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Black Jack in Cuba

General John J. Pershing's Service in the Spanish-American War

By Kevin Hymel

The following article is a revised version of one that first appeared in the Winter 1998 issue of On Point. *It is reprinted here by permission of the Army Historical Foundation.*

To most Americans, San Juan Hill conjures up images of Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders dashing up the hill to victory, but other soldiers also played an important role in driving the Spanish off the heights overlooking Santiago, Cuba. One such soldier was 1st Lt. John J. Pershing, the quartermaster of the 10th Cavalry, the famed "Buffalo Soldiers." Pershing's experiences in Cuba gave him important battlefield experience and showed him how an army at war behaves. This would pay off when Pershing led the American Expeditionary Forces into battle on the fields of France in World War I, less than twenty years later.

As tensions heated up between the United States and Spain, Pershing was teaching tactics at West Point. Desperate to join the action he foresaw as inevitable, he bombarded the assistant secretary of war, George Meiklejohn, with letters. Realizing the importance of combat duty, he wrote, "if I should accept any duty which would keep me from field service, indeed if I did not make every effort to obtain an opportunity for field service I should never forgive myself."[1]

Pershing was not totally unprepared for battle. An 1886 graduate of West Point, he had seen duty against the Plains Indians with both the 6th and 10th Cavalry Regiments. The 10th was one of two black cavalry regiments commanded by white officers. Pershing was called "Black Jack" in reference to his service with the 10th, and the nickname stuck long after he left it. Pershing had also taught military tactics and mathematics at the University of Nebraska and earned a law degree there.

Unfortunately for Pershing, when the battleship *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor on 15 February 1898, the secretary of war froze all West Point instructors in their jobs. Undaunted, Pershing realized the only way into combat was to be requested for duty by a line unit. He wrote to Col. Guy V. Henry, the commander of his old unit, the 10th Cavalry, asking to rejoin it. Henry wrote to the War Department requesting that Pershing be assigned to the unit as regimental quartermaster. Pershing soon showed up at Meiklejohn's office to press for approval. When Pershing told Meiklejohn "I shall resign and join some National Guard or volunteer unit that stands a chance of being sent to Cuba," the assistant secretary relented and approved orders for Pershing to rejoin the 10th.[2]

Pershing found his unit in training at Chickamauga, Georgia, and moved with it to the port of Tampa, Florida, from where it would sail for Cuba. The 10th was part of Brig. Gen. William R. Shafter's Fifth Corps, whose mission was to capture Santiago, where the fleet of Spanish Admiral Pascual Cervera lay at anchor. Shafter, a veteran of the Civil War and Indian fighting, had grown soft and fat in his sixty-three years and was overwhelmed by the task of preparing his force. Confusion reigned in Tampa, where thousands of Regular Army and volunteer soldiers prepared to leave with little semblance of order. The 10th Cavalry and other elements of the dismounted Cavalry Division were assigned space on the *Leona*, a coastal merchant ship pressed into military service. Loading the ship was conducted without incident, and the *Leona* set sail with thirty-one other transports on 14 June 1898.

The trip went badly. In addition to the *Leona*'s

becoming separated from its convoy for nearly a day, the men below decks became seasick and hungry. Their woolen Army uniforms were ill suited for the tropical climate, much less existence in a hot, cramped ship's hold, and there were no cooking facilities aboard ship. Unpalatable field rations were the only food available. Finally, on 22 June, the 10th Cavalry disembarked at Daiquirí, thirteen miles east of Santiago. There were no port facilities, and small boats were used to move the men as close to shore as possible. Many men had to jump from the boats carrying their equipment and wade to shore. Two men drowned during the transfer. The next day, while Pershing stayed on board to supply materiel to an insurgent Cuban unit, squadrons of the 10th, the 1st Cavalry, and the 1st Volunteer Cavalry (Rough Riders) clashed with Spanish units at Las Guásimas, then drove the Spanish from their defenses inflicting heavy casualties. The 10th lost one man killed and ten wounded.

Pershing longed to be with his men, but the *Leona* was ordered west to pick up 1,000 ragged Cuban rebels of General Calixto García's command who had been fighting the Spanish. Pershing was not impressed with the insurgent fighters: "A miserable lot they are, in my opinion they will prove of little service to the Americans."[3]

The next day, leading a pack mule laden with supplies, Pershing caught up with his encamped regiment. To his chagrin, he found that the men had earlier thrown away all but their most essential gear and they were now hungry and without shelter. He spent the next five days traveling the narrow jungle trails, bringing up supplies, no easy task considering the confusion on the beaches where only the efforts of individual officers had brought "at least the semblance of order."

The confusion taxed many men's patience but not Pershing's. When one officer complained about the supply problem and that "fat old slob" Shafter, Pershing confronted the complainer and scolded "Why did you come to this war if you can't stand the gaff? War has always been this way. . . . The fat Old Man you talk about is going to win this campaign. When he does these things will be forgotten. It's the objective that counts, not the incidents."[4]

By 30 June, enough troops had been landed to begin the advance on Santiago. The 10th moved with its division to within five miles of the city where it set up camp on a hill near the old hacienda of El Pozo, waiting for the other divisions to arrange themselves. A half mile northwest of his position Pershing spied his division's objectives, "the dark lines of masked intrenchments and the mysterious blockhouses of the

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hills of San Juan."[5] Beyond that he could glimpse Santiago's strong defenses. He knew the task laid out for the Army would not be easy. No fires were allowed that night, and pickets went out to watch for the enemy.

About 8:00 on the morning of 1 July came the crash of artillery, first American, followed by Spanish. For forty-five minutes the duel continued with the Americans getting the worst of it. Their black powder guns poured smoke, revealing their positions, while the Spanish guns, using smokeless powder, remained hidden. Near Pershing, a Hotchkiss gun exploded, wounding two troopers. The frightened Cuban insurgents who were with Pershing fled.

As the barrage subsided, the Americans started down the ridge and moved forward along a jungle path. Lt. Col. Theodore A. Baldwin, commanding the 10th, ordered Pershing to act as a guide for the regiment, making sure it found its objectives and kept an orderly advance. The task was difficult; scattered artillery and rifle fire rained down as the men mixed with elements of the 71st New York Infantry along clogged roads inadequate for such large numbers. Pershing could do little but sit on his horse and shout orders to the men. Then to make matters worse, an observation balloon was sent up above the advancing column, drawing fire and revealing the American route of approach. The Spanish soon concentrated their fire on the area around the balloon, whose observer responded by telling the troops below that the Spanish were firing on them. Pershing and his cavalrymen were decidedly unimpressed by this intelligence.

Pershing, along with three other officers from the brigade, was posted in a stream bed where he dismounted to better urge the men forward. Standing in waist-high water, he led one squadron after another forward through exploding shells and intense Mauser fire. As he ran back and forth bringing up squadrons, he spotted Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler, the division commander, and his staff, mounted on their horses in the middle of the Aguadores River. As Pershing saluted, a shell landed between the two men, drenching them both with water. Wheeler returned the salute, wheeled his horse around, and left.

Enemy fire intensified, and panic ensued as men fell everywhere. Eventually, by continually running back into the jungle, finding lost groups, and guiding

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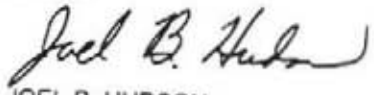

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them forward, Pershing managed to get the 10th across the river. During the action he was continually exposed to enemy fire. One officer who appreciated Pershing's efforts to organize the men under fire commented that "the gallant Pershing . . . was as cool as a bowl of cracked ice."[6]

As the men of the division waited at the edge of a wooded area below the two American objectives, San Juan Hill and Kettle Hill, they began taking more fire. Spanish snipers, in their elevated position, had a clear shot at any cavalryman who stood. Casualties mounted, a half-hour passed, and still no orders arrived to attack. Finally, 1st Lt. Jules Ord of the 6th Infantry decided that he had had enough. Shirtless, with a bayonet in one hand and a pistol in the other, he yelled to his men, "Follow me, we can't stay here." Ord's charge energized the Rough Riders and parts of the 10th to join the attack. Pershing was amazed and proud at what he saw: "Each officer or soldier next in rank took charge of the line or group immediately in his front or rear and halting to fire at each good opportunity, taking reasonable advantage of cover, the entire command moved forward as coolly as though the buzzing of bullets was the humming of bees. White regiments, black regiments, regulars and Rough Riders, representing the young manhood of the North and the South, fought shoulder to shoulder, unmindful of race or color, unmindful of whether commanded by ex-Confederate or not, and mindful of only their common duty as Americans."[7]

The men waded across the San Juan River and rushed forward, slowed only momentarily by a barbed-wire fence, which most chose to climb under. In the confusion the men of the 10th divided themselves between Ord's 6th Infantry charging up San Juan Hill and Roosevelt's Rough Riders attacking Kettle Hill. Pershing found himself with the Rough Riders, running up the exposed slopes of Kettle Hill. It was quickly taken. In the last push to the top he saw the Spanish fleeing their positions and heading for Santiago.

Pershing had a perfect view from Kettle Hill of the ongoing fight for San Juan Hill. Realizing how tenuous it was, he, and the other men on Kettle Hill, rushed forward to assist. There they struggled against the worst fire Wheeler, a Confederate Civil War veteran, had ever seen. Despite the enemy salvos, the men pushed forward, assisted by the timely arrival of a few Gatling guns brought forward for the attack. A battle yell went up along the American line. After a final, brief American artillery barrage, the troops made a final lunge for the top. Ord, with the help of the 10th Cavalry, was the first American to reach San Juan's summit, where he was immediately killed by enemy fire.

The victory was not without its price. Dead and wounded men lay all over the hill. The 10th Cavalry lost half its officers and roughly 20 percent of its men. Pershing came upon a wounded officer and asked him if he was badly hurt. "I don't know," he replied, "but we whipped them, anyway, didn't we?"[8] Pershing also was witness to the moral character of his men when he saw a Buffalo Soldier stop at a trench filled with Spanish dead and wounded, gently lift the head of a wounded officer, and give him the last drops of water out of his canteen.

Although driven from the heights of San Juan, the Spanish had not surrendered. At 3:00 a.m. their artillery again opened up on the American positions as small arms fire picked up. The men of the 10th manned their posts and waited for the expected counterattack, but none came. By 5:30 in the morning the firing began to slacken. Just before dawn, entrenching equipment and ammunition arrived, but no food for the hungry victors. As the sun rose, Spanish snipers began firing at anything that moved. When a sniper bullet wounded the regiment's adjutant, Colonel Baldwin placed Pershing in the position. The rest of the day, while both sides traded fire, Pershing delivered messages to the front and ran the regiment in Baldwin's absence. The conditions for the men were miserable. Some soldiers formed a bucket brigade from the front trenches to a watering hole a mile to the rear. Front-line soldiers tore off their heavy woolen shirts in the hot air, and soldiers who had a simple frying pan and fork became the envy of the regiment.

The firing continued into the next day, but actions farther afield most heartened the American soldiers. About 9:00 a.m. on 3 July, men heard heavier explosions reverberating from the south of Santiago. It was the guns of Rear Adm. William Sampson's U.S. fleet routing Admiral Cervera's Spanish squadron as it attempted to flee from Santiago. Like their navy, the Spanish troops in Santiago could neither flee nor survive. General Shafter sent a message of truce to

Santiago. He initially gave the Spanish until 10:00 a.m. on 4 July to surrender or American ground and naval artillery would shell the city. This deadline was later extended.

During the truce, the men of the 10th continued to strengthen their positions. While the soldiers worked, Pershing read to them two messages of commendation; one from President William McKinley and the other from Maj. Gen. Nelson Miles, the commanding general of the Army. Miles said that he would arrive in Cuba soon with reinforcements. The men exulted in Miles' promise. Soon after, Cuban refugees from the city, hoping to escape the expected bombardment, began to cross into the American lines. Pershing was moved at what he saw:

Old and young, women, children and decrepit men of every class—those refined and used to luxury, together with the ragged beggar—crowded each other in this narrow column. It was a pitiful sight; from daylight until dark the miserable procession trooped past. The suffering of the innocent is not the least of the horrors of war.[9]

As the truce lengthened, Shafter kept up the verbal pressure on the Spanish while his men advanced their siege trenches and living conditions worsened. The rainy season began, drenching the men and filling their trenches with water. The Americans started coming down with malaria and yellow fever. Pershing was no exception. Soon he was wracked with malarial fever, but this merely slowed him down. Traveling back to a supply depot, Pershing bargained successfully for a wagon which gave him the means to bring his men food, bed rolls, tenting equipment, medical supplies, and cooking utensils. Pershing was everywhere obtaining gear. He visited docks, depots, and any place else where he thought he could find some comforts for his men. He made a special effort to bring up personal baggage to front-line officers.

Spanish authorities soon realized the situation inside Santiago was hopeless, and, with permission from his government in Madrid, General de División José Toral agreed on 15 July to surrender the city. The formal capitulation took place on 17 July 1898. After General Toral handed his sword to General Shafter, the American troops were drawn up in a line along their six miles of trenches to witness the raising of the Stars and Stripes above the government palace in Santiago. At exactly 12:00 noon, a cheer went up from the American lines as artillery boomed a salute. The campaign was over.

First Lt. John Pershing had excelled in his role during the Santiago campaign. He led troops, filled in for fallen officers, braved enemy fire, and kept his men well supplied. Officers who witnessed his actions were quick to praise. Colonel Baldwin, his regimental commander, wrote Pershing: "You did some tall rustling, and if you had not we would have starved. . . . I have been through many fights and through the Civil War, but on my word 'you were the coolest and bravest man I ever saw under fire in my life' and carried out your orders to the letter—no matter where it called you." But the greatest praise Pershing received came from Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, newly appointed military governor of Santiago, who wrote to the adjutant general of Pershing's accomplishments. The letter was passed to President McKinley who wrote on it: "Appoint to a Major, if there is a vacancy."[10]

During his seven-day cruise back to the United States in August, Pershing reflected on what he had learned. He had found the fighting spirit of American soldiers excellent, even among the volunteers. As long as men were moving forward their confidence rose; sloth and disease set in only when the troops halted. Keeping units together instead of splitting them up also helped maintain *esprit de corps*. Pershing also realized that weapons had to be upgraded to include smokeless rifles and artillery; and old commanders would have to be replaced with younger, more agile men. The greatest problem facing the Army, however, was supply. If the Army could not keep supplies coming forward it could not succeed in battle. Pershing focused his complaints in this sphere on civilian staff who lacked the competence needed in wartime. "Good commissary and quartermaster sergeants or clerks would have been infinitely better and more deserving," he concluded.[11] Lessons Pershing learned during the Spanish-American War were invaluable. He would draw on them two decades later when he led the largest overseas American army into battle on the fields of France.

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NOTES

1. Frank E. Vandiver, *Black Jack: The Life and Times of John J. Pershing*, 2 vols. (College Station, Tex., 1977), 1: 172.
2. Ibid., 1: 174
3. Donald Smyth, "Pershing in the Spanish-American War," *Military Affairs* 30 (Spring 1966): 27.
4. Ibid.
5. Vandiver, *Black Jack Pershing*, 1: 199.
6. Ibid., 1: 203.
7. Herschel V. Cashin et al., *Under Fire with the Tenth U.S. Cavalry* (1899, reprint ed., Niwot, Colo., 1993), pp. 207–08.
8. Ibid., p. 209.
9. Ibid., p. 213.
10. Vandiver, *Black Jack Pershing*, 1: 211, 213.
11. Ibid., 1: 213.

In Memoriam

Dr. Robert W. Coakley

The Center's former deputy chief historian Dr. Robert W. Coakley died at his home in Alexandria, Virginia, on 26 May 1998. He was 81. Coakley received a bachelor of arts degree from the College of William and Mary and a doctoral degree from the University of Virginia He served as a noncommissioned officer during World War II in the 927th Field Artillery Battalion and with the Historical Section, European Theater of Operations, and he received an Army Commendation Ribbon for his historical work.

After the war Coakley taught for successive years at the University of Arkansas and Fairmont State College in West Virginia, before joining the Center of Military History in 1948. Except for the period 1962–63, when he was historian at the Defense Supply Agency, Dr. Coakley worked at the Center until 1980. He was named chief of the Center's Current History Branch in 1965 and deputy chief historian in 1970. Prior to his retirement in 1980, he received the Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service and the Army Special Service Award.

Dr. Coakley collaborated in producing a number of important publications issued by the Center. He was coauthor with Richard M. Leighton of the two-volume account on *The War Department: Global Logistics and Strategy* (1955, 1968) in the Center's series on the U.S. Army in World War II. Coakley and Stetson Conn, a former chief historian at the Center, prepared the bicentennial study *The War of the American Revolution: Narrative, Chronology, and Bibliography* (1975). Along with Col. John E. Jessup, Jr., Dr. Coakley was general editor of *A Guide to the Study and Use of Military History* (1979). He was sole author of *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1789–1878* (1988), a volume in the Center's Army Historical Series.

The Center mourns the passing of this distinguished military historian.

THE CHIEF'S CORNER

John W. (Jack) Mountcastle

Not long ago, I was talking with a soldier about her recent experience in airborne school. She reminded me of my own strong impressions of jump school (so many years ago). Anyone who has experienced the first tug of a parachute's deployment, followed by the relative calm and quiet of the descent, will also recall the sense of the earth rushing up to meet you in the two or three seconds before you execute a parachute landing fall.

The sense of time suddenly "speeding up" as you near the end of a mission is precisely what I have experienced in the last few months. As I write this, the end of my tenure as your Chief of Military History is rushing to meet me. Looking back on the four years I have spent at CMH, I am struck, once again, by the great amount of work that has been done by our team of historians, archivists, editors, and curators. I am very proud of the efforts of the skilled technicians who turn concepts into finished products – our cartographer, graphic artists, and design specialists. The efforts of the hardworking administrators and specialists at CMH, both military and civilian, have enhanced the reputation of this professional organization throughout the Army over the past two years. I have benefited immensely from my personal and professional relationship with the division chiefs, deputy commanders, and Dr. Jeff Clarke, the Army's Chief Historian.

As important as these contributions by the CMH staff are, the Army Historical Program would have been greatly disadvantaged without the interest, guidance, useful criticism, and selfless dedication of the Department of the Army Historical Advisory Committee, the DAHAC. These superb scholars, program managers, and leaders never failed to provide me and the Center with the help we so often needed. Sustained by the DAHAC's unflagging support, we took on challenges like the Gulf War declassification mission, cut the organization's strength by one-third within a year, prepared to reorient our operation to a different chain of command, and underwent the intensive scrutiny of an Army Audit Agency audit. The DAHAC members have been the principal defenders of the program. I am convinced that the Army Historical Program would have suffered serious, perhaps irreparable, harm had it not been for the DAHAC's steadfast demands for excellence versus expediency.

Whether the subject was establishing the Army Museum, Gulf War records declassification, commemoration of major events in the Army's history, or the practice of exchanging Army equipment for goods and services, we have always been assured of the genuine interest and involvement of the various offices of the Army Staff and Secretariat. One of the best possible developments came about as a result of widespread Army concern over our transfers of military equipment. We have benefited from the focused attention of a talented team of logistics managers from the Army Materiel Command (AMC) that continues to pay big, big dividends. Thanks to the personal interest of GEN Johnnie Wilson, CG of AMC, we are learning more every day about the effective management of our vast artifact inventory and are learning to employ better business practices in museum operations.

The DAHAC, AMC, and the Army's MACOMs were all participants when, over a five-month period, we developed strategic plans for the Army Historical Program and the Center of Military History. Of course, these crucially important plans could not have been developed in this period had we not been the recipients of the extraordinarily professional guidance from the staff of the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA). Using their automated, consensus-building software, we made exceptional progress in this very short period of time. Now we need to execute the Action Plans we developed to ensure that our strategy is carried out. My boss, LTG John Dubia, has guided us through this demanding process and has given his personal attention not only to the strategic plans process, but to ensuring that the updating of the two Army regulations for which he is the proponent, AR 870–5 and AR 870–20 is synchronized with the Strategic

Plans. I should mention here that if it were not for his personal involvement, I doubt very seriously that we would have had the very successful engineer project at Fort McNair that resulted in the renovation of an old commissary into a new home for the CMH.

When we establish our operations in our new offices in September, we will be thankful to the great team of folks from the Baltimore Engineer District, the superb Army Reserve engineers of the 458th Engineer Battalion, the Military District of Washington, and the staff of the Army Space and Building Management Office. They all worked very hard to bring this project to fruition.

I'd like to close this Chief's Corner with a word of thanks to all of the many, many people who have gone way beyond the call of duty to assist me during my tenure as the Chief of Military History. In Jack Mountcastle, what the Army got was not a brilliant intellect, but someone who still woke up every day eager to soldier; determined to serve the Army, the nation, and its citizens; and committed to finding the critical balance demanded by the old saying of "Mission First, Troops Always." I have truly appreciated the opportunity to serve as your Chief of Military History. Now, I want to wish you Godspeed, and I hope that good fortune will attend all of your endeavors. And, as we old tankers like to say: "I'll see you down range—on the high ground."

Recent Publications

The Center has published a volume of selected papers presented at conferences of Army historians held in 1990, 1992, and 1994. Edited by Judith Bellafaire, the book is entitled *The U.S. Army and World War II: Selected Papers from the Army's Commemorative Conferences*. It may be purchased from the Government Printing Office under stock number 008-029-00341-4 for $26.

The TRADOC Military History Office has published a 25th anniversary history of the command, *Prepare the Army for War: A Historical Overview of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1973–1998*, by Anne Chapman, Carol Lilly, John Romjue, and Susan Canedy. The issuing office, located at Fort Monroe, Virginia 23651-5026, has some copies available.

Editor's Journal

This issue presents two brief articles on the Spanish-American War, the centennial of which the nation is now marking, and longer papers on France's epic defense of Verdun during World War I and on the U.S. Constabulary, a unique occupation force designed to optimally align U.S. Army forces in Germany to fulfill their peacekeeping missions in the years immediately after the end of World War II. The U.S Constabulary has recently drawn the attention of Army leaders with peacekeeping missions in Bosnia.

The article by Frank Schubert, "Buffalo Soldiers at San Juan Hill," derived from a paper the author presented at the Conference of Army Historians held this June in Bethesda, Maryland. The conference drew over ninety speakers to eight workshops and twenty-three academic sessions addressing the theme "The U.S. Army and the American Century, 1898–1998." The participants included U.S. Army historians from the United States, Europe, Panama, and Japan, as well as military historians from Argentina, Austria, Germany, and Great Britain. The Spanish-American War and the Cold War figured prominently among the subjects considered. I hope to publish more papers from this conference in subsequent issues.

The Center of Military History is in the process of moving from rented space in the business district of Washington, D.C., to a renovated Army building at historic Fort McNair on the Washington Channel of the Potomac River. While the move has somewhat disrupted the normal process of producing *Army History*, all involved have made extraordinary efforts to bring this issue to press. The editor hopes that the expediencies that have been required to bring out this issue amidst the bustle of movers and half-filled offices will not adversely affect the publication.

Charles Hendricks

To the Last Limits of Their Strength

The French Army and the Logistics of Attrition at the Battle of Verdun

21 February – 18 December 1916

By Robert B. Bruce

During the First World War, near the fortress city of Verdun, the French Army endured the largest battle of attrition the world had yet seen. Verdun epitomized the massive contests of attrition which were the hallmark of that war, leading one historian of the First World War to observe "that in the total war, the battle of Verdun was [the] total battle."[1] The purpose of the German offensive at Verdun was not to achieve the chimerical "breakthrough" which would burst the contestants out of the gridlock of trench warfare. Instead the German objective at Verdun was to drag the French into a battle of attrition in an area where the Germans held local superiority and could slowly bleed the French Army to death, inflicting such punishment that neither the French Army nor the French nation would survive Verdun. Yet while the French would indeed suffer frightful losses in the coming battle, they would perform such incredible feats of logistics that they would be able to muster and maintain a mighty army in front of Verdun which would not only halt the advance of the Germans but also inflict grievous losses on them.

More than any other man it was General Henri Philippe Pétain,[2] commander of the French Second Army and later France's Central Army Group during the battle of Verdun, who was responsible for the French victory. Pétain's triumph was made possible by his exceptional ability to master the logistics of attrition, which enabled him to implement a new tactical doctrine of overwhelming firepower to inflict massive losses on the Germans while conserving his own forces. This enabled the French to emerge victorious from one of most grueling battles the world has ever seen—the battle of Verdun.

On Christmas Day 1915 the chief of the German General Staff, General Erich von Falkenhayn, wrote a report to Kaiser Wilhelm II regarding Germany's overall strategic situation in the First World War after the battles of that year. Falkenhayn was extremely optimistic about Germany's prospects for 1916, but at the same time he cautioned the kaiser that Germany's advantage in the war was a fleeting one. Falkenhayn wrote, "Our enemies [France, Britain, Russia, and Italy], thanks to their superiority in men and material, are increasing their resources much more than we are. If that process continues a moment must come when the balance of numbers itself will deprive Germany of all remaining hope."[3]

Therefore Falkenhayn decided to take advantage of Germany's then favorable situation to strike a blow in early 1916 that would resolve matters once and for all in the sector which he deemed the most important, the Western Front. By 1916 the Western Front was a solid line of trenches and barbed wire from the English Channel to the Swiss Alps, where gains were measured in yards and casualties in tens of thousands. Yet it was here that Germany faced the two adversaries whom Falkenhayn deemed the most dangerous, France and Britain, and thus this was where he felt the only decisive result could be obtained. Of these two Allies, Falkenhayn believed the French to be the more vulnerable as they had "been weakened almost to the limits of endurance, both in a military and economic sense."[4] Falkenhayn believed that

> The strain on France has almost reached the breaking point—though it is certainly borne with the most remarkable devotion. If we succeeded in opening the eyes of her people to the fact that in a military sense they have nothing more to hope for, that breaking point would be reached. . . . To achieve that object the uncertain method of a mass breakthrough, in any case beyond our means, is unnecessary. . . . Within our reach behind the French sector of the Western Front there are objectives for the retention of which the French General Staff would be compelled to throw in every man they have. If they do so the forces of France will bleed to death. . . . If they do not do so, and we reach our objectives, the moral effect on France will be

enormous.

The objectives of which I am speaking now are Belfort and Verdun.

[Of these] the preference must be given to Verdun.[5]

Falkenhayn's plan involved the largest concentration of artillery yet seen on the battlefield, which he proceeded to position around the Verdun salient. Falkenhayn would commit the German Fifth Army to an attack which would either seize Verdun or threaten to take it and then assume strong defensive positions, backed by massive amounts of artillery fire that would shred the expected French counterattacks and turn Verdun into a slaughter-pen for the French Army. Falkenhayn's plan, dubbed Operation *GERICHT* (place of execution), relied for success upon both the national character of the French and the aggressive doctrine of their army, which reflected this character.

France had entered the First World War still haunted by the ghosts of its defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, when its mighty army had been destroyed by the unified German states. It was a humiliation with which France, a nation that considered itself to be "the premier warrior race of Europe," struggled for decades to cope and which caused its army not only to deeply analyze the reasons for its defeat but also to begin a search for a new doctrine which would assure that a similar disaster never again befell the French nation.[6]

Inspired in the years before the Great War by such military thinkers as Georges Gilbert, Ferdinand Foch, and Louis Loyzeau de Grandmaison, the French came to the conclusion that their defeat in the Franco-Prussian War was a result of being too passive at all levels of command and relying excessively on defensive firepower, in lieu of pursuing direct offensive action to stop the enemy at the tactical level. These French thinkers developed a school of thought that came to be known as the "cult of the offensive," which maintained that the principal weapon of a French infantryman was his bayonet and that success on the battlefield relied on an attacker's *élan* and his ability to establish moral superiority, which would overcome any amount of firepower the defender might put up. In the opinion of these offensive theorists, the French soldier was in his element while on the attack where his *élan* would be coupled with his natural *furia française* (a term coined by Gilbert) to make him an irresistible force on the battlefield. The new doctrine was referred to as the *offensive à outrance* (attack to the death) and became codified when General Joseph Jacques Césaire Joffre, an ardent follower of Grandmaison, became chief of the General Staff in 1911.[7] While trying not to repeat their mistakes of the last war, the French committed new errors for a new war.[8]

The French Army's baptism of fire in the Great War was horrific, as French infantry stormed forward in dense formations, bayonets fixed, pitting *élan* and cold steel against machine guns and rapid-fire artillery. The result was catastrophic. In a series of indecisive battles and outright defeats, France lost an estimated 301,000 men killed in action during 1914 and a further 349,000 men killed in 1915—annual totals which each exceeded the death toll the United States would experience in the entire Second World War. A further 2 million French soldiers were listed as wounded or missing in action during this same time period, bringing France's total casualties for the first two years of the Great War to almost 3 million men.[9]

As casualties mounted, the French Army's belief in its doctrine of the *offensive à outrance* began to waver, and the military leaders of France sought a different answer to the deadlock in which they found themselves on the Western Front. Gradually, the French began to embrace a new doctrine, which was best described by its leading proponent, General Henri Philippe Pétain, by the phrase "firepower kills." Although Pétain is perhaps best remembered today for his leadership of the Vichy regime during the dark years of 1940–44, this is unfortunate because Pétain was a gifted military commander who long before the First World War had argued that firepower, and not *élan* and *l'arme blanche*, or bravery and cold steel, as the Grandmaisonites believed, would dominate the modern battlefield. As a consequence of this "heresy" Pétain was passed over for promotion on numerous occasions and, in spite of his obvious abilities, found himself a 58-year-old colonel, just one year away from mandatory retirement, in temporary command of a brigade when the war began in 1914. The bloody French defeats of 1914–15, however, made Pétain seem more the prophet than the heretic, and he began a meteoric rise in France's military hierarchy. In June 1915 Joffre placed Pétain in command of the French Second Army.[10]

The French Army's shift toward the emphasis on firepower espoused by Pétain was a difficult one, for at first the French lacked large quantities of guns and munitions that were required to implement the new doctrine. In particular the French suffered from a severe shortage of heavy artillery. The French Army had gone to war in 1914 with its field artillery batteries equipped with the famous 75-mm. gun, but it possessed virtually no medium or heavy artillery except that used to arm the numerous fortresses dotting France's eastern frontier. This choice of light artillery to the exclusion of heavier pieces was influenced by the doctrine of *offensive à outrance*, which emphasized speed of maneuver and bayonet charges over firepower. The light 75-mm. gun was a remarkably accurate, flat-trajectory weapon with a tremendous rate of fire—a formidable weapon in the war of maneuver and open-field battles that French prewar planners had anticipated.[11]

However by mid-1915, the French Army was slowly realizing that in this new war its 75-mm. gun simply lacked the power to cut through belts of barbed wire or to smash in bunkers or trenches. The major armaments manufacturers of France geared up to produce guns with calibers of 90-mm. and larger, but this process took time. So the French commander-in-chief, General Joffre, decided to meet the pressing need for heavy artillery on the battlefield by removing heavy guns from numerous French fortresses, including the forts in and around Verdun. Increased industrial output, combined with Joffre's draconian measures, resulted in a significant increase in heavy artillery for French field armies between January 1915 and January 1916, especially with regard to "super" heavy pieces of 220-mm. and larger. (*Table 1*)[12]

Finding enough ammunition for this sudden influx of new guns was a logistical challenge which rivaled the acquisition of the guns themselves. Prior to 1914 the French Army, like all other belligerents, had grievously underestimated the ammunition needs of its artillery. The French Army entered the Great War with a stockpile of approximately 5 million 75-mm. shells. Its prewar plans estimated a consumption rate of 100,000 rounds of artillery monthly. This estimate proved to be grossly in error as early as 1914, when the French fired an average of 900,000 rounds per month.[13]

French industry rose to meet the new need for artillery ammunition with a massive increase in its monthly production of shell. The French military released experienced munitions workers from their service obligations so they could return to their factories, and the French munitions industry made Herculean efforts to meet the demand for shells. In December 1914 French factories churned out an average of 34,322 rounds of 75-mm. ammunition and 3,000 rounds of heavy artillery ammunition per day. By December 1915 daily production had risen to 84,460 75-mm. shells and approximately 52,000 rounds of heavy artillery ammunition, with plans to increase shell production even further in 1916.[15]

Table 1

Number of Heavy Artillery Pieces in Service With the French Army[14]

Caliber	*1 January 1915*	*1 January 1916*
90-mm.	600	1,230
95-mm.	270	650
120-mm. (long)	300	900
120-mm. (short)	60	120
155-mm. (long)	190	470
155-mm. (short)	110	320
220-mm. howitzer	17	180
270-mm. howitzer	0	30
280-mm. howitzer	0	6
370-mm. howitzer	0	10
TOTALS	1,547	3,916

Thus the year 1916 dawned on a French Army in a state of transition from an antiquated doctrine of bayonet charges to one of modern firepower delivered in unprecedented amounts, perpetually resupplied by a massive industrial base. This new doctrine was about to be put to the test in the largest and longest battle of attrition the world had yet seen, the battle of Verdun.

The French high command (*Grand Quartier Général* or G.Q.G.) was slow to realize that the Germans were planning to strike at Verdun. Although Joffre and his staff had reports as early as December 1915 that the Germans were planning a large offensive against the Fortified Region of Verdun (*Région Fortifiée de Verdun* or R.F.V.), they were more concerned about preparations for the forthcoming Anglo-French offensive along the Somme planned for later that year.

Joffre's indifference to the threat toVerdun became a scandal when Lt. Col. Emile Driant, a member of the Chamber of Deputies who commanded two battalions of elite chasseurs in the center of the French front line in the R.F.V., sent a letter to the president of the Chamber of Deputies complaining about the lack of defensive preparations in the region. In response, the Chamber of Deputies and the Ministry of War sent out a joint inspection team, which, much to the anger and consternation of Joffre, decided that Driant was correct.[16]

The commission found that the French trench system at Verdun was poorly constructed and lacked any secondary or tertiary lines of resistance and that the front line was not connected to the rear by communication trenches. The mighty fortresses of the R.F.V. had been stripped by Joffre of virtually all of their artillery and their garrisons had been reduced to half-strength. A furious Joffre decried the commission's statements about the state of the R.F.V.'s defenses and angrily wrote to the minister of war that the report could not be justified. Joffre and his staff at the G.Q.G. did little to implement the commission's recommendations and quickly refocused their attention on the preparations for the Somme offensive, never concerning themselves with the possibility that the Germans might not sit idly by while the British and French made ready for their attack.[17]

On 21 February 1916, Operation *GERICHT* exploded across the front of the *Région Fortifiée de Verdun* with the largest artillery barrage yet seen in the Great War. The poorly constructed French trench system of the R.F.V. collapsed under the hail of German shells. Specially trained German storm troops followed behind the barrage, heavily laden with grenades and armed with a new device employed for the first time on the battlefield: the *flammenwerfer* (flamethrower). In spite of the massive firepower directed upon them, isolated pockets of French forces fought back with near suicidal courage in a desperate attempt to stem the German advance, as urgent messages requesting reinforcements were rushed to the G.Q.G.[18]

By 25 February the French had been pushed completely out of their frontline positions east of the Meuse, and it seemed as if the entire R.F.V. east of the river, with its numerous forts, would have to be abandoned. When Fort Douaumont, the largest and most powerful fort in the Verdun system, fell due to a combination of German daring and French blundering, General Fréderic Georges Herr, commanding the R.F.V., ordered that the forts still in French hands be rigged for demolition so as to deny their use to the enemy if the French were forced to retreat and abandon them. The withdrawals executed by Herr in the face of near overwhelming pressure from the Germans began to concern the G.Q.G., and so General Joffre dispatched to Verdun his second-in-command, General Noel Joseph de Castelnau, to assess the situation and recommend a course of action.

On 25 February de Castelnau issued the following order to the R.F.V.: "The Meuse must be held on the right [east] bank. There can be no question of any other course than of checking the enemy, cost what it may, on that bank."[19] This order affirmed that the French Army would stand and fight for Verdun. On that same day, Joffre met with Pétain, briefed him on the situation at Verdun, and ordered him to move his Second Army into the R.F.V. and to go immediately to Bar-le-Duc, where he would receive specific instructions from de Castelnau.[20]

Pétain and his staff set out in an automobile, "and to be as quick as possible" they went via Souilly, a town midway between Bar-le-Duc and Verdun that would become Pétain's headquarters during the battle. Driving through a heavy snowstorm, Pétain arrived at Souilly on the evening of the 25th. Pétain was concerned at the chaos he found along the main road connecting Bar-le-Duc to Verdun: "I passed the procession of supply trains, making their way towards Verdun, columns of soldiers blocking all the roads, ambulance sections moving southward [away from Verdun], and above all, most distressing of sights, the wretched horde of inhabitants seeking refuge outside of the devastated region."[21]

One item, however, caught Pétain's attention more than any other, and that was the precarious supply situation of the French forces at Verdun. There were two major rail lines to Verdun, but they were both useless because one "passed through the enemy's lines at Saint-Mihiel" and the second "was often shelled . . . and over which nothing could be carried except some of the engineers' material." This narrowed Pétain's options for a supply route to a light,

narrow-gauge railway and a seven-yard-wide, dirt road that ran seventy-five kilometers from the nearest railhead at Bar-le-Duc to Verdun. Through these tenuous arteries the lifeblood of France was to be poured into the cauldron of Verdun.[22]

Pétain used the narrow-gauge railway—dubbed *le Meusien*—to transport food and fodder for the men and supply animals of the Second Army, but all of its reinforcements, replacements, and munitions had to be transported by truck up the departmental road from Bar-le-Duc. To accomplish this, Pétain employed the infant *Service Automobile dans l'Armée Française* in the largest use of motor vehicles for logistical purposes seen in warfare to that time.

The *Service Automobile* had been officially founded in 1914, but it traced its origins to the Military Commission of Automobiles which the French Army had formed in 1896 to study the possible military use of motorized vehicles. This commission was fortunate in having several forward-thinking junior officers placed in charge of its development. These young men included Brevet Capt. L.-J. Dubost, who in 1902 authored a study that stated that automobiles would prove instrumental in the next war by permitting the rapid movement of troops. This would allow a numerically inferior force to compensate for its lack of numbers with maneuverability. In his study, Dubost argued that a corps of motorists should be formed to implement this new technology. Dubost's ideas found some acceptance among the French high command, and as a consequence the French Army maneuvers in the autumn of 1910 tested the use of heavy vehicles operating in convoy systems to supply the units taking part in the exercise.[23]

At the first battle of the Marne, General Joseph Simon Galliéni had utilized the *Service Automobile*, as well as some taxis and buses dragooned from the streets of Paris, to move the French 7th Infantry Division into position on the right flank of the German First Army, in preparation for a French counterattack that would turn aside the German drive on Paris in September 1914. The *Service Automobile* had also seen limited action in the French offensives of 1915, when it was utilized to move reserves up to the front lines, but Verdun would prove to be both its greatest trial and its greatest accomplishment.[24]

Pétain's efforts at organizing this motorized supply system were ably assisted by Major Richard, an engineer officer who was in charge of motorized transport for the R.F.V. In the days immediately after the German offensive began and prior to Pétain's arrival in Verdun, Richard had recognized the critical need for motor vehicles to supply any large commitment of force by the G.Q.G. to the R.F.V. and had thus assembled a fleet of over 700 trucks, buses, and assorted motorized vehicles for the express purpose of supplying the needs of the French forces at Verdun.[25]

Pétain quickly set about organizing this motor fleet into an efficient force. The road from Bar-le-Duc to Verdun "was divided into six sections, each in charge of an officer who was responsible for the movements over it, with the Military Police to assist him." The motorized supply convoys were administered by the *Service Automobile* and the specially created Traffic Commission of Bar-le-Duc, which together would eventually number 300 officers, 8,500 men, and 3,900 vehicles organized into 175 automobile units.[26]

This force was responsible not only for moving reinforcements to the R.F.V., but also for evacuating wounded and supplying the ammunition needs for an army that eventually numbered over 500,000 officers and men. The road from Bar-le-Duc to Verdun became the French Army's lifeline during the battle, and writer Maurice Barrès best described its importance to the cause of France when he dubbed it *La Voie Sacrée*, the Sacred Way.[27]

Before Pétain had time to effectively organize his novel supply system, disaster struck when, beginning on 28 February, the bitter cold that had dominated the first days of the battle unexpectedly broke and a thaw set in. The *Voie Sacrée* soon became a river of mud that was completely impassable to the motorized French supply columns. Although provisions could still be brought in along the narrow-gauge railway, the supply of ammunition and replacements and the evacuation of wounded soldiers relied on the trucks of the *Service Automobile*. If these vital logistical needs could not be met, the French position at Verdun would soon become completely untenable. Pétain, realizing the gravity of the situation, reacted quickly to confront the danger and rectify the situation.[28]

Pétain dragooned the local populace who lived along the route of the *Voie Sacrée* into opening a large number of rock quarries, and he set up relay teams to

move the gravel they produced from the quarries to sites along the road. Colonial troops from France's holdings in West and North Africa were brought in to serve as work crews for a round-the-clock effort to shovel gravel onto the roadbed to firm up the road. Soon trucks were once more rolling toward Verdun, and their weight smashed the gravel flat. Through this incredible effort the road was solidified and the greatest threat to the French logistical effort at Verdun overcome.[29]

Yet within weeks the solution to the softening road caused another set of problems to emerge. The sharp gravel began to gouge holes in the tires of the trucks and the bumpier ride caused by rocks in the road, along with the strain on the trucks resulting from their constant use, added an increased number of mechanical breakdowns to the incessant problem of flat tires, and thus once again France's vital supply artery to Verdun was threatened. Lieutenant Colonel Girard, the head of the *Service Automobile*, rose to the occasion by setting up repair shops along the length of the *Voie Sacrée*. The shops included hydraulic presses that worked twenty-four hours a day stamping out new tires for the motorized vehicles.[30]

In spite of the numerous problems encountered by the French motorized supply columns, the performance of the *Service Automobile* in the critical opening stages of the battle of Verdun was absolutely outstanding. From 22 February to 8 March 1916, French trucks carried 190,000 men; 22,500 tons of munitions; and 2,500 tons of various other materials up the *Voie Sacrée* to Verdun. Given the ferocity and suddenness of the German attack, the trying weather conditions, and the primitive vehicles then in use, it was an amazing logistical achievement.[31]

Those loads of men and munitions were needed in ever increasing numbers by the French forces as 1916 wore on and the battle of Verdun settled into the grueling contest of attrition which would become its hallmark. Of all the numbers involved in analyzing the logistics of the French Army at Verdun, certainly the most shocking is the casualty rate. The exact number of men lost by France during the battle of Verdun remains a matter of some speculation. The French Army's official history of the Great War states that, during the course of the ten months of battle at Verdun, France lost 162,440 men killed or missing and 216,337 wounded, for a total of 378,777 casualties. These are very conservative casualty figures. Some historians have estimated that France suffered over 500,000 casualties at Verdun, including perhaps as many as 250,000 killed.[32]

These losses are even more frightful when one considers that France had already suffered well over 2 million casualties during the Great War before the battle at Verdun began. In addition, by January 1916 France had mobilized 87 percent of the total manpower it would muster during the war and had reached the end of its manpower reserves even before the battle began, thus making every soldier lost at Verdun literally irreplaceable. This shortage of manpower also meant that there would be no relief for the men already in the trenches as there was no one with whom to replace them. As a consequence, the French Army that fought at Verdun would be virtually the same one that France would have for the remainder of the war.[33]

The lack of fresh replacements did not bode well for the future of France's war effort as overexposure to the rigors of fighting on the Western Front in the Great War often led to severe psychological disorders. The industrialized nature of warfare in the trenches produced an environment where the individual soldier was helpless before artillery and machine guns which impassively killed hero and coward alike from great distances, and against which a soldier had very limited means to strike back. The incredible firepower and range of modern weaponry transformed the soldier from a fighter to a helpless victim, and a whole host of psychological disorders, commonly lumped together under the generic term of "shell shock," began to appear in soldiers of all armies in the Great War.[34]

At first, military commanders and physicians interpreted such disorders as merely a morale problem and commonly treated psychological casualties as ordinary malingerers. They were commonly referred to as "moral invalids," whose only real problem was a lack of courage and fortitude which could best be restored by severe discipline and physical punishment. As the science of psychiatry advanced during the war, psychological casualties began to be distinguished from shirkers, but treatments for their neurological maladies were often barbaric. "Disciplinary therapists" favored the extensive use of electric shock in treating war neuroses, in spite of the poor results obtained. Although more humane, and more effective,

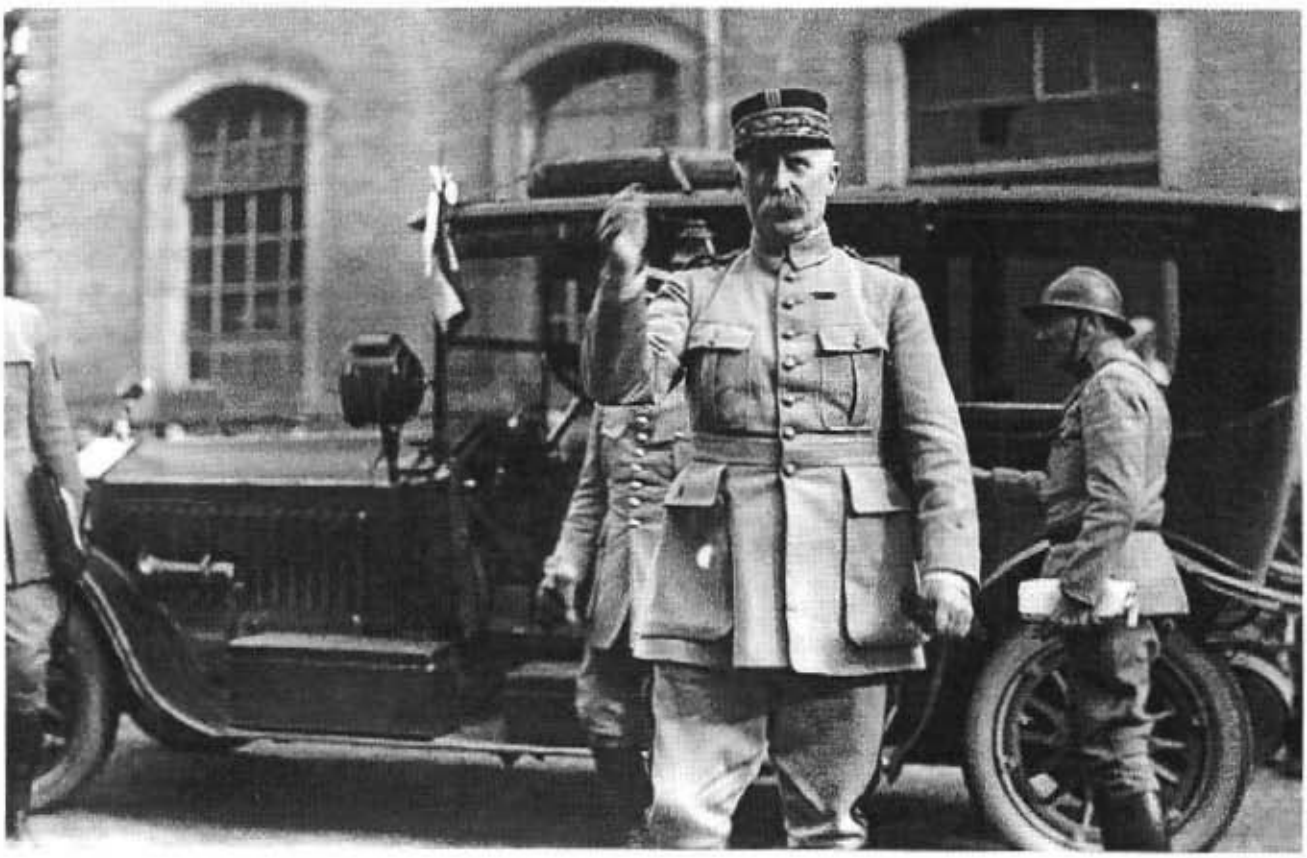
treatments such as psychoanalysis began to be used later in the war, during the battle of Verdun disciplinary therapy was the standard practice for handling psychological casualties in both the Allied and German armies.[35]

One of Pétain's major qualities as a commander, which separated him from virtually every other high-ranking officer of the First World War, was his sincere concern for the psychological well-being of his men. Pétain wrote that:

Indeed my heart bled when I saw our young twenty-year-old men going under fire at Verdun, knowing as I did that with the impressionability of their age they would quickly lose the enthusiasm aroused by their first battle and sink into the apathy of suffering, perhaps even into discouragement, in the face of such a task as was theirs. . . . I singled them out for my most affectionate consideration as they moved up into the line with their units. . . . I loved the confident glance with which they saluted me. But the discouragement with which they returned! . . . Their eyes stared into space as if transfixed by a vision of terror. . . . Horrible memories made them quail. When I questioned them, they scarcely answered, and the jeering tones of the old poilus awakened no spark of response in them. [36]

Pétain understood what a tremendous sacrifice was being asked of the soldiers in each division that he sent into the line at Verdun and also realized that he simply could not allow them to be destroyed physically or emotionally in the fighting, or France would have no army left.

Pétain therefore instituted a rotational system whereby after approximately three days in the line a division would be withdrawn from Verdun for a week or so to a quiet area where it would be allowed to rest and recover from the fighting. The division would then be moved into a somewhat more active sector, before finally being sent once more into battle at Verdun, where the whole process would begin anew. Pétain's system thus allowed for fresh, full-strength units to be placed in the front line as opposed to depleted and morally shattered units that had fought themselves to



General Pétain at Baccarat, France, in September 1918 (Signal Corps photograph)

pieces in the inferno of Verdun. Pétain wrote

Our system of rapid and frequent reliefs necessitated our keeping within the territory occupied by the army twice the number of units actually concerned in the fighting. The turning of the mill-wheel had already [1 May 1916] swept through Verdun forty divisions, by which I do not mean that all these had been used up. As a matter of fact, most of these divisions had been withdrawn before they were exhausted, and transferred for a time to quiet sectors, then again shortly afterwards into sectors where fighting was in progress.[37]

What made this rotation system possible was the *Service Automobile*, which moved soldiers quickly and efficiently from Verdun to reserve area billets and then back again to the front.

Erich Ludendorff, who became Germany's First Quartermaster-General in August 1916, was very much impressed with the French use of motorized vehicles to rotate their divisions at Verdun. Ludendorff wrote that

The enemy, backed by his enormous industries, found it easier and easier, not merely to move his reserves quickly in lorries [trucks], but also to use them on an increasing scale for bringing troops up from billets to the line and taking them back again, thus achieving an important economy of physical and moral strength. We had to be content if we could find [trucks] enough for troop movements in cases of the greatest urgency.[38]

In spite of Ludendorff's ringing endorsement, Pétain's rotation system was heavily criticized at the time by his own commander-in-chief, General Joffre, and the staff at the G.Q.G., who, even at the height of the battle of Verdun, pushed forward that summer with plans to join the British in a powerful attack along the Somme.

At a conference in December 1915, Joffre had promised the British that he would provide forty divisions for the forthcoming Somme offensive, but the manpower needs imposed on the French Army by the battle of Verdun and Pétain's generous use of reserve divisions through his rotational system quickly consumed most of the planned French contribution. In the end, France would be able to provide only nine divisions to the British effort along the Somme, but considering the strain that Verdun placed upon the French Army it was a logistical miracle in its own right that the French were able to provide any support at all to the British offensive.[39]

These conflicting manpower needs produced considerable friction between Pétain and Joffre, and each accused the other of failing to understand how to defeat the Germans. Joffre's argument was that you should never allow the enemy to dictate your actions but should always remain free to strike at him rather than merely react to his assaults. Joffre argued that the best way to halt the German attack on Verdun was for the French and their British allies to launch their own offensive in a different sector. Joffre increasingly began to feel that Verdun was consuming Pétain and that he had become so obsessed by the battle that he was losing proper perspective on the event.[40]

Pétain, on the other hand, was exceedingly frustrated by a high command that did not recognize that the climactic battle of the war had arrived for France, and he believed that neither the French Army nor the French nation would be able to survive the moral blow that the fall of Verdun would inflict. To Pétain there was more than France's honor at stake at Verdun. The very life of France itself was at risk, and Pétain would act accordingly. Pétain steadfastly refused to cancel his rotation system, and he continued to demand more men, guns, and ammunition for the battle, never hesitating to threaten to take the matter out of military channels and to appeal to the political leadership of the nation, if necessary, to meet his requirements.[41]

Joffre responded to Pétain's intransigence in April 1916 by "kicking him upstairs" to the command of France's Central Army Group, composed of Pétain's old Second Army as well as the French Third, Fourth, and Fifth Armies. Although this promotion in theory relieved Pétain of his responsibilities at Verdun, which was only one sector of his new command, he nevertheless continued to direct French strategy at that battle, keeping his successor at Second Army, General Robert Nivelle, on a very short leash.[42]

Although he exasperated Joffre, the French commander-in-chief had great respect for Pétain and later wrote that

[Pétain] was endowed with very great qualities and these, during the course of the war, and especially at the beginning of the battle of Verdun, have brought him a

justly earned reputation. What saved Verdun was his highly developed tactical sense, his continual perfecting of the methods of defence, and the constant improvement he effected in the organization of the command of the higher units. General Pétain was the heart and soul of the action. Moreover, it should never be forgotten that it was his accurate and unceasing study of the enemy's fighting methods that brought about in our own army the greatest tactical improvement seen in it at any time during the war.[43]

The "tactical improvement" to which Joffre referred was Pétain's implementation of the French Army's new doctrine of firepower, for it was at Verdun that Pétain first obtained the weapons and materiel necessary to fully implement his theory of warfare, best expressed by his slogan "firepower kills."

From the moment of his arrival at Verdun, Pétain had made the establishment of French artillery supremacy on the battlefield his number one priority. Pétain wrote, "I unremittingly urged the activity of the artillery. When the liaison officers of the various army corps, meeting at Souilly for their daily report, began to explain to me in detail the course of fighting on their several fronts, I never failed to interrupt them with the question: 'What have your batteries been doing? We will discuss other points later.'"[44]

On 19 March 1916, Pétain issued a directive to the Second Army that specified that artillery fires should be concentrated and ordered artillery observers to utilize a new report form which would detail the type and objectives of each barrage, the types of projectiles used, the enemy batteries spotted that were vulnerable to counterbattery fire, and other general observations on the effect of the fire. Pétain used these daily reports to direct and coordinate the fire of every battery in the French Second Army, a truly monumental task given the incredible number and variety of artillery pieces that Pétain had at his disposal.[45]

Pétain used his guns to lay down enormous amounts of fire on the Germans. (*Table 2*) The artillery consumption rate in the R.F.V. during Pétain's tenure as the commanding general of the Second Army was truly astounding, especially when one considers that virtually every shell fired had been brought into Verdun by truck via the *Voie Sacrée*. Thanks in part to Pétain's lavish use of firepower, the overall artillery ammunition consumption rate for the entire French Army climbed in 1916 to a monthly average of 4.5 million rounds.[47]

Table 2
Artillery Shells Fired by the French Army in the R.F.V., 21 February – 15 April 1916[46]

Caliber	*Rounds Fired*
75-mm.	3,818,935
80-mm.	45,040
90-mm.	115,730
95-mm.	168,825
105-mm.	168,070
120-mm.	484,970
155-mm.	372,585
220-mm.	9,665
240-mm.	602
305-mm.	74
TOTAL	5,184,496

Falkenhayn's plan had relied on the French to counterattack his German forces under their old doctrine of the *offensive à outrance*, but instead his soldiers faced a "storm of steel" from Pétain's artillery which caused the Germans to suffer grievous losses, thus making the battlefield of Verdun as much a "place of execution" for the Germans as for the French.

By May 1916 Pétain felt comfortable enough with the overall situation at Verdun to launch a counterattack aimed at retaking Fort Douaumont. Pétain placed artillery Col. Jacques Estienne in charge of the artillery support for the attack. Estienne explained, "The operation consists in directing on the position and in firing so as to get the greatest possible effectiveness out of our artillery, a thousand tons of shell a day for six or seven days, so as to dominate the enemy's artillery, to destroy his means of defense, and to break down his morale within the area of a hundred and fifty acres which is to be occupied."[48]

Dropping 2 million pounds of shell a day, for seven days, on an area of 150 acres would seem to be an amazing concentration of firepower, but when the French assault failed after three days of bloody combat Pétain concluded that "The lesson to be learned from this fighting was that, when we should renew the attempt, we must see that greater pressure [will be] applied by our artillery."[49]

The reason that the Germans were able to withstand the French shelling was, in part, due to the protection offered them by Fort Douaumont. The Germans had captured Douaumont virtually without a fight on 25 February, just prior to Pétain's arrival, when General Herr redeployed two corps and each corps commander thought that the other one would take responsibility for Douaumont. As a result neither corps commander had provided a garrison, and a German infantry company wandered in and occupied the abandoned fort. The tragic irony of Douaumont was that its mighty walls sheltered the German army rather than the French, which lost tens of thousands of men in a series of futile attempts to retake the fortress in the spring and summer of 1916.

Douaumont was the most modern fortress in the R.F.V., and its concrete walls withstood an incredible pounding from the artillery of both sides during the course of the battle. Pétain wrote, "At the lowest estimate, 120,000 shells fell on Douaumont. At least two thousand of these were of 270[-mm.] caliber or larger. The southern face of the casemates, of masonry construction [as opposed to concrete], was demolished by our artillery, but was the only part of the work to be destroyed."[50]

An examination of aerial photos taken of Fort Douaumont after the battle reveal that Pétain grievously underestimated the damage suffered by the fortress during the fighting, although it is true that the underground portions of Douaumont did indeed survive virtually intact, in spite of being hit by artillery shells far larger and more powerful than anything imagined by the engineers who had designed the fortress. Even the older fortresses in the R.F.V. proved capable of withstanding an incredible pounding, and the French sheltered wounded men and reserves as well as stockpiles of supplies in the many forts of the R.F.V.

The only other fort besides Douaumont which the French lost to the Germans during the battle was Fort Vaux, and the incredible defense put up by the French defenders of this humble fortification, approximately one-quarter the size of Douaumont, revealed the tremendous defensive benefits offered by the forts. Maj. Sylvain-Eugène Raynal and approximately 600 men, including many wounded soldiers who had sought shelter in the fort during the battle, defended Vaux. Fort Vaux was pounded daily by massive German railway guns and heavy howitzers of 150-mm. and larger and then attacked by an entire German corps, led by special assault teams armed with flamethrowers. Yet for almost an entire week Raynal and his gallant force turned aside the German assaults, until they were overcome by the one weakness of Fort Vaux, its lack of an internal water supply.[51]

Fort Vaux's water was stored in large cisterns that were refilled periodically once the water level declined to a certain depth. The German attack on Vaux fell at a time when the fort's cisterns were already low, and the Germans quickly surrounded the fort cutting off any attempt to move supplies there. Soon after the German attack struck, Raynal discovered that the gauges used for measuring the water in the cisterns were faulty and that his supply of water, which he already knew to be low, was in fact about half what he thought it was. Though there were many barrels of salted meat for food, the water shortage for the overcrowded garrison quickly reached crisis proportion until finally, after going two full days without water, Raynal was left with no other choice than to surrender his beleaguered force to the Germans.[52]

The heroic French defense of Vaux proved that, as was so often the case at Verdun, it was logistics that was the final arbiter. Vaux's stout walls had resisted incessant German shelling, and the gallant garrison had withstood the full fury of an entire German corps for almost a week. Yet in the end, the inability of the French to supply their garrison with water caused the fort to fall.

The beginning of the battle of the Somme on 1 July 1916 marked the end of Falkenhayn's offensive at Verdun, as the Germans were forced to shift large numbers of men and guns out of the Verdun sector and rush them north and west to halt the Anglo-French assault. The French contribution to the Somme offensive had been seriously reduced by the massive logistical pressures at Verdun, but the French Ninth Army, under the command of General Foch, did participate and, unlike the massive repulse the British suffered on the first day at the Somme, the French overran the German front line and secured virtually all of their objectives on the first day of the battle. In spite of its initial success, however, the Ninth Army's assault soon bogged down due to the failure of the British attack and inability of the French reserves to exploit

their gains.[53]

Some staff officers at the G.Q.G. argued that had Pétain's rotation system not drained the French reserves, the decisive "breakthrough" so long sought after in the First World War would have occurred in the French sector at the Somme. This is certainly a debatable contention. Indeed it could equally be argued that without Pétain's rotation system the physical and moral strength of the French Army would have been so worn down by the struggle at Verdun that it would have been incapable of taking part at all in the Allied offensive along the Somme.[54]

Pétain launched limited offensives against the Germans in the R.F.V. during the summer of 1916, but he realized that if he was ever going to retake Douaumont he would need more artillery, especially "super-heavy" guns of 370-mm. or larger. The G.Q.G. promised Pétain that more artillery would be sent to Verdun and that two brand new 400-mm. mortars in particular would arrive by autumn. So he decided to bide his time until then, and the fighting at Verdun died down during the months of August and September. Meanwhile Pétain, Second Army commander General Nivelle, and the French tactical "genius" at Verdun, General de Brigade Charles Mangin, formulated their plans for an offensive aimed at retaking both Forts Douaumont and Vaux in October.[55]

While Pétain organized his counteroffensive, Kaiser Wilhelm II grew so restless over the failure of *GERICHT* to destroy the French that he dismissed Falkenhayn on 20 August 1916, replaced him as chief of the General Staff with Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, and named Hindenburg's brilliant associate, Erich Ludendorff, as First Quartermaster General. Neither Hindenburg nor Ludendorff was pleased with the German situation at Verdun. Hindenburg later wrote his assessment of the German situation there in August 1916:

> Verdun had not fallen into our hands, and the hope of wearing down the French army in the mighty arc of fire which we had drawn round the northern and northeastern fronts of the fortress had not been realized. The battles there exhausted our troops like an open wound. The battlefield was a regular hell and regarded as such by the troops. When I look back now, I do not hesitate to say that on purely military grounds it would have been far better for us to have improved our situation at Verdun by the voluntary evacuation of the ground we had captured. In August 1916, however, I considered I could not adopt that course. To a large extent the flower of our best fighting troops had been sacrificed in the enterprise. The public at home still anticipated a glorious issue to the offensive. It would be only too easy to produce the impression that all these sacrifices had been incurred in vain.[56]

Hindenburg's statement reveals that the Germans themselves had become obsessed with Verdun, and that there could thus be no easy end to this contest. It would be a fight to the finish for both sides, no matter what the cost.

The French offensive planned over the summer began on 24 October 1916. It was supported by the fire of 300 pieces of heavy artillery (155-mm. and larger), including the new "super-heavy" 400-mm. guns which directed their crushing fire against the massive walls of Fort Douaumont and the less impressive, but equally sturdy, defenses of Fort Vaux. The French employed a novel form of artillery support in this offensive. They abandoned the former practice of conducting days, or even weeks, of preparatory bombardment, which cost them the element of surprise, in favor of one massive all-out barrage lasting only a few hours. This "drumfire barrage" was followed by a new artillery tactic developed by the French at Verdun called the "creeping barrage," which coordinated artillery fires with the attacking infantry so as to drop a curtain of steel in front of the advancing troops as they slowly moved forward. The attacking French forces met a badly demoralized and exhausted group of German defenders, who gave way under the massive impetus of the French offensive. The French retook Fort Douaumont on the first day of the offensive after a brief, hard fight, and Fort Vaux was retaken one week later.[57]

The recapture of Fort Douaumont by the French marked the beginning of the end for the Germans at Verdun. French historian Jacques Meyer, himself a veteran of Verdun, later wrote that "They [the Germans] crumbled as we regained our feet. As the loss of Douaumont, through confusion and surprise, had long demoralized the French, its recapture in the autumn of 1916 sealed the reverse of the Germans and definitely destroyed their hopes. . . . They would not take

Verdun; they would not yet finish a war which might never end."[58]

The battle of Verdun would sputter on until 15 December 1916, when the French launched a final offensive that, after three days of hard fighting, forced the Germans back almost entirely to the positions they had originally occupied when the battle had begun in February.

The French Army's magnificent stand at Verdun was a logistical feat of monumental proportions. For the first time in warfare, motorized supply columns had supported an entire army of over 500,000 men in the field almost exclusively. While credit for this success goes to many men, certainly General Pétain should be granted the lion's share.

Pétain implemented his doctrine of firepower at Verdun first to halt the German offensive and then to literally blast the Germans back to their original positions. Pétain's ceaseless activity in organizing and running the massive effort which was required to build and maintain a large force at Verdun and then defeat the Germans in a battle of attrition, in spite of the R.F.V.'s poor lines of communication and supply, certainly represented a logistical achievement of the first order. Yet though he was most assuredly the savior of Verdun, Pétain himself gave credit to all the soldiers who, whether on the front lines or in a support capacity, contributed to the French victory. Addressing a gathering of French veterans at the 1927 dedication ceremony for the *Ossuaire* in which the remains of many of those who had fallen at Verdun would be interred, Pétain stated that

> Every man of you should be mentioned by name, soldiers of Verdun, soldiers in the line and soldiers in the rear. For if I give the place of honor, as is meet, to those who fell in the front of the battle, still I know that their courage would have availed nothing without the patient toil, continued day and night, to the last limit of their strength, on the part of the men to whose efforts were due the regular arrival of the reinforcements, of munitions, and of food, and the evacuation of wounded: the truck drivers along the Sacred Way, the railroad engineers, the ambulance force.[59]

Verdun had held, and, though the French Army had paid a dear price for its victory, it had saved its nation's cause for one more year and had brought Imperial Germany one step closer to its demise.

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NOTES

1. Professor Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, interviewed in the video series *The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century* (New York, 1996).
2. General Pétain's French rank was *général de division*, as was the rank of every other French general mentioned in this article with the exception of the French Army's commander, General Joseph Jacques Césaire Joffre.
3. Erich von Falkenhayn, *General Headquarters, 1914–1916, and Its Critical Decisions* (London, 1919), pp. 210–11.
4. Ibid., p. 209.
5. Ibid., pp. 217–18.
6. Charles W. Sanders, Jr., "No Other Law: The French Army and the Doctrine of the Offensive," Rand Paper P–7331 (Santa Monica, Calif., 1987), pp. 2–3.
7. Joffre was named vice-president of the *Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre*, with the minister of war (a civilian) serving as president. In time of war, the vice president of this body was designated to become commander-in-chief of the French Army, while in time of peace his title was chief of the General Staff. See Joseph Joffre, *The Personal Memoirs of Joffre*, trans. T. Bentley Mott, 2 vols. (New York, 1932), 2: 3–13.
8. Ferdinand Foch, *De la conduite de la guerre: la manoeuvre pour la bataille*, 5th ed. (Paris, 1919); Douglas Porch, *The March to the Marne: The French Army 1871–1914* (New York, 1981); and Ronald H. Cole, "'Forward With the Bayonet': The French Army Prepares for Offensive War, 1911–1914," University of Maryland Ph.D. dissertation, 1975.
9. Jean-Jacques Becker, "Mourir à Verdun," *Histoire* 76 (April 1985): 24, and "Pertes des Armées Françaises (Nord-Est et Orient) Reparties Par Periodes," Journal Officiel, Documents parliamentaires, Session extraordinaire 1920, Annexe 633, Séance du 29 Mars 1920, proposition de résolution Marin. Reprinted in Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis*, 5 vols. (London, 1923–31), 3 (pt. 1): 290.

10. Richard M. Watt, *Dare Call It Treason* (New York, 1963), pp. 101–05. Pétain would be named to the position of commander-in-chief of the French Army in 1917 and be promoted to the rank of Marshal of France shortly after the war's end. For more information on Pétain before and during the Great War, see: Guy Pedroncini, *Pétain*, vol. 1: *Le soldat et la gloire, 1856–1918* (Paris, 1989); Bernard Serrigny, *Trente ans avec Pétain* (Paris, 1959); and Stephen Ryan, *Pétain the Soldier* (New York, 1969).
11. Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 588–89.
12. Ibid., 2: 597.
13. Ibid., 2: 599, and David T. Zabecki, *Steel Wind: Colonel Georg Bruchmüller and the Birth of Modern Artillery* (Westport, Conn., 1994), p. 8.
14. Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 597.
15. Ibid., 2: 600–601.
16. Ibid., 2: 438–40; Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory* (New York, 1962), pp. 52–53.
17. Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 440.
18. Horne, *The Price of Glory*, pp. 70–82.
19. Henri Philippe Pétain, *Verdun*, trans Margaret MacVeagh (New York, 1930), p. 70.
20. Ibid., pp. 71–72.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., p. 95.
23. Ministère des Armées, "L'action du service automobile dans les grands batailles de 1914–1918," *Revue historique des armées* 5 (September 1978): 85.
24. Ibid., pp. 89–92.
25. Horne, *The Price of Glory*, pp.146–47.
26. Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 95–99, with the quotation on pp. 95–96; France, Armée, Etat-major, Service Historique, *Les Armées Françaises Dans la Grand Guerre*, 11 tomes (Paris, 1922-37), Tome IV: *Verdun et la Somme*, vol. 1 (henceforth *LAF*), annex 1232.
27. Horne, *The Price of Glory*, pp.147–48.
28. Pétain, *Verdun*, p. 96.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., pp. 96–99.
31. *LAF*, annex 1261.
32. France, Armée, Etat-major, Service Historique, *Les Armées Françaises dans la Grande Guerre*, Tome IV, vol. 3, p. 509. Also see "Pertes des Armées Françaises (Nord-Est et Orient)"; Holger Herwig, *The First World War: Germany and Austria–Hungary 1914–1918* (New York, 1997) p. 184, and Horne, *The Price of Glory*, pp. 327–28.
33. Leonard V. Smith, *Between Mutiny and Obedience: The Case of the French Fifth Infantry Division during World War I* (Princeton, N.J., 1994), pp. 126–27.
34. Eric J. Leed, *No Man's Land: Combat & Identity in World War I* (Cambridge, England, 1979), pp. 170–74; Great Britain, War Office, *Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into "Shell-shock"* (London, 1922).
35. Leed, *No Man's Land*, pp. 176–80.
36. Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 122–23.
37. Ibid., pp. 117–18 and 133–34, with the quotation on pp. 133–34.
38. Erich Ludendorff, *Ludendorff's Own Story, August 1914 – November 1918*, reprint ed., 2 vols. (Freeport, N.Y., 1971) 1: 401–02.
39. Jean de Pierrefeu, *French Headquarters, 1915–1918*, trans. C. J. C. Street (London, 1924), p. 73.
40. Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 449–50.
41. Pétain *Verdun*, pp. 121–22; Pierrefeu, *French Headquarters*, p. 73.
42. Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 127–28: Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 451.
43. Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 450.
44. Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 93.
45. *LAF*, annex 1346.
46. Ibid., annex 2105.
47. Zabecki, *Steel Wind*, p. 8.
48. Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 149.
49. Ibid., p. 158.
50. Ibid., p. 228.
51. Sylvain-Eugène Raynal, *Le Drame du Fort Vaux* (Paris, 1919); Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 164–71.
52. Raynal, *Le Drame du Fort Vaux*; Horne, *The Price of Glory*, pp.252–66.
53. Joffre, *Memoirs*, 2: 461–88.
54. Pierrefeu, *French Headquarters*, pp. 73–74.
55. Pétain, *Verdun*, p. 194.
56. Paul von Hindenburg, *Out of My Life* (New York, 1921), pp. 201, 262.
57. Alain Derizot, "Verdun, Novembre 1916: Victoire en enfer," *Historama*, no. 33 (November 1986): 10–21.
58. Jacques Meyer, "Verdun, 1916" in George A. Panichas, ed., *Promise of Greatness: The War of 1914–1918* (London, 1968), p. 64.
59. Pétain, *Verdun*, pp. 210–13.

Order out of Chaos

The United States Constabulary in Postwar Germany

By Michael A. Rauer

The following article is a revised version of a paper the author delivered at the 1998 Conference of Army Historians in Bethesda, Maryland.

On 1 July 1946, the European edition of the newspaper *Stars and Stripes* proclaimed a new era in the history of the United States Army in Germany with the headline "Constabulary Forces Swing Into Action." The accompanying article began

At midnight tonight 27 troops of the U.S. Constabulary will move into positions along the 1,600 miles of the border of American occupied Germany and 54 mechanized troops will begin patrolling the interior of the zone as the Constabulary starts operation. Approximately 28,000 officers and men will make up the soldier-police force as it begins operations. An additional 7,000 men, currently in training, will bring the Constabulary up to strength. . . . Maj. Gen. Ernest N. Harmon, Constabulary Chief, stated that the Constabulary will begin operations quietly. "We don't want to start off with some big operation," he said, "because our job is not to supply headlines, but to perform important security tasks."

Nevertheless, within the next six months the *Stars and Stripes* would carry a variety of stories reporting on the activities of the United States Constabulary in the American Zone of Occupation. Their headlines read: "Constabulary Raids Stuttgart Depot, Envelope Swoop Nets Contraband, 45 Arrests" (10 December 1946); "Constabulary Nabs 3 Black Marketeers" (19 December 1946); "Constabulary Raid Nets Food, Arms at DP Camp" (20 December 1946); "4 Germans Caught in Bootleg Attempt" (20 December 1946); "Raid on DP Camps Nets VD Medicine" (4 January 1947); and "Troopers Raid 6 Stamp Stores" (4 January 1947). The United States Constabulary was introducing a new era of law and order during the reconstruction of postwar Germany.

Overview

As U.S. forces took control of the areas of Germany that would become the American Occupation Zone, senior military leaders recognized that it would be necessary to establish order in the chaotic situation that faced both the Germans and the Americans. Along with the Allied victory came the task of occupying war-torn Germany. As the war concluded, many American combat units found themselves thrust immediately into assuming the occupation duties of "maintaining law and order and establishing the Allied military presence in the defeated nation. This was the Army-type occupation."[1] Combat units found that they were not adequately prepared for these duties, which involved challenges ranging from coping with millions of displaced persons to controlling hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war, hunting for suspected war criminals, halting rampant black market activity, and, most important, preventing any possible uprising against the occupation government of the Allies. The question of how these missions could best be accomplished by the Americans forces in postwar Germany could not easily be answered.

The commander of United States Forces, European Theater (USFET), General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and his planners agreed that some sort of police organization would need to be established to provide for the order and security of the newly occupied areas of Germany.[2] The United States Constabulary that was developed to meet this task would, over its four-year history, become one of the most distinctive organizations that the United States Army ever fielded. The dedicated service of the soldiers of the United States Constabulary left postwar Germany a substantial legacy of harmony and security.

Planning

Within six months after the Normandy landings, American field commanders were planning for the establishment of order in the areas of Germany that

would fall to their armored thrusts. In November 1944, the Fifteenth Army conducted a study to determine the basis for troops needed in the occupation of the Rhineland. This study led to the creation of a "Frontier Command," which has been described as a forerunner to the United States Constabulary. The Frontier Command became operational on 15 April 1945 and was charged with controlling the movement of people across the western border of Germany. The mission of the Frontier Command was to provide for the security of the occupation zone by setting up roadblocks and conducting motor patrols along the entire western frontier.[3] These functions would later be among the basic missions assigned to the United States Constabulary.

The idea for a constabulary force may have come from any of several sources. Various tactical units which had already experienced occupation duties provided their recommendations based on what they had learned. At the USFET headquarters, the G–2 and G–3 staffs tried to determine what they believed would be necessary in postwar Germany. At the top of the military hierarchy, the planners at the War Department in the Pentagon sought a solution to deal with this issue in both Europe and the Pacific.[4]

Four months after the start of the occupation, the G–2 Section of USFET headquarters produced a staff study indicating that a security organization of American personnel would be needed to effectively perform occupation duties. This September 1945 study concluded that the security force should consist of specially trained, highly mobile units similar to mechanized cavalry squadrons and should be employed chiefly in making security patrols.[5]

The USFET study proposed a reorganization of the occupation security forces that would take into account the looming shortfall of Army personnel in Europe. Under this proposal USFET aligned selected mechanized units of the occupation forces into what became known as the District Constabulary. The term "district" related to the two areas into which the American Zone of Occupation had been divided—a Western Military District controlled by the Seventh Army and an Eastern Military District controlled by the Third Army. Each district constabulary was designed as an organization of highly mobile tactical troops assigned to provide security for its entire district. The 15th Cavalry Group served as the Western Military District Constabulary and the 2d Cavalry Group served as the Eastern Military District Constabulary.

The American theater headquarters determined that the district constabularies should not perform duties normally associated with the military police, such as military personnel control, traffic control, or law enforcement over personnel subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Instead, their primary functions were (1) to serve as a mobile reserve of tactical troops able to respond quickly to any need, (2) to provide security coverage, and (3) to assist in various Counter-Intelligence Corps functions. The broad definition given to security coverage included patrolling specified areas for security purposes; transporting civilians, internees, and prisoners of war; and conducting "search and seizure" operations. These district constabulary forces became operational in November 1945.[6]

USFET planning for the establishment of a unified United States Constabulary began in October 1945. At that time the War Department directed that more detailed plans be prepared for the operation of an occupation police force with the goal of placing this organization into service in the American Occupation Zones of Germany and Austria on 1 July 1946. General Eisenhower explained that the occupation control of the American zones would be performed by a United States Constabulary organized along "state police" lines. This force would operate above the German police and would be supported by designated combat units. The effectiveness of this plan would be measured by the results of the initial thirty-day period of operation of the district constabularies.[7]

Once the decision had been made to establish the United States Constabulary, the size of the organization would have to be determined. USFET decided to base its strength on the population it would serve. After deliberation by various elements of the USFET staff, a "norm" of one United States constable per 450 Germans was recommended. Based on this norm, a total strength of approximately 38,000 personnel would be necessary to fill out the organization.[8]

It was broadly agreed that mechanized cavalry units were best suited to carry out the functions of a constabulary. Mechanized cavalry units were known for their mobility and speed. A cavalry reconnaissance troop of 140 men could patrol a rural area of 225 square

miles. Since the American zone consisted of 43,000 square miles, 192 troops of cavalry would be required. These troops, along with the infrastructure necessary for their support would total 38,000 soldiers. The constabulary, as envisioned, would consist of a corps-size headquarters and three brigades, one located in each of the German *Länder* or states in the American occupation zone. The troops would be organized into forty-eight constabulary squadrons assigned to nine constabulary regiments allocated on the basis of population density, the size of the territory to be covered, and the security concerns of the particular region. There also would be a school squadron to train the constabulary troopers. Geographically, the constabulary brigade headquarters would be situated at the *Länder* capitals of Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, and Hesse.[9] This placement would allow for close liaison between the commanders of the U.S. forces and the German authorities.

In November 1945, USFET constabulary planners identified a set of functions for the organization. Constabulary troopers were to conduct routine motorized patrols covering the entire occupied area, operate both permanent and temporary roadblocks, participate in large-scale raids, cooperate with the German police in cases when their assistance was required, support minor reprisal actions, handle requests for action from the Counter-Intelligence Corps, and execute other related duties.[10] The "other duties" were later specified to include providing border security, executing search and seizure operations, detailing security personnel to U.S. military government offices, maintaining a mobile reserve force, and performing military police functions when military police units were not available.

By January 1946, USFET had received approval from the War Department for the police-type occupation of the American Occupation Zones in Germany and Austria. USFET gave the Third Army the requirement to organize the nucleus of the United States Constabulary and selected Maj. Gen. Ernest N. Harmon to command it.[11] General Harmon initially established a planning cell in the Third Army headquarters, and on 15 February 1946 he took command of VI Corps, located in Bamberg. This headquarters was officially designated as Headquarters, United States Constabulary, on 1 May 1946.

General Harmon was eminently qualified to lead this unique organization. A protégé of the late General George S. Patton, Harmon had commanded the 1st and 2d Armored Divisions in North Africa, Italy, Belgium, and Germany and the XXII Corps in postwar Czechoslovakia. He thus possessed a great deal of experience both in handling armored and mechanized forces and in occupation duty. A hard-charging leader, General Harmon knew how to get things done. The initial impression that General Harmon left with his troops was one that would not be quickly forgotten. As one constabulary trooper later remembered Harmon, "He was some kind of a tiger! He would always gather our squadron together after he conducted a detailed inspection and make ferocious speeches, larded with every known profanity and a few that he must have created. We thought that he was really something."[12]

Since the United States Constabulary was designed to be a unique organization, a distinctive uniform would be necessary to distinguish its members from the other American troops in the zone of occupation. General Harmon recommended that the constabulary uniform not depart radically from current Army

General Harmon inspects Sgt. Norman Stickney of the 1st Constabulary Brigade, July 1946.
(Signal Corps photograph)

dress but be distinguishable by special features. The constabulary trooper would normally wear the service coat, parachutist or cavalry boots, and the service cap with visor. While on patrol duty, the trooper would wear the traditional "Sam Brown" belt with shoulder strap, a leather holster, and magazine pockets and would carry a first-aid pouch. The most distinctive item would be the helmet liner, with its circled blue and yellow stripes and the Constabulary shoulder-sleeve insignia painted on the front. That insignia consisted of a disk of gold, bordered with blue, in the center of which stood the letter "C" pierced by a red lightning bolt. Personally designed by General Harmon, this insignia used a combination of the colors of the infantry, artillery, and cavalry.[13]

Stationing

Army planners in 1946 made a thorough analysis to ensure that the stationing of United States Constabulary units would correspond to the overall security plan for the American zone. They gave great care to assessing the impact of stationing troopers in major cities and in the surrounding towns. Adhering to the initial decision to place constabulary units in the capitals of the three *Länder* and nine administrative districts, the planners sited the major constabulary headquarters as follows: the First Constabulary Brigade in Biebrich (Hesse), a suburb of Wiesbaden; the Second Constabulary Brigade in Munich (Bavaria); and the Third Constabulary Brigade in Bad Cannstatt (Baden-Württemberg), in metropolitan Stuttgart. The Constabulary regiments were located as follows:[14]

1st Constabulary Regiment	Kassel (Hesse)
2d Constabulary Regiment	Freising (Bavaria)
3d Constabulary Regiment	Wetzlar (Hesse)
5th Constabulary Regiment	Gablingen (Bavaria)
6th Constabulary Regiment	Bayreuth (Bavaria)
10th Constabulary Regiment	Möhringen (Baden-Württemberg)
11th Constabulary Regiment	Weiden in der Oberpfalz (Bavaria)
14th Constabulary Regiment	Kitzingen (Bavaria)
15th Constabulary Regiment	Weinheim (Baden-Württemberg)
Constabulary School Squadron	Sonthofen (Bavaria)

In addition, the 4th Constabulary Regiment was established with headquarters in Linz, Austria. One of its elements, the 16th Constabulary Squadron, patrolled the American Sector of Berlin. These units reported through their respective chains of command in Berlin and Austria, not to Headquarters, United States Constabulary.[15]

Many of the units that would become elements of the United States Constabulary had to move to the strategic locations that were identified as their ultimate operating bases. Constabulary plans originally called for a "blanketing" of the American zone with the troopers, but appropriate facilities were not readily available in all areas. Some units had to move four or five times before starting operations in the areas they were assigned. The difficulties arose because other units, homeless refugees, or camps for displaced persons were occupying the locations designated for the constabulary units. Through a great deal of effort, the Constabulary finally obtained most of these locations, although some constabulary troopers remained bivouacked in improvised camps for considerable periods.[16] Once permanently situated, the constabulary troopers embarked on a period of concentrated training that would only be complete when operations began.

Organization

The tables of organization and equipment approved by the War Department provided for a Constabulary headquarters organized as a conventional corps headquarters, including a medical detachment, supported by special troops allotted in view of the unique mission and the dispersed deployment of constabulary units. Emphasis was placed on communications, liaison, and intelligence activities. The organization included an entire signal squadron to maintain communications between headquarters and constabulary units. Since intelligence activities were of great importance to constabulary operations, the counterintelligence and criminal investigation elements were particularly potent. Each constabulary line regiment had—in addition to its cavalry squadrons—a light tank troop, a motorcycle platoon "for highway patrol work," and a horse platoon "for use in difficult terrain." Each regiment also had a service troop to perform routine administrative functions and to maintain vehicles and equipment.[17]

General Harmon wasted no time in establishing his organization. Aggressively implementing the approved structure, he sought out the necessary units. Due to the ongoing demobilization of troops and inactivation of Army units in Europe, the process would sometimes be frustrating. In selecting particular units for conversion into constabulary, General Harmon sought only those that had some experience in either cavalry or in mechanized and motorized operations. For this reason, he drew heavily upon units of the 1st and 4th Armored Divisions and on separate tank and antiaircraft artillery units.[18] As the selected units came under Constabulary control, they were reorganized and given constabulary designations, which became official on 1 May 1946. During this period of reorganization, the units embarked on personnel replacement, equipment acquisition, and initial training for the constabulary mission.

In the units that had been redesignated as constabulary troops, most soldiers did not know what to make of the changes. One constabulary soldier later stated, "Suddenly, about the end of March 1946, we learned that the division was being inactivated, but . . . we were going to be converted to something called 'Constabulary.' No one knew what that was, except that it was rumored to be something that was going to require training and other nasty things that no one seemed to be practicing in the European Theater. Cries of anguish—everyone is going to apply for a transfer. Many did. . . . No dice; our world was coming to an end."[19] Another such reaction was noted when General Harmon told the members of another unit that they were going to become constabulary troopers. "I was a newly assigned member of the 474th AAA [Antiaircraft Artillery] Battalion (AW) (SP) fresh from infantry basic training. The battalion was an empty vessel. . . . its weapons had been turned in. About a month after I arrived in the battalion, we were trucked to a nearby town, to a German theater, and addressed by a very profane little major general by the name of Ernest Harmon. He advised that we were about to 'get off our beer-soaked asses' and become soldiers again. There was a new organization that would be designed to keep the Germans in check, if need be."[20]

The elements of the United States Constabulary in the spring of 1946 were a mixture of units that had been previously organized as armored infantry, armored

Sgt. Harold Green of the 15th Constabulary Regiment mounts his machine, July 1946.
(Signal Corps photograph)

field artillery, tank, cavalry, and antiaircraft artillery units. Special Troops, United States Constabulary, included signal, military police, quartermaster, special service, counterintelligence, and criminal investigation elements and a band. This combination of military specialties would produce an organization that would be well suited for diverse constabulary functions. The motto eventually adopted by the United States Constabulary, "Mobility, Vigilance, and Justice," reflected both its operational goals and the extraordinary composition of the organization.

The Constabulary organization was established along standard operational lines. Specialized units, assigned unique functions, formed the Special Troops, United States Constabulary. These included an air liaison squadron of 13 officers and 146 enlisted men to plan, coordinate, and conduct aerial support for constabulary missions. This squadron was equipped with 32 observation/spotter planes. The Constabulary School

Squadron was placed within the headquarters for simplicity of control. The School Squadron was located in the Allgäu region of southern Germany at a kaserne that had once trained favored elements of Hitler Youth. Comprising 108 officers, 5 warrant officers, and 633 enlisted men, the School Squadron would perform all the necessary constabulary training.[21]

When it began operations, the United States Constabulary was composed of three constabulary brigades commanded by brigadier generals. Each brigade consisted of three constabulary regiments commanded by colonels. The regiments had three squadrons, each commanded by a lieutenant colonel. Additionally, each regiment would have a headquarters troop composed of a communications platoon, a motorcycle platoon, and a horse platoon, as well as a light tank troop, a service troop, and a band. Each regimental tank troop operated seventeen M24 light tanks, while the regimental horse platoon would ready thirty mounted men to operate in strenuous terrain. There were nine light observation aircraft in each regimental headquarters. The regimental motorcycle platoon was composed of an officer and twenty-five enlisted men who would be used on the autobahns for patrol purposes.[22]

Each constabulary squadron had a headquarters troop, three mechanized troops, and two motorized troops. Mechanized troops were made up of three platoons, each comprising three reconnaissance sections of thirteen men led by a lieutenant or staff sergeant and utilizing an M8 armored car and three quarter-ton jeeps. Armament for each reconnaissance section consisted of two .30-caliber light machine guns mounted on the M8 armored car and one of the jeeps. The troopers in the typical reconnaissance section carried five .45-caliber machine guns, seven .30-caliber M1 rifles, and thirteen .45-caliber pistols. The motorized troops similarly consisted of three motorized platoons, each having three motorized sections of twelve men led by a staff sergeant and utilizing a single one-and-a-quarter-ton truck. The armament for each motorized section consisted of a single .30-caliber light machine gun mounted on the truck. The individual weaponry of each motorized section's troopers consisted of five .45-caliber machine guns, seven M1 rifles, and twelve .45-caliber pistols. The personnel strength for each mechanized and motorized troop was set at 5 officers and 155 enlisted men.[23] Once the United States Constabulary became operational, the 12- and 13-man sections would be the basic constabulary units for operational purposes in a wide variety of missions.

Personnel

As the Army rotated veteran soldiers back to the United States, it integrated new soldiers fresh from basic training into what would become the constabulary units. Assignment to the United States Constabulary was considered a "branch-immaterial" assignment, which made it easier to mix and assign the various military occupational specialties. By the end of April 1946, the Army had assigned a total of 29,351 officers and enlisted men to the United States Constabulary. As this was still below the Constabulary's authorized strength, recruiting officers made further efforts to alleviate the trooper shortages. On 14 July 1946, the Constabulary finally reached its full authorized enlisted strength of 31,059. However, officer strength on that date was 1,455, reflecting a level of just 78 percent of the authorized officer strength. The Constabulary did not receive its full complement of officers until the end of August 1946.[24]

The selection of well-qualified personnel to fill the newly established ranks of the United States Constabulary was a challenging process. The preliminary plan formulated by USFET headquarters called for the United States Constabulary to be an elite organization staffed by officer and enlisted personnel of the highest caliber. When USFET headquarters proposed tables of organization and equipment for the Constabulary, it informed the War Department that there would be a need for more noncommissioned officers than in other units of similar size. USFET stated that "due to the special type of mission of the Constabulary, enlisted men will more frequently than not be called upon to operate in small groups without officer supervision, and at extended distances from headquarters. For this reason an unusually large number of noncommissioned officers will be necessary to provide grade[s] and ratings sufficiently high to attract the best type of enlisted personnel."[25]

With the demobilization of all but the most junior wartime inductees, finding enough noncommissioned officers with experience and maturity was no easy task. As a result, promotions were frequently hastened and

awarded for reasons other than skill levels or seasoning. The shortage of noncommissioned officers created a new hierarchy of young sergeants. One new trooper described his situation as follows: "I was a 'buck' sergeant. . . . Typical of the chaotic personnel turnovers of that day, I was shoved into the position of acting platoon sergeant, for which I was definitely not qualified. I had only the virtues of . . . keeping my nose pretty much to the grindstone. . . . doesn't sound like much now . . . However, then, it was sufficient for a desperate troop commander's purposes."[26]

The shortage of noncommissioned officers was eventually resolved, but the situation of the company grade officers was quite different. Even after officer strength in the Constabulary reached authorized levels, constant fluctuation in the numbers of assigned company grade officers continued to be a problem. To fill the recurrent vacancies, the Army began to commission officers in the unheard of period of three short weeks. As related by one of these "21-day wonders," "I had to . . . clear post on 29 November because I was on orders to go to OCS on 30 November. . . . I turned in my troop property . . . and was in a jeep heading for the Third Army OCS at Seckenheim School Center . . . where I survived a 460 man class that graduated 240 second lieutenants on 20 December 1946."[27]

The United States Constabulary did obtain the services of a number of officers who would have exemplary Army careers. Prominent among these troopers were General Earle G. Wheeler, Chief of Staff of the Army in 1962–64, who as a lieutenant colonel in 1947–49, served as the G–3 in the Headquarters, United States Constabulary, and Maj. Gen. George S. Patton, who served in 1947–48 as a lieutenant in a constabulary squadron.

Equipment

The acquisition of authorized equipment posed challenges similar to those involved in acquiring personnel. The Constabulary drew most of its vehicles and other major items of equipment from depots throughout the theater that had received them as wartime combat units inactivated and returned home. One constabulary trooper remembered that in order to obtain vehicles for his unit, "We went to France to secure many jeeps, trucks, and armored personnel carriers which we brought back and completely painted—painting the United States Constabulary insignia and stripes on all vehicles."[28] The operating condition of these vehicles ranged from fair to poor, and ordnance units spent a great deal of effort to make many of these vehicles serviceable. As a result, General Harmon continually stressed vehicle maintenance and safe vehicle operation.[29] One former trooper remarked, "We got, through General Harmon's efforts, a great number of new jeeps. . . . He cursed us roundly during an initial visit to our squadron for having wrecked about the same number of jeeps as he was able to pry out of the supply system."[30] Constabulary leaders would emphasize proper vehicle maintenance and cautious operation for years, since many of the deaths and serious injuries that befell both constabulary troopers and regular soldiers in the American zone would come from traffic mishaps.

Constabulary leaders also evaluated the use of boats for patrolling the waterways of Germany. As a test, the Constabulary G–3 in April 1946 requested fifty boats for five of the regiments "for purposes of patrolling inland waterways to aid in border control." However, USFET turned down this request, preferring to allow the Security Section of the Inland Waterways Branch to maintain the responsibility for patrolling the waterways of Germany.[31]

Training

The majority of the personnel assigned to the United States Constabulary had little or no training in the performance of any type of police or security duty. The bulk of these service members held military occupational specialties of the combat arms branches. As a result, Constabulary leaders found it necessary to develop specialized training for their newly designated troopers.

USFET leaders hoped that the School Squadron established in January 1946 at Sonthofen would produce competent personnel after an intense period of training in police procedures and related tasks. The initial goal was to train the officers and noncommissioned officers so that they would be able to return to their units and begin to train the remainder of the troopers. The capacity of the school was set at 650 students, and a four-week training program was designed. The schools created five departments that offered programs of instruction in geopolitics, police

procedures, military tactics, communications, and general instruction. One former trooper who commented on this effort said, "The period from about February to June 1946 was likely one of the more intense in the way of changing attitudes and states of training . . . of constabulary troopers of any period in American military history." By 30 September 1946, six classes had been conducted at the Sonthofen Constabulary School and a total of 3,688 officers and enlisted men had taken the four-week course of instruction.[32]

Since there were no existing manuals, standard operating procedures, or handbooks for the new troopers, the Constabulary issued a "Trooper's Guide" to provide the necessary policy guidelines and operational procedures for their law enforcement work. Col. J. H. Harwood, who had been state police commissioner of Rhode Island, helped prepare this manual. Among other subjects, the "Trooper's Guide" explained the proper method of searching a prisoner, making arrests, gathering evidence, performing riot duty, and coordinating efforts with other agencies.[33] General Harmon sought to reinforce the importance of the troopers' mission and duties by writing in the introduction of the "Trooper's Guide":

You are a direct representative of the United States Government charged with the enforcement of the laws of the United States Forces in the United States Zone of Germany in direct support of Military Government. . . . You are a combination soldier and policeman. As a soldier you must be professionally trained and disciplined, and have confidence in yourself, your organization, and your weapons. As a policeman you must be able to perform the five principal duties of police – (1) to preserve the peace, (2) to enforce the law, (3) to prevent and detect crime, (4) to protect life and property and (5) to arrest violators of the law."[34]

The United States Constabulary issued another important training publication entitled *Troop Information Program, US Constabulary, Know Your Job* in August 1947. This booklet would be used to make troopers more aware of their responsibilities in a series of eight lecture and discussion periods that were to be conducted in their units. The introduction to the first discussion topic clearly enunciated the revised goal of the American Army of Occupation: "If the Trooper is to re-orient the Germans—sell them democracy—he must understand them. Instead of blindly hoping they will understand us and our political ideals, we should make an all-out effort to understand them. In this approach we may get a better perspective of the job assigned to us."[35]

Operations

The United States Constabulary became operational on 1 July 1946. The constabulary was initially charged with the maintenance of general military and civil security in the occupied U.S. Zone of Germany, exclusive of the Berlin District and the Bremen Enclave. The execution of this mission would involve an active patrol system and a readiness to take effective action to forestall and suppress any riot, rebellion, or other act prejudicial to United States occupation policies or to the security of its forces. The constabulary would also maintain effective military control of the borders of the United States zone.[36] To ensure that the constabulary troopers clearly understood their individual responsibilities and functions, the "Trooper's Guide, " which was issued to every soldier, explained at the outset exactly what was expected, that the Constabulary mission would be accomplished by

1) Maintaining a system of police and security patrols,
2) Maintaining border control posts,
3) Conducting planned raids,
4) Suppressing riots and disorders,
5) Conducting investigations,
6) Arresting known violators and suspects,
7) Aiding, assisting other United States and German law enforcement agencies, and
8) Operating permanent and temporary roadblocks and checkpoints.[37]

While each constabulary trooper was "empowered while on duty to arrest all civilians and all enlisted men within the United States Zone of Occupation," the "Trooper's Guide" emphasized that their "great powers of arrest, search, and seizure must be exercised with good judgment and only on official and reasonable grounds. *Any abuse of this power will not be tolerated.*"[38]

The Constabulary's first major operation, code-

A Constabulary trooper, aided by two German border police, checks the papers of a civilian crossing between Germany and Austria in November 1946.
(Signal Corps photograph)

named GRAB-BAG, took place on 21 May 1946. This operation sought to disrupt the flow of former Nazi SS members out of occupied Germany and to stop the smuggling of illegal goods. Four thousand soldiers sealed off the Danube River between Deggendorf and Passau, a distance of forty-five miles. In the span of thirty-four minutes, constabulary personnel halted and occupied every vessel on this stretch of the river.[39]

To impress upon the Germans that the American Army remained an effective military presence in their country, the Constabulary would periodically perform a "show of force" in major German cities. Constabulary leaders selected locations for the shows of force by using statistics which identified areas experiencing high rates of crime or security violations. Contemporary American reports admitted that "these operations were nothing more than street parades in which mounted Constabulary units with loaded weapons, armored cars and tanks passed through the city in complete readiness for action."[40]

The initial constabulary patrols evoked some alarm from the Germans. Recalling the comments of his German wife, former enlisted trooper Carl Cunningham, observed, "At first the Germans feared the patrols and would give them a wide berth. . . . Many Germans at first associated those patrols with the fearsome SS street patrols in the major cities who summarily shot and hung deserters, looters, and anyone who displeased them. . . . However, very soon, we were taken as benign."[41]

As the geographic borders between the four occupation zones began to stabilize in 1945 and 1946, the American forces erected border-crossing posts, and it was at these posts that the Constabulary began its mission of border control. For the first few years, there was no fence along the border. The border was distinguishable only by various posts, barriers, and markers with signs indicating the German states the traveler was entering and departing. The most significant border of the American zone was the eastern boundary with the Soviet zone. It was from this direction that most clandestine pedestrian and vehicle traffic attempted to enter the American zone. When the constabulary troopers first assumed their border duties, their Russian counterparts were friendly, most often desiring to exchange pleasantries and share American cigarettes.[42] Unfortunately within two years heightened Cold War tensions and the start of the Berlin blockade would dramatically change that relationship.

Col. Donald Perkins, who served as a constabulary noncommissioned officer during this period, recalled spending a week at a time of relaxed and uneventful duty on the U.S.-Soviet interzonal border as part of a party of four enlisted men. They lived in two pyramid tents that served as sleeping quarters, office space, and a dining facility. Each post would normally have a German civilian who was employed as a cook and purchasing agent with nearby farmers. A German border policeman would usually come by for several hours each day and make one or two patrols in either direction. The daily patrolling operations for each of the three troopers would consist of a four-mile round trip foot patrol to the next constabulary border post. As a result, Perkins recalled, "the patrolling trooper did not hurry but spent time observing the area he passed

through, looking for signs of recent border crossings, which in fact were observed from time to time."[43]

The Constabulary quickly discovered ways to improve the efficiency of its activities. Constabulary leaders concluded that active "in-depth" border patrolling by mobile units could accomplish more than operating fixed or static positions. Another early lesson learned dealt with raids. Because adequate execution of constabulary raids required a significant number of personnel, they would be planned only when there was strong indication of illegal activity. Some raids were notably successful. One constabulary raid at the Polish displaced persons camp at Flossenburg revealed black market activities in food, currency, and U.S. government property. It also turned up an individual suspected of murder and six pistols. The constabulary detained seventeen persons, including the camp commander, who was arrested for assisting the prisoners by destroying or altering evidence.[44]

The Constabulary participated in joint operations with French security forces, but these produced mixed results. In one such operation nearly two squadrons of constabulary troopers, accompanied by tanks, entered and secured the Wiesbaden suburbs of Kostheim and Kastel, surprising their nearly 30,000 inhabitants. The troopers completely sealed the area and the adjacent Rhine River bridges. In Mainz, directly across the Rhine, French security forces secured the areas around the Rhine bridges and French crews operated along the Rhine River three security boats carrying constabulary personnel. People were caught trying to "escape" with goods, bicycles, and luggage as they went across the river. Another constabulary raid conducted during the initial period of operations in the city of Munich netted over 6,000 people for various infractions. Eventually, the constabulary raids made the German population more conscious of the American security presence and of the increasing likelihood that illegal activity would be detected. Early constabulary operational reports also noted a threat to the internal security of the American zone involving the illegal transmission of uncensored letters.[45]

A constabulary trooper compares weapons with a Russian soldier along the Soviet-U.S. sector border near Hof, Germany, in July 1946.
(Signal Corps photograph)

Newly reorganized German police agencies assisted U.S. Constabulary units in their security and law enforcement roles. These new German police units had first been organized in 1944 and 1945. As Allied forces swept through France, Belgium, and Germany, they captured, disarmed, and disbanded various groups of German military and civil police. The members of these groups then underwent a screening and denazification process, at the completion of which only a few qualified and reliable German police remained. As a result, the Allies in October 1944 opened a police training school in Belgium for German police aspirants. This school conducted an intensive program of training and instruction in police skills that would produce the nucleus for a new German civilian police force. The Allies selected individuals to attend this police training school from prisoner-of-war camps based on their backgrounds and character traits. The school would subsequently follow the advancing combat forces, moving three times before finally being permanently established in Marburg.[46]

By August 1946 the Americans had founded twenty-one police training schools, which had graduated 9,400 of the more than 28,000 German policemen working in the American Zone of Occupation. The remaining 18,600 were waiting to attend an intensified six-week course of instruction supervised by the American military government. Eventually 2,000 more German police would be appointed to bring the total to the

authorized level to 30,000 in the U. S. zone. These German police were armed with either pistols or rifles depending on their duty requirements. As a result constabulary troopers and military policemen needed to work harmoniously with the German police in maintaining security and law and order in the American zone. Although the German police were armed, they were not given any authority over Allied personnel, whose policing remained a constabulary function. The German police gradually assumed a greater responsibility for civilian law enforcement. The U.S. Constabulary's ultimate goal was for the German police to perform the primary police role with all civilians, with constabulary units available as backup when needed. This would allow the constabulary troopers to concentrate on the zonal borders and on trouble spots.[47]

Youthful acts of petty violence, delinquency, vandalism, and minor crime captured the attention of the U.S. Constabulary early in its operations. Some German youths were even thought to be responsible for attacks on American soldiers and their German female acquaintances. American occupation leaders traced these acts to the boredom, absence of family members, and lack of organized pastimes being encountered by German youth. The United States Office of Military Government concluded, in the words of a historian of the occupation, that "the worst off—and most dangerous—were those in their late teens. Although too young to have served in the *Wehrmacht* and experienced the sobering effects of defeat in the field, they were old enough to have absorbed Nazi attitudes."[48]

To counteract this threat, the Office of Military Government on 1 April 1946 initiated a new youth activity program, forming voluntary groups of young people for cultural, religious, and recreational purposes. General Joseph T. McNarney, Commanding General, USFET, directed his major subordinate commands to assign American personnel, either military or civilian, to develop worthwhile activities for German young people. He directed local commanders to evaluate local recreational facilities in their areas to determine what could be made available on a periodic basis. In support of the German youth programs, General Harmon directed constabulary units to establish youth centers in as many towns as possible both to involve Germans in activities that would be beneficial and to demonstrate the American commitment to helping Germany recover from the effects of the war. By October 1946 a total of 329,750 German youths were participating in the program. This effort to help German youth was deemed necessary as a step on the path to educating them in the fundamentals of democracy, although it was found to require a great amount of time, equipment, and personnel. As one constabulary officer concluded, "In teaching democracy to German youths, the Constabulary trooper proved the sincerity of American policy." The problems that had been associated with German youth began to diminish from the alarming levels that had first been evidenced right after the end of the war.[49]

Change

Successive reorganizations of United States occupation forces in Germany impelled the Constabulary to relocate its headquarters. It moved first in February 1947 from Bamberg to Heidelberg and then moved again within a year to its final location at Stuttgart-Vaihingen.[50] In mid-1948, the Constabulary relinquished its police and border duties to the rehabilitated German civilian police forces, which were judged competent to perform these functions. Although no longer directly performing police duties, the Constabulary remained a key enforcement asset of the military government.

Changes in both the American domestic and international situations also led to revisions in the mission and strength of the Constabulary. Force authorization reductions led the Army to inactivate in September 1947 the headquarters of the 3d Constabulary Brigade and the 1st, 3d, 5th, and 10th Constabulary Regiments. As the Cold War took shape and the Soviets blockaded Berlin, USFET began to focus on providing constabulary units tactical training to prepare them for any sort of hostilities that might erupt in Europe. In the spring of 1948, the Army reorganized the constabulary units to enhance their military power, creating reconnaissance, rifle, and weapons platoons in each line troop. In the last two months of that year, the Army inactivated the 15th Constabulary Regiment and reorganized the 2d, 6th, and 14th Constabulary Regiments into armored cavalry regiments. With this change, the Constabulary effectively became a combat organization. However, two constabulary squadrons continued to serve in

Germany until December 1952—the 15th at Weiden and the 24th at Hersfeld.[51]

In November 1950, Headquarters, United States Constabulary, was inactivated, and Headquarters, Seventh Army, assumed control over the remaining constabulary units. The United States Constabulary's last commander, Maj. Gen. Isaac D. White, retained control of the constabulary forces as deputy commander of the Seventh Army. The 15th and 24th Constabulary Squadrons retained their distinctive insignia and uniforms until their inactivation in December 1952. Meanwhile, the 4th Constabulary Regiment had been inactivated in Austria in May 1949 and the 16th Constabulary Squadron inactivated in Berlin in November 1950.[52]

During the period 1946–1952, the United States Constabulary helped maintain the peace and order that were vital for the successful development of postwar Germany. The constabulary troopers exhibited a high degree of pride and professionalism, leading German citizens to refer to them as the *Blitzpolizei*. The thousands who served as a "Circle C Cowboys" left a legacy of service to future generations of both Americans and Germans.

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Two M8 scout cars of the 24th Constabulary Squadron leave base in Austria during Exercise PRIME September 1948. (Signal Corps photograph)

tions of the United States Constabulary, 3 October 1945–30 June 1947 (Heidelberg, 1947), p. 13.

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In Memoriam

Colonel John A. Cash

Col. John A. Cash, United States Army, Retired, a career infantry officer who served two tours at the Center of Military History, died on 24 August 1998 at his home in Fort Washington, Maryland. Born in 1936, he earned bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees in American history from Rutgers University and a master of arts degree in Latin American studies from the University of Wisconsin. Additionally, he graduated from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the comparable Brazilian Army institution and from the U.S Army War College.

John Cash's military career included service as an instructor at the U.S. Military Academy; as defense attaché in El Salvador and Brazil; and as a battalion commander at Fort Dix, New Jersey. He served in Vietnam as a company commander and as a member of a brigade operations staff in the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), participating in combat actions in the Ia Drang Valley. He described the "Fight at Ia Drang" and three other combat episodes in *Seven Firefights in Vietnam*, a 1970 Center publication of which he was coauthor. He also served two short tours in Vietnam on special missions for the Center of Military History, to which he was assigned from 1966 through 1968.

Colonel Cash was again assigned to the Center of Military History in 1988 to prepare a history of the 24th Infantry Regiment in the Korean War. Over the next several years, he undertook research in the National Archives, conducted nearly three hundred oral history interviews, visited battlefields in Korea, and began work on the manuscript that eventually became the volume, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (CMH, 1996). Colonel Cash retired from the Army in August 1992. Following his retirement, he was for five academic years a lecturer in geography and history at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Center grieves the untimely departure of this thoughtful and respected officer.

Buffalo Soldiers at San Juan Hill

By Frank N. Schubert

The following article derives from a paper the author delivered at the 1998 Conference of Army Historians in Bethesda, Maryland.

Finding the middle, where the truth sometimes rests, requires you to know the edges. When it comes to responsibility for the victory of the United States Army on San Juan Heights, Cuba, on 1 July 1898, the edges are easy to find. On one side, there is the Teddy-centric view, first and most clearly expressed in the writings of Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt of the 1st Volunteer Cavalry Regiment—the legendary Rough Riders. Roosevelt's memoir of Cuba so emphasized his own role that Mr. Dooley, the barroom pundit created by humorist Peter Finley Dunne, said the book should have been called "Alone in Cuba."

Roosevelt augmented his campaign of self-promotion by carrying along his personal publicist. Richard Harding Davis' dispatches from the front, picked up by many newspapers and magazines, spread the word of TR's heroics. They also followed a time-honored tradition. George Custer had taken a reporter on the 1874 expedition that discovered gold in the Black Hills, and Nelson Miles had had one along to record his exploits against the tribes of the southern plains.[1] Now Davis, of the *New York Herald*, did the same—essentially providing TR with PR.[2]

The view that Teddy Roosevelt dominated the battle at San Juan Heights still has adherents. I saw first-hand evidence last February, when I made a presentation for African-American History Month at Oyster Bay, New York, the great man's home. The draft press release announced that I would be talking about Medal of Honor heroes among Buffalo Soldiers, the black regulars who had served on the frontier and who also fought in Cuba. The notice went on to assert that these soldiers had "assisted" TR in achieving victory at San Juan Hill. Clearly the text implied that the more than 2,000 black troopers dodging bullets and pushing their way resolutely forward in the Cuban sun were supporting players. TR still got top billing.

Lately, a competing view has emerged to challenge Teddy-centric claims. This new assertion puts the Buffalo Soldiers at the center of the Cuban fighting, relegating Roosevelt to a supporting role. Most recently this view was stated by Edward Van Zile Scott in his 1996 book, *The Unwept*. According to Scott, "in the Spanish-American War of 1898, veteran black troops . . . were more responsible than any other group for the United States' victory."[3]

The new interpretation replaces one extreme position, represented by the emphasis on TR, with another, focusing on the contributions of African-American soldiers. These competing viewpoints represent the edges but don't help us understand what happened on the battlefield.

For that, we have to look at the order of battle, read the reports of the commanders, and follow the movements of all units on maps of the campaign. The record shows that about 15,000 American troops of Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter's Fifth Army Corps participated in the battles on the high ground near Santiago, Cuba, on 1 July 1898. About 13,000 of them were white; 2,000 or so were black. Of the twenty-six regiments in this force, three were volunteer organizations; the vast majority were regulars. More than 200 soldiers were killed in action, and nearly 30 of those who fell were from the four black Regular Army regiments, the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry.[4]

There were two major battles that day, one at El Caney and one on San Juan Heights. Both objectives were east of the city, with El Caney the more northerly of the two. Brig. Gen. Henry W. Lawton commanded his own 2d Division and the Independent Brigade, a force of about 6,500, which took El Caney. Lawton's troops included more than 500 men of the black 25th Infantry. This regiment was in the thick of the four-hour fight, and one of its members, Pvt. Thomas Butler of Baltimore, was among the first to enter the blockhouse on the hill.[5]

The other key objective, San Juan Heights, was closer to the city, about one mile directly east of it. San Juan has historically received more attention than El Caney, and for good reason. It was the main objective,

after all, and was attacked by 8,000 troops of Brig. Gen. Jacob F. Kent's 1st Division and the dismounted Cavalry Division, commanded on this day by Brig. Gen. Samuel S. Sumner. San Juan Heights had two high spots along its north-south axis, one called San Juan Hill and the other later named Kettle Hill by the troops. Both were part of the same objective.

In addition to being more important than El Caney as an objective, San Juan was also Theodore Roosevelt's stage. Roosevelt, of whom it was said that he never attended a wedding without wishing he was the bride or a funeral without wishing he was the corpse, was the unquestioned star of San Juan and by extension of the entire Cuban campaign. The commander of his regiment, Col. Leonard Wood, had been conveniently promoted out of the way, so Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt had the Rough Riders all to himself.

But he did not have the battle for San Juan Heights all to himself. There were after all 8,000 men in the operation, a total of thirteen Regular Army regiments and two regiments of volunteers, including TR's Rough Riders. The force included about 1,250 black troopers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry in Sumner's Cavalry Division and the 24th Infantry in Kent's 1st Division.

Critics have complained that Roosevelt erroneously and undeservedly claimed credit for the victory at San Juan Hill, when he actually was involved in the assault on Kettle Hill. In fact, he did play a prominent role in the fight for Kettle Hill. His volunteers, part of Sumner's dismounted cavalry force, reached the top of Kettle Hill alongside black and white regulars. The actions of Color Sgt. George Berry of the 10th Cavalry, who carried the colors of the white 3d Cavalry up that hill along with his own regiment's standard, reflected the shared nature of the operation, with black and white regulars and Rough Riders fighting side by side and with one group sometimes indistinguishable from the others.

Once Roosevelt reached the top of Kettle Hill, he watched Kent's troops begin to overrun their objective on San Juan Hill. Still eager for a fight, he urged the men around him to follow him into the fray on San Juan. That's when he found out what happens when you sound a charge and nobody comes. Only a handful of soldiers heard the great man, and he found himself at the head of an assault that consisted of five soldiers. Roosevelt retreated, regrouped, and assembled a more respectable force that reached the Spanish trenches in time to participate in the last of the fight. "There was," he said, "very great confusion at this time, the different regiments being completely intermingled—white regulars, colored regulars, and Rough Riders."[6]

Roosevelt's observation accurately characterized the mix of troops in the battle for the heights. Overall, the great majority of these soldiers were regulars; the rest were volunteers. "Their battles," Timothy Egan wrote in an article entitled "The American Century's Opening Shot," in the *New York Times* of Saturday, 6 June 1998, "were sharp, vicious crawls through jungle terrain in killing heat."[7] Regulars and volunteers, blacks and whites, fought side by side, endured the blistering heat and driving rain, and shared food and drink as well as peril and discomfort. They forged a victory that did not belong primarily to TR, nor did it belong mainly to the Buffalo Soldiers. It belonged to all of them.

Despite the fact that these groups shared the victory and despite the attention that gravitated toward TR, the postbattle spotlight shone brightly on the Buffalo Soldiers. Since the Reorganization Act of 1866, their regiments had mainly served in the remotest corners of the West. They had fought against the Comanches and Kiowa in the 1860s and 1870s and the Apaches between 1877 and 1886, and they had seen service in the Pine Ridge campaign of 1890–1891. Most of this duty had been performed in obscurity.[8]

But Cuba was different. All eyes that were not on TR seemed to focus on the Buffalo Soldiers. For the first time they stood front and center on the national stage. A number of mainstream (that is, white) periodicals recounted their exploits, as nurses in the yellow fever hospital at Siboney as well as on the battlefield, and reviewed their history, mostly favorably.[9] Books by black authors recounted the regiments' service in Cuba and in previous wars and reminded those who cared to pay attention that the war with Spain did not represent the first instance in which black soldiers answered the nation's call to arms.[10] In an age of increasing racism that was hardening into institutionalized segregation throughout the South and affecting the lives of black Americans everywhere, the Buffalo Soldiers were race heroes. Black newspapers and magazines tracked their movements and reported their activities. Poetry, dramas, and songs all celebrated their service and valor.[11] As Rayford Logan, dean of a

generation of black historians—and my undergraduate adviser—later wrote, "Negroes had little, at the turn of the century, to help sustain our faith in ourselves except the pride that we took in the 9th and 10th Cavalry, the 24th and 25th Infantry. Many Negro homes had prints of the famous charge of the colored troops up San Juan Hill. They were our Ralph Bunche, Marian Anderson, Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson."[12]

Almost one hundred years passed before the nation rediscovered the Buffalo Soldiers. The process started with the 1967 publication of William Leckie's *The Buffalo Soldiers* and culminated in 1992, with the dedication by General Colin Powell of the Buffalo Soldier statue at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. For the Buffalo Soldiers, "the American century" is ending the way it had started. In a period of increasing informal segregation, growing dissatisfaction with affirmative action, and the spreading emphasis on a separate African-American minority culture, books, plays, movies, and even phone cards celebrate the service of these troopers. In what appears to be a disconcertingly similar setting of deteriorating race relations, the Buffalo Soldiers have returned to take their place among America's heroes.

Dr. Frank Schubert is chief of joint operational history in the Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. His latest book, Black Valor: Buffalo Soldiers and the Medal of Honor, 1870-1898 *(Scholarly Resources, 1997), is reviewed in this issue.*

NOTES

1. Jeffry D. Wert, *Custer: the Controversial Life of George Armstrong Custer* (New York, 1996), p. 313; Robert Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army* (Lincoln, Neb., 1993), p. 74.
2. Mitchell Yockelson, "'I Am Entitled to the Medal of Honor and I Want It': Theodore Roosevelt and His Quest for Glory," *Prologue* 30 (Spring 1998): 12.
3. Edward Van Zile Scott, *The Unwept: Black American Soldiers and the Spanish-American War* (Montgomery, Ala., 1996), p. 13.
4. Order-of-battle information comes from Albert A. Nofi, *The Spanish-American War, 1898* (Conshohocken, Penna., 1996), p. 331.
5. Frank N. Schubert, *Black Valor: Buffalo Soldiers and the Medal of Honor, 1870–1898* (Wilmington, Del., 1997), p. 109.
6. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York, 1899, 1920), p. 139.
7. *New York Times*, 6 Jun 98, pp. A17, A19.
8. For the campaign history of the four regiments, see Arlen L. Fowler, *The Black Infantry in the West* (Wesport, Conn., 1971); William H. Leckie, *The Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Negro Cavalry in the West* (Norman, Okla., 1967).
9. See Stephen Bonsal, "The Negro Soldier in War and Peace," *North American Review* 185 (7 June 1907): 321–27; James Cleland Hamilton, "The Negro as a Modern Soldier," *The Anglo-American Magazine* 2 (August 1899): 113–24; William H. Head, "The Negro as an American Soldier," *World Today* 12 (March 1907): 322–24; W. Thornton Parker, "The Evolution of the Colored Soldier," *North American Review* 168 (February 1899): 222–28; Oswald G. Villard, "The Negro in the Regular Army," *The Atlantic Monthly* 91 (June 1903): 721–29; "The Negro as Soldier and Officer," *The Nation* 73 (1 August 1901): 85.
10. The best of these are Herschel V. Cashin et al., *Under Fire with the 10th Cavalry* (London, 1899), and Theophilus G. Steward, *The Colored Regulars in the United States Army* (Philadelphia, 1904). Also see James M. Guthrie, *Camp-Fires of the Afro-American, or, the Colored Man as a Patriot* (Philadelphia, 1899); Edward A. Johnson, *A History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish-American War* (Raleigh, N.C., 1899); Hiram Thweatt, *What the Newspapers Say of the Negro Soldier in the Spanish-American War* (Thomasville, Ga., n.d.).
11. See James Robert Payne, "Afro-American Literature of the Spanish-American War," *Melus* 10 (Fall 1983): 19–32.
12. Rayford W. Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro, from Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (New York, 1965), p. 335.

Book Review
by Warner Stark

1815: The Waterloo Campaign: Wellington, His German Allies and the Battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras
by Peter Hofschröer
Stackpole Books, 1998, 398 pp., $49.95.

This effort is the first of two volumes on the Waterloo campaign written from the perspective of the German forces involved. The author, Peter Hofschröer, is an expert in this field, having written two well-received books on the Prussian and Hanoverian forces of the Napoleonic era. In this volume, the author presents the background to the Waterloo campaign, details the strengths and weaknesses of the allied forces involved, and then discusses activities and actions culminating with the battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras.

The author's basic premise is that the Duke of Wellington had to defeat Napoleon but do so without significant Prussian help. According to Hofschröer, Wellington and his government believed that the nation whose army made the largest contribution to Napoleon's defeat would have the most to say about how Europe would be shaped at the final peace settlement. Britain's leaders were determined to restore the balance of power on the Continent, a situation they considered essential to their continued well-being. Since Great Britain regarded Prussia as an expansionist power, that nation had to be kept in a secondary role. According to the author, this conclusion was so important that Wellington supposedly undertook a number of steps to ensure limited Prussian involvement, to include allowing the fine Saxon army to be broken up rather than let it serve with Prussian forces.

The duke's original plan was to defend Brussels with an Anglo-Dutch army reinforced by the Prussians, while the Austrians and their German allies formed up along the Rhine River. Wellington would then invade France, while the Austrians and their allies protected Germany, leaving the Prussians in a reserve, or blocking, mode. This plan ensured they would not make any significant contribution at either the battlefield or the peace table. As matters turned out, the Prussians took the brunt of the fighting on 16 June 1815, and their thrust against the French right saved the day for Wellington. The author notes that ill feelings arose between the allies as a result of the battles. The Prussians complained that Wellington did not give Blucher the support he promised. The British perceived the Prussian support at Waterloo as slow and begrudging. However, Hofschröer points out that the Prussians had given battle, been driven back, and then rebounded to help finish the battle, a contribution that has been overlooked by some historians.

The book presents a very detailed account of the German and Prussian forces involved to include the British army's German troops. One nice feature is the presentation of biographical data on the major participants. The author seeks to underscore the heavy contribution the German, especially the Prussian, forces made to the defeat of Napoleon. He contends that the Prussians did most of the fighting, especially at Ligny and Quartre Bras.

This is a generally well researched and well written tome about the Prussian contribution to victory. In this presentation, however, the author makes a case against his own theories as he gives the reader a clear awareness that before the battle no one knew quite where the enemy was. In the confusion of a meeting engagement, the chaos of several separate battles scattered across a wide space made it hard for a commander to know the disposition of his allies. The fight was spread out over such a large expanse of countryside that it was nearly impossible for a commander to see the whole battle. This may be what did Napoleon in more than anything else. He had to rely on his subordinate commanders, and they weren't up to the task.

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Book Review
by Scott Garrett

The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat
by Earl J. Hess
University Press of Kansas, 1997, 244 pp., $29.95.

"Who but a living witness can adequately portray those scenes . . . when our wounded men, mingled with the rebels . . . [were] begging for someone to end their misery? . . . Who but one who has heard them can describe the peculiar sizzing of the minnie ball, or the crash and roar of volley fire? Who can describe the last look of the stricken soldier as he appeals for help that no man can give or describe the dread scene of the surgeon's work, or the burial trench?"—William T. Sherman [p. 1]

Who, indeed? Those who have not experienced such things cannot truly know them. Even so, it is vicariously possible to attain some understanding, some sense of war's reality. Prof. Hess has aided greatly in this effort.

The author's stated purpose, in which he succeeds admirably, is to understand how the Northern soldier dealt with combat in the Civil War. This book is not a fully developed study of soldier morale, but an interpretive essay about the experience of battle and the mechanisms whereby the Northern soldier was able to emotionally face the shock of battle, master his reactions to it, and continue to effectively serve the cause.

The book is based on a careful reading of the primary literature—the letters, diaries, and memoirs of the soldiers. Blessed with a high rate of literacy, unencumbered by military censorship, and fully aware that they were engaged in a great endeavor that could change their country forever, the mass of Northern soldiers produced a valuable collection of personal accounts that documents a crucial phase of American history. This study is a thoughtful evaluation of what they had to say.

Although Professor Hess chose to focus on the Union soldier, much of his work might also apply to the Confederate. Yet any such comparison cannot be exact, because each side saw cause, course, and consequences of the war very differently. Given the quality of this study, one can only hope that the author will undertake a comparable one about the Confederate soldier in battle.

The book is divided into three parts of unequal length. The first three chapters explore the experience of battle. This part is especially adept at showing the soldier's transition from green recruit to combat veteran. The following five chapters explore the factors that enabled soldiers to endure battle. In truth, well-trained, disciplined troops will usually fight well in their first battle. The true test of courage is in succeeding battles. After the first one, there are few, if any, illusions left. The author is also very good at portraying both the confusion of combat and, despite that, how troops persevered through battle after battle.

The final chapter discusses postwar attitudes toward the experience of war. "Wars do not end when the shooting stops. . . . The impact stays with them [the soldiers] for the remainder of their lives." [p.159] What did it all mean? In general, Professor Hess treats this topic very well. However, he gives only very oblique attention as to how survivors dealt, or failed to deal, with the traumas they had endured. Variously called shell shock, combat fatigue, or post-traumatic stress syndrome in later wars, this aspect of the Civil War's impact is virtually ignored by Professor Hess. It is true Victorian sensibilities dictated that such things were not to be mentioned. Even so, some relevant primary material does exist. Inclusion of it would have enhanced the book.

This scholarly, carefully researched work is complex, subtle, and multifaceted. It is well organized, reads well, and has an excellent summary at the end of each chapter. Moreover, the introduction and conclusion are thoughtful and well done. Although only sixteen in number, the photographs serve to illustrate points made in the text. Each has a lengthy, informative caption.

The greatest shortcoming was not in the narrative itself, but in the brief description of the book on the inside flap of the dust jacket. Unequivocally stating that the text takes us into Civil War battle and that we fully experience all its aspects is merely florid prose doing a disservice to the work as a whole. Fortunately, within the book itself, the author goes to great lengths to emphasize the ultimate futility of trying to explain

battle to those who have not experienced it.

Another minor issue that does not detract from the work in its totality is his definition of what constitutes a veteran. The author appears to recognize only two kinds of soldiers, the green recruit and the combat veteran. This is a recurrent theme. He does not take into account the tens of thousands of veteran soldiers who were never in combat.

In conclusion, Professor Hess makes an excellent contribution to the study of military history. *The Union Soldier in Battle* should become one of the standard works read by anyone with particular interest in the Civil War, a general interest in combat, or, more broadly, the human condition. The author's triumph is in cogently, succinctly recounting and putting into historical context the story of the Union soldier in battle.

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Book Review
by Keir B. Sterling

Carl Schurz
by Hans Trefousse
Second edition, Fordham University Press, 1998, 386 pp., cloth $32.50, paper $19.95.

Carl Schurz (1829–1906) was a distinguished American polemicist, editor, and political reformer, as well as a Union Army general in the Civil War. In 1849, he was forced to abandon his doctoral studies at the University of Bonn in his native Germany and flee because of his participation in an unsuccessful revolution there. After spending brief periods in Switzerland, France, and England, he came to the United States in 1852.

Rapidly mastering the English language, he settled in Wisconsin in 1856. Lacking much aptitude for either farming or business, he soon was involved with the nascent Republican Party. He quickly became an articulate spokesman for antislavery and ethnic politics far beyond the borders of his state. At age 28, several months before his final citizenship papers were in hand, he was a candidate for lieutenant governor and lost by a "mere handful of votes." A year later, he had been appointed to the Board of Regents of the state university, and was a successful and well-paid speaker for the Republican Party. He met and was soon on excellent terms with Abraham Lincoln and, as a Wisconsin delegate to the party's 1860 convention, helped the Illinoisan secure the presidential nomination.

Appointed American minister to Spain in 1861, Schurz proved effective at his job, but he pestered Lincoln for divisional command in the Army. An able, outspoken, and high-minded person, Schurz could also be a difficult subordinate. Returning to the United States on leave in 1862, he was appointed a brigadier general. This obviously political appointment was resented by many because of Schurz's comparative youth and virtual lack of military experience. Promoted to major general in 1863, he went back to civilian life in 1865.

After the war, Schurz was a newspaper correspondent, editor, and owner in three states. A Radical Republican, he moved to St. Louis and served as U.S. senator from Missouri for one term (1869–75) and later as secretary of the interior (1877–81). He never again held office but continued working as a newspaper writer and editor, an anti-imperialist, and a tireless advocate of political and civil service reform.

This biography by Hans Trefousse, Distinguished Professor of History at Brooklyn College, was originally published in 1982, and the present edition is a reissue, not a revision. No changes have been made in the text or the bibliography. In a new preface, the author extols Schurz's continuing relevance to the history of immigration in America owing to his "insistence upon Americanization while retaining one's ethnic heritage." This book, however, is still the most recent account we have of Schurz's life. Trefousse's scholarship, especially in his handling of Schurz's political career, has held up well.

Military historians will be particularly interested in the two chapters—of the eighteen in the book—which are concerned with Schurz's Civil War career. Trefousse is more laudatory of Schurz's accomplishments in this period than are most other authorities. Despite the Union disaster at Second Manassas, for

example, in which Schurz's division had sustained heavy losses, Trefousse argues that Schurz "distinguished himself [there] by daring, skill, and real qualities of leadership." His summary assessment of Schurz's Civil War career is that Schurz was a "competent officer who had risen too high too fast," a view with which most other historians would probably concur. Rightly or wrongly, Schurz's standing as a military commander was usually overshadowed by the unfortunate reputation of the Union Army's XI Corps, of which his division was a part. In the spring of 1864, Schurz requested relief when the XI and XII Corps were combined to form the XX Corps, and he spent much of that year campaigning for Lincoln's reelection. He ended the war as chief of staff to General Henry Slocum, the XX Corps' commander.

Schurz unceasingly expressed his political ideas while in uniform. He urged Lincoln to adopt an emancipation policy before the president was ready to do so and was appalled by what he considered Sherman's excessive use of force in his march through the South. Yet after the war, he deplored the situation of blacks in the former Confederacy, and, as Charles Royster has commented, thought the Union Army might have to "[sweep] away whatever obstructed the victory of progress." Northerners, he informed one South Carolinian, would "make the south 'the Eden' of the known world."

As secretary of the interior, Schurz angered Lt. Gen. Philip Sheridan in a dispute over the government's Indian policy. Trefousse argues that Schurz "gained general approbation" for his handling of this difficult issue, which was a "crowning triumph." On the other hand, Sheridan's most recent biographer has tepid regard for Schurz's role in the controversy. Certainly, Schurz was consistent in his preference for negotiation rather than force in his dealings with Native Americans. Withal, Trefousse's book is a fast-moving and engaging assessment of this flawed but gifted nineteenth-century leader.

Dr. Keir B. Sterling was the Ordnance branch historian from 1983 to August 1998 and has been the Combined Arms Support Command historian since then. His article on the Army's contributions to post–Civil War American natural science appeared in the Summer 1997 issue of Army History.

Book Review
by Edgar F. Raines, Jr.

Black Valor: Buffalo Soldiers and the Medal of Honor, 1870-1898
by Frank N. Schubert
Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1997, 231 pp., $22.95.

Sixteen African-American soldiers won the Medal of Honor while serving in segregated volunteer regiments during the Civil War. In 1866 Congress created six black regiments in the Regular Army, the 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st Infantry, later consolidated as the 24th and 25th Infantry, and the 9th and 10th Cavalry. Twenty-three African-American regulars won the Medal of Honor during the Indian Wars and the War with Spain between 1866 and 1898. In *Black Valor: Buffalo Soldiers and the Medal of Honor, 1870-1898*, Dr. Frank N. Schubert, a historian with the Joint History Office who has two other books dealing with black soldiers to his credit, recounts the circumstances of these awards and in the process provides an account of the black military experience from the perspective of enlisted men. He is also very careful to sketch the larger context of race relations in the United States. In his view, the period after the Civil War until the imposition of segregation outside the deep South was a rare moment of plasticity in white-black relations—when African-Americans could have more hope for their future than either before the Civil War or during the early twentieth century.

Emanuel Stance, the first black regular to win the Medal of Honor, joined the 9th Cavalry within two months of its creation. From Carroll Parish, Louisiana, probably a former slave, he was rapidly promoted to sergeant and learned a "brawling" kind of discipline as he used physical force to keep recruits, mainly former field hands, in line. He won the Medal of Honor for actions on 21–22 May 1870 when a small patrol under his command surprised a band of Apache raiders near Fort McKavett, Texas, recaptured five stolen horses, and then fought off repeated attempts by the raiders to take back the horses. "I set my Spencers [carbines] to talking and whistling about their ears so lively," Stance reported later, "that they broke in confusion and fled for the hills." Stance remained in the service—a professional soldier. However, as the regiment changed, replacing ex-field hands with recruits from Northern

cities who were both better educated and more sophisticated than their predecessors, Stance, a fierce disciplinarian, remained wedded to the methods of leadership he had learned as a recruit, causing terrible strains within his troop. He was apparently murdered by one of his own men near Fort Robinson, Nebraska, on 24 December 1887.

The account of Stance's career is illustrative of the author's approach. Schubert meticulously researches the life of each Medal of Honor winner in primary sources. (The research alone is a tour de force.) The writing is clear and straightforward. Schubert makes effective use of quotations. As far as possible, he allows the Medal of Honor winners to describe in their own words the combat actions that provided the bases of the awards. A lesser writer might have paraded all that he knew about each soldier and scout. (Four were Negro Seminole scouts enlisted to assist the 4th Cavalry in ridding the Texas-Mexican border of Indian raiders.) Instead Schubert uses his facts to link these individual lives to larger historical trends.

In his final chapter, a model of concision and insight, Schubert discusses the recognition that American society accorded these African-American heroes. The ratio of black Medal of Honor winners to the total number was less than the ratio of black soldiers to the total size of the Army. But Schubert finds no evidence of systematic discrimination against Buffalo Soldiers. The proportion of African-American Medal of Honor recipients was roughly equal to the proportion of combat actions in which black regiments fought during the Indian Wars. Most black Medal of Honor winners came from one regiment, the 9th Cavalry, because that regiment saw more combat during the Indian Wars than the other three. In contrast, all five Medal of Honor winners from the War with Spain came from the 10th Cavalry, although all four regiments were heavily engaged at San Juan Hill and El Caney.

This suggests one of the limitations of Schubert's account as social history—Medal of Honor winners are by definition atypical, and this book, because of its strengths, conveys a skewed view of the black military experience. Moreover, as long as white Medal of Honor winners are not studied as intensively as the black recipients, comparisons between the two groups must remain somewhat problematic. Still, whatever the results of future research, readers of *Black Valor* will agree that the characterization of the scouts by one of their descendants (p. 40.) applies equally to all the African-American Medal of Honor winners: "Them suckers was tough."

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Book Review
by Mary Lou Gjernes

Drawing Fire: A Combat Artist at War
by Howard Brodie
Portolá Press, 1996, 159 pp., $16.95.

There is something compelling about a drawing by a witness to military combat that is missing from a photograph—or even the most artfully crafted verbalization. With a few lines left by a pencil as it is pushed across a paper by a human hand, a simple, immediate image is caught—singular and universal at the same time.

That image paradox—singular and universal—is captured in these sketches of three wars by Howard Brodie. The human themes that tie the works into a single body are of fear, horror, confidence, a job to be done, teamwork, and caring. Most of the images contained in *Drawing Fire: A Combat Artist at War* were drawn from immediate and personal experience.

The first images, from the South Pacific, are blunt and straight. The road to Kokumbura, Guadalcanal, was not a joy ride. The image that stayed with the artist was of a body on the shoulder of the road, partially mashed by the traffic of the fast push. Brodie comments that "after sketching a few: I no longer felt the need to see any more." But he would see more, much more.

Exposed to tank and artillery fire during the Battle of the Bulge, he drew infantrymen running for cover and sheltering one another. (Brodie himself was awarded the Bronze Star during the battle "for coolness under fire and for helping with the wounded.")

Exposed to machine gun fire on a frozen, shelter-

less ridge in Korea, he drew soldiers returning fire and evacuating the wounded. In Vietnam it was no different. Thickly entwined vines or a densely shaded tree line may have concealed a rifle barrel, or a chattering insect may have masked the click of releasing a grenade safety pin. Accordingly, many of Brodie's drawings from the latter war show watchful infantrymen, their eyes and ears alert for every out-of-context sight and sound. Sketch number 63, Litter Bearers, with the motif of four litter bearers carrying a stretcher with a wounded soldier in Vietnam treats the same theme as sketch number 32, Bringing Back the Dead, from the hill in Korea.

Born in Oakland in 1915, Brodie trained as a commercial artist in San Francisco and eventually went to work for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. At the age of 27 with World War II beginning, he enlisted. Because he had been an artist in civilian life, the Army assigned him to *Yank*, a magazine for the enlisted soldier. It was for *Yank* that he went into action in Guadalcanal, the European theater, and Korea. When newspaper illustration was phased out in favor of photographs, Brodie signed on with CBS as a courtroom artist and covered most of the famous trials of the 60s, 70s, and early 80s, including My Lai, the Chicago Seven, Watergate, and Klaus Barbie. His work for CBS took him to Vietnam in the 60s. Lately Brodie has been recalled to duty at age 82 and assigned to sketching troops exercising at Fort Irwin, California.

Fear, exhaustion, compassion, triumph, suffering, and death. They are all here in a way that the camera cannot capture. The photograph can record in detail, but the artist can emphasize and subordinate to dramatize a moment or an expression, such as the eyes of a gravel-fatigued combat medic or the introspective gaze of an infantry sergeant who has seen too much war.

Howard Brodie's drawings add a distinct dimension to the history of American war art and *Drawing Fire* to its literature.

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