 850 miles. With these high-speed, long-range fighter aircraft capable of escorting them into and out of Germany, the bombers devastated German industry, while the fighters drove the Luftwaffe from the skies. In the Pacific, the **B–29 Superfortress**, a more formidable Boeing bomber, replaced the B–17s and B–24s. Two B–29s dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, in August 1945. But the B–17 had served its purpose admirably; more than 12,000 bombers flew in every theater of the war. Several dozen Flying Fortresses hang in museums, and some can still fly—a rugged symbol of American ingenuity and resilience.

Comanche code talkers of the 4th Signal Company
(*U.S. Army*)

Army **code talkers** were Native Americans who used their tribal language for secure communication on the battlefield. Their origin was accidental. After an Army infantry officer overheard two Choctaw soldiers conversing in their tribal language during World War I, the Army began to use Choctaw soldiers to transmit vital information, using their native words as code. Although the Germans were able to tap the Americans' phone lines, they could not decipher the code talkers' spoken communication. During World War II, in the Pacific, North Africa, and Europe, the U.S. military employed code talkers from more than a dozen tribes, notably from the Comanche nation. The Army gave Comanche code talkers a free hand in developing secret code words that no one outside their team could grasp, not even other Comanche soldiers. For terms the Comanche language lacked, code talkers substituted descriptive words and phrases, such as "turtle" for tank, "pregnant bird" for bomber, and "crazy white man" for Adolf Hitler. The concept proved successful. It took a machine four hours to transmit and decode a message, whereas a Comanche code talker could decode a similar message in less than three minutes. The enemy never broke their code. On D-Day, thirteen Comanche soldiers in the 4th Signal Company landed with the 4th Infantry Division on Utah Beach. Code talker Pvt. Larry W. Saupitty sent the first coded message from the beach, revealing the 4th Division's off-course arrival: "We made a good landing. We landed in the wrong place." Fighting wounded several Comanche code talkers, but all survived the war.

Crews from the 761st Tank Battalion cleaning and inspecting their machine guns. (*U.S. Army*)

The **761st Tank Battalion**—or "Black Panthers"—was a predominantly African American armor unit that trained at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, and Fort Hood, Texas. In the Jim Crow South, where the 761st served for more than two years, segregation laws conferred an inferior status on Black people. The most famous member of the 761st, 2d Lt. Jack R. "Jackie" Robinson, faced a court-martial because he refused to obey a White bus driver's order to sit in the back of a segregated military bus. Although an all-White panel of officers acquitted Robinson, he missed his opportunity to deploy to France with the 761st, instead going on to become the first Black player in Major League Baseball.

After more than two years of training, the 761st received a superior rating from General Benjamin Lear, the commanding general of Army Ground Forces. On 10 October 1944, the unit landed on Omaha Beach and joined General Patton's Third U.S. Army. They fought in Belgium, France, and Germany, participating in the Battle of the Bulge. The battalion was among the units that rushed to the aid of the 101st Airborne Division, penned up at Bastogne. A soldier in the 761st, S. Sgt. Ruben Rivers, received a posthumous Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism from 15 to 19 November 1944. Despite a severe leg wound, Rivers repeatedly refused evacuation and fought on until an enemy round struck his tank, killing him and wounding the crew. The 761st Tank Battalion received belated recognition in the form of a Presidential Unit Citation awarded by President James E. "Jimmy" Carter Jr. on 24 January 1978, and a monument at Fort Hood that the Army unveiled in November 2005.

Lt. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott Jr. salutes after presenting the Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation to Company L, 3d Battalion, 442d RCT, 4 September 1945. (*U.S. Army Signal Corps*)

The Army activated the **442d Regimental Combat Team (RCT)** on 1 February 1943, about one year after President Roosevelt had signed Executive Order 9066, placing more than 100,000 West Coast residents of Japanese descent—most of them American citizens—into internment camps. Despite the racism triggered by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, thousands of Japanese Americans answered the call to arms. The 442d RCT consisted mainly of American-born, second-generation Japanese soldiers called "Nisei" (NEE-say). Roughly two-thirds volunteered from Hawai'i, and the remaining third came from the camps on the mainland. The commander and most of the company-grade officers were White. The unit included three battalions of infantry, the 522d Field Artillery Battalion, and the 232d Engineer Company. After a year of training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, the 442d RCT deployed to the Mediterranean in May 1944. It joined the 100th Infantry Battalion—another Japanese-American unit—in Italy and entered combat on 26 June 1944, attached to the 34th Infantry Division. The 442d lived up to its motto, "Go for Broke," and fought aggressively, earning nine Distinguished Service Crosses. The 100th Battalion received three more. On 10 August, the 100th formally joined the 442d as the first battalion. Beginning in

442d RCT shoulder sleeve insignia
(*National Museum of the U.S. Army*)

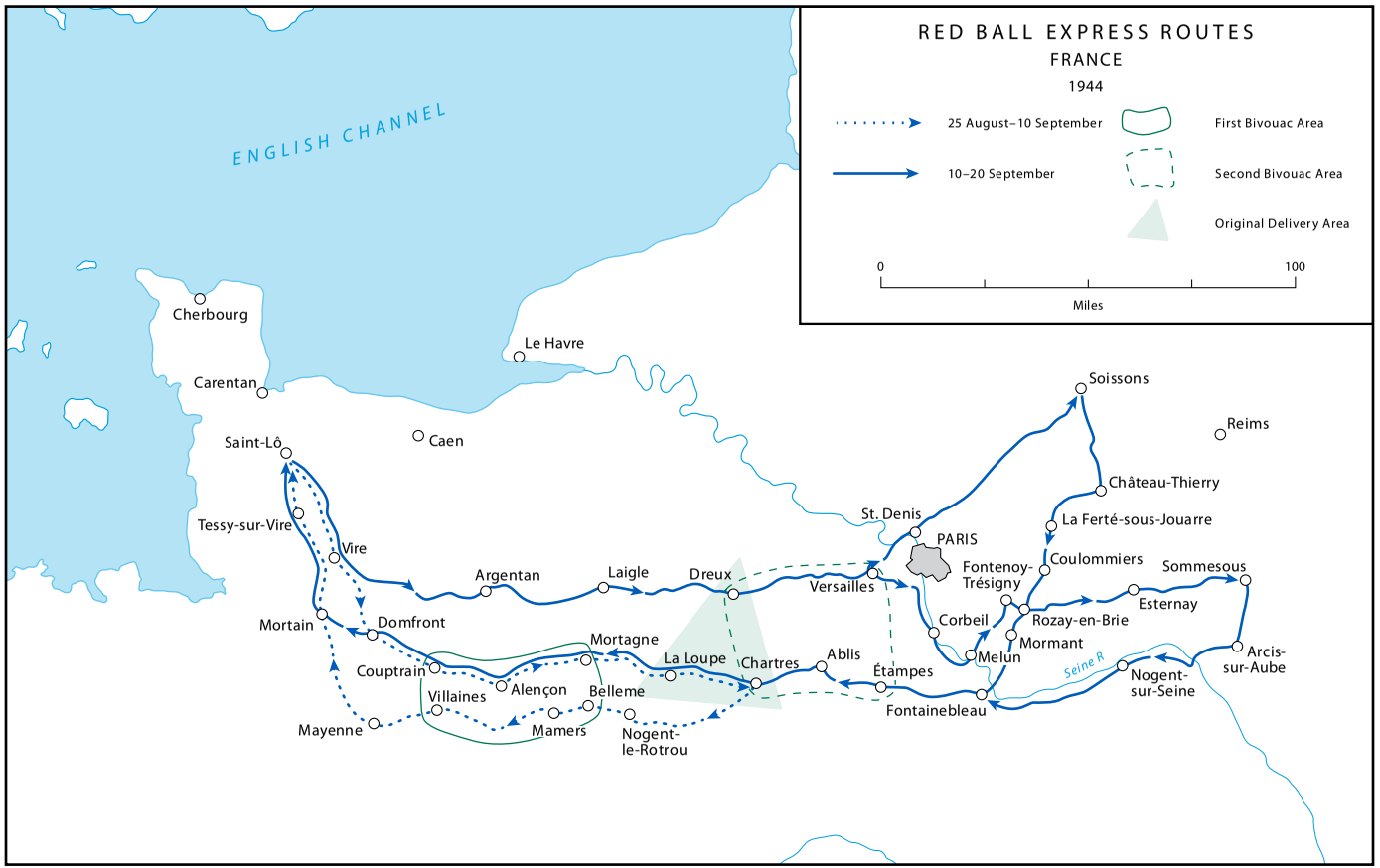
August 1944, the 442d RCT participated in the invasion of southern France as part of the Seventh Army. The unit liberated several French towns and, in October 1944, rescued a "lost battalion" that the Germans had cut off from the 36th Infantry Division. In March 1945, the 442d RCT joined the 92d Infantry Division, an African American unit, and helped drive the Germans from northern Italy. During that operation, Pfc. Sadao S. Munemori sacrificed himself to save the lives of two comrades, an act for which he received a posthumous Medal of Honor on 13 March 1946. Soldiers of the 442d RCT ultimately received more than 4,000 Purple Hearts, 21 Medals of Honor, and an unprecedented 7 Presidential Distinguished Unit Citations. The Army inactivated the 442d RCT in August 1946. The unit's lineage and honors live on in the 100th Battalion, 442d Infantry, of the U.S. Army Reserve.

An M4 Sherman tank with hedgerow cutters
(*U.S. Army Armor & Cavalry Collection*)

In July 1944, the First Army faced a major tactical obstacle in its battle to expand the Normandy beachhead. For centuries, Norman farmers had cultivated **hedgerows**—massive, irregularly shaped earthen walls, 3 to 15 feet high and 1 to 3 feet thick, and topped with hedges—to divide and enclose their fields. The Germans turned these natural barriers into fortresses, with rifles, machine guns, mortars, and antitank weapons creating a withering crossfire in the fields between them. Overcoming the hedgerows challenge was a true team effort. A New Jersey tanker, Sgt. Curtis G. Culin, assembled a tusk-like device that he attached to the front of a tank, enabling the tank to drive straight through a hedgerow, rather than expose its belly as it climbed over it. Drawing on plentiful steel from the obstacles the Germans had erected on D-Day beaches, ordnance soldiers welded 500 hedgerow cutters and distributed them to forward troops. Meanwhile, infantry soldiers, tankers, artillery troops, and engineers evolved combined arms tactics to beat the hedgerows. While tanks and artillery provided covering fire, the infantry advanced until they masked the tanks' fire, throwing hand grenades to eliminate as many German defenders as possible. The tanks then backed up, and the engineers came forward to emplace charges in the embankments. The explosions blew gaps in the hedgerows, and the tanks themselves drove through the embankments, firing as the infantry advanced. Such tactics and technology enabled the Americans to work their way through the hedgerows until they reached the jump-off point for the breakout and eventual drive across France.

When Allied forces finally broke through the maze of Normandy hedgerows and raced to the German border, their rapid success resulted in a supply crisis. The enemy had left the French and Belgian ports in ruins, and Allied bombers before D-Day had destroyed much of the French rail network. Large-scale aerial supply was impractical. Somehow, the logisticians had to provide 28 Allied divisions in the field with their daily requirement of up to 21,000 tons of supplies. After a marathon brainstorming session, American commanders decided to implement a massive, around-the-clock convoy effort dubbed the **Red Ball Express**, after the red ball symbols used by railroad companies to mark express freight trains. The Army likewise placed red ball symbols on trucks, cargo, road signs, and uniform patches to denote their priority status. The system went into action on 25 August 1944 and ran through the fall. Because of narrow French country roads, trucks ran in a nonstop, one-way loop, hauling food, fuel, ammunition, and other vital items from beach dumps to depots near the front and then returning for another load. On Red Ball's peak day, roughly 6,000 trucks carried 12,500 tons of supplies. Seventy-five percent of the drivers were African American soldiers, because the Army's segregation policy sent disproportionate numbers of Black soldiers to rear echelon units. Working in teams of two, drivers faced numerous hazards, including breakdowns, accidents, fatigue, and the occasional enemy aircraft. With the opening of the port in Antwerp, Belgium, the Red Ball Express ceased operations on 16 November 1944. In 82 days, the drivers had delivered an impressive 412,000 tons of supplies. Their success in keeping Allied forces on the move inspired a 1952 movie, *The Red Ball Express,* featuring Sidney Poitier.

Cpl. Charles H. Johnson of the 783d Military Police Battalion waves on a Red Ball Express convoy. (*National Archives*)


RED BALL EXPRESS ROUTES
FRANCE
1944
25 August–10 September
10–20 September
First Bivouac Area
Second Bivouac Area
Original Delivery Area
0
100
Miles
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Cherbourg
Carentan
Saint-Lô
Tessy-sur-Vire
Vire
Mortain
Domfront
Le Havre
Caen
Argentan
Laigle
Dreux
Mortagne
Couptrain
Villaines
Alençon
Belleme
Mayenne
Mamers
Nogent-le-Rotrou
La Loupe
Chartres
Ablis
Étampes
Versailles
St. Denis
PARIS
Fontainebleau
Corbeil
Melun
Fontenoy-Trésigny
Soissons
Reims
Château-Thierry
La Ferté-sous-Jouarre
Coulommiers
Mormant
Rozay-en-Brie
Sommesous
Esternay
Arcis-sur-Aube
Nogent-sur-Seine
Seine R

Map 4

Although the U.S. Army has long used distinct units to perform special tasks, **special operations** in the modern sense came into being during World War II. In the Mediterranean and Europe, the Army employed elite light infantry Ranger battalions. The service initially intended these units to conduct commando missions and seize key points in amphibious landings—such as Chiunzi Pass at Salerno and Pointe du Hoc on D-Day. Once the main force had established itself ashore, however, too often Ranger battalions served as line infantry, despite their smaller size and lack of firepower compared to standard infantry battalions. In the Pacific, the Sixth Army was able to avoid such misuse, allowing the 6th Ranger Battalion to pull off the liberation of the Japanese prisoner of war camp at Cabanatuan in the Philippines. The Sixth Army's Alamo Scouts also skillfully performed long-range reconnaissance in the Pacific. Elsewhere, the Canadian-American First Special Service Force and Merrill's Marauders came into existence for long-range raiding missions; but in the end, events forced their use as regular infantry. The Army generally left support of guerrillas to the Office of Strategic Services, which employed several Army personnel in such roles around the globe. In the Philippines, American officers who escaped to the jungle rather than surrender helped create several valuable guerrilla forces. Psychological warfare troops used leaflets and loudspeakers to induce enemy surrenders, and civil affairs detachments restored order to rear areas as the armies moved forward. Army special operations forces today trace their roots to many of these World War II warriors.

Army Rangers at
Pointe du Hoc, Normandy
(*National Archives*)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