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ARMY HISTORY

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CPL. FRANCIS WEBSTER

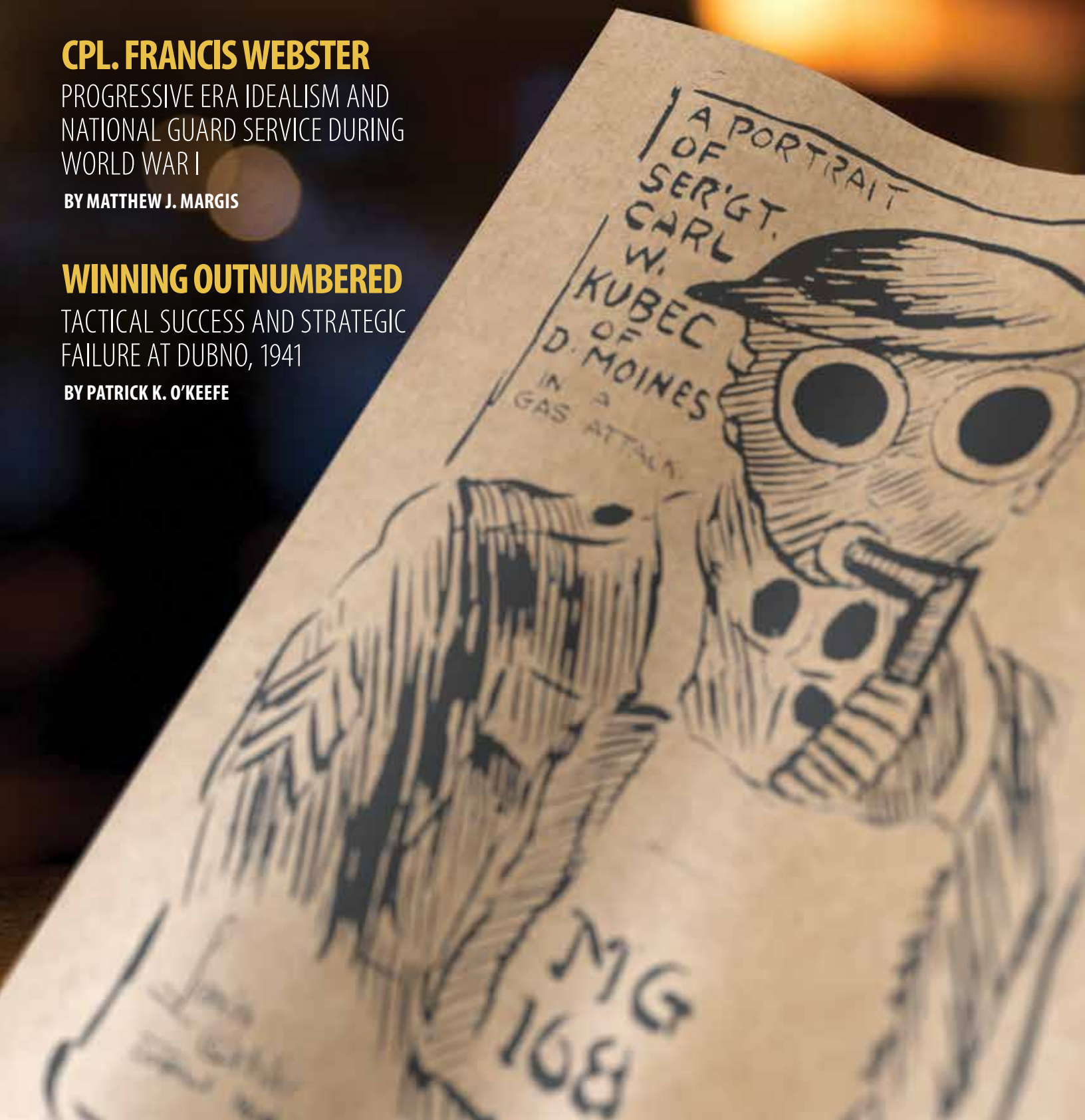
PROGRESSIVE ERA IDEALISM AND NATIONAL GUARD SERVICE DURING WORLD WAR I

BY MATTHEW J. MARGIS

WINNING OUTNUMBERED

TACTICAL SUCCESS AND STRATEGIC FAILURE AT DUBNO, 1941

BY PATRICK K. O'KEEFE



ARMY HISTORY

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Front cover: A sketch titled *A Portrait of Ser'gt Karl W. Kubec of D. Moines in a Gas Attack*, by Francis Webster, ca. 1918. ***Iowa Gold Star Military Museum***

Back Cover: Three additional sketches by Francis Webster ***Iowa Gold Star Military Museum***

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

In the Spring 2025 issue of *Army History*, I am pleased to present two excellent articles, an in-depth look at a pair of extremely rare and nationally important Army artifacts, and a preview of a unique museum exhibit coming to the Airborne and Special Operations Museum, as well as our usual crop of book reviews.

The first article, by Center of Military History historian Matthew Margis, examines the service of World War I National Guard soldier Francis Webster. Viewing his career through the lens of shifting national ideals, from the Gilded Age to the Progressive Era, Margis uses Webster's service and sacrifice to showcase what it meant to be a citizen-soldier during a time of rapid social change. Margis argues that the lack of a unified training system for Guard soldiers, and the lack of funding for most militia units, put them at a disadvantage both socially and militarily. Often looked down upon by their Regular Army counterparts, and the public at large, Guard soldiers found an opportunity on the front lines in Europe to showcase their commitment and courage, forever changing what it meant to be a middle-class American, a citizen, and a soldier.

The second article, by Patrick O'Keefe, an active-duty Army major, examines the drive by *Wehrmacht* units of *Army Group South* during the initial days of *Operation Barbarossa*. Although the Soviets had vastly greater numbers, with technologically superior tanks, and were fighting on the defensive, Germany largely destroyed their mechanized forces in just over a week. O'Keefe shows how superior training, doctrine, and use of combined arms tactics allowed the German forces to overcome the odds and deal the Soviet forces of the Southwestern Front a crushing blow. The Soviets' lack of effective combined arms often negated their numerical superiority leading to significant losses. O'Keefe contends that for the U.S. Army, a force facing significant reductions on the horizon, it should seek to leverage qualitative advantage over a quantitatively stronger opponent, and that the decisive battle offers the best alternative to the longer attritional style of warfare.

The Artifact Spotlight in this issue looks at a pair of pistols once owned by George Washington. Housed at the West Point Museum these pistols were given to Washington just after the winter at Valley Forge and have a very strong provenance. They will feature prominently during the museum's commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

This issue's Museum Feature provides a preview of an upcoming exhibit at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Titled "Surviving the Devil's Cauldron: The Enduring 'Swaying Virgin' of La Gleize," this exhibit will honor the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives officers, also known as the "Monuments Men." It will highlight a newly acquired replica of the statue of the Virgin Mary rescued by renowned American sculptor and Monuments Man, Capt. Walker K. Hancock. The exhibit will also feature artifacts and photographs from his military service.

As I occasionally like to do, I want to thank the small staff here for their continued dedication to *Army History*. I also want to further encourage our readers to send us submissions related to the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War and the birth of the U.S. Army.

BRYAN J. HOCKENSMITH
MANAGING EDITOR

AH SPRING 2025 ARMY HISTORY

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THE CHIEF'S CORNER

CHARLES R. BOWERY JR.

CALL TO ARMS

THE SOLDIER AND THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR EXHIBIT

In my previous Chief's Corner, I told you about our blockbuster temporary exhibition, "Call to Arms: The Soldier and the Revolutionary War," which will open to the public at the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on Saturday, 7 June 2025. I am excited to share with you some images of displays and objects that will be in the exhibition.

You can explore more about the American Revolution and the rest of the Army's history in person at our Museum or on the Museum's website, https://www.thenmusa.org.

1. Powder Horn

This horn stands out for its striking carvings of its owner's name and unique pattern of vines and leaves. Made in Brimfield, Massachusetts, where many powder horns were produced, it is inscribed with "JOHN BOND" and the date "MAY/1779." On 4 July 1775, John Bond enlisted in Capt. Gideon Foster's Company of Col. John Mansfield's Regiment at Cambridge. He served at Bennington, Vermont, in 1777 and remained in the war until he was discharged from the Continental Army on 23 January 1780. My favorite aspect of the new exhibition is the display in one place of several of the one-of-a-kind collection of carved colonial powder horns acquired by the U.S. Army Museum in 2018 for its artifact collection.

2. Webb Flag

This standard belonged to Samuel B. Webb's Additional Continental Regiment, formed on 11 January 1777. Raised in Connecticut, it was one of the sixteen newly authorized "additional" regiments. This incredibly rare eighteenth-century standard employs fascinating references to Native Americans and to the English Civil War and offers us a window into the intellectual world of American revolutionaries. The Native American woman, a representative of the new country, stands over a beheaded monarch, with the crown fallen to the side. She carries a banner topped by a commoner's hat. The scroll above the scene reads in Latin, "In Meridiem Progredeto," or "Move Beyond Midday," a pointed reference to the execution of Charles I of England in 1649, which took place at precisely noon. This flag urged the soldiers who marched beneath it to give their all in the cause for independence from Great Britain and promised they would defeat the British soldiers who faced them.

3. Canteen

Markings on this wooden canteen indicate that Henry Gardner used it. He served with the 1st Pennsylvania Battalion of the Continental Army. The year 1776 was clearly meaningful for Henry, as it was for our Army and our new nation.

4. Pistol

This American flintlock pistol was made in Rappahannock Forge, Virginia. It is modeled after the British Light Dragoon pistol, and it's a great example of the burgeoning world of American industry and technology. Small industries around Fredericksburg, Virginia, relied on the hydroelectric power of the Rappahannock River and the wood and iron ore of the surrounding areas to produce weapons and farm implements.

5. Rendering

The 5,000-square-foot exhibit features rare artifacts, realistic cast figures, and interactive technology that captures the soldier experience of the Revolutionary War. It will be a moving and educational space that will connect the U.S. Army and the nation of today with its beginnings, 250 years ago.


ANNA LANE
JOHN LANE

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ARMY HISTORY

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Army History welcomes articles, essays, and commentaries of between 4,000 and 12,000 words on any topic relating to the history of the U.S. Army or to wars and conflicts in which the U.S. Army participated or by which it was substantially influenced. The Army's history extends to the present day, and *Army History* seeks accounts of the Army's actions in ongoing conflicts as well as those of earlier years. The bulletin particularly seeks writing that presents new approaches to historical issues. It encourages readers to submit responses to essays or commentaries that have appeared in its pages and to present cogent arguments on any question (controversial or otherwise) relating to the history of the Army. Such contributions need not be lengthy. Essays and commentaries should be annotated with endnotes, which should be embedded, to indicate the sources relied on to support factual assertions. A manuscript, preferably in Microsoft Word format, should be submitted as an attachment to an email sent to the managing editor at usarmy.mcnair.cmh.mbx.army-history@army.mil.

Army History encourages authors to recommend or provide illustrations to accompany submissions. If authors wish to supply photographs, they may provide them in a digital format with a minimum resolution of 300 dots per inch or as photo prints sent by mail. Authors should provide captions and credits with all images. When furnishing photographs that they did not take, or any photos of art, authors must identify the owners of the photographs and artworks to enable *Army History* to obtain permission to reproduce the images, if necessary.

NEWS NOTES

West Point Museum Receives AAM Reaccreditation

The West Point Museum, located just before the main gates of the U.S. Military Academy in New York, was reaccredited recently by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). Accreditation by the AAM is the highest national recognition afforded to public and private museums. It signifies excellence to the museum community, governments, funders, outside agencies, and the museum-going public. Of the more than 33,000 museums in the United States, only about 1,100 currently are accredited. Accreditation is a rigorous process that examines all aspects of a museum's operations, and this achievement reflects more than two years of work and preparation.

The West Point Museum collects, preserves, exhibits, and interprets historically significant artifacts pertaining to the United States Military Academy, the United States Army, and the Profession of Arms. Admission is free and the museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 0930 to 1615. To contact the museum, please call 845-938-3590 or email usarmy.westpoint.cmh.mbx.west-point-museum@mail.mil. Visitors can find more information at https://www.westpoint.edu/visitors.

New Publications from CMH

To commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) is publishing a series of monographs titled U.S. Army Campaigns of the Revolutionary War. Each short monograph will cover a campaign period from the war, represented on the Army flag by sixteen individual streamers. Currently, four monographs are available: *Opening Shots in the Colonies, 1775–1776*, *The Canadian Campaign, 1775–1776*, *The Philadelphia Campaign, 1777*, and *Valley Forge to Monmouth, 1777–1778*. More volumes in this series will be released in the coming months. Army units can order print editions of all these monographs from the Army Publishing Directorate online ordering portal at https://www.orderportal.army.mil. They also can be downloaded for free from the CMH website, https://history.army.mil/Revwar250/Publications-and-Videos.

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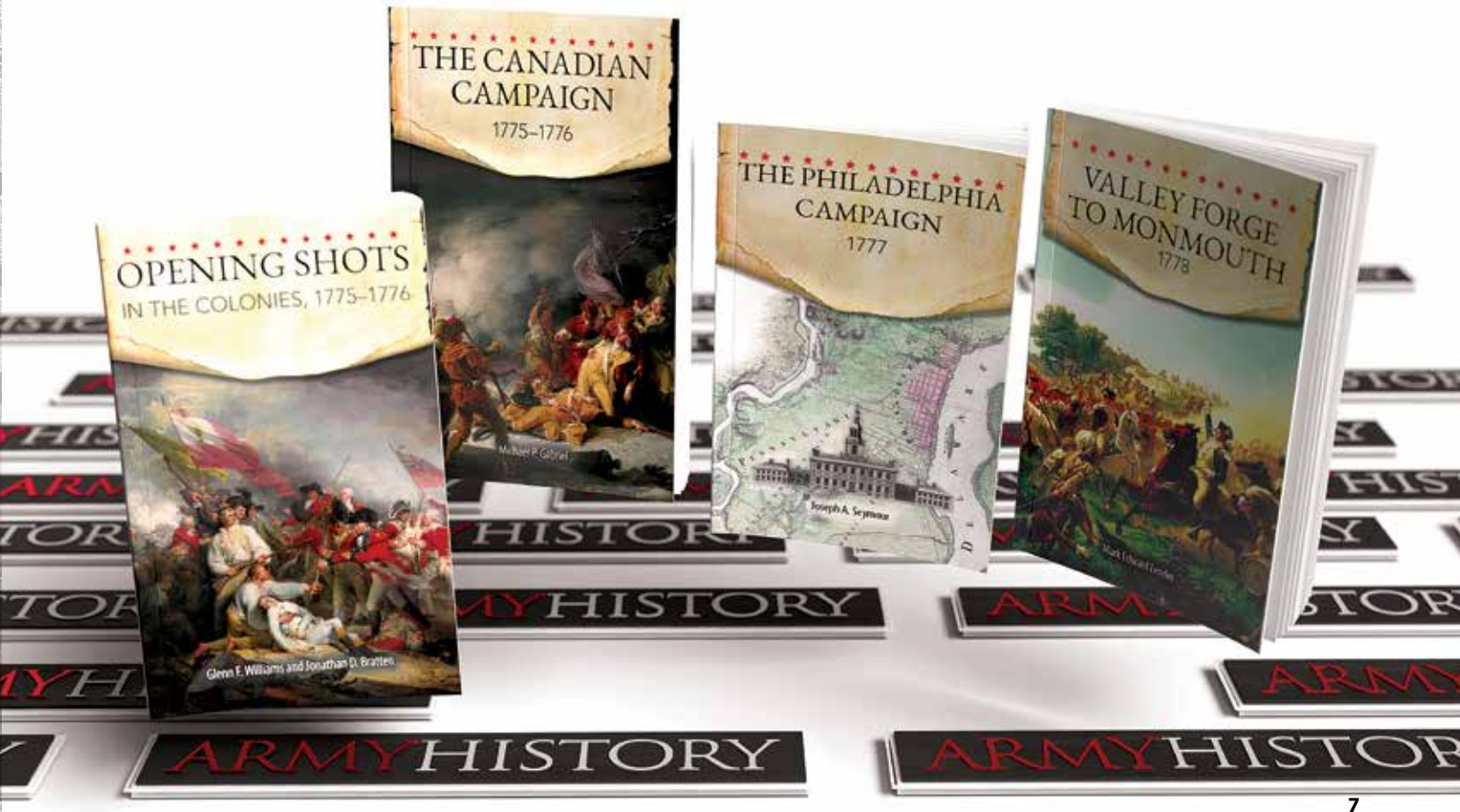
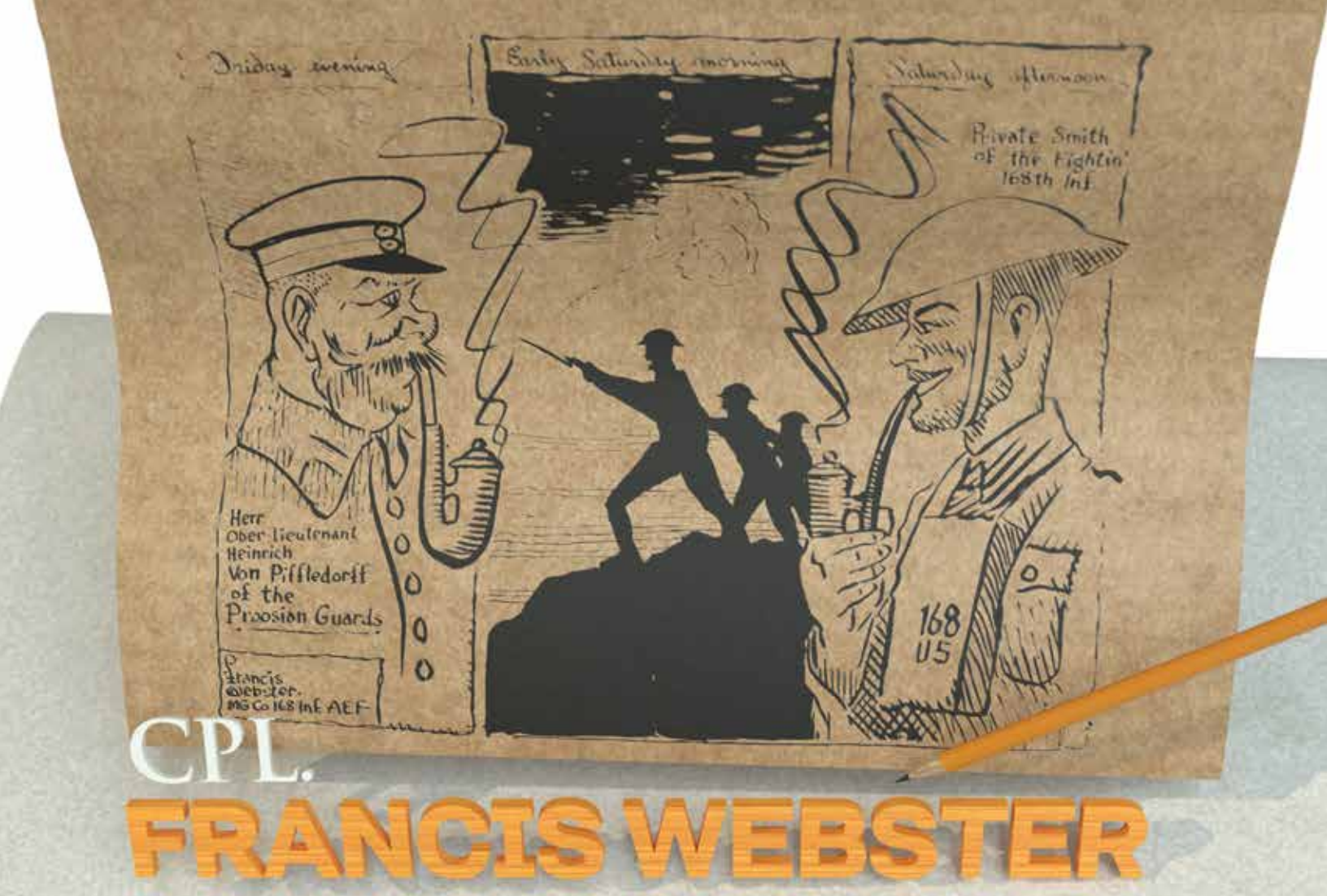




CPL. FRANCIS WEBSTER

Progressive Era Idealism and National Guard Service during World War I

By Matthew J. Margis

Francis Webster welcomed the opportunity to fight for his country when he disembarked the RMS *Baltic* in late November 1917. A few months later, he and the rest of his regiment saw their first taste of combat when German forces launched poisonous gas into the American lines before storming across no-man's-land. Webster's machine gun crew cut down the charging Germans, as other elements in his regiment waited to face the enemy.[1] Over the next eight months, Webster and the other national guardsmen in the 42d Division faced off against German forces almost daily. During the First World War, the National Guard played a key role in the American war effort, but its importance went beyond its operational capabilities. As a part-time force, the Guard embodied the citizen-soldier ideal and appealed to an new middle-class conceptualizations of patriotism, tradition, and civic virtue.

Webster was just one soldier in the National Guard, but he personified the Guard's connection to Progressive Era idealism. As the nineteenth century ended, an emergent middle class began reshaping society in its image. American historians refer to the period that spanned the decades between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the twentieth century as the Gilded Age. Dominated by powerful, unethical industrialists known as robber barons along with an expansive elite class, the nation expanded both economically and geographically, but was rocked by multiple economic recessions and depressions, as well as increased labor strife and urban poverty. Americans who operated in an economic middle between the laboring class and the elites had prided themselves on self-discipline and self-denial, but they found themselves tempted by the self-indulgent conspicuous consumption of the individualistic upper class. They further believed they were witnessing an erosion of the values that made the United States a virtuous republic.

***Above*: A sketch by Francis Webster** *Iowa Gold Star Military Museum*

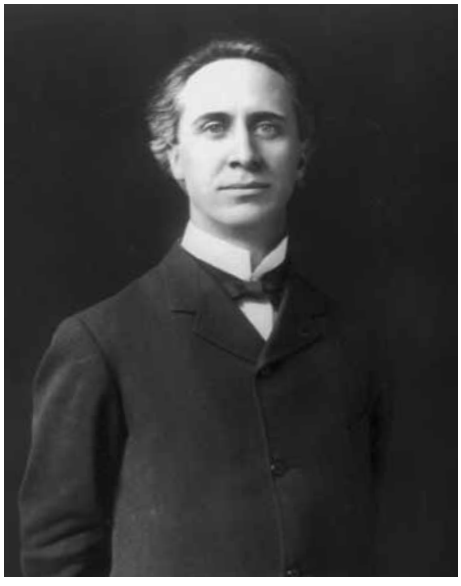
Francis Webster
Iowa Gold Star Military Museum

Beginning in the 1890s, this middle class—composed of managers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other professionals—sought to reshape society. Some focused on social issues pertaining to poverty and civil rights. Others focused more on managerial processes and increasing professional standards and efficiency. These middle-class progressives came from varied backgrounds and held diverse political beliefs, but they found common ground in the desire to redefine the boundaries between the individual and the state as well as between men and women. At the heart of this desire was a perceived commitment to upholding republican virtue and idealism.[2] Francis Webster was not a well-known figure, nor was he a leading reformer or political leader. However, his background placed him firmly within the emergent middle class, and his National Guard service was an outpouring of the middle class's idealistic leanings.

The National Guard at the Onset of the Progressive Era

The National Guard was one of three components in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), along with the Regular Army and National Army (drafted troops). Tracing its lineage to the colonial militia system, the Guard harkened to the minuteman tradition, but it shared little resemblance to its colonial forebearer. In the decades following the Civil War, the American militia system struggled to keep pace with military and social developments. States increasingly used the militia to restore and maintain order during labor disputes, worker strikes, and race riots. Unfortunately, the lack of a uniformed training system and meager federal allocations meant that some states fielded well-trained, well-funded, and well-organized militias, and others did not.[3] During the Spanish-American War, an antiquated mobilization process that required militiamen (or militia units) to volunteer for federal service limited the nation's ability to mobilize a large force in a timely manner.[4] As the nineteenth century drew to a close, questions regarding militia's effectiveness prompted Congress and military theorists to reassess the state-based force structure.[5]

Congress addressed many of these issues by replacing the militia with the modern National Guard in the early twentieth century. The Militia Act of 1903—commonly known as the Dick Act after its proponent, Ohio politician and National Guard member Charles W. F. Dick—was the first step in this process. A series of amendments to the act in 1908 extended the term of service and expanded the federal government's authority in Guard matters, particularly concerning funding and standardization.[6] Congress altered the law twice more in 1910 and 1914 before passing the National Defense Act of 1916 which established the National Guard as the Army's main reserve component, and allowed the president or Congress to mobilize the National Guard in any national emergency, including overseas service. Each piece of legislation centralized the federal government's authority over the National Guard, and standardized training, equipment, and uniforms. Congressional leaders hoped these efforts would help professionalize the Guard and allow for a type of expert rule.



Representative Dick
Library of Congress

These efforts coincided with larger movements in the American military as well as in society. Throughout the final three decades of the nineteenth century, middle-class professionals established organizations to advance their causes and increase their authority in a specific arena. The American Medical Association, the American Bar Association, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the American Nurses Association standardized practices in their respective fields and established a sense of authority based on one's credentials. In a similar fashion, middle-class social reformers formed civic organizations such as the Shriners Club and religious groups like the Knights of Columbus to help advance their agendas.[7] Not surprisingly then, militia officers—most of whom were middle-class men—formed the National Guard Association (NGA) in 1878 to establish a sense of professionalism within the militia officer corps.[8] The NGA lobbied Congress for increased funding and worked to ensure officers in various states followed uniform practices with high standards of military proficiency and effectiveness.

Despite the NGA's efforts, the militia suffered from poor public opinion. Since the 1870s, militias often had been known more for their lavish uniforms and extravagant parades than for their military purpose, and so many considered the militia little more than a social club for married men to escape their homes for a weekend or for young single men to impress potential mates.[9] Furthermore, though the militia and National Guard's participation in strike suppression was rare, this role created animosity among America's working class. By the First World War's onset, this impression was engrained in the public mind. However, the Guard was far from its ineffective militia predecessor. Increased standards, professionalization of the officer corps, and a prolonged training deployment along the Mexican border in 1916 helped the National Guard become a critical

military asset as the nation joined the fray in World War I.

Interestingly, despite the perception of the National Guard as a strikebreaker, the Guard attracted many working-class men to its ranks. At a time when mechanization and consolidation threatened masculine identity, service in the Guard provided wage-earning men with an arena to display their manliness through military service—particularly marksmanship. Newly arrived immigrants used militia and Guard service as a way of assimilating into American culture, and racial minorities served to achieve a sense of citizenship during a period associated with Jim Crow segregation.[10] By 1917, the National Guard was a unique organization in the United States, as middle-class professionals and social elites served side-by-side with the working-class. As an institution, the Guard represented a cross-section of American society, and it reflected the social complexities of the era.

Generally, historians have placed the National Guard somewhere outside of society's developments during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. This approach has created a lack of understanding concerning Guard service, which at best describes the Guard as an undertrained and undermanned home defense force. At worst, these misperceptions cast the Guard as a homogenous group of anti-labor strikebreakers who fulfilled the wills of state and corporate enterprises. For example, Alan Trachtenberg's work, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (Hill and Wang, 1982), outlines numerous American social shifts and describes the emergence of industrial capitalism in the country, but barely mentions the militia or the National Guard.[11] For Trachtenberg—who focuses on the coalescence of big business and social structures—the militia played only an occasional role as strikebreakers.

Heather Cox Richardson's *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America after the Civil War* (Yale University Press, 2007) details the realignment of American society between 1865 and 1901, arguing that "a new definition of what it meant to be an American developed from a heated debate over the proper relationship of the government to its citizens."[12] Richardson discusses how politicians used the militia in the American South during Reconstruction, but barely mentions the militia after 1877. Both Trachtenberg and Richardson offer compelling explanations of American social and cultural shifts following the Civil War, but only include the militia as tools of big business and politicians. This limited explanation of the militia's societal role ignores the fact that the militia was an institution of volunteers who came from varying political and social backgrounds. A more nuanced examination of the National Guard will lead to a better understanding of America's social structure and concepts of patriotism and civic virtue.

The National Guard in the First World War

Similarly, most World War I scholarship glosses over the Guard's wartime contributions. A few works make brief mention of the Guard's level of preparedness when the United States declared war in 1917, but rarely distinguish between the Guard and Regular Army when discussing combat operations.[13] In *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (Oxford University Press, 1968), Edward M. Coffman separates the Guard, Regular Army, and National Army (NA) when discussing mobilization, but he blends the three elements together when examining combat operations.[14] This is understandable. When the federal government drafted the National Guard into service, it became part of the U.S. Army and lost its state designation. However, this approach overlooks the Guard's unique identity as citizen-soldiers and compares the Guard to the NA because of their temporary soldier status. The distinction between the Guard and NA is important because unlike the conscripts in the NA, guardsmen volunteered and signed a multi-year service contract.

Works that focus on the Guard during World War I often paint a bleak picture of its performance. Robert Zieger, in his book America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000),r mentions the Guard's border service before entering the First World War but points out that its performance was "particularly discouraging." He goes so far as to say that the Guard was "a less ready reserve than a grumbling and weakly coordinated patchwork of disparate state units."[15] This conclusion ignores the Guard's extensive border training as well as the Guard's growth in competency over the previous decade. Robert H. Ferrell's *Collapse at Meuse-Argonne: The Failure of the Missouri-Kansas Division* (University of Missouri Press, 2004) focuses on a notable National Guard unit, the 35th Division (which included future president Harry S. Truman). *Collapse at Meuse-Argonne* offers various explanations for the 35th's combat shortcomings, but Ferrell's reasoning ultimately centers around poor training. Ferrell argues that the Guard was less prepared for war than their Regular Army counterparts.[16] Such was not the case. Ferrell's explanation overlooks other Guard divisions who received the same training as the 35th, but did not "fail" in combat. In fact, by war's end, National Guard divisions comprised two-thirds of the entire AEF, and the 42d and 26th Divisions accrued more combat days than every other division except the Regular Army's 1st Division.

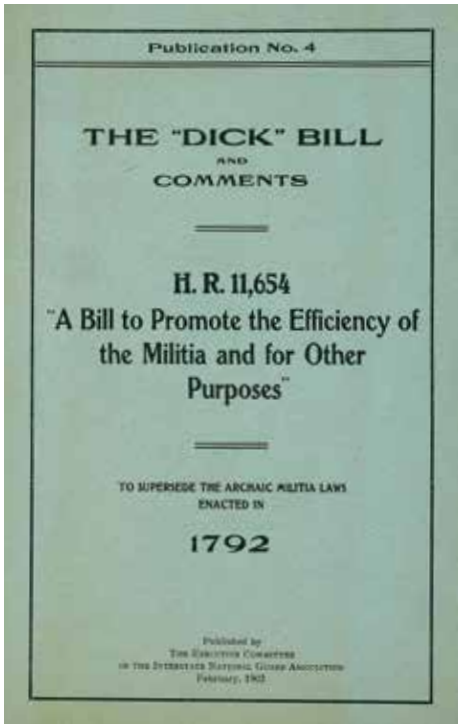
Although training played a role in the Guard's performance, an individual unit's level of readiness depended on multiple variables. When President Woodrow Wilson drafted the National Guard into federal service in April 1917, a large portion of the Guard recently had returned from the Mexican border where they had drilled in weapons tactics and acclimated themselves to military life.[17] Owing to a variety of legal factors, many soldiers left the Guard when the border duty concluded. State governments needed to recruit large numbers of guardsmen to reach full strength throughout 1917 and 1918, and the Army reorganized existing Guard elements. Therefore, some units, such as the 35th, entered wartime service with roughly the same level of preparation as fresh volunteers and drafted troops, and so their military shortcomings should not be blamed on their Guard origins. In other instances, Guard divisions like the 42d compiled an impressive service record on par with their Regular Army counterparts. Describing the entire National Guard as being militarily deficient because of a few instances of combat ineffectiveness obscures the complexities of American service in the Great War.

Though the National Guard served in a similar capacity to the Regular Army during the war, its more lasting influence derives from the Guard's nature

as a civilian military force. Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Harvard University Press, 1957) offers a theoretical framework regarding civil-military relations, and argues that, "Civil-military relations is the principal institutional component of military security policy."[18] Huntington set the military and civilian-controlled government agencies on opposite ends of a spectrum that professional officers and politicians crossed to manage military affairs. Here, the "principal focus of civil-military relations is the relation of the officer corps to the state," and these two elements represent the relationship between the military and the state.[19] However, guardsmen served as both civilians and soldiers and bridged the gap between these two factions. Although the civil sphere and military sphere often were separated on the governmental level, numerous political leaders—including Charles Dick, the architect of the 1903 Militia Act—served in the Guard's ranks. Unlike with the Regular Army then, the National Guard was not kept in a separate military sphere but was tied to civic affairs and civilian concerns.

Individual guardsmen, such as Francis Webster, can serve as lenses through which to view larger trends. Webster's wartime experiences, though, are reflective of the war's typical narrative. Additionally, Webster's story differs little from those found in wartime memoirs—including Hugh Thompson's and John Taber's—who served as officers in Webster's regiment.[20] So, why study Webster? One element that makes Webster's experience worthy of recounting is that his story bridges the gap between the small unit and the larger context of the First World War. Eric T. Dean noted that focusing on individual soldiers makes all war seem futile because, "the greater purpose and flow of the war is rarely evident; to the common soldier in all eras, war has seemed a chaotic and terrifying business."[21]

Webster, though, is an exception to this rule. A Des Moines, Iowa, newspaper contracted with Webster to serve as something of a World War I version of a wartime correspondent. Webster's writings often included insights into what life was like in the trenches, as well as how those experiences fit into the larger political and military contexts of the war. Dar-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THE "DICK" BILL
AND
COMMENTS

H. R. 11,654
"A Bill to Promote the Efficiency of the Militia and for Other Purposes"

TO SUPERSEDE THE ARCHAIC MILITIA LAWS ENACTED IN

1792

Library of Congress

rek Orwig published an edited version of Webster's diary, artwork, and letters in *Somewhere Over There: The Letters, Diary, and Artwork of a World War I Corporal* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2016). Orwig recounts many of Webster's experiences, but he avoids discussing Webster's motivations or middle-class background. Although Webster was not representative of the whole of American society, he personified the middle class's idealism concerning social reform and a desire to reconnect with traditional values.

Additionally, Webster's middle-class status aligned with the composition of the AEF, which included a disproportionate number of educated Americans. So, although Webster did not lead a life seemingly worthy of advanced historical study, his "ordinariness" is what makes him interesting, and combining his writings with those of other soldiers clarifies the wartime contributions of National Guard troops. Webster maintained a strong understanding of political and social issues, as well as overall military strategy.[22] Historians can gain a great deal of understanding of the human experience of warfare within the context of the greater purpose of the war by examining the National Guard because the organization functioned at the intersection of civil-military affairs. In this way, Francis Webster's story is more than just a soldier's story; it is the National Guard's, and America's wartime story.

Francis Webster in World War I

Francis Webster was born in Shelton, Washington, on 11 July 1896. Webster's father was a Baptist minister, and after a pair of short-term moves to California and Nevada, the family settled near Des Moines, Iowa, in 1907. Webster's family's social status allowed him to focus on his studies, and just before his sixteenth birthday he graduated from Maquoketa High School and went on to Des Moines College. For a brief period, Webster took time off of school to travel and earn some extra money. To finance his wanderlust, he took up a series of odd jobs, including one with a local newspaper. This short-term job became an important element in Webster's life, as the *Des Moines Capital* contracted with Webster to provide artwork and reports while he served in the trenches. Eventually, Webster returned to Des Moines College, where he excelled in his studies and graduated with a liberal arts degree at the age of 20. He intended to pursue a career in education, but war changed that. After serving as superintendent of the Deloit School District in Iowa for one year, Webster refused reelection and enlisted as a bugler in the machine gun company of the Third Iowa Infantry regiment in early May 1917.[23]

Webster's decision to enlist in the National Guard over the Regular Army is telling. To sell the American people on entering the war—less than six months after winning an election on the promise of keeping the nation out of the war—President Wilson framed the war as a Progressive endeavor. He declared that the United States must "make the world safe for democracy," and his message took hold. John Dewey, the famous educator and writer, argued that this was a malleable time in human history, and true peace and pacifism could only be achieved if the United States and its allies defeated Germany militarily.[24] Capt. Irving Goff McCann of the Illinois National Guard reflected these Progressive sentiments in his memoirs, with an emphasis on Christian-based struggles for justice and equality. Captain McCann declared that Jesus's death "gave impetus to his teachings," and "So will it be in this baptism of blood."[25] McCann went on to say that:

> The earlier motives that may have brought on this colossal struggle, commercial and political jealousy and greed, have been entirely swallowed up in a larger issue, the liberty and freedom of mankind. It is now a war of democracy against tyranny, of right against wrong, and America must do everything in her power (which means men as well as money) to crush forever the ideas that are now held to and fought for by the Central Allies. When a world struggle is being waged for freedom and humanity, the Stars and Stripes should and must be flung to the battle's front.[26]

As with McCann, Christianity played a prominent role in Webster's life. Though raised in a Baptist household, Webster often attended Methodist and Latter-day Saint services in Deloit as a means of expanding his community involvement and recognition. In the spring of 1917, Webster encouraged area residents to support possible American involvement in the First World War, and he worked with a local physician to drum up support in a largely German community.[27]

The National Guard's symbolic ties to tradition and its real ties to local communities attracted middle-class Progressives like Webster. Beginning in the late 1870s, high-profile labor strikes, industrialization, and the rise of urban slums prompted an emerging middle class to believe that society was on the brink of collapse. Seeking a sense of order, the middle class looked to America's traditional institutions for guidance. They believed that an emphasis on republican virtue could realign the nation's values and usher in an era of prosperity and increased equality. Service in the National Guard reflected the high ideals of the virtuous minuteman who volunteered to answer the call to arms in the defense of liberty. When his younger brother, Hiram, enlisted in June 1918, Webster wrote that he was proud that Hiram "enlisted before [he] even had to register. [He] could have dodged the draft if [he] had cared to, probably, but [he isn't] a slacker and never will be." Webster boasted that "the two stars in the service flag that the folks have at home in the window both stand for volunteers."[28] Hiram Webster never made it to Europe; the war ended before he shipped out, and he was mustered out of service early in 1919.[29]

Webster *(right)* and his brother Hiram
Iowa Gold Star Military Museum

The National Guard's demographic breakdown was indicative of trends in the AEF, where most volunteers came from educated backgrounds. This stood in stark contrast to the National Army, where upward of 30 percent of draftees could not read or write.[30] Additionally, the Guard carried close ties to one's community. Like the "pals battalions" in the British army, the Guard allowed men an opportunity to serve alongside others from their own neighborhoods and towns.[31] The majority of Webster's comrades in his machine gun company lived in Des Moines or the surrounding area, and though they came from diverse backgrounds, their desire to fulfil a sense of civic duty superseded class-consciousness. In a letter to his parents, Webster spoke about the other men in his company, and said, "I like them better even than the fellows at college." Webster went on to say that some of the men "with excellent educations and money behind them are content to do details as buck privates."[32]

The Organization of the National Guard

Although Webster was a raw recruit in 1917, the National Guard was fresh off active duty. A year before Webster's enlistment, President Wilson called the National Guard into active service after a failed expedition to capture Mexican revolutionary leader Francisco "Pancho" Villa. Guardsmen from around the United States spent anywhere from three to seven months along the Mexican border.[33] When the United States declared war in April, many guardsmen were anxious to prove their worth on European battlefields and show that they were more than just strikebreakers. Some guardsmen were more reluctant. Believing they enlisted in a state force, some soldiers refused to take a new federal oath required under the National Defense Act of 1916. Because of discharges related to the oath as well as a new Dependent Relative Order that automatically discharged soldiers who served as their family's sole source of income, many states struggled to field enough soldiers to fit the Army's new divisional outline.[34]

These divisions held a numerical identifier based on affiliation and region. Divisions 1 through 25 were reserved for the Regular Army, 26 through 75 were National Guard divisions (though in practice these only went through 42), and all divisions above 76 went to the National Army. The Guard's breakdown held a regional element moving from east to west, so the New England Guard coalesced into the 26th Division, with the New York Guard comprising the 27th Division. Moving westward, the division numbers increased, with guardsmen from the Pacific Northwest serving in the 41st Division.[35] Each of these square divisions maintained two infantry brigades with two regiments each. Each regiment

contained infantry companies, machine gun companies, artillery batteries, engineering companies, and other support units.

Unlike in previous mobilizations though, the War Department required Guard units to fit into these divisions based on need rather than population. Therefore, many Guard elements blended together into new regiments. Some field-grade Guard officers lost their commands and others found themselves in command of units outside of their military specialty. This practice created a sense of resentment within the Guard, as it broke down the regional and provincial perspective that was historically central to the Guard's identity.[36] In many ways, this reorganization became another step in the Guard's overall transformation from the old militia system. By dividing the Guard regiments to fit the Army's organizational breakdown, the federal government removed any state control from the Guard's mobilization process. Interestingly, this practice rejected the middle-class emphasis on tradition, but upheld the mainstream Progressive emphasis on centralized authority and control. Nonetheless, by the middle of 1917, only New York's and Pennsylvania's National Guards were at full divisional strength.

The War Department had already decided that the first unit to travel overseas would be the 1st Division but debated which Guard units would travel overseas first. Some supported simply sending the complete divisions, but others believed this would lead to charges of favoritism. Secretary of War Newton D. Baker was open to suggestions. According to Baker, Brig. Gen. Douglas MacArthur suggested "the possibility of our being able to form a division out of the surplus units from many states, the major part of whose National Guard organizations were in multi-state divisions." Chief of the Militia Division Maj. Gen. William Abram Mann agreed with General MacArthur, and they decided to include Guard elements from twenty-six states into a new composite division. Upon its creation, MacArthur declared that this 42d Division would "stretch over the whole country like a rainbow."[37]

To meet the new guidelines, Iowa's adjutant general blended the First and Second Iowa Infantry regiments into the "orphaned" Third Iowa, which became one of the four regiments in the 42d Division. The rest of the Iowa Guard became part of the 34th Division. In August 1917, the Army dropped any state insignia or references from Guard units as a means of minimizing prejudice and creating unity within the larger force.[38] Guard units removed the "N.G." insignia from their collars and replaced it with the universal "U.S." pin, and state units removed any state-oriented regimental designations. Francis Webster's Third Iowa became the 168th U.S. Infantry Regiment. This process fully integrated the mobilized Guard units into the AEF and solidified the Army's control over its subordinate elements.

Secretary Baker and General Mann review troops of the 42d Division at Camp Mills, Long Island, New York.
Library of Congress

Heading Overseas

Following their mobilization, Webster and the 168th spent two months at Camp Logan, Iowa, where they underwent daily training exercises and said goodbye to their families and friends. They traveled by rail to Camp Mills, New York, early in September 1917, and continued their wartime preparation. This training period came to an end on 18 October when the troops boarded the USS *Grant* bound for England, but after only three days at sea, engine trouble forced the ship to return to port in New York.[39] In late November, after nearly six months of drilling in military tactics, Francis Webster and the rest of his regiment sailed to Europe onboard three converted British passenger liners of the White Star Line. The 1st Battalion traveled on the RMS *Aurania*, and the 3d Battalion journeyed on the RMS *Celtic*. Francis Webster's machine gun company, along with the 2d Battalion, were the last to leave on the RMS *Baltic*. The trip to England lasted two weeks, and included a short security stop at Halifax, Nova Scotia.[40]

For most soldiers in the AEF, life on the transport ships was far from comfortable. The troops traveled on cramped ships and slept in small bunk areas containing rows of bunks stacked three high. Prolonged bouts of seasickness made the journey all the less enjoyable.[41] However, the *Grant*'s

RMS *Baltic*
National Museums Northern Ireland

Lieutenant Taber
United States World War One Centennial Commission

engine trouble worked in the 168th's favor. First Lt. John H. Taber stated in his 1925 memoirs that, "These vessels [the *Celtic*, *Aurania*, and *Baltic*] were far superior to the *Grant* in every respect. The men were not packed in like sardines, they were allowed freedom of the decks, and they had all the fresh air they wanted."[42] Webster slept in a small stateroom with only three other men, and he remarked to his parents that his journey had been "very pleasant," and his accommodations were "much better than we expected this time," though he did still suffer from a short period of seasickness.[43]

Upon their arrival in England, the 168th paraded through Winchester and South Hampton.[44] Webster described the English landscape to his former fiancée, Ione "Betty" Zelenhofer, as "cloudy, foggy, and rainy."[45] Despite the foul weather, most soldiers enjoyed their brief time in England, and the troops received a motivational letter from King George V, who offered them his support and thanks.[46] However, this stay in England lasted only five days, and the Iowans began joining the rest of the Rainbow Division in Le Havre, France, throughout December 1917. After two days in a rest camp that Pvt. Cecil Clark described as a "Hell hole," the regiment moved toward Rimaucourt, Haute-Marne, where they remained for the next two months.[47] The troopers spent most of this time drilling and trying to keep warm in their leisure time. However, this stay had its high points. Francis Webster received a promotion to corporal in mid-December, and the troops enjoyed a turkey dinner on Christmas day, complete with mashed potatoes, figs, cake, biscuits, and coffee. They spent Christmas evening in a cathedral where French soldiers put on a lengthy musical performance, topped off with a rendition of "La Marseillaise." Eight Americans, including Webster, finished the show by singing the "Star-Spangled Banner" to resounding cheers from the audience.[48]

Although Webster's regiment trained near Rimaucourt, American high command remained locked in an ongoing debate with their French and British counterparts regarding the AEF's role on the front lines. French and British calls for amalgamation required the Americans to serve as replacement troops and fall under their control. Both the American commander, General John J. Pershing, and President Wilson refused to accept this plan, as they intended to maintain an independent command and serve alongside the French and British, not under them. General Pershing believed amalgamation would weaken the American wartime position and alienate the American populace and the troops themselves, who wished to fight for their own interests. Furthermore, if the Americans did not have an independent command, General Pershing's strategic goal of an all-out American assault against the German main force would never come to fruition. Pershing's persistence paid off, and the American troops went to the front as independent units under American commanders. As a compromise, General Pershing sent the 93d Division (composed mostly of African American National Guard units) to serve under the French for the duration of the war. Other divisions, such as the 42d, would serve in French lines under American commanders until the rest of the AEF arrived.[49]

American troopers seemed to support General Pershing. Francis Webster told his parents that "Politically, we all think that without doubt Pershing will be the next president."[50] French soldiers, however, grew impatient with the United States' slow buildup. According to Webster, "The French soldiers with whom I've talked are very unreasonably impatient because we have not already got several millions of men in the field. We try to make them realize the difficulties which our country is facing. From what I read, the ship problem is the biggest, and so I hope they give Schwab a free hand."[51] Here, Webster referenced Charles M. Schwab, whom President Wilson placed in charge of shipbuilding. Ultimately, logistical struggles limited the United States' ability to bring the entire AEF into the field quickly. Even though the Rainbow Division had been in the trenches for more than a month by the time of this letter, the majority of the AEF remained in the United States. For the first half of 1918, Webster's division was one of only foursubstantial American forces in the field, and while allied commanders debated strategy and command structures, the American troops were about to receive a trial by fire.

Webster on the Front

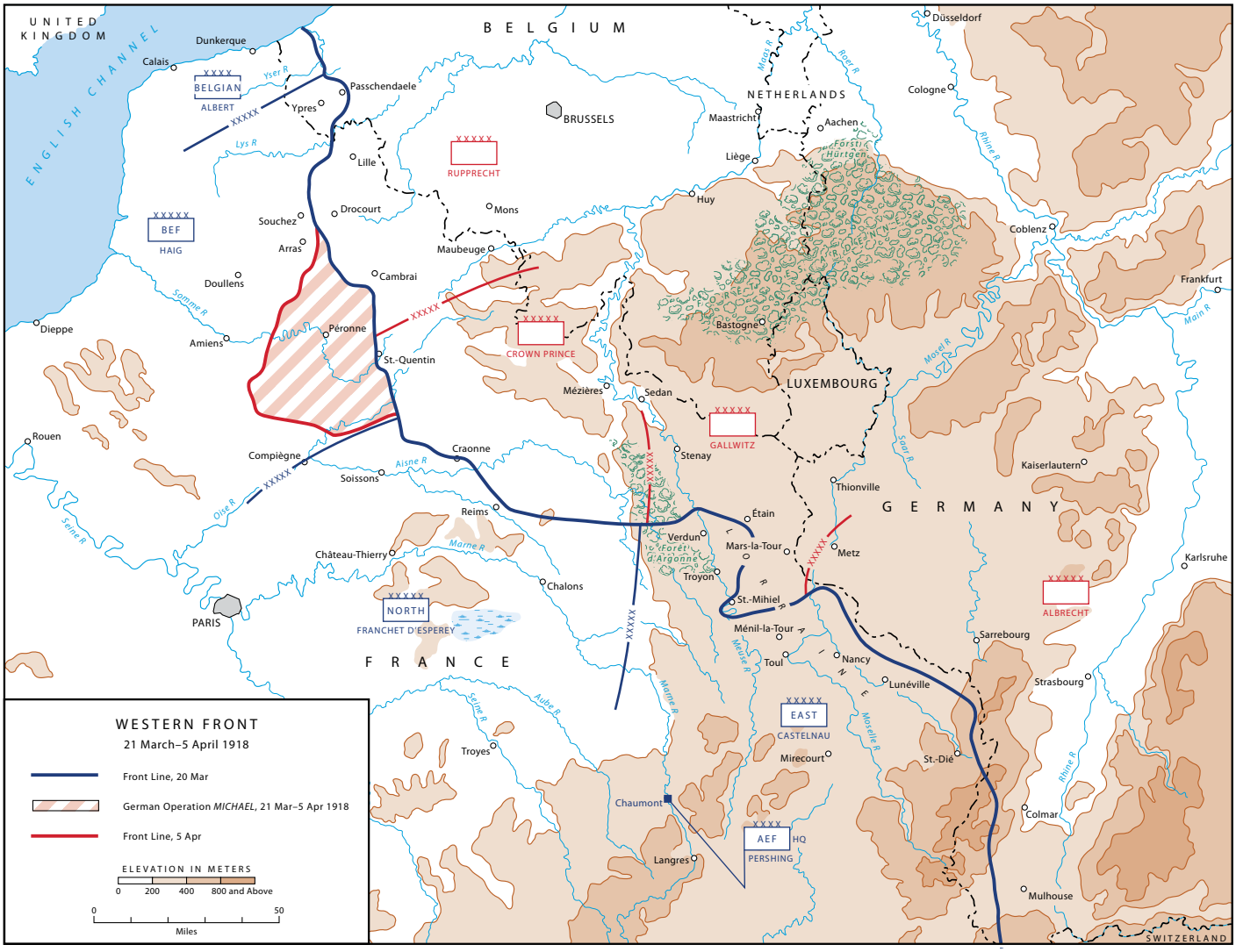
In February, the 168th began its move toward the front. Throughout the first two weeks of the month, the troops marched from station to station and town to town before settling in Baccarat, France. On 18 February, the regiment marched 9 miles through a snowstorm before they set up camp. The troops bunked in whatever shelter they could find: empty homes, cellars, shacks, or barns. Francis Webster—along with forty others—slept in an abandoned hay loft.[52] On 1 March 1918, Webster's machine gun company moved to the forward trenches in relief of French companies on the front lines. Four days later, Webster awoke to the sound of a heavy bombardment and gas calls.[53] He and the rest of his company hastily donned their gas masks, scurried out of their dugouts, and took up their positions along the trench, but this was not the prelude to an attack. Although one Iowa corporal died during the barrage, it was simply a prolonged bombardment on Webster's section of trench.

In other sections though, German forces did advance against other elements in the Rainbow Division, including parts of the 168th. According to an Iowa captain, "The enemy attacked at 4:30 AM by barrage, followed by a heavy bombardment until 6:00 AM. The enemy's attack failed, only three men entering the front line trenches without capturing any of our men. The rest were driven off by our rifle and machine gun fire."[54] However, this attack did result in "quite a few killed," as the regiment suffered twenty-two dead and another nineteen wounded.[55] Sgt. Charles

Kosek perceived and resented a certain level of hypocrisy on the part of American commanders. According to Sergeant Kosek, division command awarded war crosses to Company B, even though they were a mile in the rear of the trenches. Conversely, "We ran out and repulsed the Hun attack as soon as the barrage lifted; we got nothing. B Co. waited till they were sure it was all over and when they came out the Huns were in their trench and they had to run them out, result they got three medals."[56] Members of Company B probably remembered this event differently. In any event, these awards came from a generally positive American performance, and although the attacks of early March were minor compared to later offensives, French commanders congratulated the Rainbow Division on their ability to repulse the German raids.

In the next few months, the fighting continued for the troops, and wartime routines began to take shape, as the 168th moved from the front to the rear in regular intervals and spent most of their time soldiering.[57] On 21 March 1918, German forces advanced against the allied front in the first of five major offensives codenamed *Operation Michael*. Although British and French forces felt the brunt of this offensive, American troops were not immune from raids and bombardments. Over the next few months, American forces continued to engage with German forces, but no major American offensive took place. Most the AEF was still en route to the front, and General Pershing was not yet ready to make a push. The 168th remained in the trenches and held their ground against small but persistent German attacks.

In late May, Francis Webster received a minor wound and suffered some effects of poisonous gas. He told a family friend that "I wasn't hurt very badly, but they put me in an ambulance and sent me back to an evacuation hospital where I was kept on a liquid diet and cootieless bed for two days."[58] Webster reassured his family that the medical staff "have taken fine care of me," and he spent the next few days at base hospital in a former luxury hotel in the "most beautiful little city in all of France."[59] Webster and the other convalescent soldiers wore "cast-off civilian clothes" as uniforms, took time to write home, strolled through the gardens, and watched the short film *The Barefoot Boy* (1914).[60] Minor wounds such as Webster's drew mixed messages from home. His parents voiced their concerns to their son in letters, whereas Hiram Webster, who was in training at a field artillery remount depot in South Carolina, praised his brother for his selfless sacrifice. Hiram opened a letter by saying, "Got a letter from the folks a couple days ago telling that you got wounded in action. Atta boy!" Only after his cheerful encouragement did Hiram say, "I hope it isn't too serious."[61]



Francis Webster received a more serious wound two weeks after his twenty-second birthday. As his machine gun company advanced across a wheat field, his gun crew set up in an artillery crater to provide cover for the infantry. After repulsing two German attacks with heavy fire, the American infantry charged, but the Germans held their ground. The following day, German artillery unleashed a heavy bombardment. While they hunkered down, a shell exploded near Webster's team, killing Sgt. Emmett E. Collins, and severing the leg of a private sitting directly beside Webster. Shortly after, mustard gas debilitated Sgt. Donald Anthony, and Webster became acting sergeant. Francis Webster performed his new duty well, as his gun crew held their ground during the impending German advance, and Webster's commander placed him in charge of the guard the next day. Unfortunately for Corporal Webster, another gas attack followed, and he failed to reach his mask in time. He left for the hospital on 27 July with nine others.[62]

Webster's experience with hospital life offered a stark contrast to the typical wartime narrative found in works such as Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*.[63] The novel's main character, Paul, discussed the gruesome wounds incurred by soldiers and the broken bodies in hospital wards, and he declared, "A hospital alone shows what war is."[64] Francis Webster described hospitals much differently. During his first hospital stay, he ended a letter to a friend by saying, "The Red Cross is certainly a splendid organization."[65] Throughout Webster's convalescence, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) provided free movies for wounded soldiers, and those well enough to move around took in occasional baseball games between hospital staffs.[66] Also during his first hospital stay, Webster worked on his French language skills by taking lessons from a local woman, Madame Paris, who ran a postcard shop, and by attempting to speak to wounded French soldiers.[67] During his recovery from the second gas attack, Webster wrote to his parents that, "I've eaten so much that I now weigh 154 pounds which is a record for me so far."[68] Webster spent eighteen days at a large hospital camp before moving to a convalescent camp for twenty-six days, where he spent his nights in a tent with one other soldier.[69]

In August, Webster rejoined his unit. Just before leaving the hospital, he wrote, "The life of the front is much harder than it is back here, but we never are content when we are back away from the fight."[70] Excited as Francis Webster might have been to return to the front, life in the trenches remained squalid. Filth and disease were commonplace, and Webster noted in his journal that, "The lice or 'cooties' are very thick in all our dugouts. I have had them continuously for several weeks. We get rid of them for a day or two, and then a new batch will crawl onto us."[71] But lice were not the only repulsive critter in the trenches. Troops of all nations reported problems with trench rats, which allegedly grew as large as cats. Ironically, the only respite from the lice and rats often came in the aftermath of gas attacks, when the pests would disappear for a few days. The conditions in the trenches were worsened by the lack of opportunities for hygiene. A trooper could find a bath only when his unit moved to the rear, away from the trenches, and even this was not a guarantee. Some troops went as long as seven weeks without a hot bath.[72] Other troops broke the rules of trench etiquette by washing and shaving while on the front lines, which were actions generally performed in rear positions.[73]

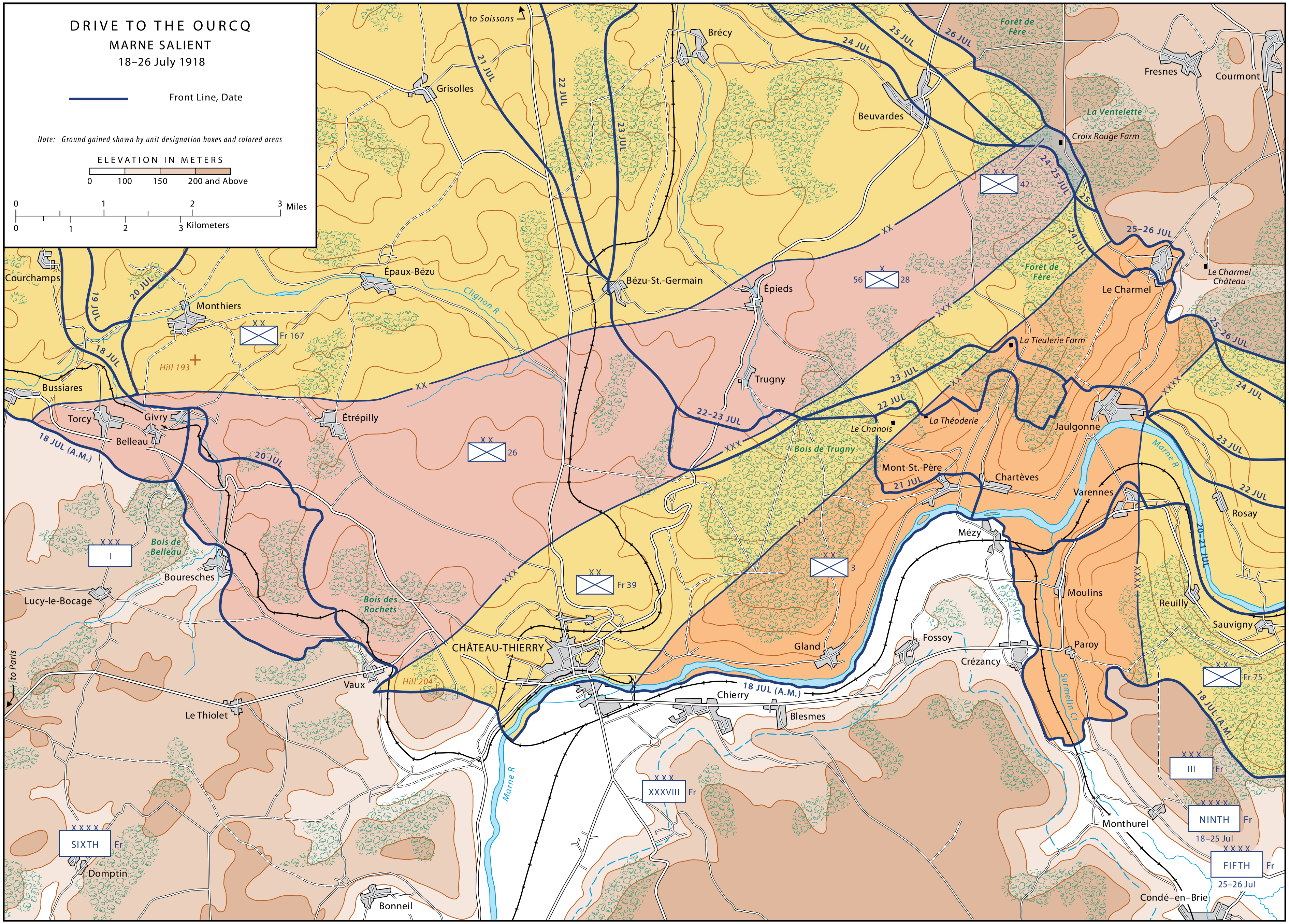
When Webster returned to his company, though, the AEF was in a much different position than it had been in when he left. Now that it had arrived in France in force, it was poised for a massive assault. General Pershing finally could put his strategy into action in the form of open warfare. The overall plan called for numerous medium- and large-scale advances across open ground with heavy artillery support. Rather than moving between trenches, the Americans hoped to move swiftly into and through enemy territory. Pershing used a simple concept when he devised his campaign objectives. Instead of bleeding the enemy through attrition, his plan called for a grand attack at an isolated position intended to overwhelm German forces and bring the war to a quick end.[74] Pershing held to the notion that a mass, concentrated attack of fresh American troops would breach the German positions and deliver a final knockout blow.

Pershing's strategy offered an opportunity, but it left the Americans exposed to enemy counterattacks. Webster declared, "The open warfare is much more exciting, but there are many advantages to being in the trenches. It is hard to get food and water up to the front lines in open fighting, and the men have less protection."[75] The lack of protection and limited artillery ranges were the factors that led European commanders to abandon similar tactics much earlier in the war. However, although the trench provided protection and a stable source of supplies, Webster believed "if we stayed in the ditch the war might last for twenty years longer without decisive result."[76] On 11 November 1918, the fighting ended, but American losses were high, despite less than one year of official action on the front. In all, the United States lost 53,400 soldiers in battle (another 60,000 died of disease), and suffered more than 320,000 casualties.[77] Of these numbers, nearly two-thirds of all American casualties came from the Guard's ranks. Once again, Francis Webster's experience reflected this sad reality.

A Soldier's Ending

On 14 October 1918, Webster's machine gun company moved toward the front lines. Webster received orders to set up his gun crew on a small hill with a good line of sight to provide cover for the infantry. German artillery spotted the Americans, and began shelling their position. Webster's friend, Pvt. John W. Kelso Jr., remembered "we had been there but a short time when the German artillery located us, and harassed the hill with their fire. We immediately went out of action and jumped into any little hole for a little protection."[78] Corporal Webster refused to take cover until all his troops were dug in, and a piece of shrapnel struck him on the right side of his chest and exited his body near his neck. Webster fell into Sgt. Frank M. Bondor's arms and "asked me [Bondor] to hold his hand and kept saying that he could not get his breath." Sergeant Bondor called for medical service and implemented first aid, but Webster died before he reached the aid station.[79] Francis Webster was one of twenty soldiers in the 168th killed that day.[80] Four days earlier, Webster told his parents that he was "in good health" despite the German artillery, which "keeps booming."[81]

Webster's family, like so many others, needed to cope with the loss of their son. Before Francis's death, his father, Frank, hoped to join his son in France as a volunteer for the YMCA. The elder Webster


DRIVE TO THE OURCQ
MARNE SALIENT
18–26 July 1918
Front Line, Date
Note: Ground gained shown by unit designation boxes and colored areas
ELEVATION IN METERS
0
100
150
200 and Above
0
1
2
3
Miles
0
1
2
3
Kilometers
to Soissons
to Paris
Brécy
Grisolles
Beuvardes
Fresnes
Courmont
La Ventelette
Croix Rouge Farm
Forêt de Fère
Forêt de Fère
Le Charmel
Le Charmel Château
La Tieulerie Farm
Courchamps
Épaux-Bézu
Bézu-St.-Germain
Épieds
Monthiers
Clignon R
Hill 193
Trugny
Bussiares
Torcy
Givry
Belleau
Étrépilly
Le Chanois
La Théoderie
Jaulgonne
Bois de Trugny
Mont-St.-Père
Chartèves
Varennes
Rosay
Marne R
Mézy
Moulins
Reuilly
Sauvigny
Bois de Belleau
Bouresches
Lucy-le-Bocage
Bois des Rochets
CHÂTEAU-THIERRY
Gland
Fossoy
Crézancy
Paroy
Surmelin Cr
Vaux
Hill 204
Chierry
Blesmes
Le Thiolet
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Condé-en-Brie
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XX 42
XX 56 28
XX Fr 167
XX 26
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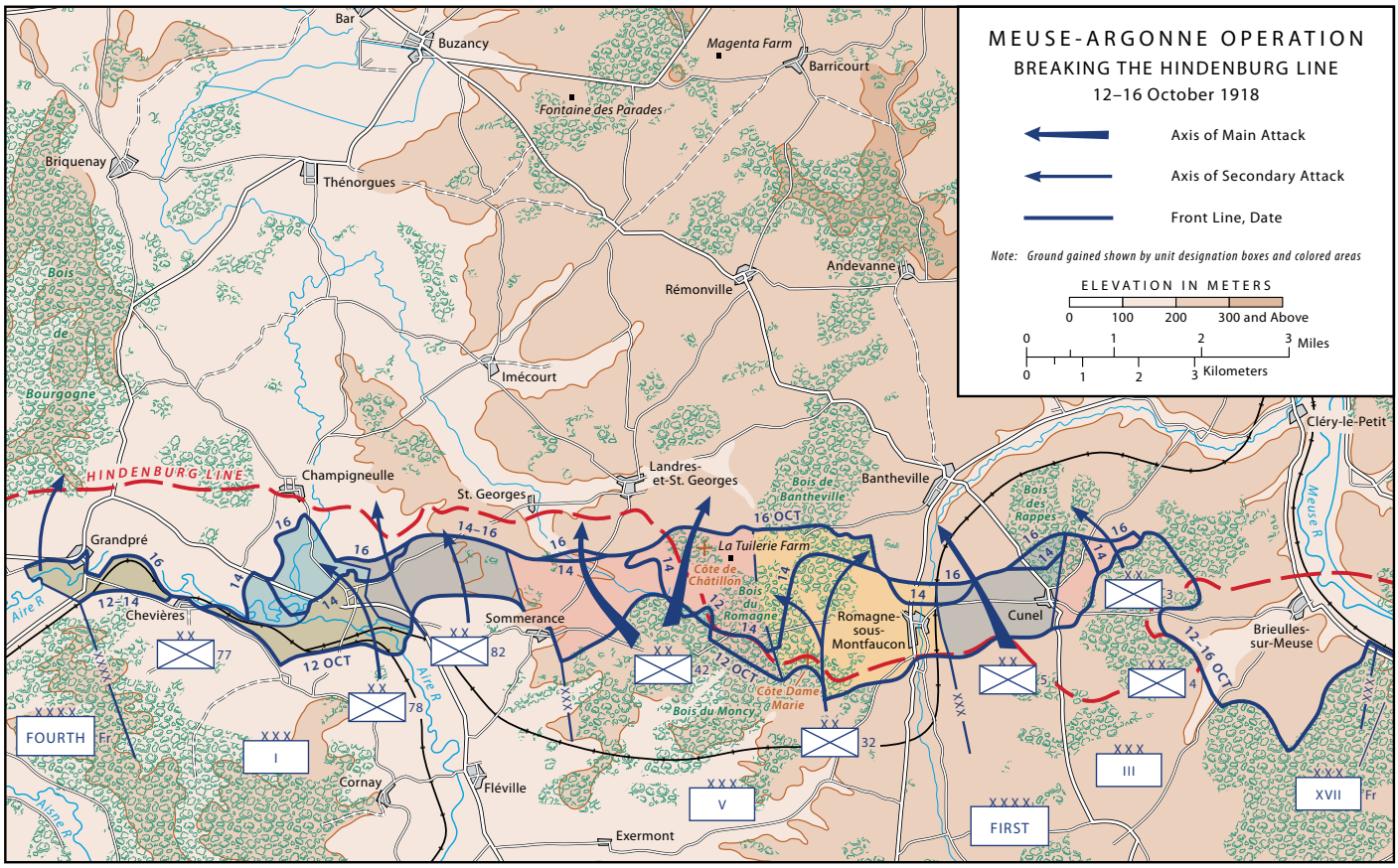
XX Fr 75
XXX I
XXX XXXVIII Fr
XXX III Fr
XXXX SIXTH Fr
XXXX NINTH Fr 18–25 Jul
XXXX FIFTH Fr 25–26 Jul

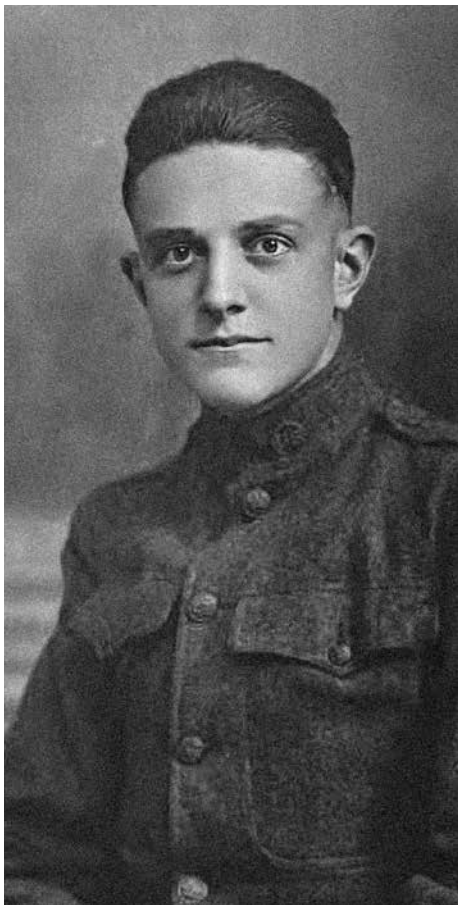


knew he most likely would not see his son overseas, but he thought being in the same country would ease the tensions associated with his son's wartime absence. Like other American families, the Websters followed the news and believed the war's end was imminent. On 2 November, Frank Webster wrote in a letter that "the war is looking more and more hopeful."[82] Though Mr. Webster did not want to be overly optimistic, he described numerous newspaper reports of a coming peace. Frank Webster did not know that his son had died two weeks before his hopeful letter. When news reached Hiram Webster of his brother's death, his commanding officer initially refused to grant him a furlough home, though Hiram Webster threatened to "come anyway."[83] The younger Webster brother penned a letter to his parents where he lamented that "Francis should have met his fate just two weeks before the war quit," but he went on to express pride because "he died fighting for the freedom of men—not because he was drafted and compelled to fight."[84]

The Army buried Francis Webster in a soldiers' cemetery in France. Sergeant Bondor took the liberty of sending Mr. and Mrs. Webster their son's personal effects, including the piece of shrapnel that took Francis's life. After the war, Bondor returned to civilian life and attended Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (currently Iowa State University), but he maintained a lasting correspondence with the Websters and always spoke highly of Francis.[85] Nearly two years after the war, the Webster family, with Bondor's aid, petitioned the Army to return their son's body. In August 1921, Francis Webster returned home, and his family, with Frank Bondor in attendance, buried their son in the Gold Star Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa.[86]

A Legacy

Seemingly, Francis Webster was an average young American without any extraordinary accomplishments. Yet, his service during the Great War reflects nearly every aspect of the greater American experience. He enlisted in the Army National Guard at the onset of American belligerency during the First World War, and along with 3,600 others, he became part of the 168th U.S. Infantry in the 42d Division. Webster found himself in the trenches of the Western Front, and bore all its realities; he suffered two wounds from gas attacks, and he endured two stints in army hospitals. With the advent of



Corporal Webster
Iowa Gold Star Military Museum

General Pershing's open warfare strategy, Webster advanced with the rest of his division. He hunkered down in dugouts during artillery bombardments and grew accustomed to this life. Francis's own words sum up his growth, "I haven't yet been afraid except for the night when we first went into the trenches. I was alone on a dark street in a ruined town. One of our own cannons fired a shot from a nearby building, and I nearly died of shell-shock. Since that time we've been in many tight squeezes and the shells and bullets have been landing all around us, but my heart refuses to beat any faster, and I never feel like worrying."[87]

On the surface, Francis Webster's story was a tragic one. However, his death was not meaningless, as his story connects the soldier experience to the larger American contribution on the battlefields in France. Webster is representative of the greater role the National Guard played in the war. Guardsmen served in the same capacity as their Regular Army counterparts, and contrary to emphases in general literature on the war, the National Guard was not a peripheral force. Webster's story also demonstrates the extent to which many guardsmen understood larger political, social, and military concepts because of their nature as citizen-soldiers. Middle-class soldiers, such as Webster, enlisted to fight to make the "world safe for democracy," and the National Guard offered the ideal avenue through which to serve. The Guard maintained an appeal to tradition and virtue, while simultaneously modernizing amid Progressive Era reforms. Francis Webster's story encapsulates these aspects of the Guard's story during the First World War.

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Notes

1. Darrek D. Orwig, ed., *Somewhere Over There: The Letters, Diary, and Artwork of a World War I Corporal* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 61–62. Note that Webster referred to his ship as the RMS *Baltic*. Lt. John H. Taber referred to the same ship as the *Cedric* in his diary. However, photographs and other evidence supports Webster's reference, though both ships belonged to Britain's famed White Star Line; Diary, Cecil A. Clark (Clark Diary), 5 Mar 1918, 2003.89.1A, World War I Collection, Iowa National Guard Archives, Gold Star Military Museum, Camp Dodge, Iowa (GSMM); and Clark Diary, 8 Mar 1918, GSMM; and Diary, Francis Webster, 7 Mar 1918, 2005.107.139, Papers of Francis Webster (Webster Papers), GSMM. The Iowa National Guard Archives at the Gold Star Military Museum at Camp Dodge uses either a ten- or seven-digit folder number within boxes in collections with multiple folders, based on the donation date. In the above example, the folder creation date was 2005, and the individual number is 107.139.

2. Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 12, 51–55; and Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 42, 64–74.

3. Jerry Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1865–1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 40.

4. Michael Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War: The Army National Guard, 1636–2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 127–30.

5. Charles Sydney Clark, "The Future of the National Guard," *North American Review* 170, no. 522 (May 1900): 732–44.

6. An Act to Promote the Efficiency of the Militia, and for Other Purposes, Public Law 33, 57th Cong., *Congressional Record*, Sess. II, Chap. 196 (21 Jan 1903): 775–80.

7. Julie Husband and Jim O'Loughlin, *Daily Life in the Industrial United States, 1870–1900* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), 234–35.

8. Jim Dan Hill, *The Minute Man in Peace and War: A History of the National Guard* (New York: Stackpole Company, 1964), 129–30.

9. Eleanor Hannah, "From the Dance Floor to the Rifle Range: The Evolution of Manliness in the National Guards, 1870–1917," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, no. 2 (Apr 2007): 149–77.

10. Eleanor Hannah, *Manhood, Citizenship, and the National Guard: Illinois, 1870–1917* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 1–3, and 133–39.

11. Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982). Numerous pages discuss labor disputes and corporate responses but most deal with this issue from a worker perspective. A good example is found on pages 233–34.

12. Heather Cox Richardson, *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America after the Civil War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 1.

13. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars*; Robert Zieger, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000); and John S. Eisenhower with Joanne Thompson Eisenhower, *Yanks: The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I* (New York: The Free Press, 2001). These works only discuss the National Guard in passing or imbed the National Guard into the Regular Army's wartime operations, without making any distinction between the origins or identities of the National Guard, Regular Army, or National Army.

14. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars*, 14–18, 27–29, 61–69, and 84.

15. Zieger, *America's Great War*, 38.

16. Robert H. Ferrell, *Collapse at Meuse-Argonne: The Failure of the Missouri-Kansas Division* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), x, 2–3, and 128–30.

17. Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Great Call-Up: The Guard, the Border, and the Mexican Revolution* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015) discusses in detail the expansive deployment of the National Guard to the Southern border.

18. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1957), 1.

19. Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 3.

20. Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, trans. A. W. Wheen (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982); Ernst Junger, *Storm of Steel*, trans. Michael Hoffman, 15th ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 2004); Hugh S. Thompson, *Trench Knives and Mustard Gas: With the 42d Rainbow Division in France*, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004); John H. Taber, *The Story of the 168th Infantry*, 2 vols. (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1925); and John H. Taber, *A Rainbow Division Lieutenant in France: The World War I Diary of John H. Taber*, ed. Stephen H. Taber (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2015). Both Thompson and Taber served with

the Iowans in the 168th but were Regular Army officers. Therefore, their experiences as non-Iowan transfers who served with commissions were somewhat different than Webster's, which provides an enlisted perspective.

21. Eric T. Dean Jr., *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 188.

22. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975). Fussell argued that the First World War altered perceptions of ideals, that the war influenced how society perceived itself and that postwar literature reflected this shift. Webster's writings reflect many broader ideas pertaining to the war and America's role in the conflict, but the postwar reimagining of the war's greater purpose and effect on culture and society did not influence his letters and diaries.

23. Article, "Our Boys are Coming Home," 1–2, 2005.107.202, Webster Papers, GSMM; and Des Moines College Yearbooks, 1915–16, 2005.107.19, Pre-War Collection, Webster Papers, GSMM. The article offers a brief biography of Francis Webster before he joined the National Guard.

24. David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 50.

25. Capt. Irving G. McCann, *With the National Guard on the Border: Our National Military Problem* (St. Louis, MO: C. V. Mosby, 1917), 14.

26. Ibid., 15.

27. Orwig, *Somewhere Over There*, 9.

28. Ltr, Francis Webster to Hiram Webster, 5 Jul 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

29. Ltr, Hiram Webster to Parents, 13 Nov 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

30. Mark Henry, *The US Army of World War I* (Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, 2003), 5–6; and Jennifer D. Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

31. David G. Chandler, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Army* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994), 241.

32. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 10 Jul 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

33. McCann, *With the National Guard*. This memoir summarized the day-to-day activities of guardsmen at the border.

34. "Report of the Adjutant General-Iowa 1918," Iowa in the Great War, 34, 43–45, https://iagenweb.org/greatwar//ag/index1.htm; and "Guard to Drop Married Men," *New York Times*, 12 Apr 1917, 11.

35. Brig. Gen. Henry J. Reilly, *Americans All: The Rainbow at War, Official History of the 42d Rainbow Division in the World War*, 2nd ed. (Columbus, OH: F. J. Heer, 1936), 28.

36. Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 169–70.

37. Ltr, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker to Brig. Gen. Henry J. Reilly, 12 Sep 1935, reproduced in Reilly, *Americans All*, 26.

38. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars*, 66.

39. Diary and Timeline, Francis Webster, Webster Papers, GSMM. Webster included a detailed timeline of his early service in the center of his pocket diary; and Thomson, *Trench Knives and Mustard Gas*, 20–21.

40. John H. Taber, The Story of the 168th Infantry, vol. 1; John H. Taber, *The World War I Diary of John H. Taber*, ed. Stephen H. Taber (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2015), 3–5; and Orwig, *Somewhere Over There*, 61–62.

41. Diary, Pvt. Harry Lehnhardt, 26 Sep 1918 through 17 Oct 1919, 2006.602, GSMM.

42. Taber, *Story of the 168th*, Vol. I, 31.

43. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 5 Dec 1917, Webster Papers, GSMM.

44. Diary and Timeline, Webster, Webster Papers, GSMM.

45. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 5 Dec 1917; and Ltr, Francis Webster to Betty Zelenhofer, 6 Dec 1917, both Webster Papers, GSMM.

46. Ltr, King George to American Expeditionary Force, undated; 1995, 131, Papers of August Smidt, GSMM.

47. Diary, Cecil A. Clark, 9 Dec 1917, GSMM.

48. Diary, Webster, 24 and 26 Dec 1917, GSMM.

49. General John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, vol. I (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1931), 151–54; Donald Smythe, *Pershing: General of the Armies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); Kennedy, *Over Here*, 172–73; and Thomas Fleming, "Iron General," in *The Great War: Perspectives on the First World War*, ed. Robert Cowley (New York: Random House Publishing, 2003), 420–25.

50. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 9 Apr 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

51. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 22 Apr 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

52. Diary, Webster, 21 Feb 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

53. Orders for Relief, Lt. Col. Mathew A. Tinley, 1 Mar 1918; and Assignment and Relief, 168th Regiment, 1 March 1918, both Rcds of Combat Divs 1917–1919, Record Group (RG) 120: Records of the American Expeditionary Forces (World War I), National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD (NACP); and Diary, Webster, 5 Mar 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

54. Rpt, Troops Engaged and Records of Events, Casualties List, 4 March 1918, 168th Regiment, Rcds of Combat Divs 1917–1919, RG 120, NACP.

55. Diary, Cecil A. Clark, 5 Mar 1918; Clark Diary, GSMM.

56. John Kosek, ed., *The Iowa Boys: A Remembrance of a Killing Contest, The Diary and Letters of Sergeant Charles Kosek Company D, 168th Iowa Infantry, 42d Rainbow Division, American Expeditionary Force France, 1917–1918* (Las Vegas, NV: John Kosek, 2010). This is a self-published collection of diary entries and letters written by Charles Kosek during World War I, interspersed with excerpts from Taber, The Story of the 168th Infantry. Consulted at GSMM.

57. Diary, Webster, Diary, 12–15 Mar 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

58. Ltr, Francis Webster to Mr. Jarnigan, 2 Jun 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

59. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 1 Jun 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

60. Ltr, Webster to Jarnigan, 2 Jun 1918; and Diary, Webster, 10 Jun 1918; both Webster Papers, GSMM.

61. Ltr, Hiram Webster to Francis Webster, 16 Jun 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM (emphasis in original).

62. Diary, Webster, 28, 29, and 30 Jul 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

63. Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 256–59.

64. Ibid., 263.

65. Ltr, Webster to Jarnigan, 2 Jun 1918.

66. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 8 Aug 1918; and Diary, Webster, 6–8 Aug 1918; both Webster Papers, GSMM.

67. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 11 Jun 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

68. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 18 Aug 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

69. Diary, Webster, 20 Aug 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

70. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 28 Aug 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

71. Diary, Webster, 6 May 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

72. Diary, Clark, 2 May 1918, Clark Diary, GSMM.

73. Kosek, *The Iowa Boys*, 15.

74. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of the Unites States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), xxi–xxii.

75. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 26 Sep 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

76. Ltr, Webster to Parents, 26 Sep 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

77. Coffman, *War to End All Wars*, 363.

78. Ltr, John Kelso Jr. to Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Florence Webster, 18 Oct 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

79. Ltr, Frank Bondor to Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Florence Webster, n.d. Nov 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM. In this four-page letter, Bondor noted how Webster died and detailed the bravery Webster demonstrated during a gas attack.

80. Casualty Rpt, HQ, 42d Inf Div, Daily Operational Rpts, October 1918, 42d Inf Div, Rcds of Combat Divs 1917–1918, RG 120, NACP; and John Bowers, "The Mythical Morning of Sergeant York," in *The Great War: Perspectives on the First World War*, ed. Robert Cowley (New York: Random House, 2003), 450.

81. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 10 Oct 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

82. Ltr, Frank Webster to Francis Webster, 2 Nov 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM.

83. Tlg, Hiram Webster to Rev. Frank H. Webster, 13 Nov 1918, 2005.107.21, Webster Papers, GSMM.

84. Ltr, Hiram Webster to Parents, 13 Nov 1918, Webster Papers, GSMM (emphasis in original).

85. Ltrs, Frank Bondor and Frank Webster, November 1918 to April 1920, Webster Papers, GSMM. These letters discuss various topics from school to the weather and include mostly pleasantries.

86. Article, "Our Boys are Back," 2, 2005.108, Webster Papers, GSMM.

87. Ltr, Francis Webster to Parents, 2 Sep 1918; Webster Papers, GSMM.

U.S. Army Artifact Spotlight

Washington's Pistols

By Leslie D. Jensen

George Washington's pistols at the West Point Museum, located on the grounds of the U.S. Military Academy in New York, are perhaps the best documented of several pistols that General Washington used over his lifetime. As such, they are a national treasure that reside today in the area where he spent the most time during the long struggle for independence—the years in which the Army matured, professionalized, and launched its victorious Yorktown campaign. Washington's long-standing association with West Point and the Hudson Valley led to the continued presence of the U.S. Army at West Point from the revolution until today.

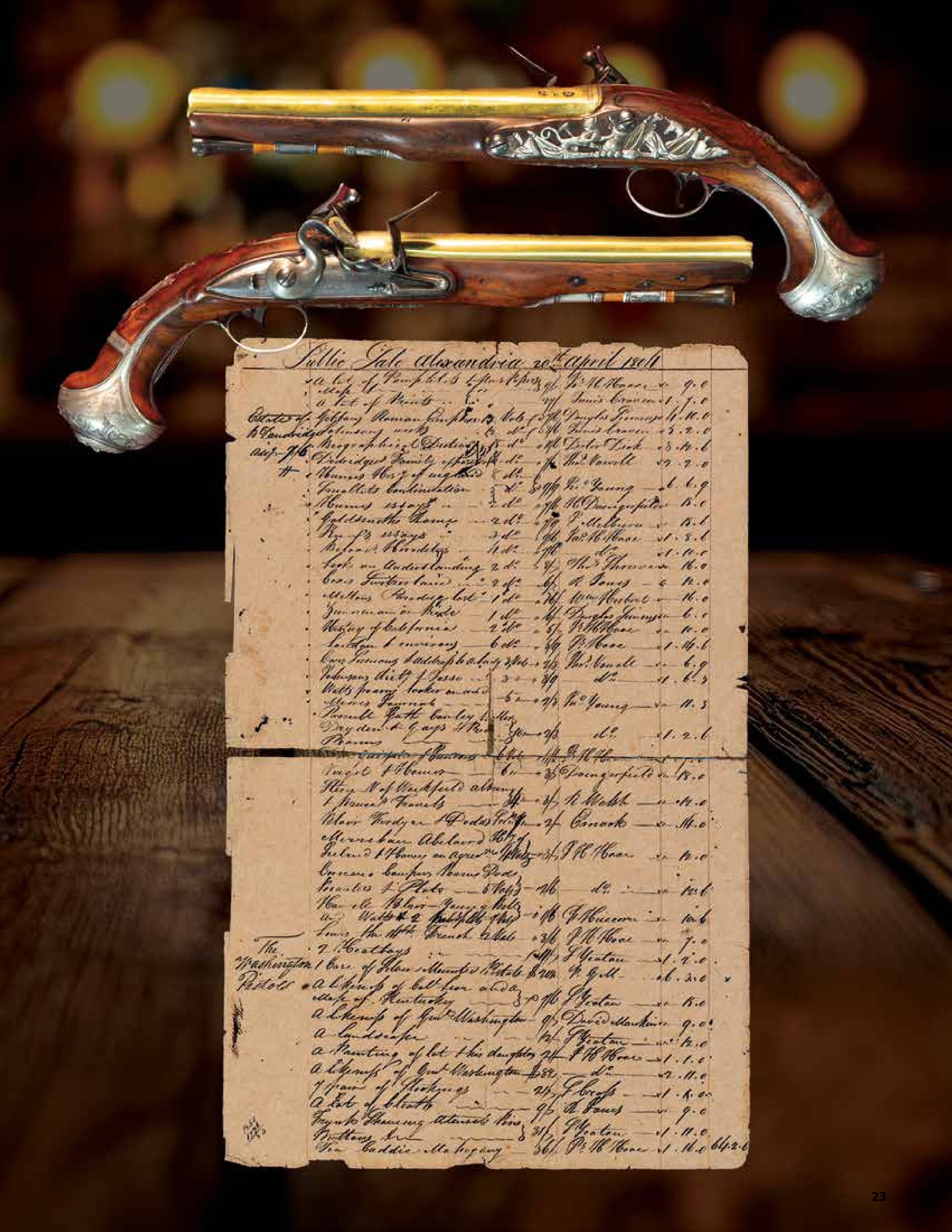
In April 1778, Capt. Henry Fauntleroy, having returned from recruiting duty and a furlough with his family in Virginia to the Continental Army's encampment at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, delivered a letter and package to the headquarters of General George Washington. The letter, dated 22 March 1778, was from Fauntleroy's brother-in law, Thomas Turner. It read:

> May it please your Excellency,
>
> Altho' I have not the honour of being personally acquainted with your Excellency, nevertheless I am far from being a Stranger to your distinguished merit, both in private and publick life; your indefatigable zeal, and unwearied attention to the true Interest of your native Country, since the commencement of these differences, must excite the warmest sense of gratitude in the breastt of every American that is not callous to the rights of humanity; that it may please the supreme Disposer of human Events, to crown you with success in this important struggle, & speedily put an end to the distressing Scenes of this unnatural War, is the fervent wish of your, Excellency's respectful & Obedient Servt
>
> Thos Turner
>
> P.S. I have transmitted to your Excellency a pair of pistols &c. &c. your acceptance of which will confer a singular obligation on
>
> T.T.[1]

Washington's reply to Turner, dated 25 April 1778, notes:

> Altho I am not much accustomed to accept presents, I cannot refuse one offered in such polite terms as accompanied the Pistols & furniture you were so obliging as to send me by Captn Fauntleroy. They are very elegant, & deserve my best thanks, which are offered with much sincerity. The favourable Sentiments you are pleased to entertain of me, & the obliging and flattering manner in which they are expressed add to the obligation & I am Sir Yr Most Obedt & Most H: Ser.
>
> G. W.

Thomas Turner and his wife, Jane Fauntleroy Turner, lived on the Rappahannock River southeast of Fredericksburg, Virginia. His father and grandfather had been prominent planters, and Washington had known Turner's father in his younger years.


Public Sale Alexandria 20th April 1801
The Washington Pistols
1 Case of Silver Mounted Pistols
a Likeness of Genl Washington
a Landscape
a Likeness of Genl Washington
A Set of Cloaths
64.2.6

Sadly, Captain Fauntleroy, who delivered the pistols, was killed later at the Battle of Monmouth in June.

The pistols themselves are a pair, brass-barreled and silver-mounted with a panoply of arms on the side plates and a grotesque face on the butts. The lock plates are signed "HAWKINS." John Hawkins Jr. was a general London gunsmith who had taken over his father's shop in 1714 and carried on the business until 1760. Normally, mounts were bought from silversmiths, and there is a single London date letter, an "n" for 1748, on the tail of one silver trigger guard bow. The barrels are 8.5 inches long, .65-caliber and are stamped "London" on top along with "RW," for Richard Wilson, a prominent London gunmaker, and London proofmarking. The practice of different makers supplying parts to produce pistols was standard among London gunsmiths of the time. Hawkins and Wilson both had extensive trade with the colonies. Indeed, Wilson produced about 2,000 muskets for New York City in two contracts and possibly 500 to 1,000 for New Jersey, as well as muskets for Georgia and South Carolina, and trade guns for Virginia, all about the time of the French and Indian War (1754–1763). Occasionally, Wilson barrels are found on other American-made arms. Work by modern arms scholars have documented several silver-mounted, high-end pistols, one almost identical to the Washington pair, which follow the basic profile of these pieces. Although these pistols were thirty years old when they were presented to Washington, their age was far less important than the fact that they were obviously high-end pistols by a prominent London maker.

Each pistol has a silver strap inlaid across the back engraved: "Gen.l G. Washington," probably done for the presentation. There was some damage to the stocks when they were cut for the inlay.

Washington certainly had these pistols from the close of the Valley Forge encampment through the end of the revolution. It appears that they saw active use, for the silver mounts show considerable wear on the high spots consistent with being carried in saddle holsters. The box in which they came, which has the original woolen lining, only shows wear from the lock screws which protrude farther than the silver mounts. Because the mounts were clear of the box surfaces, the wear on the mounts did not come from being in the box.

Washington had other pistols, including ones given to him by General Edward Braddock and Maj. Gen. Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, but it is not always easy to trace their individual histories. The provenance of this pair, however, is strong. The guns themselves provide the date of manufacture and who made them. The Turner/Washington letters document the presentation, and their condition shows some indication of their use.

The gift to Washington, just after the Valley Forge winter and the troubles with the Conway cabal, must have been a welcome indication that he still had strong supporters. Washington had the pistols from that time until he gave them to his private secretary Bartholomew Dandridge Jr. Dandridge was Martha Washington's nephew, and he was close with his aunt and uncle. Dandridge died of yellow fever in 1802 in Haiti while serving as consul.

Although there is no documentation of the date when the pistols went to Dandridge, his effects were auctioned in 1804.


HAWKINS

The original auction list, which has remained with the pistols and is also in the museum collection, clearly identifies them as "The Washington Pistols," and notes that they were silver-mounted. They were purchased by Philip G. Marsteller, the son of a Washington family friend who had been one of the six pallbearers at Washington's funeral in 1799.

The pistols remained with the Marsteller family for nearly a century. They were auctioned again in 1903, when they passed to Francis Bannerman, an international arms dealer and collector. Bannerman sold them to John S. Reed, and in 1914, E. Hubert Litchfield acquired them from the auction of the Reed collection. Litchfield, an early arms and armor collector, loaned them for a time to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, where they were on exhibit. In 1951, Litchfield sold them to New York millionaire Clendenin J. Ryan, and it was he who presented them to the West Point Museum in 1953.

This virtually unbroken chain of ownership and consistent documentation, plus other studies over the years, make these pistols the most important of the many valuable objects at the West Point Museum. They will, of course, figure prominently in the museum's observance of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

Leslie D. Jensen is the curator of arms and armor at the West Point Museum and has been managing a collection of approximately 7,000 items dating from ancient Egypt to the latest U.S. Army weapons for the last twenty-three years. He first was involved in museum work in 1962 as a member and sergeant major of the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums, with later interpretive experience at Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown Festival Park, the Virginia War Museum, and the National Park Service. After graduating from Roanoke College, he became curator of collections at the American Civil War Museum (formerly the Museum of the Confederacy), museum curator at the U.S. Army Transportation Museum (1982–1984) and director of two Army museums: 2d Armored Division Museum (1984–1986) and The Old Guard Museum (1986–1989). He moved to the U.S. Army Center of Military History's Museum Division in 1989, joining the initial planning team for the National Museum of the U.S. Army and later as chief of collections for the Army Museum System. His last major duty with the Center before moving to West Point was to lead the Army portion of the artifact recovery team in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attack on the Pentagon.

Notes

1. "To George Washington from Thomas Turner, 22 March 1778," Washington Papers, Founders Online, National Archives and Records Administration, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0249.
2. Ibid.

The Airborne and Special Operations Museum Honors

The Monuments Men of World War II

By James Bartlinski and A. L. House

The Airborne and Special Operations Museum (ASOM) is in the process of designing a permanent exhibit on Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) officers, also known as the "Monuments Men," for the museum's reimagined World War II gallery. This exhibit will emphasize the significant contributions of the Monuments Men, whose mission it was to protect cultural heritage in Europe and, to a lesser extent, Asia during the war.

To introduce the public to the future Monuments Men exhibit, ASOM has created a temporary exhibition titled "Surviving the Devil's Cauldron: The Enduring 'Swaying Virgin' of La Gleize." This exhibition showcases a newly acquired replica of the centuries-old statue of the Virgin Mary, rescued by renowned American sculptor and Monuments Man, Capt. Walker K. Hancock. It also features artifacts from Hancock's military service.

In 1944, eight Monuments Men, including Captain Hancock, created a list of artworks and significant architecture that should be protected in Belgium. Hancock emphasized the significance of the Romanesque church of La Gleize, and most importantly, the village's revered statue, the "Swaying Virgin." Hancock and art historians acknowledged the statue as a notable example of the Mosan school, a medieval Christian art style that flourished in the Meuse River valley from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries.

The Airborne and Special Operations Museum Foundation (ASOMF) commissioned Michel Gérard, a master sculptor skilled in medieval wood carving techniques from Ciney, Belgium, to recreate the oak statue for the exhibit. Bernard Geenen recommended Gérard to the ASOMF. Geenen's father helped Captain Hancock to relocate the original statue in February 1945 from La Gleize, Belgium's destroyed church

An interior view of the battle damaged church in La Gleize, Belgium.
Courtesy of The Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Interior of the church in La Gleize, Belgium, after the Battle of the Bulge, 1945. The statue of the Swaying Virgin is visible on the left.
Courtesy of The Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

A

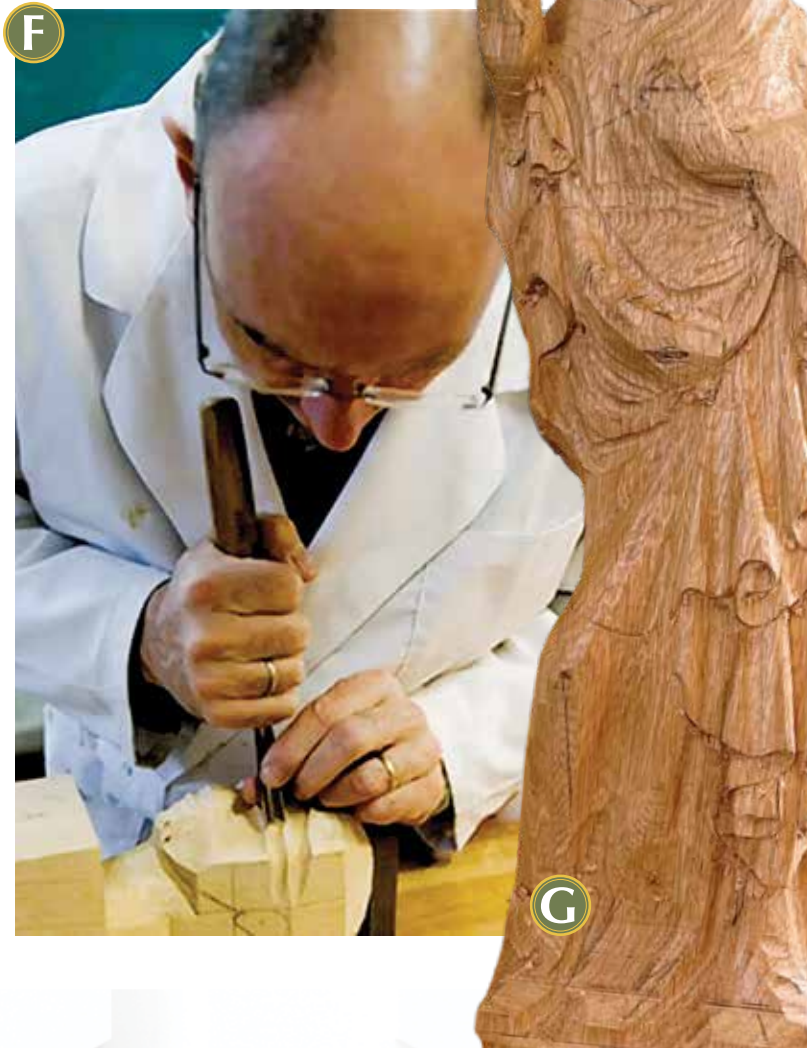
B

C

D

E

F



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A. The rescue of the "Swaying Virgin" on 1 February 1945. Captain Hancock is the soldier on the front left.
Photo Courtesy of The Walker Hancock Collection

B. Statue of the Virgin Mary inside La Gleize Church in Belgium.
Photo Courtesy of The Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

C. An early sketch of the statue from a photo by the sculptor Michel Gérard.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum

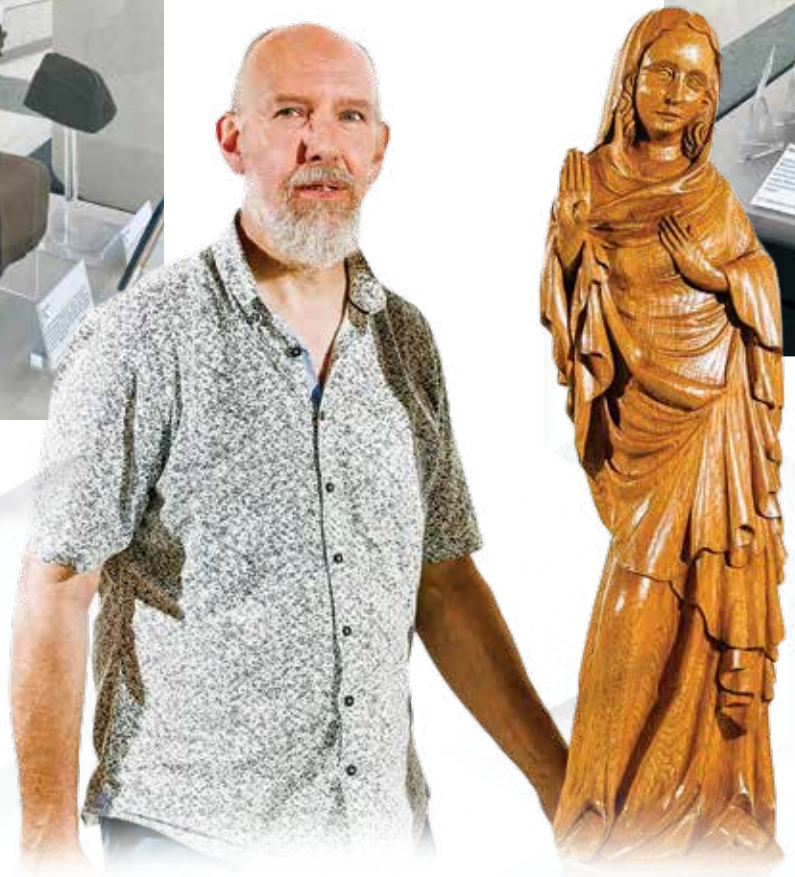
D. Photographs of the statue from various angles used for measurements.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum

E. Tracings of the templates are marked on the block of wood.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum

F. The sculptor, Michel Gérard, begins the rough carving.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum

G. The rough unfinished carving of the statue.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum

Views of the "Surviving the Devil's Cauldron" exhibit.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum



Michel Gérard poses with the finished product.
Airborne and Special Operations Museum

to a safe location. The temporary exhibition also introduces visitors to the Army's twenty-first-century Monuments Men and Women, officially designated as 38G/6V Heritage and Preservation officers, found in today's U.S. Army Reserve, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne).

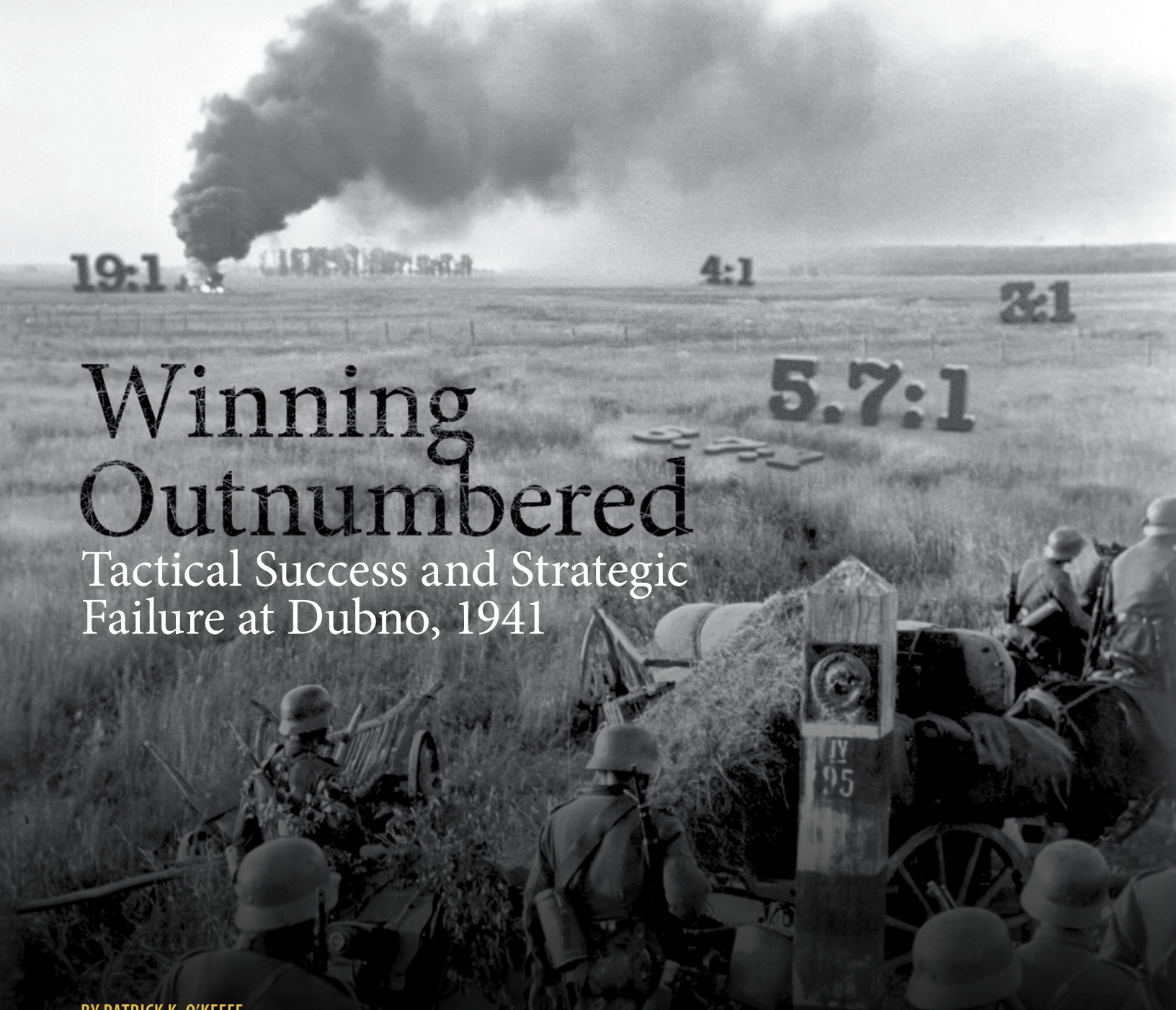
In 2027, the ASOM will open its renovated World War II gallery. The statue and Captain Hancock's artifacts, currently featured in the temporary exhibition, will serve as cornerstones of a diorama depicting his rescue of the revered fourteenth-century statue from the destroyed twelfth-century L'église de l'Assomption-de-la-Sainte-Vierge (Church of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin) on 1 February 1945. This immersive diorama will depict Captain Hancock and Willy Geenen, a local teenager from the village of La Gleize who assisted the Monuments Man, transporting the "Swaying Virgin" from the church to a local farmer's cellar for safekeeping. Cast figures of both Hancock and Geenen will be positioned within a model of the bombed-out church and surrounded by rubble and snow. The replica statue will serve as the centerpiece of this vivid exhibit. Exhibit designers are incorporating details from period photographs of the ruined church to create an accurate replica of the interior of the house of worship that had sheltered La Gleize's revered statue for over six centuries.

The exhibit will also recognize the legacy of the Monuments Men, which continues in today's Army through the 38G/6V Heritage and Preservation officers. This dedicated group of specialists is tasked with safeguarding cultural heritage in times of war and natural disasters. Their expertise ensures that the rich tapestry of human history is not lost during periods of instability. These twenty-first-century Monuments Men and Women navigate the complexities of armed conflict and disaster response, ensuring that the symbols of our shared humanity endure. Their work transcends the battlefield and reminds us that even in the darkest times, the preservation of culture and history remains a beacon of hope and resilience.

The U.S. Army Airborne and Special Operations Museum is located at 100 Bragg Boulevard in Fayetteville, North Carolina. It is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Admission is free. More information can be found on the museum's website at https://www.asomf.org.

James Bartlinski is the museum director of the Fort Bragg Museums.

A. L. House is the collections manager at the U.S. Army Airborne and Special Operations Museum, Fayetteville, North Carolina.



Winning Outnumbered

Tactical Success and Strategic Failure at Dubno, 1941

BY PATRICK K. O'KEEFE

On 22 June 1941, on the orders of Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler, the *Wehrmacht* launched *Operation Barbarossa*—the invasion of the Soviet Union. The campaign consisted of three major axes: a northern axis aimed at Leningrad, a central axis aimed at Moscow, and a southern axis aimed at Ukraine and the Caucasus. The first weeks along the central and northern axes were marked by dramatic encirclements of enormous Soviet armies and rapid advances over huge swathes of Soviet territory. By contrast, the southern axis, along a line running from Rivne to Dubno, Ukraine, began with a brutal, seesaw tank battle between the nearly 800 tanks of the German *Panzer Group 1* and several thousand tanks of the Soviet Southwestern Front.

The opening ten days of war in Ukraine between *Army Group South* and the Southwestern Front saw *Panzer Group 1*'s lead two corps, with 585 tanks, attack into the Soviet Union's main defensive sector for their resistance against German invasion.[1] The Southwestern Front committed 2,234 tanks to blunt *Panzer Group 1*.[2] Among that mass of armor, the Southwestern Front had at its disposal 758 T–34 and KV–1 tanks, which with their 76.2-mm. main guns and thick, sloped armor were far better armed and armored than anything in the German arsenal. On paper, the Soviets had every advantage: numbers, technology, and fighting on the defense. Yet *Panzer Group 1* largely had destroyed the mechanized forces of the Southwestern Front by 1 July.[3]

The United States Army is an army focused on winning the decisive battle, an overwhelming tactical and operational success that translates to strategic victory. For a smaller army that seeks to leverage qualitative advantage over a quantitatively stronger opponent, decisive battle offers the best alternative

Above: German troops crossing the Soviet border, 22 June 1941. *National Archives*

to the long, attritional styles of warfare historically favored by those opponents. The *Wehrmacht* in 1941 was a force built for decisive battle, the latest incarnation of a Prussian-German way of war that sought short, decisive wars against numerically superior opponents using a qualitative advantage and doctrine that emphasized tempo, combined arms, and decision dominance.[4] The U.S. Army's current operational concept, Multidomain Operations, is the latest in a string of doctrinal constructs stretching back to the 1980s whereby the Army codifies its pursuit of decisive battle in a style that sometimes overtly evokes the German way of war. The Army also champions the concept of Mission Command and views it as central to successful conduct of Multidomain Operations. Mission Command seeks to empower subordinates with the initiative to deviate from higher headquarters' plans when the situation changes on the ground, a concept like the German culture of *Auftragstaktik* (mission tactics), which stresses the object to be accomplished, not the methods by which it would be achieved.

The *Wehrmacht* won impressively decisive victories in Poland, Denmark, Norway, and most strikingly in France against the French army—the world's largest—and its British allies. In the opening weeks of *Barbarossa*, it destroyed entire Soviet army groups in the central and northern Soviet Union and continued to do so through 1943 despite the failure of those operational successes to translate to strategic victory. Yet, although analyses of those campaigns are alluring to hold up as vindication of decisive battle doctrine, the border battles in western Ukraine in 1941 are a more valuable lens through which to look. *Panzer Group 1* won an impressive tactical and operational victory against far greater odds and with much more difficulty than in any other campaign. Therefore, it is a better case from which to distill the key elements of their operational approach that enabled them to ultimately succeed despite the opposition and ensure that the U.S. Army is doubling down on those elements in its Multidomain Operations. It also illuminates vulnerabilities in the approach of which the U.S. Army should be aware and seek to guard against, especially in a protracted conflict.

From 22 to 30 June 1941, German forces employing combined arms at all levels and empowering subordinates via a Mission Command culture consistently outfought Soviet units that were larger and better equipped. Within *Panzer Group 1*, the dynamic actions of its southern (right) wing, *XXXXVIII Armeekorps (motorisiert)* [*XXXXVIII Army Corps (motorized)*] under Lt. Gen. Werner Kempf especially are enlightening in this regard, as are the actions of their Soviet opponents under the Southwestern Front commander Col. Gen. Mikhail Petrovich Kirponos, particularly in the Soviet 8th Mechanized Corps. This battle only has been detailed extensively in historiography thus far from the Soviet perspective, and this article provides a balanced narrative combining previous Soviet-centric work and original archival research.[5]

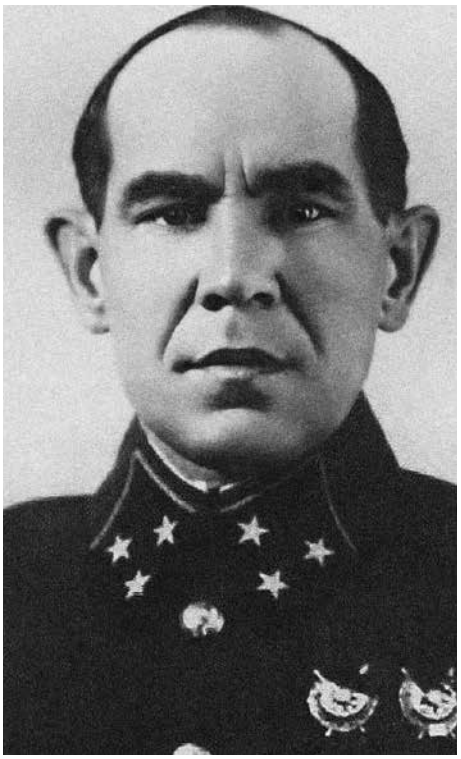
General Kempf
Bundesarchiv

General Kirponos
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

The Opening Moves

At 0330 on 22 June, German infantrymen from the *57th* and *75th Infantry Divisions* crossed the Bug River in rubber boats and stormed Russian positions on the east bank. By 1130, Kempf judged the penetration sufficient to pull the *11th Panzer Division* forward to begin exploiting the apparently crumbling Soviet defenses. The *57th* and *75th* continued battling forward through Soviet fortified regions, reaching a line from Perespa to Zvertiv by 1500. At 1600, the *11th Panzer Division*'s reconnaissance battalion linked up with the *75th Infantry Division* and began coordinating for a forward passage of lines. The Germans quickly facilitated the passage, and by 2000, the *11th Panzer Division* had captured Perespa, 14.5 kilometers past the frontal Soviet defenses, without firing a shot.[6]

That night, the Soviets assembled forces for an armored counterattack to destroy the penetrating German forces in line with their doctrine. The Soviet 6th Army under Lt. Gen. Ivan N. Muzychenko ordered mechanized forces consisting of three battalions of medium tanks and two motorized infantry battalions from the 4th Mechanized Corps to counterattack German paratroopers landing near Radekhiv. These paratroopers turned out to be only the bailed-out crew of a German Ju–88 bomber. After that discovery, Southwestern Front commander Mikhail Kirponos ordered the entirety of the 4th and 15th Mechanized Corps to counterattack the *11th Panzer Division* near Sokal. Kirponos also shifted the 8th Mechanized Corps in that direction to prepare for additional counterattacks. The Soviet mechanized corps moved to assemble near Radekhiv overnight, and Kirponos arranged for the morning attack to be supported by a regiment of Soviet Air Force bombers.[7]

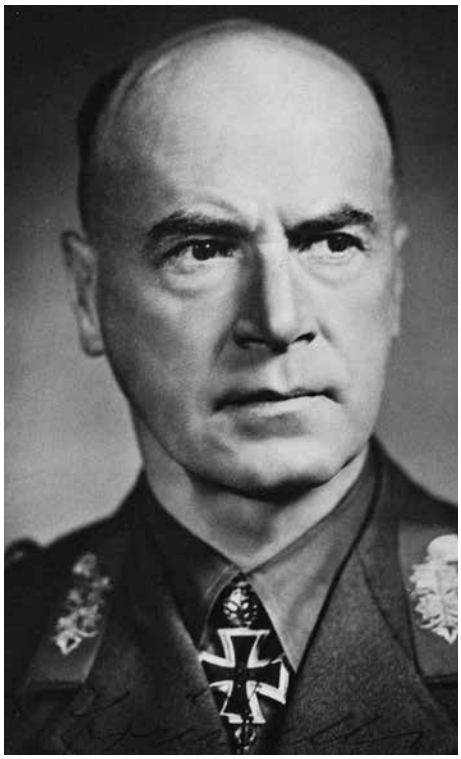


General Muzychenko
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

The Soviet tanks were not concentrated fully by dawn the next morning. At 0330, the *11th Panzer Division* resumed its advance. A *Luftwaffe* reconnaissance flight reported Soviet mechanized forces lying along the division's axis of advance. The commander, Lt. Gen. Ludwig Crüwell, accordingly reorganized his division's *kampfgruppen* (combat units).[8] Of note, *Kampfgruppe A* (*KG A*) comprised the division's panzer regiment (*Panzer Regiment 15*), its reconnaissance battalion (*Reconnaissance Battalion 61*), its motorcycle infantry battalion (*Motorcycle Battalion 61*), and a battalion of 88-mm. flak guns from the *General Göring Luftwaffe* ground regiment (*III/Göring*). Shortly before 0515, *KG A* contacted the five Soviet battalions that had arrived in Radekhiv to destroy the supposed paratrooper attack. *Panzer Regiment 15* had 166 tanks among 5 varieties, whereas the 3 Soviet tank battalions from the 4th Mechanized Corps consisted of a mix of sixty BT–7s and T–34s. The 4th Mechanized Corps was among the best-equipped corps in the Red Army, with approximately 50 percent of its roughly 1,000 tanks being either T–34s or KV–1s.[9]

As *KG A* approached Radekhiv, it cautiously deployed on line with its tanks in the lead. A battalion's worth of Soviet artillery then struck it with heavy barrages. At the same time, about sixty Soviet bombers flew over the German tanks, likely Kirponos's promised air coverage. Inexplicably, the bombers did not attack the German tanks and flew off; shortly after, bombs fell on German troops crossing the Bug at Sokal. Supported by artillery fire, Soviet motorized infantry attacked out of Radekhiv, supported by BT–7s following behind. The Soviet infantry and light tanks in the open became easy targets for *KG A*, which split and began to encircle Radekhiv from north and south. During this maneuver, they encountered T–34 tanks, the first instance of German troops contacting these new Soviet armored machines. The sight of well-placed 37-mm. and 50-mm. armor-piercing rounds deflecting harmlessly off the Soviet tanks instilled great anxiety in the experienced German tankers as the T–34s launched their own local counterattacks. The reports of the ineffectiveness of German tank guns against these new tanks rapidly made its way up the chain; Crüwell, personally accompanying *KG A*, put *III/Göring*'s Flak-88s to work on the T–34s. By noon, a little more than six hours after it began, the fighting around Radekhiv died down as the Soviets withdrew east. This first tank battle had cost the Soviets thirty-five tanks destroyed, including six T–34s. The Germans suffered nineteen tanks knocked out. All but one of these would be repaired and put back into action in the coming days.[10]

The circumstances of this first encounter prompted Crüwell to attach *Panzerjäger Battalion 61* to *Reconnaissance Battalion 61* to bolster that organization's firepower against the new threat and enhance their combined arms effectiveness. *KG A* continued cautiously eastward when a sudden barrage of artillery hit them once more. This barrage heralded the arrival of the Soviet 10th Tank Division from the 15th Mechanized Corps, yet it ceased just as the Soviet tanks attacked. The 10th Tank Division was short some artillery and its second tank regiment. Nonetheless, it committed to the attack with a single tank regiment and its motorized infantry regiment spearheaded by its reconnaissance battalion. The hilly terrain east of Radekhiv allowed the Soviets to take advantage of intervisibility lines to close the distance even as their



General Crüwell
Bundesarchiv

supporting artillery ceased. However, these intervisibility lines also negated their own standoff advantage. More than one hundred Soviet tanks attacked the *11th Panzer Division*, but the Germans had learned quickly from their earlier experience with the T–34s. Establishing a linear defense backed by *III/Göring*'s 88-mm. guns and the entirety of the division's artillery, the Germans used their tank guns to destroy lighter Soviet tanks while leaving the T–34s to the Flak-88s and direct fire from howitzers. An enterprising German lieutenant, commanding a platoon of Panzer IV tanks, noticed that the T–34s carried fuel tanks on their back decks and ordered his platoon to fire high-explosive 75-mm. rounds at the fuel tanks, engulfing two T–34s in flames. Junior Panzer leaders across the division ordered their crews to engage the tracks and road wheels of the T–34s and the KV–1s, another new model of tank making its first appearance. Even though the 37-mm. and 50-mm. tank guns of the Panzer III tanks were unable to penetrate the armor of these tanks, they were more than capable of inflicting mobility kills, making the disabled tanks easy targets for the Flak-88s and howitzers. Meanwhile, the Soviet motorized infantry regiment attacked separately and without

coordination with the tanks. After losing almost fifty tanks and an indeterminate number of infantrymen, the 10th Tank Division withdrew to the east. The *11th Panzer Division* had destroyed upward of eighty Soviet tanks at the cost of seven tanks irreparably lost. Notably, the six additional catastrophic kills from the second engagement were a result of accurate T–34 fire at a range of approximately 800 meters, which shocked the Germans. More significant was the loss of sixty-three German tank crew killed in action, including three junior officers. *III/Göring*'s flak crews also took heavy casualties, including the death of a battery commander; these experienced soldiers would not be replaced easily.[11]

These first Soviet counterattacks, which showed great potential, failed because of poor combined arms application. The initial fighting west of Radekhiv had all the ingredients of a successful combined arms counterattack: a large artillery barrage, a tank-infantry team, and even close air support arriving at the appropriate time. Notwithstanding the critical miscommunication between the Red Army and Soviet Air Forces, which led to that close air support overflying and striking targets 30 kilometers away, the five battalions from the 4th Mechanized Corps caught the *11th Panzer Division* by surprise. The local Soviet commander, Lt. Col. Georgiy Lysenko, fumbled by putting infantry in the lead, with the tanks behind them in a supporting role. This arrangement not only squandered the element of surprise, but it also forced the tanks to advance at the rate of the infantry, making them easy targets for the German tanks and guns. The afternoon engagement east of Radekhiv was an even larger failure of combined arms. The 10th Tank Division commander, Maj. Gen. Sergei Ogurtsov, cut off his artillery barrage far too early. He then used his reconnaissance battalion as the lead element of the attack, rather than exercising tactical patience and employing it in its intended role of providing accurate information regarding German dispositions. This resulted in German firepower shredding its armored cars. Finally, the failure to integrate the infantry and tank regiments in their counterattack led to a complete waste of both units' potentials.

On the reverse side, the *11th Panzer Division*'s leaders showed the ability to take in information, analyze it, and develop appropriate courses of action. General Crüwell's commitment of *III/Göring*'s 88-mm. guns against Lysenko's T–34s, his rapid reorganization of *KG A*, and the delineation of direct-fire engagement priorities for the *11th Panzer Division*'s hasty defense resulted in *KG A*'s mauling of a Soviet counterattack of equal or better strength. The benefits of Auftragstaktik also showed themselves in these early battles. First, Crüwell's forward presence with *KG A* was a direct result of Auftragstaktik's emphasis on forward command. Second, the actions of platoon leaders across the *11th Panzer Division* in reaction to the new T–34 and KV–1 tanks amplified the effects of the combined arms effort. Decisions to employ ammunition in innovative ways for which it was not designed were the result of an emphasis on junior leaders taking initiative and the inherent trust from higher commanders that comes along with that culture.

The Soviet counterattacks on 23 June 1941 held significant promise as combined arms operations involving infantry, armor, and artillery—yet failed because of misapplication of those arms against improper German weak points. In contrast, the Germans correctly identified weak points against which they could leverage strengths and applied their combat power appropriately. In addition, a culture of junior leader initiative amplified the effects of successful combined arms application. It resulted in the overall destruction of more than 100 Soviet tanks by *Panzer Group 1* for the cost of only seven tanks lost.

A German soldier sits atop a captured T–34 tank.
Bundesarchiv

General Ogurtsov
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

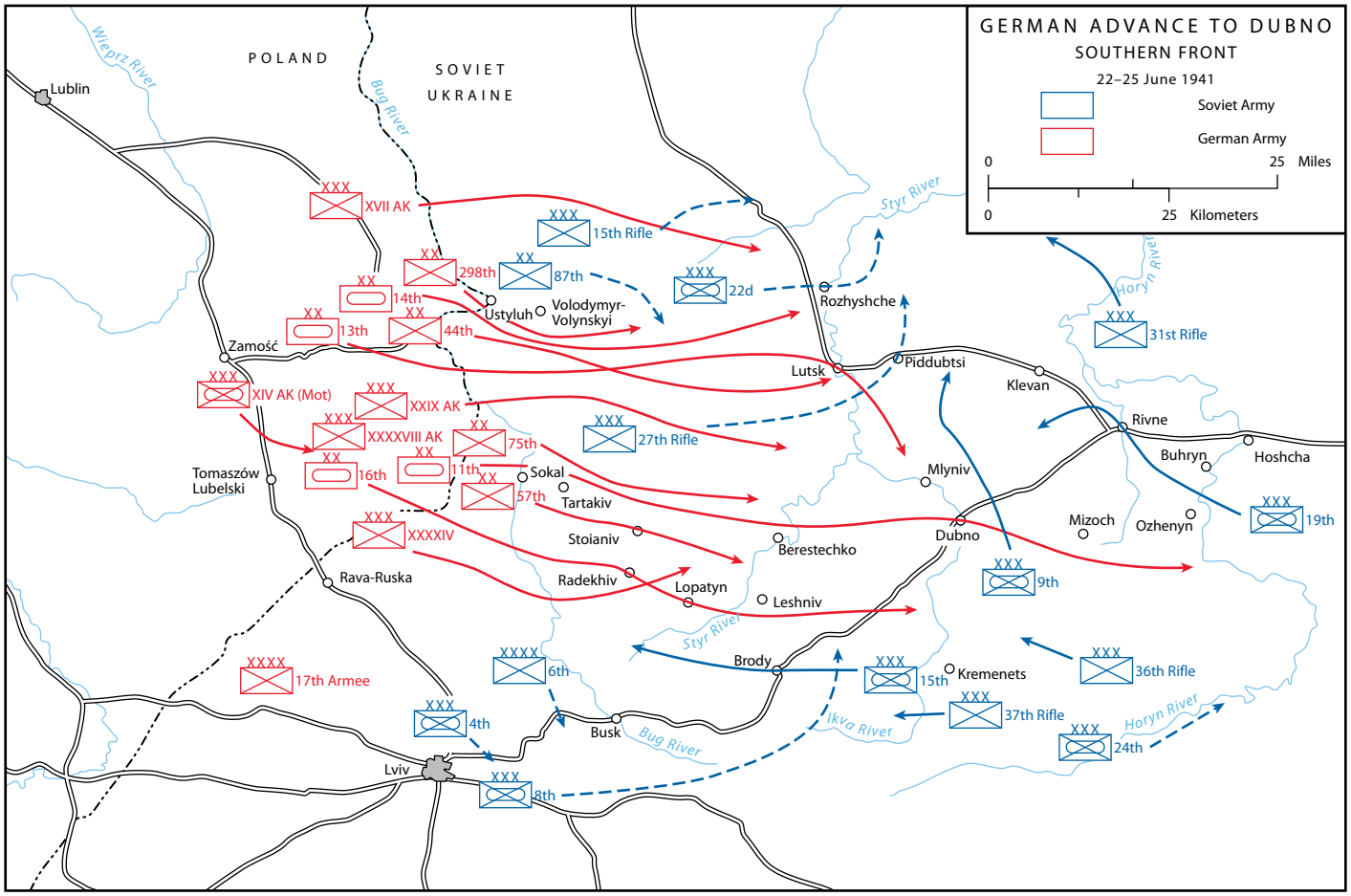
Exploitation

On the evening of 23 June, *XXXXVIII AK* published its assessment of the new Soviet tanks, remarking that 37-mm. guns were completely ineffective and recommended the use of the Flak-88s for their destruction. German commands at all levels remarked on heavy Soviet air

attacks hindering forward movement, and the *Luftwaffe* reported being unable to provide close air support or defensive counterair missions in support of the Panzer divisions because of their ongoing struggle for air superiority. In an event seemingly relegated to a footnote at the time, the *11th Panzer Division*'s motorcycle battalion had, on the initiative of its commander Lt. Col. (first name unknown) von Stockhausen, lunged forward and seized Berestechko late on 23 June. Their quick action secured vital bridges over the Styr River before Soviet forces could arrive at the town and destroy them. This maneuver, seizing Berestechko unopposed, ensured *XXXXVIII AK* could continue its advance the next day without fighting for a bridgehead. It was another example of the Auftragstaktik mindset which would continue to enable German success.[12]

German troops inspect a knocked-out KV–1 tank.
Bundesarchiv

Meanwhile, General Kirponos and his staff drew up plans for 24 June at the Southwestern Front headquarters. The 15th and 22d Mechanized Corps and the 1st Antitank Brigade were all available for counterattacks, while the 8th, 9th, and 19th Mechanized Corps still were marching from their starting positions in central Ukraine. Kirponos's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Maksim Alekseevich Purkayev, argued for adopting a defensive posture for two more days, allowing the 8th, 9th, and 19th Mechanized Corps to arrive before launching a large counterattack. Kirponos's commissar, Lt. Gen. Nikolai N. Vashugin, however, insisted that the front must counterattack immediately, in line with a directive from Moscow. The primacy of the commissariat, and the



General Purkaev
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

General Zhukov
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

order from the Stavka, the Soviet armed forces high command, made Kirponos elect to side with Vashugin and direct a counterattack for 24 June.[13]

On the southern wing, the 15th Mechanized Corps would attack Berestechko. As they were finalizing the plan, two important visitors arrived at Kirponos's headquarters from Moscow: General Georgy K. Zhukov, chief of staff of the Red Army, and Commissar Nikita S. Khrushchev, head of the Ukrainian Communist Party. Zhukov berated Kirponos for what he considered a lackluster performance thus far. Although Kirponos had limited German gains in the first two days to less than 40 kilometers, the other three Panzer Groups all had achieved deeper penetrations by that evening, including Col. Gen. Hermann Hoth's *Panzer Group 3* striking almost 125 kilometers toward Vilnius in Lithuania. The Stavka and Stalin clearly expected the Germans to be held farther forward. Zhukov demanded a counterattack, which Kirponos already had decided upon.[14]

XXXXVIII AK's drive on 24 June was spearheaded by the *11th Panzer Division*, with the *16th Panzer Division* hurrying to catch up. General Crüwell formed the *11th Panzer Division* into three kampfgruppen to advance on three parallel axes, one around each of its maneuver regiments: *Panzer Regiment 15*, *Schutzen Regiment 110*, and *Schutzen Regiment 111*.[15] The Schutzen regiments each traded a motorized infantry company to *Panzer Regiment 15* in exchange for a tank company, and each kampfgruppe was rounded out with artillery, antiair, and engineer units to create robust combined arms teams. The *11th Panzer Division* advanced rapidly on 24 June, hampered only by continual Soviet Air Forces attacks. They were all that kept the *11th Panzer Division* from reaching its objective of Dubno that day, as Maj. Gen. Ignaty Ivanovich Karpezo's 15th Mechanized Corps did not counterattack as ordered. German air and ground reconnaissance detected the 15th Corps' armor around 0700 that morning, but merely observed it moving back and forth, shadowing the *11th Panzer Division*'s advance without engaging.[16]

Eventually, Kirponos sent an order for Karpezo to take up defensive positions and await the arrival of Lt. Gen. Dmitry I. Ryabyshev's 8th Mechanized Corps

General Vashugin
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

Commissar Khrushchev
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

General Karpezo
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

that afternoon before launching the counterattack. However, the 8th Mechanized Corps would not linkup with the 15th Mechanized Corps that day. As Ryabyshev's forces traveled through Lviv, insurgents from the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists—a right-wing nationalist group that had been armed by Germany since 1939—ambushed them. The 8th Mechanized Corps got bogged down in running street battles with the insurgents. The situation continued to deteriorate as members of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) began executing Ukrainians in reprisal for the insurgent attacks, which in turn led to civilians fleeing the city and obstructing the roads. By the time the 8th Mechanized Corps disentangled itself from Lviv, it had lost the day. Meanwhile, the *11th Panzer Division* swept aside small Soviet infantry detachments with little comment and reached Verba, 15 kilometers short of Dubno, by the end of the day. That night, General Kempf directed the *16th Panzer Division* to seize Kremenets while the *11th Panzer Division* seized Ostroh.[17]

On 25 June, the *11th Panzer Division* continued to attack aggressively at the head of the corps. Despite *Kampfgruppe Riebel* lagging because of resupply issues and terrain difficulties, General Crüwell ordered *Kampfgruppen 110* and *111*, recombined into *Kampfgruppe Angern* under Col. Günther Angern, to continue onward to Dubno, a confidence enabled by the robust combined arms nature of each of them. The Soviet Air Forces continued to bomb the *11th Panzer Division* throughout the day. At 1100, *Kampfgruppe Angern* reached the outskirts of Dubno, where they encountered the Soviet 529th Super-Heavy Howitzer Regiment, a front-level artillery unit equipped with 210-mm. cannons. The Germans captured 2,500 stunned Soviet artillerymen and 42 brand-new howitzers, securing Dubno without much of a fight.[18]

General Ryabyshev
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

As the two infantry-heavy kampfgruppen were capturing Dubno, the division's scout element, *Reconnaissance Battalion 231* reinforced with elements of *Panzerjäger Battalion 61*, split off and advanced on the town of Mlyniv, 15 kilometers north, to secure a secondary crossing point over the Ikva River in case the bridges in Dubno had been blown. At 1400, the German scouts encountered a company of sixteen Soviet tanks from the 40th Tank Division defending Mlyniv. Despite having no tanks of its own, *Reconnaissance Battalion 231* attacked the Soviet tanks with a mixture of armored cars, dismounted scouts, motorcycle scouts, infantry guns, and antitank guns. This bold assault was enough to drive the Soviet tanks, with no infantry or artillery support, into retreat and allowed *Reconnaissance Battalion 231* to capture the Mlyniv bridges intact. Shortly thereafter, the Soviet 228th Rifle Division, tasked to defend Mlyniv and Dubno, arrived at their objectives to find both areas in the hands of the *11th Panzer Division*. Had Crüwell not pushed aggressively without most of his armor, he likely would have encountered the 228th Rifle Division firmly entrenched with heavy artillery support. Instead, Soviet rifle forces attacked into German defenses. The Soviets' one advantage was in artillery, as the 228th had been reinforced with two additional regiments, bringing their total indirect fire support to three regiments. One rifle regiment, the 787th, and one artillery regiment, the 366th, attacked Mlyniv, scooping up the wayward tank company along the way. In a display of combined arms skill, the 787th Rifle Regiment's anonymous commander integrated his infantry, armor, and artillery superiority to overwhelm

Colonel Angern
Bundesarchiv

Reconnaissance Battalion 231 and drive it out of Mlyniv before digging in to defend. Meanwhile, the 228th Rifle Division's main assault against Dubno was thrown back. Despite the nearly 3:1 ratio of Soviet advantage in artillery, the lack of armor support doomed this attack to failure. The German kampfgruppen, supported as they were by two companies of tanks, repulsed the Soviet assault on Dubno with relative ease.[19]

The actions on 25 June reflect the criticality of both combined arms integration and Auftragstaktik culture to the *Wehrmacht*'s conduct of operations. The *11th Panzer Division* formed its kampfgruppen based on its specific needs and the perception of the enemy situation. Each kampfgruppe was a self-contained combined arms team capable and expected to fight independently without the need for the division commander to get involved. This empowered subordinate commanders to make important decisions, such as the commander of *Reconnaissance Battalion 231* deviating from his Dubno objective to secure a secondary crossing at Mlyniv, and enabling the division commander to place himself at the point of friction. Meanwhile, the corps commander could focus on bringing their corps artillery to bear in support of various fights, solve

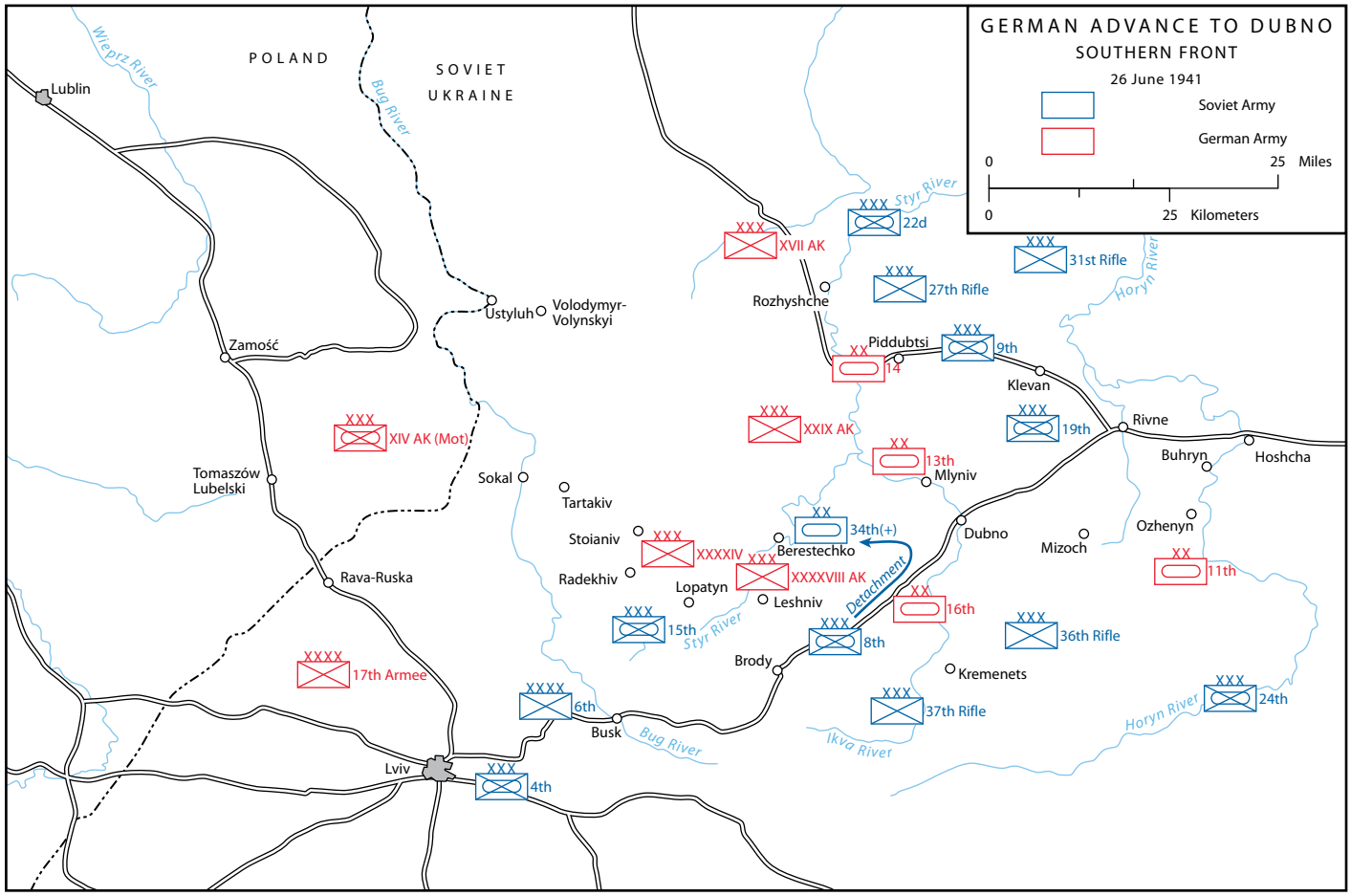
issues regarding traffic flow between divisions, and engage the *Luftwaffe* to lobby for more fighter coverage for his divisions. The Soviet 787th Rifle Regiment's successful attack to dislodge *Reconnaissance Battalion 231* from Mlyniv proves that some Soviet commanders could leverage combined arms at lower echelons against their more experienced German opponents and find success. This point deserves attention because it stands in such stark contrast to the performance of every other Soviet formation up to that point. It is the proverbial exception that proves the rule. Soviet commanders' overreliance on combined arms considerations at higher echelons at the expense of lower echelons created an asymmetric advantage which the Germans' combined arms teams were able to exploit to the fullest. By the evening of 25 June, *XXXXVIII AK* had advanced slightly more than 100 kilometers, still significantly behind its peers in *Army Groups Center* and *North*, and still had not yet engaged the bulk of Soviet armor in Ukraine.

First Counterattack

That engagement was soon coming. At 0500 on 26 June 1941, the *11th Panzer Division* continued its advance eastward from Dubno, while the *16th Panzer Division* set off southeast from Berestechko. German *Sixth Army* pulled infantry divisions up behind these two armored spearheads to protect their flank overnight, eliminating Kempf's key concern at the time. *Army Group South* headquarters alerted all its subordinate commands to expect a major Soviet counteroffensive on 28 June and attached a battalion of Flak-88s from *Flak Regiment 7* to *XXXXVIII AK* for use against the heavier Soviet tanks they had been encountering. Kempf attached this battalion to the *16th Panzer Division*.[20]

Opposite the Germans, Kirponos directed the Soviet counteroffensive to begin at 0900 on 26 June. In the southern grouping of forces, the 15th and 8th Mechanized Corps attacked north on schedule. The 15th Mechanized Corps was short its 10th Tank Division, temporarily combat ineffective after its encounter with the *11th Panzer* on 23 June. Its motorized rifle division, the 212th, was placed into a defensive posture at Brody, leaving the 37th Tank Division attacking alone. The 8th Mechanized Corps attacked with all three of its divisions, albeit at just above 50 percent strength owing to mechanical failures and *Luftwaffe* air attacks; the corps' older model tanks had been particularly hard-hit. Nevertheless, this meant the 8th Mechanized Corps attacked with more than 450 tanks. The 8th Mechanized Corps was among the more seasoned Soviet units, having fought in Poland as the 4th Cavalry Corps under a skilled, experienced commander in Lt. Gen. Nikolai N. Vashugin. The 12th Tank Division, mainly equipped with the new T–34 and KV–1 tanks, formed the center, while the 34th Tank Division attacked to the northeast and the 7th Motorized Rifle Division to the southwest. Kirponos directed the bulk of his aviation support to this southern thrust. The Soviet Air Forces flew almost 300 sorties in support of the 15th Mechanized Corps, dropping 26,000 pounds of ordnance. The 8th Mechanized Corps was supported by almost 500 sorties delivering a staggering 250,000 pounds of ordnance, pummeling the Germans throughout the day.[21]

At 0900, the German *57th Infantry Division*, still subordinated to *XXXXVIII AK* and guarding the rear right flank of the *16th Panzer Division*, reported that they



had suddenly come under fierce attack by Soviet tanks supported by heavy artillery fire and air support. This was the 12th Tank Division, which quickly brushed aside the forward German reconnaissance forces and attacked toward Leshniv. However, the Soviet plan began to unravel quickly. The attacks of the 12th Tank, 34th Tank, and 7th Motorized Rifle were not coordinated at the corps level. Each division attacked its own objective relying on its own organic assets. The 7th Motorized Rifle Division was supposed to attack on line with the 7th Tank Division from the 15th Mechanized Corps, but that unit's delays in attacking meant the 7th Motorized Rifle Division did not enter the fight until 1300, four hours after its two sister divisions. After sweeping through the *57th Infantry Division*'s forward elements, the 12th Tank Division smashed into the German main defensive line at the town of Leshniv. Using its motorized infantry regiment under cover of suppressive artillery fire and the heavy attacks from the air forces, the Soviets forced a crossing of the Slonivka River south of Leshniv and began enveloping the *57th Infantry Division* with their tanks. At 1200, *XXXXVIII AK*'s war diary recorded grimly: "The situation at Leshniv is critical."[22]

Alerted to the danger by his chief of staff, Kempf, who was forward following the *11th Panzer Division*, took charge of the situation. Turning around to head toward the crisis point, he took several critical actions that would salvage his flank and exploit the weaknesses in the Soviet plan. The first was a request for *XXXXIV Armeekorps* to reinforce his right flank, taking over security responsibility from the *57th Infantry Division*; *XXXXIV Armeekorps* began moving into position. Second, Kempf ordered the *16th Panzer Division* to abandon their attack and face about. They would come to the support of the *57th Infantry Division* and strike the Soviet 12th Tank Division in its right flank. Third, Kempf demanded and received both fighter and close air support from *Fliegerkorps V*. The corps staff vectored in the attacking Ju–88 and He–111 bombers on the 12th Tank Division. Critically, Kempf ordered the *Luftwaffe* bombers to attack Soviet artillery positions, not tanks. This was the first time in the fighting in western Ukraine that *Fliegerkorps V* conducted close air support, previously operating almost exclusively in an offensive counterair and interdiction role. This represented an important addition to the Germans' combined arms approach in the battle. *Fliegerkorps V*'s Bf–109 fighters pounced on the Soviet Air Forces bombers, who were operating without significant fighter coverage. Indeed, many of the Soviet fighters had been equipped with bombs in a ground attack role, leaving them at a disadvantage against their opponents. This air battle diverted Soviet Air Forces attention from supporting the ground attack, and the bomber divisions of the Southwestern Front instead focused their attacks on German airfields, removing a critical force multiplier from the Soviet advance just at the moment of breakthrough. *Fliegerkorps V* confirmed they shot down at least 68 Soviet aircraft on 26 June alone, and Soviet reports record the loss of 173 aircraft by the evening of 27 June; 26 June was "a black day for the Air Forces of the South-Western Front."[23]

Meanwhile, the tanks of the Soviet 12th Tank Division broke through the *57th Infantry Division* and continued driving north. However, the tank regiments did not wait for their supporting motorized rifle regiment to remount and continue onward; having seized the bridgehead across the Slonivka, the infantry's task was complete. The Soviet tanks therefore rushed on alone, aiming to exploit their breakthrough into operational depth, and they succeeded in cutting *XXXXVIII AK*'s ground line of communications west of Berestechko. At 1400, two things happened nearly simultaneously. First, *Fliegerkorps V* unleashed its air attacks against the 12th Tank Division's artillery and logistics trains, destroying all the artillery's prime movers and killing most of the Soviet artillerymen. Second, the *16th Panzer Division*'s lead kampfgruppe contacted the 12th Tank Division's flank. The two exploiting Soviet tank regiments suddenly found themselves without support facing a German kampfgruppe of tanks, motorcycle infantry, and the *16th Panzer Division*'s antitank battalion, supported directly by corps artillery. The lead Panzer battalion attacked prematurely, losing four tanks in a tank duel in an oat field before retreating. Once the kampfgruppe employed its full combined arms weight, the 12th Tank Division's two tank regiments took the worst of the fighting. The Germans used their tanks, infantry guns, and 37-mm. Pak 36s to score mobility kills on the T–34s and KV–1s, and used the antitank battalion's complement of 50-mm. Pak 38s and the attached Flak 88s from *I*

Soviet tanks advance ahead of supporting infantry.
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

Battalion, Flak Regiment 7 to destroy the Soviet armor. The fighting was fierce and lasted past nightfall as the Germans first succeeded in reestablishing control around Leshniv and then reopened their ground line of communications. Devoid of infantry and artillery support, the two Soviet tank regiments retreated.[24]

To the west, the 7th Motorized Rifle Division attacked feebly with its infantry in the lead and its tanks providing supporting fire from behind, making no progress against German positions. To the east, the 34th Tank Division attacked toward Berestechko. Given the greater distance the 34th Tank had to cover, the Germans had more time to react when they spotted the oncoming Soviet division. Elements of the *Regiment General Göring* (*RGG*) held Berestchko, which included its motorcycle infantry battalion and a Flak-88 battalion. To deal with the impending Soviet tank attack, *Panzer Group 1* reinforced *XXXXVIII AK* with the *Panzerjäger Battalion 670* that was equipped with Panzerjäger I tank destroyers.[25] Kempf formed *Kampfgruppe Eisermann* by attaching the *670th* to *Motorcycle Infantry Battalion 165* from the *16th Infantry Division (Motorized)*, the corps' trailing element, and dispatched the kampfgruppe to Berestechko. As the Soviets' 34th Tank Division attacked Berestechko and took fire from *RGG*'s Flak-88s, Pak 36s, and infantry guns, it suddenly also came under enfilading fire from its left flank and a heavy artillery barrage. *Kampfgruppe Eisermann* had deployed to the left of the 34th Tank Division, using the mobility of the Panzerjäger Is and *Motorcycle Battalion 165*'s towed antitank and infantry guns to gain a position of relative advantage on the Soviet flank. Because the 34th Tank Division was equipped with T–26 and BT-series tanks, even the 37-mm. Pak 36 antitank guns were able to penetrate the Soviet armor at considerable ranges. Like the 12th Tank Division, the 34th Tank Division had outpaced its supporting infantry, and after losing thirty tanks, it broke contact with the Germans and withdrew out of direct fire engagement range.[26]

Although the remainder of *XXXXVIII AK* was fighting desperately between Leshniv and Berestechko, Crüwell's *11th Panzer Division* continued its aggressive eastward attack. By evening, *Kampfgruppe Angern* had advanced 30 kilometers, driving the Soviet 228th Rifle Division before it in disorder. On its left wing, *Kampfgruppe Riebel* with the bulk of *Panzer Regiment 15* advanced 11 kilometers to Molodava Tretya before contacting the Soviet 43d Tank Division from the 19th Mechanized Corps. Weakened by breakdowns of tanks and trucks and by *Luftwaffe* attacks, the 43d Tank's committed strength was about 150 tanks and 650 mounted infantrymen. The engagement between the attacking *Kampfgruppe Riebel* and the 43rd Tank Division was roughly even in terms of size and composition of forces. The fact that the 43d Tank was equipped almost entirely with T–26 light tanks meant all tanks involved could destroy each other. The tank duel ebbed and flowed, and Crüwell became unhappy with the lack of progress. He once again task-organized his forces, creating a new *Kampfgruppe Usedom* under the commander of *Reconnaissance Battalion 231*. *Kampfgruppe Usedom* consisted of the reconnaissance battalion, *Pioneer Battalion 61*, an antitank company, a tank company, two batteries of Flak-88s, a battery of 105-mm. howitzers, and a battery of 150-mm. howitzers. Maj. Horst von Usedom and his kampfgruppe conducted a relief in place with *Kampfgruppe Riebel*, which sped quickly southeast. *Kampfgruppe Usedom*, with its static firepower fixed, began attriting the 43d Tank Division while *Kampfgruppe Riebel*'s tanks turned its left flank. This occurred at the same time as the *13th Panzer Division* from *III Army Corps* (*motorized*) was turning the 19th Mechanized Corps' right flank.[27]

Major Usedom
Bundesarchiv

As the *11th* and *13th Panzer Division*s outmaneuvered the 19th Mechanized Corps and forced it to withdraw, Colonel Stockhausen, commander of *Motorcycle Battalion 61*, once again turned the moderate tactical success into an operational impact during the night of 26–27 June. In another display of the advantages of Auftragstaktik culture, Stockhausen deduced that given the relative ease with which they had penetrated the 228th Rifle Division, there were likely no significant Soviet forces in front of him. He decided to lead his battalion onward while the remainder of *Kampfgruppe Angern* dug in at Mizoch. The motorcycle infantry dashed forward and, as their commander expected, met no Soviet resistance. They reached Ostroh, 28 kilometers from Mizoch. As they arrived, the Germans encountered a small garrison and the motorcycle scouts of the Soviet 173d Reconnaissance Battalion. The German motorcyclists drove off their opponents and, finding the Ostroh bridges intact, began to entrench. Unbeknown to the Germans, the Soviet scouts belonged to 109th Motorized Infantry Division from 5th Mechanized Corps, which was en route to Ostroh with the exact same goal: secure Ostroh and its bridges and dig in to defend. Thus, the initiative of a single battalion commander not only doubled his corps' effective penetration for the day, but also completely negated Soviet plans for a third defensive line held by a fresh mechanized corps.[28]

On 26 June, Southwestern Front commander Kirponos orchestrated a counterattack in line with existing Soviet doctrine. Focusing on combined arms at the Army and Front level, Kirponos envisioned a force of two, later three, rifle corps supported by an antitank brigade fixing the advancing German mechanized forces of *XXXXVIII AK*, while four Soviet mechanized corps enveloped the Germans from both north and south. A prodigious effort from his air forces would support this, flying more than 750 sorties and delivering more than 275,000 pounds of ordnance. However, interference from Zhukov led to

the rifle corps attacking instead, separating them from their supporting antitank brigade and leaving them at the mercy of the Germans' combined arms kampfgruppen.

The Soviet decision to dedicate most of its fighters to ground-attack roles rather than to fighter sweeps or escort missions meant that the Soviet Air Forces suffered greatly on 26 June. Kirponos chose to reallocate their sorties from ground attack to offensive counterair to regain air superiority. Meanwhile, the various mechanized units of the counterattack continued to repeat the same mistakes which their comrades had made since 22 June: although artillery support continued to range from adequate to extremely effective, infantry and tank regiments continued to be employed separately at the division level. The 8th Mechanized Corps' penetration of *XXXXVIII AK*'s flank created a crisis for the Germans, but the Soviets' failure to support their exploiting tanks with any of their motorized infantry represented a flaw in combined arms application that nevertheless was essentially in line with Soviet doctrine.

Throughout the fighting, German Auftragstaktik culture continued to pay outsized dividends. By this point, Colonel Stockhausen had twice used initiative to lead his battalion forward to seize critical bridgeheads well ahead of his division after assessing the enemy situation and finding it permissible. On a more constant level, Auftragstaktik culture's mutual trust enabled German commanders to task-organize several times throughout the shifting situations of 24–26 June without fear of loss of effectiveness. German kampfgruppe leaders continued to display the initiative required of them to outthink and outfight their Soviet opponents.

By the evening of 26 June, Kirponos's counterattack had failed to slow the German advance significantly. In the south, 8th Mechanized Corps, which had achieved the most success of any Soviet formation thus far, had been contained and repulsed. The 109th Motorized Rifle Division from the 5th Mechanized Corps was about to enter the battle for Ostroh, although the bulk of its two tank divisions were being loaded up onto trains to be shipped north to Western Front, which was collapsing in front of *Panzer Groups 2* and *3*. The counterattack had not achieved its intended effects, but it had been far from disastrous. In multiple engagements the Soviets had fought well, worrying the Germans and reinforcing Soviet confidence. With significant forces still available, Kirponos and his staff gathered to plan a new counterattack for the next day.[29]

General Counterattack

Kirponos's main concern was the startling breakthrough of the *11th Panzer Division* all the way to Ostroh. Because of poor reconnaissance, Kirponos knew neither the size nor strength of the German forces occupying that city. He feared the German Panzer troops could begin encircling Muzychenko's 6th Army from the north. Unlike Maj. Gen. Mikhail I. Potapov's 5th Army, which had been fighting against two German motorized corps, the 6th Army was facing only German infantry and accordingly had not lost much ground. The penetration to Ostroh now imperiled the 6th Army's rear area, and Kirponos ordered Muzychenko to withdraw and establish a new right flank at Kremenets. Kirponos then planned to have three rifle corps establish a new defensive line from Kremenets to the northeast and pull all four mechanized corps behind them to consolidate and reorganize before a renewed counterattack. However, when Kirponos's staff sent this plan to Moscow, the Stavka immediately forbade any withdrawal and demanded Kirponos counterattack immediately on 27 June. To still pull eastward while complying with Moscow's orders, Kirponos changed the axes of both the 15th and 8th Mechanized Corps' attacks from north to northeast: the 15th Mechanized would attack toward Berestechko, while the 8th Mechanized would attack Dubno. From the north, the 9th and 19th Mechanized Corps would likewise attack toward Dubno, aiming to encircle and destroy the *16th* and *11th Panzer Division*s. The time for the general counterattack was set for 0900 on 27 June.[30]

The rapid advance by the *11th Panzer Division* combined with the Soviet attack on Leshniv and Berestechko on 26 June left *XXXXVIII AK* in a state of confusion as to the location of its subordinate elements. Establishing a solid right flank became corps commander Werner Kempf's primary focus. Starting in the early morning hours, the *57th Infantry Division* conducted local counterattacks to reestablish its defensive positions that it had lost the previous day. It then

Mikhail I. Potapov, shown here as a lieutenant general.
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

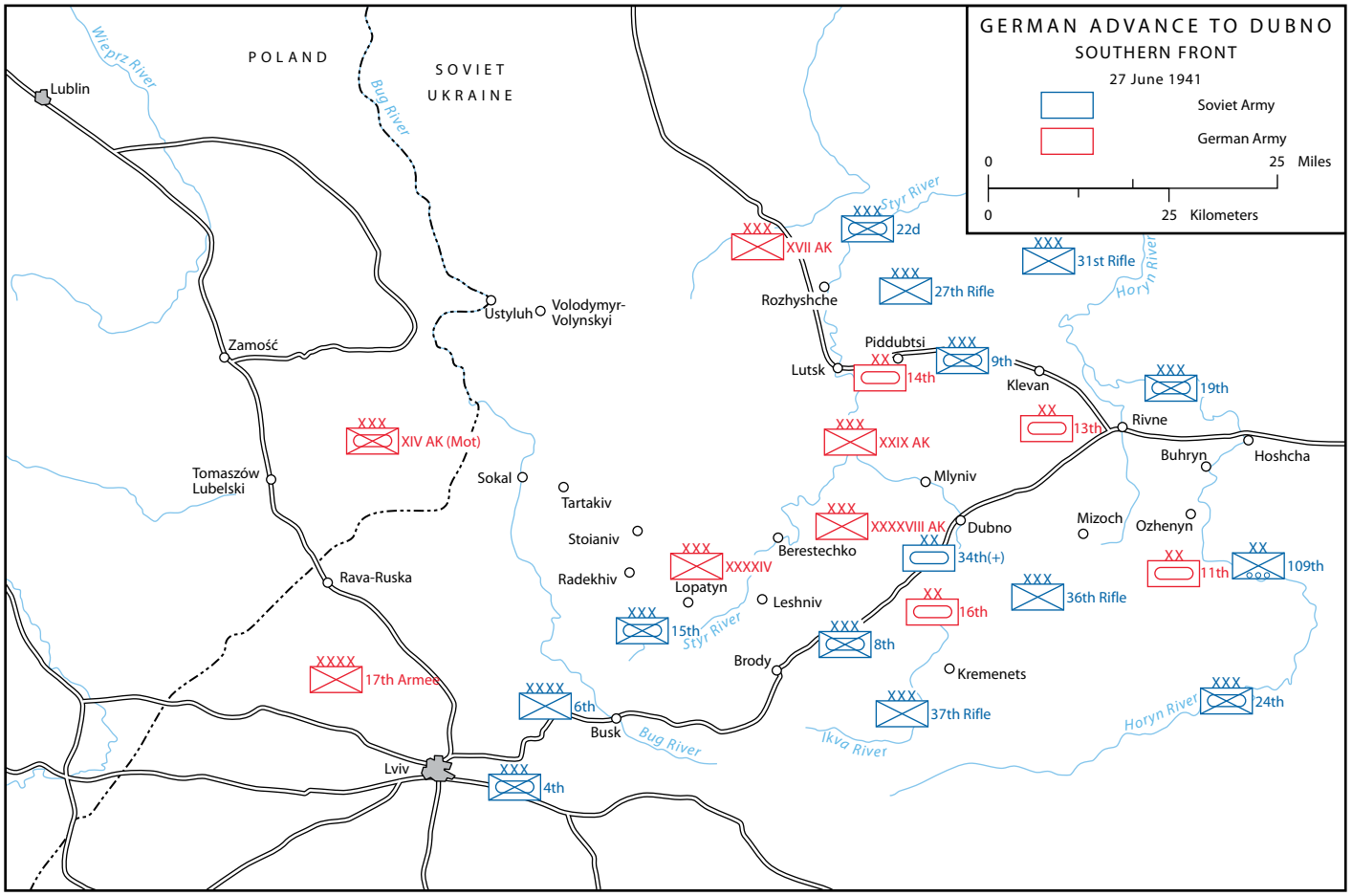
transferred under *XXXXIV Armeekorps*, which assumed flank responsibility from Leshniv to the west. Kempf ordered the *16th Infantry Division (Motorized)*, lagging because of clogged roads, to expedite its advance to Berestechko and assume flank security for the *16th Panzer Division*. Kempf had lost all radio contact with the *16th Panzer* and had no idea where its commander, Brig. Gen. Hans-Valentin Hube, was located. *Panzer Group 1* sent orders to *III AK* and *XXXXVIII AK* to immediately press the enemy, because there were "signs that the enemy in front of *Panzer Group 1* is falling back." Although it was true that all four Soviet mechanized corps in the 5th Army area had broken local contact the previous evening, Kempf rightly assessed that the danger had not passed; in the Auftragstaktik spirit, he ignored orders to press his advance in favor of reforming the integrity of his corps because of his superior local understanding.[31]

At the leading edge of the corps, the *11th Panzer Division* consolidated at Ostroh. Traveling since early morning, *Kampfgruppe Angern* began arriving at the city at 0500, reinforcing the motorcyclists who had charged ahead so

General Hube
Bundesarchiv

boldly. However, elements of Col. N. P. Krasnoretskiy's 109th Motorized Division attacked Ostroh before all *Kampfgruppe Angern* was in position; at the time of the attack, there was only *Motorcycle Battalion 61* and *Schützen Regiment 110*. Krasnoretskiy's artillery was not yet in position. Of his twenty-three available tanks, only six were at the forward staging area, and seventeen others along with fifteen armored cars were moving from the railhead. Anxiety about the loss of Ostroh's bridges overwhelmed any good sense, as Krasnoretskiy ordered his two motorized rifle regiments and his reconnaissance battalion to attack Ostroh without indirect fire support. Advancing under the suppression of only their 76-mm. infantry guns and six tanks, the motorized riflemen and scouts forced their way into Ostroh. The German defenders likewise were caught with their artillery still on the march and could reply only with small arms and infantry guns. As more of *Kampfgruppe Angern* arrived in Ostroh, Colonel Angern fed them into the southern part of the town where the Soviets had concentrated the bulk of their combat power. This, along with the wounding and evacuation of Krasnoretskiy around 1000, enabled the Germans to retake the southern bridge. However, the fighting was still fierce, and Angern sent an urgent request to Crüwell for reinforcements.[32]

Crüwell was traveling with the tank-heavy *Kampfgruppe Riebel* to expedite its advance. At approximately 1200, the lead battalion arrived at Ostroh and began maneuvering around the Soviet's northern flank. The German tanks enveloped the Soviet right flank, bypassing it and striking the 109th Motorized Rifle Division's center. At this point, the remaining seventeen BT–7 tanks and fifteen BA–3/6 armored cars that were available to the 109th were committed to the battle, counterattacking the lead Panzer battalion.[33] The *11th Panzer Division*'s war diary remarked on the courage and hard-fighting skill of Soviet tank crews, but the battalion-sized Soviet formation could not prevent the center from collapsing under attacks from front and rear. The sudden envelopment caused a rout of the 109th Motorized Rifle Division's center and left, which, in turn, produced the complete isolation of two Soviet battalions in northeastern Ostroh. These encircled Soviets held on tenaciously to the northern bridge until evening, with *11th Panzer Division*'s *Schützen* (infantrymen) battling forward slowly through the streets. Near nightfall, 109th Motorized Rifle Division's artillery



was finally in position and began a heavy bombardment of Ostroh in support of a renewed attack by the division's motorized rifle regiments. Soviet Air Forces attacks accompanied this starting at 1700 and lasted for several hours. By this point, the entirety of the *11th Panzer Division* was firmly ensconced around Ostroh and it easily repulsed the infantry assault. They completed clearing the northeast section of the town near midnight. The isolated Soviets fought almost to the last soldier.[34]

To the *11th Panzer Division*'s rear, *XXXXVIII AK* was experiencing its second crisis in as many days. Crüwell's rapid consolidation of his division at Ostroh occurred during a period of intermittent radio communications; the corps headquarters would not receive a report from the *11th Panzer Division* until 1430, by which point the division was concentrated forward. This exacerbated Kempf's already tenuous grasp of the positions of his units. Meanwhile, aided by renewed reconnaissance efforts, Kirponos sought to take advantage of a now massive gap in *XXXXVIII AK*'s lines: the *16th Panzer Division*'s kampfgruppen were strung out between Leshniv and Kremenets, while the *11th Panzer Division* was 60 kilometers forward at Ostroh.[35]

Into this gap, Soviet 8th Mechanized Corps commander Lt. Gen. Dmitry Ryabyshev thrust a task force under the command of 8th Corps Commissar Nikolai K. Popel consisting of the 34th Tank Division's 190 tanks and fresh motorized rifle and artillery regiments, 25 T–34s and KV–1s from the 12th Tank Division, and the 2d Motorcycle Regiment. Ryabyshev and Popel had argued to delay their attack until 28 June to allow them to get the 7th Motorized Rifle and 12th Tank Division back into the fight but Southwestern Front Commissar Lt. Gen. Nikolai N. Vashugin, who insisted upon immediate counterattacks, had threatened them with execution for treason.[36]

The Soviets attacked around 1400, shortly before the *11th Panzer Division*'s reports reached Kempf. The Soviet task force cut 35 kilometers into the center of *XXXXVIII AK*. As he achieved this breakthrough, however, Popel did not keep the force consolidated, instead launching separate formations in different directions, thereby diluting his combat power and separating his arms. The 2d Motorcycle Regiment and the 67th Tank Regiment's KV–1s and T–34 tanks attacked the highway west of Dubno, ambushing and destroying elements of *XXXXVIII AK*'s intelligence section and supply convoys heading to that town. The 68th Tank Regiment, consisting of one battalion of T–35 heavy tanks and two battalions of T–34s, attacked the infantry-heavy *Kampfgruppe Hube* from the *16th Panzer Division* near Verba. Other Soviet forces encountered elements of the *11th Panzer Division*'s field trains and destroyed them.[37]

Commissar Popel, shown here in a postwar photo.
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

General Kleist
Bundesarchiv

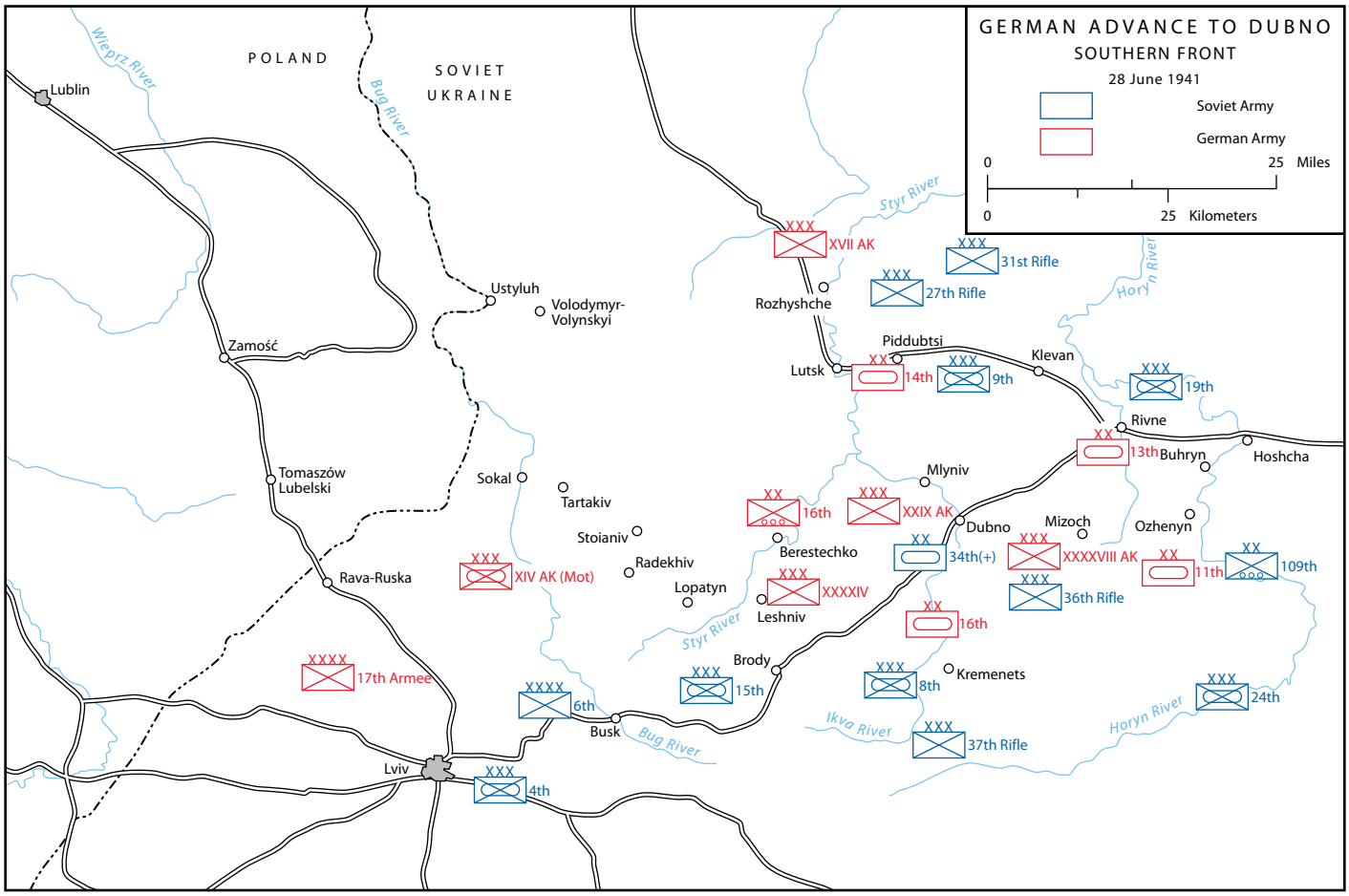
By nightfall, when Popel halted for lack of visibility, the 67th Tank Regiment had occupied the southern outskirts of Dubno, while the 68th Tank Regiment had encircled *Kampfgruppe Hube.* The *11th Panzer Division* at Ostroh and the tank-heavy *Kampfgruppe Wagner* from the *16th Panzer Division* at Kremenets likewise were encircled completely. Ryabyshev worked tirelessly to extricate the 7th Motorized Rifle Division from its engagement near Leshniv, and by nightfall two additional battalions of motorized riflemen had linked up with Popel. The 8th Mechanized Corps now had more than 200 tanks, 8 battalions of infantry, and an artillery regiment established in a salient stretching 35 kilometers deep and 20 kilometers wide. At 2100, Kempf reported to *Panzer Group 1* commander Col. Gen. Paul Ludwig Ewald von Kleist that the situation was critical, and he had no clear idea as to the status of the *11th Panzer Division*. In Kempf's opinion, all effort should be made to clear the enemy salient before any further advance was contemplated; if not, he feared both the *11th* and *16th Panzer Division*s might be destroyed. They agreed that getting the tanks and infantry of *Kampfgruppe Hube* relieved from their encirclement was to be the priority, after which an effort could be made to reach *Kampfgruppe Wagner* and then the *11th Panzer Division*.[38]

On the other side of the battlefield, Kirponos also had lost radio contact with some of his forces. To the south of the 5th Army, the 6th Army had pulled back as ordered but still was fighting well against the German infantry that opposed it. With the loss of Ostroh, Kirponos positioned the 24th Mechanized Corps to the southeast to intercept the *11th Panzer Division* if it attacked south. Upon hearing news of the 8th Mechanized Corps' breakthrough to Dubno, Kirponos issued orders for renewed attacks by the 9th and 19th Corps to slam the jaws of the counterattack shut. Kirponos ordered the 5th Army to go on a general offensive in support of the 8th Mechanized Corps, along with the 36th and 37th Rifle Corps. The 15th Mechanized Corps was to strike Berestechko in support the 8th Mechanized Corps' left flank. All available aviation would support this attack.[39]

As 28 June dawned, both sides launched simultaneous attacks toward the Dubno salient. By 0700, the German *111th Infantry Division* arrived in Dubno, reinforcing the paltry and scattered defenses. Meanwhile, *Luftwaffe* aircraft conducted reconnaissance on the size and disposition of 8th Mechanized Corps' forces, providing critical information to Kempf as he prepared to rescue his encircled formations. Further east, the Soviet Air Forces unleashed heavy attacks against the *11th Panzer Division*. Attacks by the Soviet 109th Motorized Infantry Division continued throughout the day on 28 June, but its lack of armor support prevented it from making any headway against the *11th Panzer Division*. Nevertheless, the focused attention from the Soviet Air Forces and Soviet artillery inflicted heavy casualties on the isolated *11th Panzer*; one German sergeant stated after the war that the air attacks against Ostroh on 28 June were the heaviest the division experienced for the entirety of the war.[40]

To the south, Soviet 8th Mechanized Corps commander Ryabyshev put all his effort into feeding more troops into the salient to reinforce Commissar Popel, who assumed defensive positions against the coming German counterattacks. The first attack came from the infantry-heavy kampfgruppe under *16th Panzer Division* commander Hube. Using a combination of Flak-88s, infantry guns, antitank guns, and even close infantry assault with grenades, *Kampfgruppe Hube* launched a counterattack against the 68th Tank Regiment, which had no supporting infantry or artillery. Luring the enemy tanks in, *Kampfgruppe Hube* encircled one Soviet battalion, destroying twenty-two tanks and forcing the 68th Tank Regiment to withdraw by noon; the first encircled German unit was free. The withdrawal of the 68th Tank Regiment also meant that there were no longer any strong Soviet forces between the *16th Panzer Division*'s two main kampfgruppen. The reunited *16th Panzer Division* turned its attention to the lead elements of the 7th Motorized Rifle Division advancing toward Popel's position. By 1400, this infantry force was destroyed, receiving no help from the tanks of 68th Tank Regiment. The local counterattacks by the *16th Panzer Division* had not freed only its own encircled units, but they had also driven a wedge between Popel's group and the remainder of the 8th Mechanized Corps.[41]

Kempf reassessed the situation. With strong Soviet mechanized forces both north and south of him, Kempf determined that his next move needed to be dealing with Popel's division-sized task force near Dubno. However, before Kempf could direct the *16th Panzer* to face about and attack north, the main bodies of the Soviet 7th Motorized Rifle Division and 12th Tank Division attacked north. Ryabyshev, hurrying to reestablish contact with Popel, put an emphasis on speed instead of cohesion, resulting in detachments of both Soviet divisions engaging the Germans in succession. This allowed the *16th Panzer Division* to defeat them piecemeal with combined arms teams against individual groups of Soviet tanks or motorized infantry. Although the Soviet forces did not threaten the *16th Panzer Division* seriously, they were fixed in place defending against repeated attacks until evening. *Fliegerkorps V* also aided the *16th Panzer* with close air support. As in earlier fights, *Luftwaffe* bombers targeted not the forward



maneuver forces, but Soviet artillery, wreaking havoc and killing so many gun crews that by nightfall a lieutenant was in command of the 12th Tank Division's artillery regiment. Toward the end of the day, the German *75th* and *57th Infantry Division*s entered the fight on the *16th Panzer Division*'s right flank and the three divisions plus *Sturmgeschütz Battalion 191* counterattacked the 7th Motorized Rifle Division. Pressed hard and fearing the Germans would envelop the 7th Motorized Rifle, Ryabyshev ordered the 8th Mechanized Corps to retreat to the southeast. To the west, the 15th Mechanized Corps' attack against the German *XXXXIV Armeekorps* floundered because of employing single-arm attacks.[42]

Within his rapidly constricting salient, Popel consolidated his tanks, infantry, and artillery southwest of Dubno and intended to launch an attack. However, the situation in and around Dubno had changed significantly. The German *111th Infantry Division* had reinforced the artillery of the meager garrison, while the *44th* and *75th Infantry Division*s were closing rapidly from the west. Before Popel could begin his attack, his forces were hit by a heavy barrage of German artillery from both the north and west. The arrival of the *111th Infantry* and the closing in of *XXIX Armeekorps*' corps troops gave the German defenders an overwhelming artillery advantage over Popel, who had only three battalions of guns. The fierce German artillery fire focused on counterbattery, and by 0900 had reduced Popel's 34th Motorized Artillery Regiment to three guns through unrelenting barrages. Without artillery support, Popel's attack floundered as the German artillery was free to target advancing Soviet tanks. After losing thirty tanks for no appreciable gain, Popel prepared to try again under cover of darkness.[43]

Last Gasp

Rain soaked both sides over the night of 28 June, and 29 June dawned with scattered rainfall. At 0400, Popel led a portion of the 34th Tank Division in a renewed assault on Dubno. He had been unable to establish radio communications with any friendly formations but heard heavy fighting from both north and south and hoped that the Southwestern Front's general counteroffensive was close to success. The best course of action seemed to be to try to link up with Maj. Gen. Konstantin K. Rokossovsky's 9th Mechanized Corps north of Dubno. With his artillery destroyed the previous day, Popel's tanks and motorized infantry attacked without suppressive indirect fire on the German defenders. In Dubno, the *111th Infantry Division* and *Artillery Command 108* brought their antitank guns and artillery pieces to bear on the advancing Soviets.[44] Popel committed his KV–2 tanks with their massive 152-mm. cannons as a main part of the attack, and they made a strong impression on the Germans. Despite his lack of artillery support, Popel was able to concentrate enough tanks and infantry to break through the *111th Infantry Division*'s left flank and block the main highway east of Dubno around 0945. This created great anxiety at the headquarters of both *XXXXVIII AK* and *Panzer Group 1*.[45]

In response, Kempf ordered the *16th Panzer* and *16th Infantry Division (Motorized)* to counterattack against the left flank and rear of Popel's group. *Panzer Group 1* commander Paul Ludwig Ewald von Kleist also informed Kempf that the elite *44th Infantry Division* was closing on Dubno. *16th Panzer Division* commander Hube formed *Kampfgruppe Sieckenius* with *Panzer Regiment 2*, a battalion of Schützen, and a battery of Flak-88s to break through toward Dubno. *Kampfgruppe Sieckenius* attacked northeast, encountering elements of Popel's group holding the town of Verba. By 1400, *Kampfgruppe Sieckenius* had captured Verba and continued its advance toward Dubno. By 1700, *Artillery Command 108* reported that they had pushed back the Soviets blocking the highway east of Dubno and their position in the open was untenable against the massed artillery, to which they had no response. *Kampfgruppe Sieckenius* continued its attack northeast, its tanks rushing ahead of its infantry. It was the Soviets' turn to pounce upon tanks unsupported by infantry with a combined arms attack. Around 2130, *Panzer Regiment 2* ran into dug-in Soviet tanks near Ptycha. As they engaged, the German tankers found themselves under close infantry assault. Soviet motor riflemen charged the tanks, climbing aboard and firing into open hatches or attaching satchel charges to the sides. Having outpaced their own Schützen, *Panzer Regiment 2* lost ten tanks in brutal close-quarters fighting before being able to break contact back to the south. The Soviet tanks and infantry pursued the retreating Germans, forcing Hube to bring the remainder of the *16th Panzer Division*

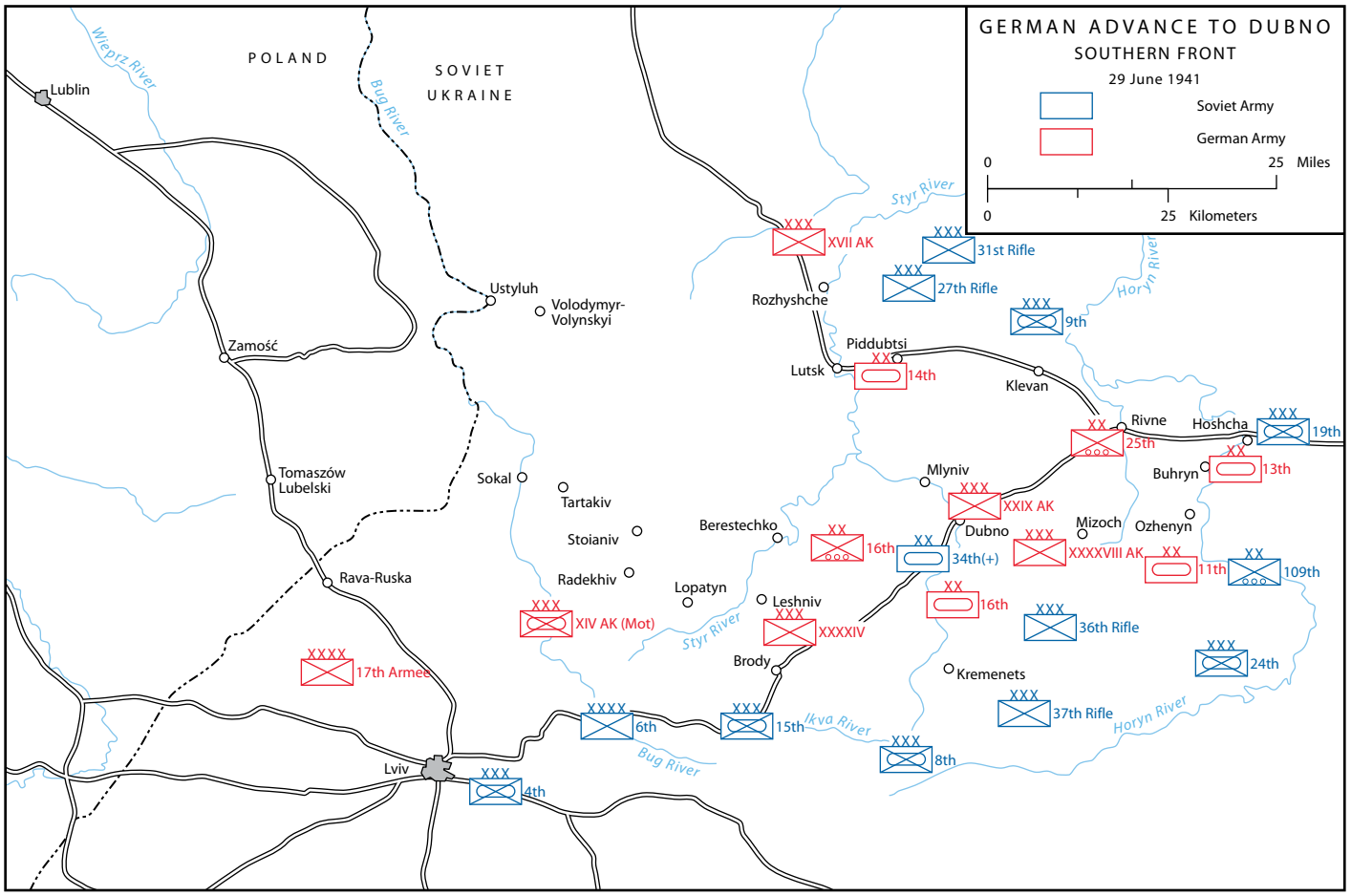
A destroyed T–34
Bundesarchiv

General Rokossovsky (*left*) shown here with General Zhukov.
Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive

out of its blocking position to the south to stem the Soviet counterattack near Verba. This was a rare example of excellent Soviet combined arms integration, which showed how effective it could be against the Germans when employed correctly.[46]

Meanwhile, 8th Mechanized Corps commander Ryabyshev had made the difficult decision to abandon Popel and his task force to its fate. Having lost his corps cryptology equipment and personnel to a *Luftwaffe* air strike overnight, he had no secure way of contacting the commissar. His division commanders reported they were low on fuel and ammunition, and two days of assaulting the German defenses had resulted in losses for no progress. To make matters worse, the German *57th* and *75th Infantry Divisions* had consolidated their gains during the night and continued to advance, meaning the 8th Mechanized Corps now occupied a salient surrounded on three sides. Unless he acted now, Ryabyshev knew he would be encircled. He decided to move southwest in the direction of the 6th Army. Under the cover of night, the 8th Mechanized Corps broke contact in good order and escaped its salient with few casualties and without German pursuit.[47]

On the 8th Mechanized Corps' left flank, the sudden introduction of the lead elements of the German *XIV Armeekorps* (*motorized*) into the battle threatened the 15th Mechanized Corps. The *9th Panzer Division* attacked southeast from Zibolky, splitting the 15th Mechanized from the 6th Army to the south. However, 15th Mechanized Corps commander Karpezo was able to slip his corps away without much harassment, annoying *XIV*



Armeekorps commander Lt. Gen. Gustav Anton von Wietersheim. Thus, by nightfall on 29 June, the Soviet mechanized forces had withdrawn the southern wing of their attempted envelopment of *XXXXVIII AK*.[48]

At Ostroh, the 109th Motorized Rifle Division and the late introduction of the 213th Motorized Rifle Division from the Southwestern Front's reserves still was pressing the *11th Panzer Division* hard. The Soviets still had air supremacy over Ostroh and continued to pound the Germans throughout 29 June. These air attacks along with heavy artillery fire from the newly arrived 404th Artillery Regiment and armored trains suppressed the *11th Panzer Division* and enabled the two Soviet divisions to advance on Ostroh. However, the 109th Motorized Division was now without armor, and its infantrymen suffered heavily. The 213th Division, however, brought tanks to the fight. As their comrades in the 109th were being massacred east of Ostroh, the 213th attempted an enveloping attack from the north. Throughout the day, Crüwell shifted tanks and infantry around Ostroh to hold off the attacks but finally made the decision to destroy the northern bridge and consolidate his troops in defense of the southern bridge. As night fell, the *11th Panzer Division* had weathered the storm yet again.[49]

Kirponos Yields

After moving his command post further east, Southwestern Front commander Mikhael Kirponos took stock of the situation on the morning of 30 June. General Potapov's 5th Army remained undefeated in detail and had fallen back, albeit in some disorder, to a line along the Horyn River from Klevan to Hoshcha. However, the bridgeheads of the *13th Panzer Division* at Buhryn and the *11th Panzer Division* at Ostroh had split the 5th Army in half. South of the 213th Motorized Rifle Division outside Ostroh, there was a gap of more than 30 kilometers to the next 5th Army unit, the 36th Rifle Corps. Additionally, the introduction of the German *XIV Armeekorps* finally looked ready to unhinge the 5th Army's link to the 6th Army to the south. The 6th Army, as well as the 26th and 12th Armies to its south, were all withdrawing in good order under pressure, but Kirponos assessed that if the German bridgeheads at Buhryn and Ostroh could not be destroyed, *Panzer Group 1* would swing around behind them. Any good order would be lost, and those armies would fall into a similar catastrophic encirclement like the one that Western Front had suffered at Minsk several days before. Kirponos once again petitioned Moscow for approval for a general withdrawal to a new defensive line to the east. By this time, the Stavka had finally come around and approved the withdrawal. Having already planned for the 5th Army to conduct a counterattack on 1 July, Kirponos reiterated that order: the 5th Army's counterattack would hopefully fix *Panzer Group 1* and enable the 6th, 12th, and 26th Armies to withdraw safely beyond the German Panzer divisions' ability to encircle them. Popel's group and the 5th Army would be left to their fates, a necessary sacrifice to ensure the survival of the Front. With the issuing of Kirponos's withdrawal order on 30 June, the border battle ended in German victory.[50]

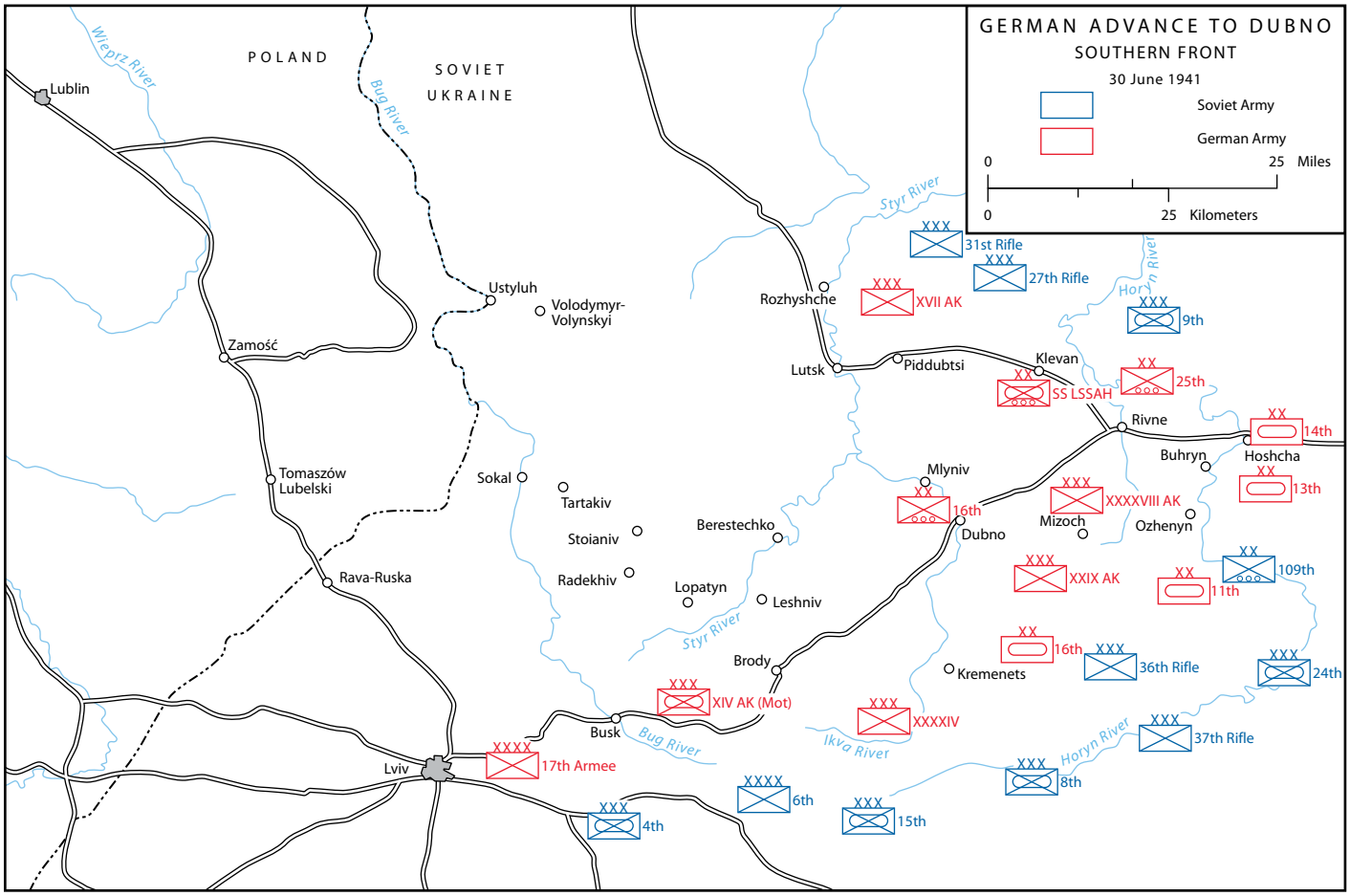
General Wietersheim
Bundesarchiv

Within the Dubno pocket, Commissar Popel's task force attempted to break out from 30 June to 1 July. Running a gauntlet of German artillery, aircraft, infantry, and armored formations, Popel's group was decimated and lost all their vehicles. Nine hundred dismounted survivors, led by Popel, eventually slipped through German lines and retreated 161 kilometers on foot to rejoin the Southwestern Front on 23 July. At Ostroh, a task force of the 213th Motorized Rifle Division and what remained of the 109th Motorized Rifle Division bravely held the *11th Panzer Division* in place while the 5th Army retreated, but by the end of 1 July this ad hoc blocking force "practically ceased to exist as a military formation."[51]

In northwestern Ukraine, German forces consolidated their gains, conducted maintenance, and prepared to pursue the withdrawing Southwestern Front. *Army Group South* had achieved an Army Group–level penetration, with *Panzer Group 1* as its breach force. Kleist's Panzer divisions had unhinged the entire Soviet defensive line south of the Pripyat marshes. Yet, as flawed as Soviet combined arms integration and command style were, they had blunted *Army Group South*'s offensive and then withdrew in good order. The Southwestern Front had lost nearly all its armor, but it remained a coherent headquarters capable of prolonged resistance, unlike its counterparts in the Western and Northwestern Fronts. The 5th Army's remnants fled into the Pripyat marshes, where they would continue to harass *Army Group South*'s left flank while the remainder of the Southwestern Front fought on stubbornly. This enabled the evacuation of much of the vital industry from Ukraine, including the Donets Basin's armaments factories. Kirponos's tenacious resistance would be the major factor in Hitler's decision to dispatch Col. Gen. Heinz Guderian's *Panzer Group 2* away from Moscow toward Ukraine, where he and Kleist finally would encircle and destroy the Southwestern Front in late September at the Battle of Kyiv. This was a critical result. For several weeks on the eve of the Russian winter, German attention deviated from the drive to Moscow. It ultimately would doom the *Wehrmacht*'s attempts to take the capital in 1941 and would enable the Soviet counteroffensives to stabilize defensive lines. On 20 September 1941, while attempting to break out of the encirclement east of Kyiv with his staff and 800 troops, German mortar fire killed General Kirponos.[52]

Conclusions

The case of *XXXXVIII AK*'s engagement with the mechanized corps of the Southwestern Front is important to study for a modern U.S. Army wrestling with the problem of fighting at a potential technological disadvantage on the offense while



outnumbered. The tactical and operational successes of Kempf's formation have positive lessons, as they demonstrate the importance of combined arms integration and highlight the ways in which mission command–style culture gives leaders advantages in initiative and decision-making. However, the *Wehrmacht*'s experiences also provide warnings. For all its tactical and operational success in unhinging the Southwestern Front, *Panzer Group 1* ultimately failed its strategic objective to envelop and destroy the Southwestern Front in the border region. Additionally, the costs of a mission command–style command and control philosophy, which emphasizes junior leader initiative, creates high casualties among those same leaders. Those casualties in turn degrade that organization's effectiveness and endurance if the conflict does not end quickly.

German divisions in *Panzer Group 1* and *Sixth Armee* destroyed approximately 1,614 Soviet tanks in close combat. For this bounty, *Panzer Group 1* recorded 85 tanks destroyed, with 200 more in various states of maintenance because of either breakdown or battle damage. The Soviets lost tanks at a rate of 19:1 in close combat, and the ratio is still 5.7:1 if assuming the 200 German tanks in maintenance were all battle damaged. By the standards of any army, a force attacking and winning against an enemy which holds a nearly 4:1 numerical advantage as well as a technological edge is worthy of study. Numerically, it is the most impressive German armor accomplishment of the Second World War, far outpacing the Battle of France, the achievements of both *Army Groups Center* and *North*, and any of Rommel's North African battles. Such a lopsided tactical victory would be the envy of many commanders past and present, especially those in pursuit of decisive battle.[53]

Combined arms integration and employment were critical to German success against the Southwestern Front. The primary example is the dominance of German combined arms task forces over Soviet single-arm formations. The creation of these kampfgruppen was a fundamental tenet of German doctrine, yet organizational doctrine is only one piece of the puzzle. Soviet tank and motorized rifle divisions also were envisioned as combined arms formations, yet these units faltered owing to a lack of experience as well as a flawed doctrine that viewed combined arms more as a practice in which each arm accomplishes its mission in support of the other arms, rather than in conjunction with them. Consistently, smaller German combined arms teams, primarily formed of tanks, infantry, antitank guns, and artillery, achieved tactical success by leveraging asymmetric advantages through the application of multiple combat arms, which used capabilities to protect the vulnerabilities of the others. The Soviets, even when they formed combined arms teams, often failed to apply those arms in a manner which exploited capabilities to cover for vulnerabilities. This allowed *Panzer Group 1*'s subordinate divisions to isolate and destroy portions of Soviet formations in detail rather than taking on the entirety of the larger and better-equipped enemy units. Although none of these smaller engagements were decisive on their own, the consistency with which German tank-infantry teams defeated Soviet single-arm forces aggregated across the battlefield and across eight days of fighting to result in the destruction of multiple Soviet mechanized corps.

Two additional examples are the comparative use of artillery and airpower. Sufficient artillery on both sides supported most of the engagements between German and Soviet forces. Artillery was a known killer of soldiers and materiel, with tanks and infantry both vulnerable to its firepower. Neither infantry nor armor normally was able to counter enemy artillery, making it a key asymmetric asset for both sides. Although Soviet commanders nearly always employed their artillery in this manner against German infantry and tanks, German commanders made counterbattery fire the primary purpose for their artillery. Realizing the asymmetric advantage that artillery gave, the Germans made it a priority to target Soviet guns. Once these weapons were neutralized or destroyed, German commanders were free to focus their artillery on Soviet infantry and armor formations with impunity. German commanders repeatedly used aviation in the same way, targeting Soviet artillery to remove it from the battlefield while Soviet aviation struck German maneuver units instead. Although German infantry and armor units undoubtedly suffered under Soviet artillery fire initially, they had to withstand it for only a short period while their higher headquarters eliminated the Soviet guns with counterbattery and air-delivered fires. Once the guns had been silenced, German ground formations were free to maneuver without fear of Soviet artillery.

A critical function enabled all these air and artillery strikes: targeting. Aggressive German ground and air reconnaissance gave *Panzer Group 1*'s commanders and staffs the ability to identify and prioritize high-payoff targets and then allocate their deep fires against them. The Soviets conducted little ground reconnaissance and were without effective air reconnaissance for the first four days of the battle, severely hampering their ability to conduct adequate targeting even if they had wanted to do so. Effective reconnaissance enables effective targeting, and together they form an important cornerstone of combined arms integration.

Aside from combined arms, Auftragstaktik was foundational to *Panzer Group 1*'s success. Throughout the battle, lower-level leaders made crucial decisions that altered the course of the battle and provided decision advantage for the Germans over the top-down Soviets. The most notable example of this was Colonel Stockhausen, commander of *Motorcycle Battalion 61*. Twice during the border battles, Stockhausen led his mounted infantry forward in daring lunges to seize bridgeheads over major rivers on his own initiative. The first, on 23 June, prevented Soviet forces from blowing the bridges at Berestechko and enabled the *11th Panzer Division* to penetrate deep into Soviet lines the next day against little opposition. The second attack seized the two bridges at Ostroh before the Soviet 109th Motorized Rifle Division could get to the town and fortify it. The inability of the Southwestern Front to reduce the *11th Panzer Division*'s bridgehead at Ostroh after several days was the main factor in Kirponos's decision to retreat.

Yet the success of *Panzer Group 1* also holds warnings for the U.S. Army today. Combined arms integration and mission command at all levels require highly trained and intelligent leaders, especially at lower echelons. The *Wehrmacht*'s operational concept demanded that those leaders insert themselves at the point of friction to best assess the situation and make the appropriate decision within a commander's intent. It asked for inspirational leadership in combat, gained by shared hardships and leading from the front. It led to great success, but those demands had a heavy cost. As an example, from 22 June to 21 July 1941, the *14th Panzer Division* suffered 399 killed in action and 960 wounded in action. Officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) accounted for 93 and 247 of those, respectively, or roughly 25 percent. By 31 October, 141 officers in the *14th Panzer Division* had been killed compared to 795 enlisted soldiers of all ranks including NCOs—meaning officers killed in action alone accounted for 15 percent of all those killed in action. This was a permanent loss of 40 percent of the division's officers in four months of combat without even considering wounded, whereas enlisted soldiers killed in action, including NCOs, were between 7 percent and 23 percent of their starting strength.[54] The casualties were particularly grievous among the combat units: only a single staff officer and two supply officers were among the total killed, meaning loss rates in combat units were even higher.[55]

Modern armies structured for decisive battle and mission command should pay close attention to the lessons of western Ukraine in 1941. Early attempts at a decisive battle against an enemy with the strategic depth and endurance to resist enormous blows may fail even if the attacking force finds incredible tactical and operational success. These blows also will reduce operational effectiveness as the necessary leaders become casualties at a rapid pace. Many decisive battle doctrines do not account for this scenario, and have no provision for attritional, positional-style warfare in the long term under reduced-quality leaders. An examination of this possibility today can reduce the pain of adaptation in combat. This examination also will pay dividends in the likely event that long periods of positional attrition warfare persist between opportunities for deep maneuver. Acknowledging and planning for these periods more fully can prevent high-quality units from battering themselves into combat ineffectiveness during conditions in which no decisive maneuver is possible.

The performance of *XXXXVIII AK* illustrates the enormous benefits of having a combined arms concept that permeates throughout a warfighting organization coupled with a mission command–style approach to leadership that generates decision advantage across formations. However, these practices cost them dearly in well-trained, combat-experienced leaders

A Soviet soldier killed in battle lies in front of a knocked-out T–34.
Bundesarchiv

and ultimately did not result in decisive victory. For militaries seeking to fight outnumbered on the offense and win via decisive combined arms maneuver, the armored clashes at Dubno are worthy of close study for both the advantages on which to capitalize and, more importantly, the risks against which to guard.

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Notes

1. *Panzer Group 1* had 793 tanks in its inventory but only committed its third corps on the last day of fighting.

2. Of the 4,525 tanks in the Southwestern Front's inventory, only 2,234 tanks made it into actual close combat with German ground forces. The remaining 39 percent remained behind in depots for lack of crews, broke down en route, became mired in mud, or were destroyed by the *Luftwaffe*.

3. Robert Forczyk, *Tank Warfare on the Eastern Front, 1941–1942: Schwerpunkt* (Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2020), 23; David M Glantz, ed., *The Initial Period of War on the Eastern Front, 22 June–August 1941* (London: Routledge, 2012), 32–33, 37–38, 259, 282; David M. Glantz and Jonathan M. House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler,* updated and rev. ed.(Lawrence: Kansas University Press of Kansas, 2015), 40; A. V. Isaev and Kevin Bridge, *Dubno 1941: The Greatest Tank Battle of the Second World War* (Warwick, UK: Helion & Company Limited, 2019), 228–29; Boris Kavalerchik, *The Tanks of Operation Barbarossa* (Havertown, PA: Casemate Publishers, 2018), 63, 162–79.

4. Carl Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 86–92. See also Robert M. Citino, *The German Way of War: From the Thirty Years' War to the Third Reich* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005).

5. This article is a significantly condensed and edited version of the author's Command and General Staff College Master of Military Art and Science thesis, "Graveyard of Tanks: Combined Arms and Mission Command in Western Ukraine 1941," which covered the entirety of the border battles between *Panzer Group 1* and the Southwestern Front, including the actions along the northern flank involving *III Armeekorps (motorisiert)*, *9th Mechanized Corps*, *19th Mechanized Corps*, and *22d Mechanized Corps*. Please feel free to contact the author for a copy of the entire thesis.

6. XXXXVIII Armeekorps (AK) (motorisiert), *Kriegstagebuch 1, Heft II [War Diary 1, Notebook II]*, Series T314, Roll 1138, Records of German Field Commands Corps, National Archives and Records Service, (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 482–83; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung, Anlage 3 Z. Kriegstagebuch Nr. 6. Operationsakten [Operations Section, Appendix 3 Z. War Diary No. 6. Operational files]*, Series T313, Roll 4, Records of German Field Commands Armies, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 563, 573.

7. Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 53–60.

8. "Battle groups" are equivalent to the U.S. Army concept of task forces.

9. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch, Kriegsgeschichtliche Berichte Der Division, Einsatz Russland, 1941 [War Diary, Division War History Reports, Russia Operation 1941]*, Series T315, Roll 2320, Records of German Field Commands Divisions, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 17–20; Forczyk, *Tank Warfare*, 56–57; Glantz, *Initial Period of War*, 248–24; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 80–87; Victor Kamenir, *The Bloody Triangle: The Defeat of Soviet Armor in the Ukraine, June 1941* (Minneapolis, MN: Zenith Press, 2010), 139–44.

10. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 17–20; Glantz, *Initial Period of War*, 248–64; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 80–87; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 139–44.

11. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 17–20; Forczyk, *Tank Warfare*, 56–58; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 80–87; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 139–44; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 489–90.

12. Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 657–58, 670–71, 676, 680; XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 488–90.

13. Glantz and House, *When Titans Clashed*, 57–61; Heinz Guderian, *Panzer Leader* (1952; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, 2006), 152–55; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 84–91; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 126–27.

14. Glantz and House, *When Titans Clashed*, 57–61; Guderian, *Panzer Leader*, 152–55; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 84–91; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 126–27.

15. Referred to from here on as *Kampfgruppe Riebel*, *Kampfgruppe 110*, and *Kampfgruppe 111*.

16. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 490–94; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 89–97; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 151–56; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 757, 761, 791, 797; 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 21–22.

17. John A. Armstrong, "Collaborationism in World War II: The Integral Nationalist Variant in Eastern Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 40, no. 3 (Sep 1968), 396–10; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 151–56; Franz Kurowski, *The Brandenburgers: Global Mission* (Winnipeg, MB: J. J. Fedorowicz, 1997), 92–93; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 89–97; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 785, 792, 797.

18. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 23–24; XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 494–98; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 97–99; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 165–166; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 935.

19. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 23–24; XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 494–98; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 97–99; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 165–66; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 935.

20. III AK (motorisiert), *Führungsabteilung, Kriegstagebuch 6 [Command Section, War Diary 6]*, Series T314, Roll 182, Records of German Field Commands Corps, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 924–26; XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 499; Glantz, *Initial Period of War*, 272; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 172–75; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 955.

21. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 499; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 135–37, 145–46; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 183–84, 188.

22. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 499; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 127–31; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 183–88.

23. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 499–503; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 129–46; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 183–89.

24. Ibid.

25. Panzerjäger Is were captured 47-mm. Czech antitank guns mounted on Panzer I chassis.

26. Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 134–35; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*,189–91; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 1023, 1028, 1050; XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 499.

27. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 24–25, 745–46; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 146; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 176–79; 13 Panzer Division, *Ia, Kriegstagebuch 5, 1941* [Chief of Operations, War Diary 5, 1941], Series T315, Roll 2325, Records of German Field Commands Divisions, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 58–60.

28. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 24; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 146–47; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 178–79; Leo Nierhorster, "Motorcycle Regiment, Mechanized Corps, Soviet Army, 22 June 1941," World War II Armed Forces: Orders of Battle and Organizations, 4 Apr 2015, http://www.niehorster.org/012_ussr/41_organ/corps_mech/mc_mcl–rgt.html.

29. Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 146–47; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 178–79.

30. Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 137–44; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 192–94.

31. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 504–6.

32. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 25–26, 767; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 146–47; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 197–98.

33. The BA–3 and BA–6 armored cars were equipped with 45-mm. tank guns and had armor of equivalent thickness to a BT–5 or T–26 tank. They were essentially wheeled light tanks.

34. 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 25––27, 749–50; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 146–47; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle,* 198–99.

35. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 505–6.

36. Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, iv–vi, 141–43; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 199–206.

37. T–34s still were being referred to here as heavy tanks because of their size, armor, and main gun caliber. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 505–7; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, iv–vi, 141–45; Forczyk, *Tank Warfare*, 62; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 207–9; 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 749–50.

38. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 505–7; 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 749–50; Forczyk, *Tank Warfare*, 62; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, iv–vi, 141–45; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 207–9.

39. Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 213–17.

40. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 509; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 222, 227–28.

41. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 509–10; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 148–49; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 225–26.

42. XXXXIV AK, *Kriegstagebuch 2*, *Teil 1* [War Diary, Part 1], Series T314, Roll 1025, Records of German Field Commands Corps, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 811–18; XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 511; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 1159; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 149–52; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 226–28.

43. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 511; XXXXIV AK, *Kriegstagebuch 2*, 811–18; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 149–52, 166; Kamenir, Bloody Triangle, 226–28; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung*, 1159.

44. An Artillery Command was a headquarters overseeing several units of Army-level artillery subordinated to a corps or operating together at the Army level.

45. XXXXVIII AK, *Kriegstagebuch 1*, 512–13; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 166–67; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 229, 234; Panzergruppe 1, *Operationsabteilung* 1191, 1197–98.

46. XXXXVIII AK, 513–15; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 167–68; Wolfgang Werthen, *Geschichte Der 16. Panzer–Division, 1939–1945* [History of the 16th Panzer Division, 1939–1945] (Freiberg, Germany: Podzun Publishing House, 1958), 46–47.

47. 57 Infanterie Division, *Ia, Kriegstagebuch 5, 1941* [Chief of Operations, War Diary 5, 1941], Series T315, Roll 980, Records of German Field Commands Divisions, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 13; LV AK, *Ia, Kriegstagebuch 1* [Chief of Operations War Diary 1] ,Series T314, Roll 1367, Records of German Field Commands Corps, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 464; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, vii; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 232–43.

48. XIV AK (motorisiert), *Kriegstagebuch, Führungsstaffel* [War Diary, Command Section], Series T314, Roll 529, Records of German Field Commands Corps, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 20; 9 Panzer Division, *Ia, Ic, IIa, Kriegstagebuch Mit Anlagen, Tatigkeitsberichte* [Chief of Operations, Chief of Intelligence, Adjutant War Diaries with Appendices, Activity Reports], Series T315, Roll 533, Records of German Field Commands Divisions, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 9–10; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 235.

49. Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, vii; Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 236.

50. Kamenir, *Bloody Triangle*, 229–30, 236–39.

51. Ibid., 247–49, 254.

52. David Stahel, *Kiev 1941: Hitler's Battle for Supremacy in the East* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 74–98, 264, 348; James Sterrett, "Southwest Front Operations, June–September 1941" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 1994), 63–90.

53. Glantz, *Initial Period of War*, 28–37; Isaev and Bridge, *Dubno 1941*, 199.

54. Officer loss numbers include those listed as "died of wounds" at a field hospital. Enlisted accounting lists only included killed and wounded. If taking only killed into account, the number is 7 percent. If applying the same died of wounds ratio to the enlisted casualties as officers, the number expected would be approximately 23 percent. Notably, noncommissioned officers are accounted for in the enlisted data, meaning that leader killed rates would dwarf junior soldier rates.

55. 14 Panzer Division, *Ia, Kriegstagebuch 2, 1941* [Chief of Operations, War Diary 2, 1941], Series T315, Roll 656, Records of German Field Commands Divisions, National Archives and Records Service (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1962), 800, 1194; 11 Panzer Division, *Kriegstagebuch*, 177–78.

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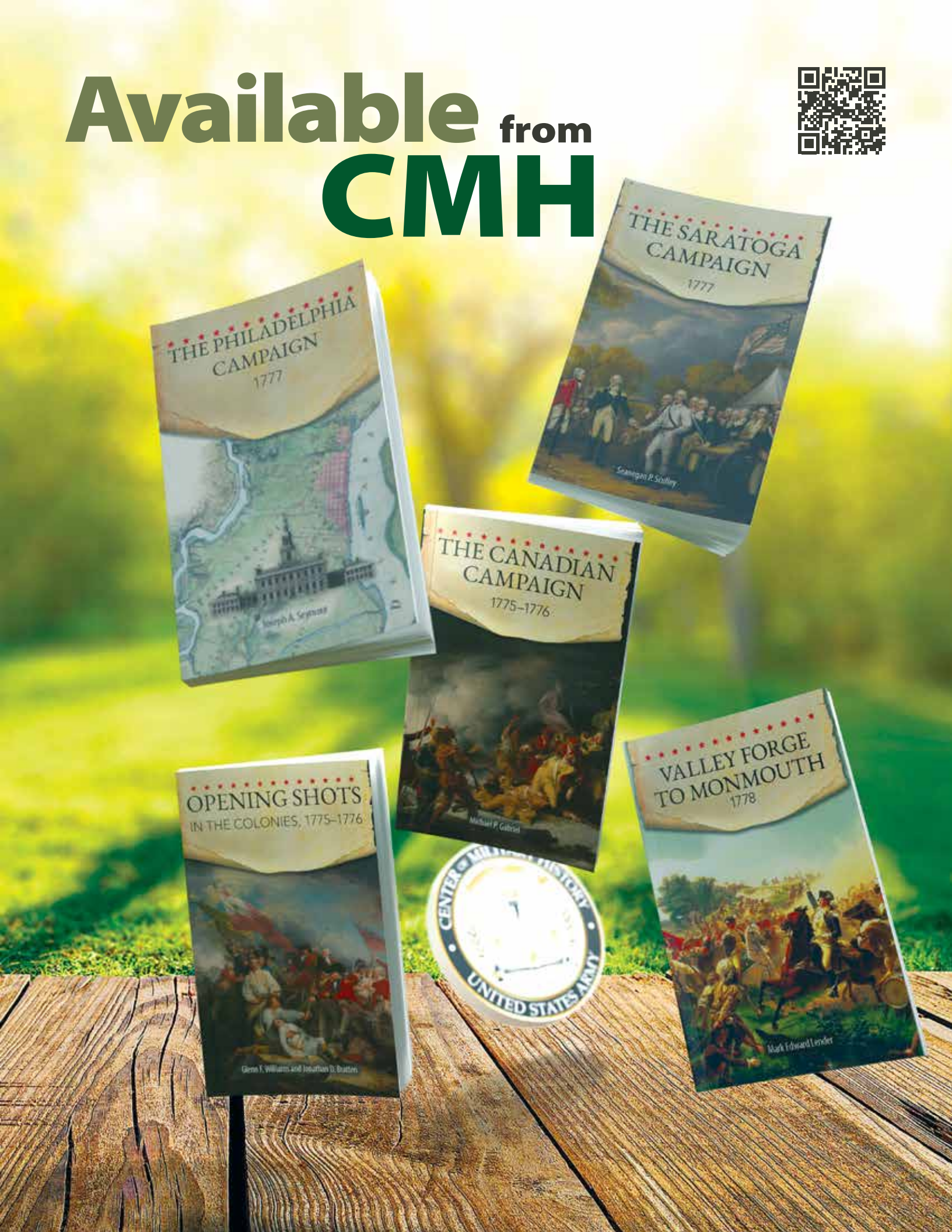
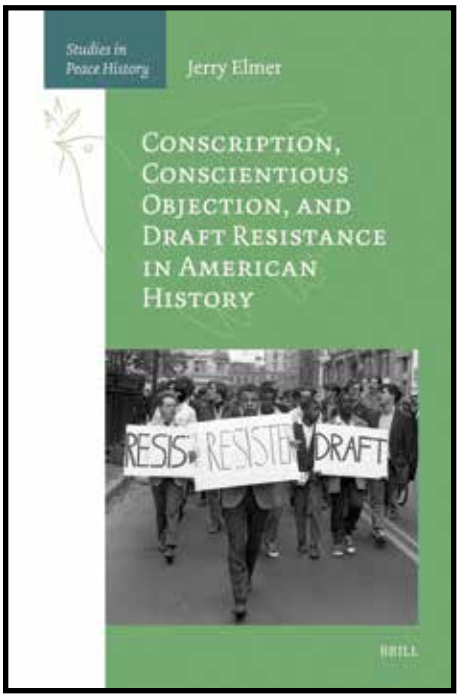


BOOK REVIEWS



CONSCRIPTION, CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION, AND DRAFT RESISTANCE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

By Jerry Elmer

Brill, 2024
Pp. xiv, 343. $136

Review by James C. McNaughton

In the century from 1863 to 1973, the United States resorted to conscription four times, each time evoking serious opposition. Until now, we have lacked a comparative analysis of conscription and those Americans who opposed it across time. Jerry Elmer's *Conscription, Conscientious Objection, and Draft Resistance in American History* admirably fills this gap with his new study. He looks closely at the legal and constitutional foundations of conscription and the government's often clumsy struggles with its opponents. This inaugural volume in a new series, "Studies in Peace History," from the academic publisher Brill deserves attention not just by peace historians but by military historians as well, especially those interested in how America filled its military ranks and how it dealt with those who refused to serve.

In each section of the book, Elmer describes the enacting legislation, the legal challenges brought against it, and court rulings. For twentieth-century conflicts, he also draws from the archives of peace and church groups, as well as Federal Bureau of Investigation documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. Although the publisher has priced it out of reach of individual readers, this essential work would make a welcome addition to any American military history library.

Elmer comes to this work as a legal historian and peace activist, as he described himself in his previous book, *Felon for Peace: The Memoir of a Vietnam-Era Draft Resister* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2005). During the Vietnam War, he explains, antiwar activists and draft resisters knew little about their ancestors. "My principal thesis," he writes, "is that opposition to conscription in the United States has been far more widespread and active than is generally recognized, even by historians" (4).

American debates over conscription began in the colonial period, when every "free able-bodied white male citizen" was obligated to serve in the militia, as codified in the Militia Acts of 1792, but not all did.[1] In the new republic, some asserted that Congress's power to "raise and support armies" did not include the power to "take children from their parents & parents from their children & compel them to fight the battles of any war, in which the folly or the wickedness of Government may engage it," as Daniel Webster thundered in 1814 (16–17).

During the Civil War, the United States resorted to conscription to fill its ranks. However, the system, administered by the provost marshal general, was deeply flawed. Elmer calculates that "more than 50 percent of the men who were supposed to be enrolled either refused to be enrolled or refused to be drafted" (62). Those who did not want to serve could pay a $300 commutation fee or hire a substitute. The New York draft riots of July 1863 were the best-known example of widespread evasion and resistance throughout the North. Armed mobs murdered enrollment officers and burned draft records. Although the draft prompted thousands to volunteer, Elmer calculates that only 3.67 percent of U.S. Army soldiers were conscripts (62).

The Confederacy, short of White manpower, turned to conscription with even worse results. Especially unpopular was the "Twenty Slave Law" that exempted plantation owners because, according to an earlier historian, "of course agriculture and the lives of families could not be entrusted to slaves unrestrained by overseers" (72). Armed bands of resisters and deserters lurked in swamps and mountains. Elmer sums up conscription in the South as "slow to be organized, chaotic and ineffective when operating, and deeply and widely opposed by the populace" (73).

During World War I, America used conscription more effectively, this time under civilian control with community draft boards. Selective Service (a list of male residents subject to the draft) also was used to channel men into different sectors of the war effort: soldiering for some, agriculture, mining, or industry for others. Unlike in the Civil War, 78.8 percent of the Army was conscripted (62). Yet Elmer cites estimates that as many as 3 million men failed to register

as required, and 11.23 percent of those drafted refused to go (112, 156).

The new laws and regulations made little provision for conscientious objectors (COs), whose treatment "was wildly inconsistent and chaotic" (129). Consequences were severe for resisters. The Espionage and Sedition Acts, which criminalized political speech, targeted historic peace churches, such as the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Anabaptists (Mennonites), and antiwar groups. COs also faced violence from vigilante groups and endured beatings and torture. Several died of mistreatment in custody.

During World War II, local draft boards once again ordered Selective Service. This time the laws and regulations made more generous accommodations for COs. As many as 50,000 members of the "greatest generation" served as noncombatants and another 12,000 served in Civilian Public Service camps, established by the peace churches in cooperation with Selective Service. However, some COs even objected to this cooperation with the war effort. Courts sent over 6,000 draft resisters to federal prison. Elmer briefly describes the further injustice of African Americans drafted into a Jim Crow Army by all-White draft boards, and Japanese American men drafted from behind the barbed wire of government internment camps.

Congress reauthorized Selective Service in 1948 in time to fight in Korea and maintained a postwar army of over a million soldiers. However, the system faltered when America committed ground troops to South Vietnam. Selective Service faced wide-ranging opposition, from the peace churches to individuals who were opposed to a war they considered morally outrageous. Many African Americans objected to being conscripted to fight what many believed to be a White man's war.

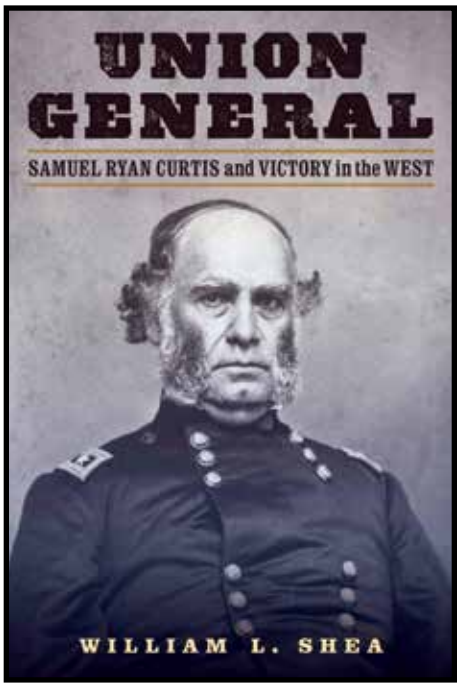
Local draft boards, once considered the bedrock of the system, became a weakness when they applied standards unevenly. A loose network of thousands of draft counselors sprang up to advise young men who chose not to fight. The system for enforcing the draft laws eventually broke down under the sheer number of offenders. "At the height of the war, . . . one-sixth of the prison population was composed of violators of Selective Service law" (325) and the Department of Justice resorted to "highly selective prosecutions" (327). Millions of others found creative ways to evade service with few consequences. Selective Service ended in 1973, only to be revived in 1980 on a stand-by status.

My greatest criticism is that Elmer does not suggest how the United States ought to balance the rights and obligations of citizenship. He meticulously identifies all the reasons why men have objected to, resisted, or simply evaded conscription, but not the circumstances in which conscription might be necessary and legitimate. If, in a future conflict for America's vital interests, voluntary enlistments fall short of requirements, how should the country fill its ranks, while making allowances for conscientious objectors? That is something every military historian ought to consider.

Dr. James C. McNaughton, former chief of the Histories Directorate, U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH), served in the Army Historical Program for thirty years, including with the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center; U.S. Army, Pacific; U.S. European Command; and U.S. Army, Europe. He holds graduate degrees from the Johns Hopkins University and the U.S. Army War College and is the author of *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II* (CMH, 2006).

Note

1. "Militia Act of 1792." George Washington's Mount Vernon. https://www.mountvernon.org/education/primary-source-collections/primary-source-collections/article/militia-act-of-1792.



UNION GENERAL: SAMUEL RYAN CURTIS AND VICTORY IN THE WEST

By William L. Shea

Potomac Books, 2023
Pp. xii, 346. $34.95

Review by Michael P. Gabriel

William L. Shea, the coauthor of *Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997), has directed his considerable talents to writing the first biography of the victor of Pea Ridge, Samuel Ryan Curtis. According to Shea, Curtis undoubtedly was the most important figure in the Trans-Mississippi Theater during the Civil War and arguably one of the conflict's most successful generals. However, he largely is overlooked today. This fine biography goes a long way toward demonstrating Curtis's importance and explaining why he does not hold a larger place in Civil War historiography.

The younger son of an industrious Ohio family, Curtis learned early the value of hard work. He obtained an appointment to West Point, graduated twenty-seventh of thirty-three in 1831, and after a brief stint in the Army, resigned his commission to seek his fortune in business. Shea fully documents Curtis's numerous ventures, most of which involved civil engineering. He was an early proponent of a transcontinental railroad, later served on the commission which

oversaw its construction, and worked on various canal and western river projects. These activities ultimately brought Curtis to Iowa where, as an opponent to the expansion of slavery, he joined the new Republican Party and was elected to the United States House of Representatives three times.

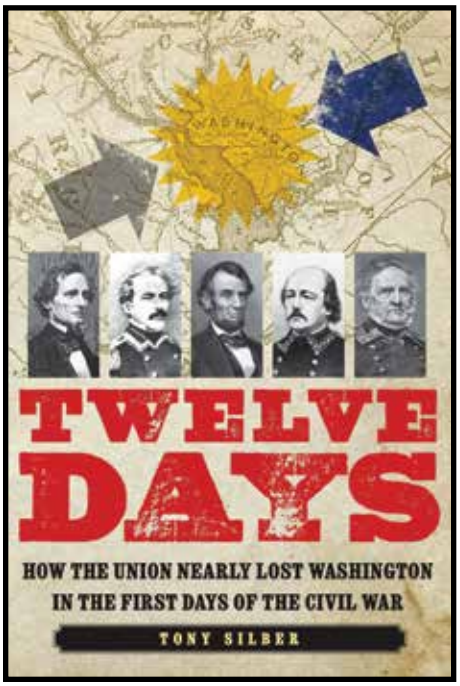
Shea rightly focuses most of his attention on Curtis's military career and notes how early experiences shaped his later actions. Curtis served in the Mexican-American War, and although he did not see combat, he learned the importance of logistics while on garrison duty in the Rio Grande Valley. He reentered the military at the outbreak of war in 1861 and became convinced of the importance of thorough training after witnessing the rout of U.S. Army soldiers at Bull Run. Curtis applied these lessons when he led Northern troops in Missouri and Arkansas.

In March 1862 at Pea Ridge—the first time he experienced a major battle—Curtis reoriented his army 180 degrees when attacked from behind and defeated General Earl Van Dorn's numerically superior force. Over the next five months, he drove Confederate forces from southern Missouri and much of northern Arkansas. During this grueling campaign, Curtis—the oldest Union general commanding a field army—became the first Civil War commander to have his soldiers live off the land, predating General Ulysses S. Grant by eleven months. Shea, quoting an Arkansas resident, notes that this was also the first time Southern civilians felt the harsh effects of economic war: "No country ever was, or ever can be, worse devastated or laid waste than that which has been occupied, and marched over by the Federal army. Everything which could be eaten by hungry horses or men has been devoured, and . . . almost everything which could not be eaten was destroyed" (148–49). Having occupied Helena, Arkansas, on the Mississippi River in August 1862, Curtis proposed a quick waterborne assault on Vicksburg, Mississippi, in conjunction with Grant's forces, months before the city was heavily defended. U.S. Army Commanding General Henry W. Halleck, diverted by Union reverses in Virginia and eastern Tennessee, rejected this proposal that potentially could have changed the war. Still, Shea credits Curtis's success with materially aiding Union operations east of the Mississippi and in central and western Tennessee earlier that year. Curtis performed similarly well at Westport in October 1864 when he repelled General Sterling Price's raid on Missouri. Curtis's subsequent pursuit through Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory devastated what remained of organized Confederate forces in the region and effectively ended the war in the theater.

Shea also examines Curtis's noncombat endeavors to reestablish federal authority in Arkansas. He started the state's first Unionist newspaper and enlisted hundreds into the Unionist First Arkansas Regiment. Even more importantly, he "sounded the death knell for slavery" in large parts of Arkansas (149). Although he lacked authority to do so, Curtis distributed thousands of emancipation forms to slaves in spring 1862, and Helena later became the main training center for U.S. Colored Troops in the Mississippi Valley. Curtis set up refugee camps; employed hundreds of freed slaves as laborers, servants, and launderers for the Army; and in at least one case, provided a group of African Americans with money. Shea notes that Curtis enacted these policies more to punish Southern planters rather than from any great sympathy for enslaved people, and in fact, would not rent a farm to an African American family after the war. Still, he grew more concerned about formerly enslaved people over time, favored Black suffrage, and feared that "insolent revengeful masters" would regain control over them "if chicken hearted officials administer the affairs of the rebel states" (272). Curtis similarly came to sympathize with the Great Plains Indians after unsuccessfully trying to negotiate a long-term peace with them late in the war and immediately after. He believed that most Native Americans wanted peace but thought that this was unlikely as settlers continued to migrate west.

Shea closes his work by examining why Curtis faded into obscurity, despite his many achievements. He argues that the general never promoted himself, did not write a memoir, and died shortly after the war in December 1866. Additionally, he spent the entire Civil War in the often-overlooked Trans-Mississippi Theater and clashed with other Union military and political leaders. These included Halleck; Generals Franz Sigel, John M. Schofield, and Frederick Steele; and Hamilton R. Gamble, the governor of Missouri. Several of them opposed Curtis's abolitionist tendencies and sought to ruin his reputation. These machinations resulted in a court of inquiry investigating Curtis for unsubstantiated allegations of corruption. Although acquitted, Curtis was relieved from command and sidelined for part of 1863 because of these charges. Shea identifies General Grant's dislike of Curtis as a final reason for his lack of recognition. Although the two officers had little direct interactions, Grant never acknowledged Curtis's contributions, shunted him to backwater commands after he became general of the armies, and only mentions him once in his famous *Memoirs* (Charles Webster, 1886). Shea cannot explain the source of Grant's animosity, but it played a role in how quickly Curtis was forgotten after the war. Although several statues of Curtis stand in Iowa today, the author argues that Pea Ridge National Military Park is the general's most fitting and lasting tribute. This well-written and thoroughly researched biography, based largely on the general's writings and the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, represents another acknowledgment of Samuel Ryan Curtis's importance, and it is a worthwhile read for those interested in the American Civil War.

Dr. Michael P. Gabriel is chair of the Department of History at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, where he teaches courses on United States history through 1865 and public history. He is the author or editor of five books on the American War for Independence and the Second World War.



TWELVE DAYS: HOW THE UNION NEARLY LOST WASHINGTON IN THE FIRST DAYS OF THE CIVIL WAR

By Tony Silber

Potomac Books, 2023
Pp. xxi, 348. $36.95

Review by Stephen Donnelly

Twelve Days: How the Union Nearly Lost Washington in the First Days of the Civil War illuminates a largely overlooked crisis at the commencement of the Civil War. Southern troops were within striking distance of the capital, the defenders were few and weak, and no one seemed to be coming to the rescue. If the South had seized the opportunity that was arguably theirs for the taking, the entire course of the war and indeed of human history might have been altered. The capital taken, the government in hiding, Lincoln on the run or imprisoned—these were all very real possibilities during the first days of the war. Game, set, match, and national humiliation was a real possibility. Only the arrival of Northern reinforcements to augment the pitifully small number of militia and guard troops available for the capital's defense could avert it.

Most Civil War histories devote a page or two to this critical situation, omitting important details and failing to convey the real fear and desperation that Lincoln and his cabinet felt at the time. The government was genuinely in danger of falling, and no one seemed able to do anything about it. Abraham Lincoln, the ambitious politician who craved the chance to make an enduring name for himself, faced the tangible possibility that Washington would fall again as it had during the War of 1812. Instead of being revered for maintaining the Union and emancipation, he instead might face recrimination and ridicule like Governor Thomas Jefferson faced when he lost the Virginia state capital to the British during the revolution.

Twelve Days rectifies this gap in historical knowledge by detailing the critical days from the fall of Fort Sumter to the eventual rescue of Washington. Readers can see how this situation developed over time, and how it eventually was resolved satisfactorily. Washington was an antiabolitionist Southern city, teeming with insurrectionists and Southern sympathizers, and surrounded by the Confederate state of Virginia and the southern-leaning Maryland. A large enemy army lay just two days away by rail, with no Federal forces of any consequence available to stop them if they decided to advance. The city effectively was cut off from the outside world. Enemy forces cut northbound rail lines, blocked roads, burned bridges, severed the telegraph and, stopped the mail. There was no Northern newspaper available. Northern citizens and critical information were prevented from entering the city, adding to the fear and isolation that the people and government felt.

Lincoln precipitated the crisis by calling for 75,000 volunteers to crush the rebellion. This seemingly reasonable response to the attack on Fort Sumter led to vitriolic verbal attacks on Lincoln and the North. Washington, D.C., was seething with discontent, with an undercurrent of violence seemingly ready to be unleashed at the slightest provocation. The Union army was practically nonexistent. Several factors contributed to the early mismatch of forces, with the South gaining an early lead as Southern states started forming their new armies almost immediately after seceding. The Union, however, waited to make the call for volunteers until after hostilities commenced to avoid "provoking" the South. It put them at an immediate disadvantage. The country's pathetically small national army was spread out around the country on garrison duty, with the bulk of the soldiers stationed across the Mississippi on a mission to "civilize" the Plains Indian tribes. The government officially relied on state militias to fill in the gaps during crisis times such as these. However, the last such crisis had been in 1812, and the state militias had become soft and informal, mere shells of what they were supposed to be. For this short window of time, the South would have something in its favor that it would not see again: numerical superiority.

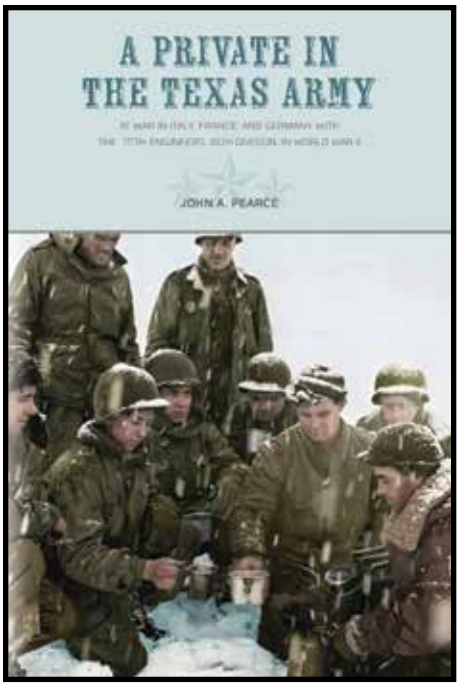
While Lincoln and the state governors frantically worked to get sufficient troops to Washington, great events were transpiring to impede their progress and slow their advance. Virginia seceded, enemy troops captured the Harpers Ferry arsenal and the Navy Yard, armed mobs attacked Federal troops in Baltimore, and hundreds of officers (almost 25 percent) resigned their commissions. The uncertainty and communications blackout drove Lincoln nearly to despair, prompting him to cry out, "Why don't they come? Why don't

they come?" (5).

The book documents the confusion, lack of coordination, and politics that delayed but did not prevent the eventual rescue of the city. An important factor for the Confederacy was that although the public favored direct attack, many of its leaders thought it more prudent to build up their forces and protect assets before launching an assault on Washington. This dichotomy of opinion bought the Union some extra time, which they used to their advantage. Troops from New York and Massachusetts eventually were organized and sent to the city, with a good deal of confusion, miscommunication, and political maneuvering by General Benjamin Butler to garner more credit than he deserved.

Twelve Days: How the Union Nearly Lost Washington in the First Days of the Civil War is a fascinating, informative read about an aspect of the Civil War of which many are ignorant. Had the twelve days ended differently, we certainly would not be so uninformed on the topic.

Stephen Donnelly is a consultant for the life insurance industry. He received a master's of business administration from Western New England University and a bachelor's degree in social science from Westfield State University. He is a frequent reviewer for the *Historical Journal of Massachusetts.*



A PRIVATE IN THE TEXAS ARMY: AT WAR IN ITALY, FRANCE, AND GERMANY WITH THE 111TH ENGINEERS, 36TH DIVISION IN WORLD WAR II

By John A. Pearce

State House Press, 2021
Pp. x, 311. $39.95

Review by Bearington Curtis

No other conflict grips the American imagination like World War II. As such, there is a vast historiography, yet there is always room for more voices to be heard. The place of this conflict in the public's minds has encouraged witnesses of the war to publish numerous memoirs and personal wartime accounts. John A. Pearce's publication of his father Frank Webster Pearce's war diary and letters home adds valuable insight. It provides the near-daily reflections of a combat engineer who enlisted in the 111th Engineer Regiment of the Texas National Guard before its federalization in 1940.[1] This microhistory provides what was at the forefront of the average soldier's mind during the twentieth century's most turbulent event.

As the anthologizer, John Pearce divided his father's war experience into sixteen chapters. Each chapter provides a historical summary of the events to which the diary relates, such as the crossing of the Rapido in Italy. The volume lifts the fog of war surrounding the perspective of one enlisted soldier's fight. Although, this account focuses on a singular soldier, it maintains the value of the many individual soldiers that surrounded Frank Pearce. During John Pearce's exposition, he provides details to explain where and how each soldier of the 111th Engineers suffered injury and loss of life—exemplifying the human cost of war and the dangerous duty of combat engineers.

The beginning of the book provides details of Frank Pearce's life. Raised in East Texas, he spent his youth working odd jobs during the Depression. Part of what makes this account unique is that Pearce enlisted as a combat engineer in the Texas National Guard along with several local friends before the war. A month later, Pearce and the soldiers of the 36th Infantry Division were activated for federal service on 25 November 1940 (5). Although the Texas identity of the unit diminished over time with mounting casualties, Frank Pearce's writing maintains a local allegiance vital to his war experience and provides a tangible link to home even on the front lines.

The diary details are essential in establishing Frank Pearce's sustaining motivations, soldier comradery, and interactions with other soldiers and local civilians. Private Pearce is not a sardonic or eloquent writer as he details only a few matter-of-fact lines to the day's events. He is more like a sportswriter in his description of combat: "It was nip and tuck all day, in fact the worst we had . . . a sniper shot at me all evening but was a bum shot" (37). Such accounts of combat show the reader how accustomed men such as Pearce became to their harsh environment.

What sustains troops in the field are familiar to soldiers throughout history. Priorities that Frank Pearce reflects on is food, alcohol, weather, creature comforts, and the affection of loved ones through letters. The volume of their reoccurrence in his diary shows their importance to him. Furthermore, he demonstrates how these things grounded soldiers as they experienced little control over their lives. Pearce reflects on his condition to his family and to those few he considered friends, the core of which seem to be from Texas.

His expression of comradery reveals the hard lessons of losing someone close to you and the nature of the individual replacement system that often failed to fully integrate new soldiers with their units before combat operations. "I make no efforts to cultivate a close friend as it doesn't pay in that way there is no deep hurt. I merely try to be like and like all the boys to a point where one can depend on each other" (191). This line, penned late in the war, betrays the callous nature of war on the soldier. The same line tells that his priority toward the group and theirs toward him is that they are dependable at their job, increasing his chance of survival.

As Pearce's outlook toward his fellow soldiers became more hard-boiled, his opinion on the many unfamiliar cultures he encountered reflected an outsider's judgment. His opinion on Africans, Italians, French, British, and Germans shows the complicated relations between soldiers and civilians. He was disgusted by the condition of North African communities and pitied the Italian civilians. He expresses a sternness toward the Germans whose homes he occupied.

Although some soldiers saw a meteoric rise in rank and responsibility, Frank Pearce remained a private through most of the war. He spent the war as one of the many doers, soldiers who bore the consequences of the strategic and tactical decisions of others. Only after the war does Pearce pen a true reflection of his experiences. He felt bitter toward the conduct of his compatriots in the immediate aftermath, wondering for what it was he fought. Pearce did not seek the conflict's meaning while overseas; he could only wrestle with the meaning of World War II after he returned home. He concludes his diary and literally closes the book on the war, with a note dated November 1945. He concluded that he had found peace and purpose in his war experience through the love of an understanding woman (whom he married) and in religion (256).

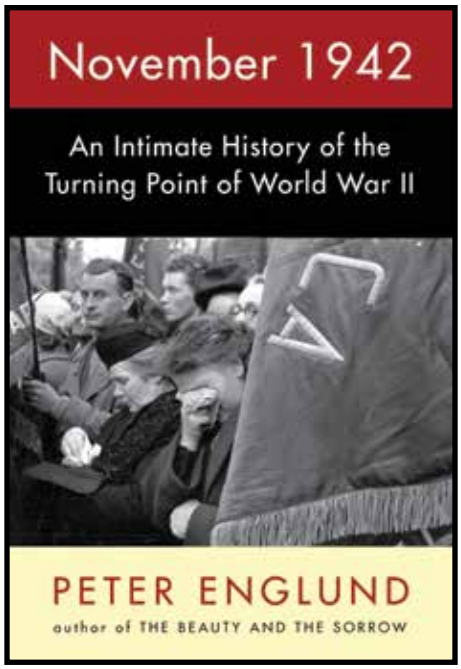
This detailed account of Frank Pearce's experiences should be of interest to those interested in a bottom-up understanding of the troops who fought World War II. The book peels back the layers of mythology that have crept into academia

and the national zeitgeist of the war. This excellent microhistory provides scholars with details on soldier motivations, and complex wartime relations between soldiers and civilians. For the general reader, the diary provides a human connection to the war. Frank Pearce is not a poet, a crusader, or a great man of history. Yet he, like so many others, answered their country's call to arms, and for this reason, this frank account of the conflict deserves a place on bookshelves.

Bearington Curtis, originally from Texas, is a PhD candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi. His dissertation research focuses on the Army National Guard from 1930 to 1943. He currently serves as a graduate research assistant at the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Note

1. In 1940 the National Guard retained square divisions which incorporated an engineer regiment in its table of organization. When converted to the triangular division the engineer regiment was minimized to a battalion. The Texas-based 36th Infantry Division retained the 1st Battalion, 111th Engineer, reflagged as the 111th Engineer Battalion.



NOVEMBER 1942: AN INTIMATE HISTORY OF THE TURNING POINT OF WORLD WAR II

By Peter Englund

Alfred A. Knopf, 2023
Pp. xvii, 467. $32

Review by Nathan J. Holcomb

Peter Englund's new book, *November 1942*, a work of military and social history, examines the Second World War in personal detail, using a cast of forty characters whose voices lend a critical human element to the conflict. Englund received a PhD in history from Uppsala University in 1989 and is a member of the Swedish Academy, which regulates the Swedish language and selects recipients for the Nobel Prize in Literature. This book was translated from Swedish by Peter Graves, an honorary fellow at the University of Edinburgh following his retirement, and the recipient of several prizes for his translations. Previously, Graves translated Englund's 2011 book *The Beauty and the Sorrow* (Knopf, 2011), a similar personal history approach to World War I.

Rather than a traditional examination of the Second World War's turning points, Englund chose to focus on those who lived through it, and how they experienced the selected month. The forty individuals are mostly obscure, but several were famous authors: Ernst Jünger, Vasily Grossman, Vera Brittain, and Albert Camus. None of his cast of characters are generals or politicians; the highest-ranking soldier is a Japanese destroyer captain. Twenty-two are civilians, and fourteen are women. Englund's selection of his cast covers all major theaters of war, as well as the German, British and American home fronts, and occupied areas in the Soviet Union, China, Paris, and Brussels. Several characters are near each other, for example, Japanese troops Tameichi Hara and Tohichi Wakabayashi are in proximity to Americans John McEniry and Charles Walker on Guadalcanal. It is unlikely these characters exchanged fire with each other. A few noncollective stories are also present: the completion and early reception of the American film *Casablanca*, and American *Liberty*-class ship S.S. *James Oglethorpe*'s launching from Georgia's newly built shipyards in Savannah. Each character left behind a diary or memoir, which became Englund's primary sources.

Through the narrative, Englund divides the book into four parts: "November 1–8," "November 9–15," "November 16–22," and "November 23–30." There are no chapter divisions, each character lends their experiences that day, if available, and then all move on to the next day, and so on. Through this enormous tapestry of different voices, experiences, and ideologies, each person is a fully realized character. Englund's writing throughout the book is a masterpiece of historical storytelling. The reader experiences the war, but also the character's anxieties and dreams, the indignities they suffer, as well as the small comforts that lend them the strength to continue. Englund freely borrows from other parts of their memoir or other sources to fill in contextual gaps, as well as from secondary literature. He makes assumptions, based on the character's actions or mental state and the surrounding context, and states when he does so.

A few themes are present in all accounts. Because many characters are not frontline troops, Englund brings the immediacy of the conflict to each story. This may sound obvious to history consumers: the author directly ties Willy Peter Reese's experiences fighting near Rzhev, Russia, to the conflict. Less obvious is Dorothy Robinson, a homemaker on Long Island. However, Robinson's son is serving, her

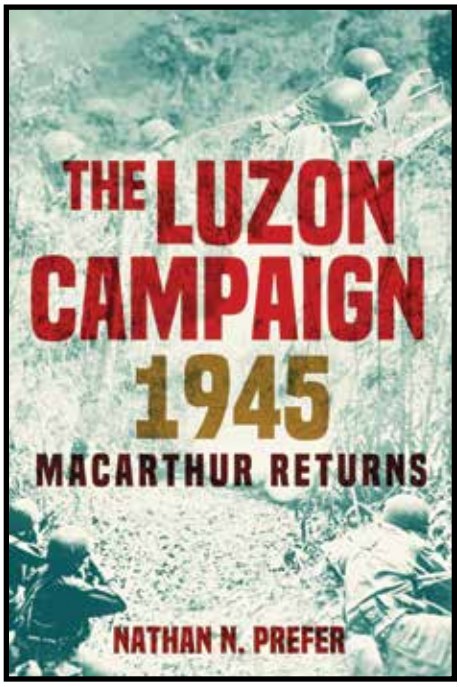
daughter is married to another service member on the West Coast, and she has to navigate and adapt to a new reality of rationing and blackouts. The least likely character, French author and philosopher Albert Camus, lives under German occupation and his ambition to return to Algeria is frustrated by Operation Torch.

Another present theme is endurance. Enthusiasm for war and combat is completely devoid from every character. Conspicuous bravery is also almost entirely absent, save for two incidents: Soviet infantryman Mansur Abdulin saves a colonel near Stalingrad, and Kurt West, a Swedish Finn, recaptures a Finnish position seized by Soviets near Leningrad. German World War I memoirist Ernst Jünger, whose books described animal-like ferocity in combat, also rejected such an approach to this war. All view the conflict as a task to complete, a job to do and then return home. Rather than courage, this requires emotional and mental fortitude to get through the day, or the hour, or the minute. Several characters' ordeals require endurance above and beyond the ordinary needs. Jechiel Rajchman, a "Death Jew" at Treblinka extermination camp in Poland, endures sadistic SS guards, yet volunteers for several gruesome tasks: first shaving the heads of arriving victims, then pulling gold caps from their teeth. He escaped during a 1943 uprising. A world away, Mun Okchu, a Korean comfort woman to Japanese soldiers in Burma, survives the indignities of her rock-bottom social position in a strange land. Although *November 1942* features the turning point in the war, it would be years for it to conclude. Aided by their endurance, more than thirty people featured in the book survived the war.

As Englund observed in his introduction, it is impossible to cover all demographics and experiences of World War II. He gives considerable time to major operations taking place at Stalingrad, North Africa, and Guadalcanal. However, this comes with a trade-off; he underrepresents several regions in the narrative. Although he gives treatment to the experiences of Black Americans in the Georgia shipyards, Africans themselves are left out. So, too, are Indians and Southeast Asians. Besides the United States, the Americas are underserved; there are no Canadian or Brazilian accounts. Englund includes two accounts from China: Ursula Blomberg, a Jewish refugee, and Zhang Zhonglou, but combined they receive minimal narrative space. Elites are shunned, but including a lower-level factory manager or diplomat also would lend an interesting perspective. There is always the question of sources and translations in these underexamined regions, but the narrative would be well served with these additional viewpoints.

In sum, *November 1942* is a thorough examination of the Second World War, deepening our understanding of the war's turning point as people experienced it. So often, accounts of the conflict focus on generals and politicians, and the individual's lived experiences get swept along and aggregated in the larger story. Englund's project places that perspective first, with first-rate writing that reads more like fiction than academic history. This approach can also be applied to other complex topics to return the individual to the fore. It is a welcome addition to World War II scholarship, a wonderful piece of literature, and deserves a place on bookshelves the world over.

Nathan J. Holcomb is a graduate student at Murray State University, concentrating on twentieth-century U.S. history. His research interests focus on the relationships between the state, the military, and the population. He currently works as the human resources manager at Buckeye Gymnastics in Columbus, Ohio.



THE LUZON CAMPAIGN, 1945: MACARTHUR RETURNS

By Nathan N. Prefer

Casemate Publishers, 2024
Pp. ix, 307. $37.95

Review by Robert D. Seals

In September 1944, pugnacious U.S. Navy Admiral William Halsey Jr. proposed landing directly on Leyte in the Philippines the following month. Approved by the U.S. Chiefs of Staff, the plan was thought to be brilliant because the Japanese would have to split their forces in the Philippines and it would perhaps force the Japanese Combined Fleet to come out to meet the threat in a decisive naval battle. With the Leyte campaign, General Douglas MacArthur was finally able to return to his beloved Philippine Islands, but after Leyte, what next? For the Southwest Pacific Area Commander, the next target in 1945 was the largest and most important island in the commonwealth, Luzon. Now, almost eight decades later, Nathan N. Prefer tells us a familiar story with his latest book *The Luzon Campaign, 1945: MacArthur Returns.*

Prefer's book seemingly aims to "fill [a] historical gap" because "few studies of that battle [campaign] have been produced" and they are rather "histories of incidents" within the Luzon campaign (1). Additionally, the author believes

existing histories "do not do justice to the ordinary soldiers who fought" and Prefer intends to correct that by celebrating their heroism in his narrative account (1). There was no shortage of heroism, on both sides, during the bitter eight-month long Luzon campaign in 1945. *The Luzon Campaign, 1945* is the author's fourth book on subjects involving World War II in the Pacific and his previous book in 2012 was *Leyte, 1944: The Soldier's Battle*, also published by Casemate. A veteran of the Marine Corps, he received his PhD in military history from the City University of New York.

In the introduction, Prefer reviews the status of the war in 1945 and provides brief summaries of the opposing Generals Douglas MacArthur and Tomoyuki Yamashita. Here, the author begins to commit missteps. MacArthur's father, Arthur, was not a "Civil War General" but became known as "the Boy Colonel" at the age of 19 (2). Additionally, Douglas MacArthur's career after World War I did not include "serving as aide to President Theodore Roosevelt" because that assignment was in 1906 (3). MacArthur had not "resigned from the U.S. Army" to become field marshal of the Philippines but remained on the active list until retirement in 1937 (4). Of the two opposing generals, Prefer regards Yamashita, "their best field commander," who seemingly made "only [one] error" as the superior. Yamashita believed that somehow tens of thousands of Japanese troops could withdraw "deep into the Luzon mountains where they could produce their own food" (5–7). However, clearly Yamashita had to delay the inevitable as long as possible.

Written chronologically, the book's chapters begin a broad survey largely focused at the operational and tactical level with short vignettes on individuals, including many of the twenty-nine soldiers who received the Medal of Honor during the Luzon campaign. Beginning with the Sixth Army assault landings on the Lingayen beaches on 9 January, Prefer narrates the campaign's eight months from the drive on Manila to the end in the northern mountains. The chapters are short, ranging from twelve to seventeen pages, and most include maps. However, fourteen maps, largely from Robert Ross Smith's excellent "Green Book" work *Triumph in the Philippines*, are at times hard to read and do not support the narrative.

The last two chapters of the book, "Pursuit" and "The Luzon Campaign," are perhaps the strongest as they provide some needed context. By July 1945, the most significant fighting of the campaign was over as the Eighth Army relieved the Sixth Army and I Corps, but hard fighting continued in the mountains. Use of the term "mopping-up operations" does not do justice to the soldiers who continued fighting until the Japanese surrender in September (58). Prefer continues his praise of Yamashita who "accomplished much more than expected" by his "prolonged defense" as opposed to MacArthur who "[corralled] his forces in a dead-end location like Bataan" in 1941 (257–63). The author also criticizes MacArthur for being hesitant to authorize heavy firepower during the Manila fighting, quite possibly to limit civilian causalities.

Ironically, Prefer does not see the similarities between MacArthur in 1941 and Yamashita in 1945. Both faced logistical, transportation, communications, fire support, and air supremacy problems on Luzon while fighting a prolonged delaying action against a stronger enemy. To the author, MacArthur "seems to have lost any interest" after the recapture of Manila. He does not mention MacArthur's selection as the commander in chief, U.S. Army Forces in the Pacific, and responsibilities associated with the Operation Olympic invasion of Kyushu, the southernmost Japanese home island, scheduled for November 1945 (171). Prefer does honor the Philippine people and guerrilla forces, but the book does not convey the incredible success of the unconventional warfare effort, begun by MacArthur in January 1942. On Luzon alone, there were eighteen major groups on the island that had grown into a capable and complex force. They were capable of operating as regiments, battalions, and rifle companies with some having special weapons platoons armed with machine guns and light mortars.

The Luzon Campaign, 1945: MacArthur Returns does give the reader a good understanding of the grinding nature of ground combat on Luzon. As always, it was the infantry who took the brunt of the casualties, accounting for "about 90 percent of [what the] Sixth Army" suffered during the campaign (262). The four appendixes and endnotes will help those unfamiliar with the topic, but at times they are idiosyncratic and digress into details about German "dive-bombers" which add little (291). To me, the author has accepted considerable risk by relying largely on secondary sources and he should have made greater use of archival sources and records. Prefer has written a history of the Luzon Campaign that does indeed honor "the ordinary soldiers who fought," but Army historians remain better served by Smith's 1963 work *Triumph in the Philippines* (1).

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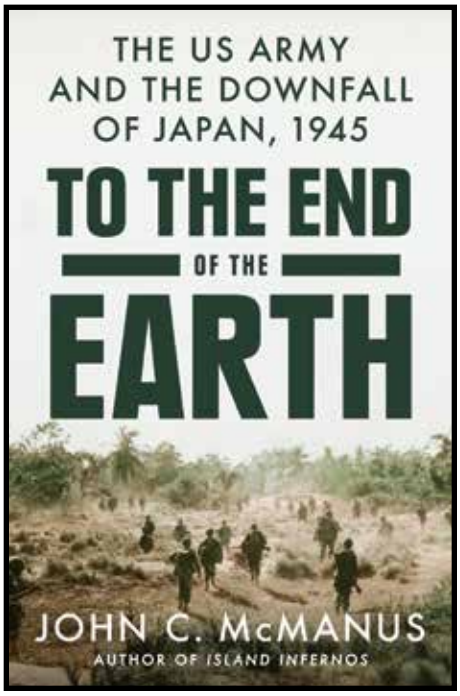


TO THE END OF THE EARTH: THE US ARMY AND THE DOWNFALL OF JAPAN, 1945

By John C. McManus

Dutton Caliber, 2023
Pp. v, 437. $35

Review by Ivan Zasimczuk

To the End of the Earth: The US Army and the Downfall of Japan, 1945 completes John C. McManus's trilogy immortalizing the exploits of the U.S. Army in the Asia-Pacific Theater during World War II. He has done for the Asia-Pacific Army what Bruce Catton did for the Army of the Potomac, Rick Atkinson for the World War II U.S. Army in

Europe, and Ian W. Toll for the U.S. Navy in the Pacific. He takes his place alongside the heralds of these other storied U.S. forces. As with the two preceding volumes, this splendidly detailed coda cements this Army and its soldiers rightfully in the pantheon of American fighting forces. He carries over into this final chapter of the war the threads, themes, and personages of the previous volume, *Island Infernos: The US Army's Pacific War Odyssey, 1944* (Dutton Caliber, 2021). In 1945, the action, from the tactical to the strategic level, climaxes. Consequently, the scope and scale of this last piece of McManus's historical triptych is narrower than the first two. Yet, the range of topics remains impressive. The balance between facts and analysis is perfect. Above all else, the prose is elegant and beautiful.

McManus divides this text into five long chronological and thematic chapters, followed by a touching epilogue. The core of the narrative revolves around the campaigns for the Philippines and the Ryukyu Islands, emphasizing the battles of Manila and Okinawa, respectively. Woven throughout are other ancillary, but important, topics covered in the previous volumes—the experiences of the prisoners of war; race relations in the ranks; the perspectives of the Women's Army Corps and of the medical professionals; and the fate of the American mission to Chiang Kai-shek in China. McManus begins by asking the central Allied question about Japan in 1945: how much will it "cost the Allies, and most notably the Army, in lives, treasure, and time to subdue Japan?" (4). In the next 362 pages, he answers that question in great and gritty detail.

By 1945, General Douglas MacArthur had at his disposal one of the greatest fighting forces ever assembled. It included two armies of four corps, with fifteen divisions, and many separate regiments, independent brigades, guerrilla units, and necessary attachments (6). Chapter 1 begins with a description of Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger's Sixth Army invasion plans for Luzon, code named Mike I. Highlighted is the ongoing friction between MacArthur and Krueger over the latter's perceived slow but careful rate of march (21), which was exacerbated by the continued incompetence of MacArthur's intelligence officer, Brig. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby. Willoughby, despite controlling a highly functioning intelligence apparatus complete with aerial reconnaissance, access to Japanese signals communications, and guerrilla units, still managed to underestimate the strength of the Japanese on Luzon by 135,000 troops. According to McManus, "Luzon was Willoughby's magnum opus of inaccuracy" (11). To spur on Krueger, MacArthur moved his headquarters 47 miles ahead of Krueger's position, expecting that Krueger would advance more rapidly (26). The low estimate of Japanese forces on Luzon "mentally imprisoned" (63) MacArthur and caused him to develop an unrealistic narrative in which he could deliver the liberation of the Philippines with minimal costs.

The cost to liberate Luzon was the near-total destruction of Manila and the death of an estimated 100,000 Filipinos. McManus describes this as an "orgy of destruction against [the Filipino] people and [their] property" (65). Most died cruelly at the hands of the Japanese, but many perished in the crossfire or from American firepower. Also lost was an incalculable amount of cultural, historic, and scientific heritage accumulated over centuries (88). Despite the carnage and destruction, the campaign was successful and perhaps only equaled by the parallel exploits of Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger's Eighth Army.

Under Eichelberger, between 28 February and mid-April, the Eighth Army executed thirty-eight audacious amphibious invasions, ranging from company- to division-level landings, across the southern Philippine Islands. Known as the Victor operations, Eichelberger's troops averaged a landing every thirty-six hours (153). However, despite the impressive display of operational art and superb tactics, the capture of these islands was of no strategic value; it was a backward movement away from the final objective, the Japanese home islands to the north (157).

By April 1945, with the Philippines firmly under Allied control, attention turned to capturing Okinawa and the rest of Ryukyu Islands, the first of the Japanese home islands. This operation, however, belonged to the Central Pacific Theater Commander, Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and his Tenth Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr. The strategic value of these islands cannot be overstated. They were essentially "Japan's front doorstep" and would provide valuable air and seaports within a mere 360 nautical miles from Kyushu and 850 miles from Tokyo (196). After shockingly meeting no resistance on the beaches of Okinawa, the divisions of the Tenth Army pushed inland and captured two airfields within five days, key objectives of the campaign (212).

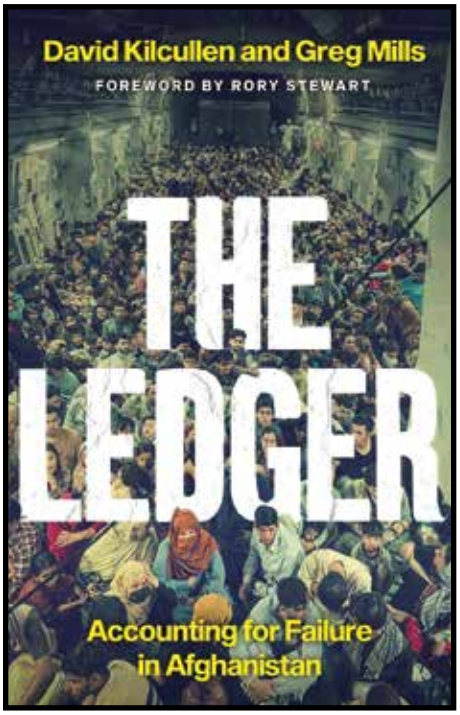
This initial lack of resistance soon gave way to a ferocious defense of Okinawa, on land, at sea, and in the air. At the peak of the fighting, six infantry divisions, two Marine and four Army, devised new tactics, called the "corkscrew and blowtorch" approach, to smash their way forward from one ridge to the next (241–42). These tactics were especially adapted to root out the deeply entrenched and tenacious Japanese from their sophisticated fighting positions. The result was carnage on a new scale. Infantrymen used combinations of bulldozers, firepower, flamethrowers, fire tanks, combustible barrels, and satchel charges to destroy the Japanese. Enroute to capturing Okinawa, the Tenth Army crushed two profligate and wrongfully optimistic Japanese counterattacks on 12 April and 4 May (230, 254).

The human toll was astonishing. The U.S. forces suffered over 49,000 casualties, of which 12,520 were fatalities. The Japanese lost a catastrophic 107,539 killed (284), a consequence of the belief that surrender was dishonorable. Using this battle as a gauge, the Allies projected and feared that the invasion of the home islands would require enormous Allied sacrifices and generate casualties of catastrophic proportions for both sides (297). The Allies had begun making extensive preparations for the invasions, codenamed Operation Downfall, when President Harry S. Truman authorized the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan, essentially ending the conflict.

Although this work is dominated by battle narrative, there is much additional content related to medical care; logistics; naval operations; prisoners-of-war survival stories; race relations; the opening of the Ledo Road into China; Maj. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer and the American mission to Chiang Kai-shek; and an epilogue telling the fates of the major characters and, most poignantly, the story of Public Law 383. The 1946 law allocated over $190 million to return the remains of service members interred overseas to their homeland. Sixty-one percent of the families chose to repatriate their deceased loved ones and eventually some 170,000 were brought (359–60). This additional content adds depth and contour to the Army's history. With extensive sources and engaging prose, *To the End of the Earth* will have broad appeal—from a general audience to the military scholar. Readers will find it no coincidence that

McManus begins with a question about the cost of the war and ends with a stark reminder of that cost. It is a reminder that we are all better served to remember.

Ivan Zasimczuk has been the military history instructor in the Office of the Chief of Signal, Fort Eisenhower, Georgia, since June 2019. While on active Army duty, he attended Kansas State University, earning a master's degree in history. He followed this with a teaching assignment at the United States Military Academy at West Point where he taught military history and leadership. He ended his Army career in 2017 managing a marketing portfolio in the Army Marketing and Research Group. He then worked at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., for one year before assuming his current role. He is a regular contributor to *Army History*.



THE LEDGER: ACCOUNTING FOR FAILURE IN AFGHANISTAN

BY DAVID KILCULLEN AND GREG MILLS

Hurst Publishers, 2021
Pp. xxxi, 352. $19.95

REVIEW BY WM. SHANE STORY

For the United States, the collapse of the Afghan government in August 2021 was a foreign policy debacle. Two decades of support for Afghan democracy and fighting to stave off a Taliban return had gone for naught. To top it all off, the desperate evacuation of Kabul airport looked like a shameful replay of the fall of Saigon in 1975. In *The Ledger: Accounting for Failure in Afghanistan*, David Kilcullen and Greg Mills argue that Presidents George W. Bush, Barack H. Obama, Donald J. Trump, and Joseph R. Biden—especially Biden—are most to blame for what went wrong. *The Ledger*, however, needs an outside auditor because the numbers do not add up.

Kilcullen and Mills, from Australia and South Africa, respectively, have built lucrative careers as international security and development experts. Kilcullen has written extensively on counterinsurgency doctrine and touts his experience advising commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan. Mills has advised African governments on development projects and counseled civilian leaders and commanders in Afghanistan. When Kabul fell, Kilcullen and Mills helped coordinate the evacuation of an Afghan acquaintance and his family to the United States as refugees. Weeks later, in October 2021, they holed up in a Moroccan mountain resort to write *The Ledger* in just one month. How does one write a book in just one month? First, rehash and knit together a bunch of old material and checklists on how one should conduct counterinsurgency. Throw in well-known and long-standing criticisms of the operation. Finally, write with the boundless energy and fury of full-blown righteous indignation, repeatedly blasting a carefully chosen target (President Biden) for his treachery.

The structure of *The Ledger* reflects a thirty-day writing effort. Kilcullen and Mills use lists to organize the text: "five common lessons;" "assessing four failures;" eleven things "that could have been done differently" (109, 125, 225). Vietnam makes multiple appearances. Kilcullen and Mills twice evoke the "lessons of Vietnam" (59, 168) without specifying what they are except for the observation that the United States "could do everything in its power to assist the South Vietnamese [but] it could not win the conflict for them" (2). In an unseemly detour, Chapter 5 shifts the focus from Afghanistan to Africa to imply that future interventions on that continent will be more effective if the proper lessons are drawn from Afghanistan. An incongruous shout-out to Somaliland reads like a bid for the next international consulting contract (274).

Their indignation about Afghanistan is all the greater because of their conviction that it did not have to end as it did. The war was "eminently winnable" (37) and "winning tactical engagements was never a problem in Afghanistan, especially when airpower could be bought to bear" (83). That it was not won was due primarily to terrible policy decisions by the American presidents. First was the Bush administration's failure in late 2001, after ousting the Taliban from power, to include that group in the negotiations to establish a new government of Afghanistan. This becomes the original sin that begets all others in the long war. Next was the eighteen-month time limit that President Obama put on the surge of forces into Afghanistan from 2009 through 2011, which *The Ledger* dismisses as "too small . . . too brief . . . and too compromised," because the Taliban had only to wait out the Americans (228). Finally, there was the disastrous departure. President Biden should have ignored the withdrawal agreement negotiated by President Trump in 2020. Strategically, "there was no reason to remove the 2,500 NATO troops that remained in the country" in 2021 (38). Moreover, "just as the decision to invade Iraq was never supported by the actual evidence, the same was true for the decision to leave Afghanistan" (43).

The Ledger belies its own criticisms of the American presidents by depicting an Afghanistan that no outside power could ever hope to stabilize. Elections, they explain, did not lead Afghanistan toward any semblance of representative democracy. Then there is Afghanistan's eastern neighbor, Pakistan, with its own geostrategic and demographic concerns for shaping Afghanistan's future. It was Pakistan's interests that led it to support the mujahideen fighting the Soviets in the 1980s and to play both sides of the Taliban-American war from 2001 through 2021. America's objectives in Afghanistan depended heavily on Pakistani support, but Pakistan opposed American objectives in the region. Additionally, endless corruption consumed most of the aid and construction funds spent during the war.

Even the authors' assertions about the coalition's military indomitability do not

hold up to scrutiny. Improvised explosive devices took a steady toll on coalition and Afghan forces and the coalition abandoned combat outposts because they were impossible to defend. Moreover, insider attacks defeated coalition efforts to partner with and build up Afghan security forces, which themselves were going to have to win the war if it was ever going to be won. "Military force," they note, "in this context often proves to be counterproductive beyond a certain, fairly low, threshold of violence" (93). Kilcullen and Mills laud coalition soldiers but make their efforts seem pointless: "The war was not inherently unwinnable, perhaps, but the missions these mostly very capable, brave and selfless men and women were sent on, within the resource and timeframe parameters they were given, were often unachievable" (58). In retrospect, any president reading *The Ledger* could only regret not having withdrawn from that intractable conflict even sooner.

War begets bitterness. It is to be expected, and Kilcullen and Mills convey bitterness in spades, but their fundamental interest in Afghanistan was not selfless service. Rather, they both fit their own definition of "conflict entrepreneurs": "actors who benefit from the continuation of a war and therefore seek to prolong it rather than win it . . . [including] the enormous buzzing swarm of contractors, consultants and implementing partners [who] were feeding at the same trough" (163). There is much to learn about the war from *The Ledger*, but readers should take the authors' judgments with a grain of salt.

Dr. Wm. Shane Story, is a retired Army officer. He is currently a student at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. From 2015 to 2024, he was a division chief in the Histories Directorate at the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

chief historian's FOOTNOTE

Jim Malachowski

Celebrating Army Historians

As we commemorate the U.S. Army's 250th anniversary, we also must honor the military historians whose tireless work preserves the history of America's Army. For nearly 250 years, Army historians have chronicled both the Army's institutional history and the detailed operational challenges in both success and failure in battle. When you consider the primary function Army historians provide, which is writing the official history in peace and war to improve the Army's effectiveness, our story begins with the U.S. Army during the American Revolutionary War.

In 1781, just six years after the beginning of the war, General George Washington wrote to the Continental Congress to propose creating a section of writers, led by a leader in "whom entire confidence can be placed" to organize and preserve war records at his headquarters.[1] With congressional approval, Washington hired the Army's first chief historian, appointing Lt. Col. Richard Varick as his general secretary. One can imagine Varick walking into Washington's headquarters to find a mountain of paperwork—an experience repeated by nearly every historian arriving at a headquarters today. Over the next several years, Varick and his team compiled orders, correspondence, and detailed reports on troop movements—laying the groundwork for what today we term "operational history." Although revolutionary pamphlets like Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (printed in 1776) stirred public opinion, Varick's work provided a factual blueprint of military engagements, leader decisions, and logistics that led to success and failure on the battlefield. The forty-four volumes collected during the war and in the immediate postwar period became raw material for later historians.

As the nation grew, so did its commitment to detailed historical documentation. In 1864, Congress again authorized the Army to collect and publish the official history of "The War of the Rebellion." Between 1880 and 1901, historians completed 131 volumes with records of the U.S. and Confederate Armies and the collection now is considered as the essential source to the study of the Civil War.[2] Following World War I, Army historians produced a monumental series of 128 books. These volumes, spanning tactical orders of battle, troop deployments, and the technological innovations of industrialized warfare, stand as a comprehensive record of operational complexity.

The challenges of World War II demanded an even more nuanced synthesis of narrative and operational detail. Forrest C. Pogue emerged as a leading figure during this era. Serving as an official combat historian, Pogue's work went beyond merely charting events; he delved into the operational intricacies that defined the European Theater of Operations. Through firsthand interviews with soldiers and in-depth analyses of battlefield coordination and tactical shifts, Pogue provided an immersive account that shed light on how operational decisions influenced the course of the war. His narrative combined strategic assessment with operational detail, offering insights that continue to inform both historical scholarship and modern military doctrine.

In the post–World War II era, combat historians have further expanded the operational narrative to capture the complex nature of modern warfare. During the Korean and Vietnam Wars, historians meticulously recorded the harsh realities of fighting in extreme conditions, focusing on the rapid troop movements, supply challenges, and shifting battle tactics that defined the conflicts. More recent theaters, like Afghanistan and Iraq, have presented historians with new operational challenges in the realms of counterinsurgency, urban combat, and multidomain operations.

Over time, Army historians have examined key operational details in their effort to capture both the strategic and human elements of conflict. Today, Army historians are leveraging tools to move digital data from the forward line of troops to the archive, conducting interviews, and capturing important documents and data from around the globe. Their work, steeped in operational art and the historian's craft, simultaneously serves as the Army's historical record and as a guide for refining tactics, training, and doctrine to improve the Army's combat capabilities. Behind all of it, the U.S. Army Center of Military History ensures that both the operational and narrative dimensions of military history are preserved.

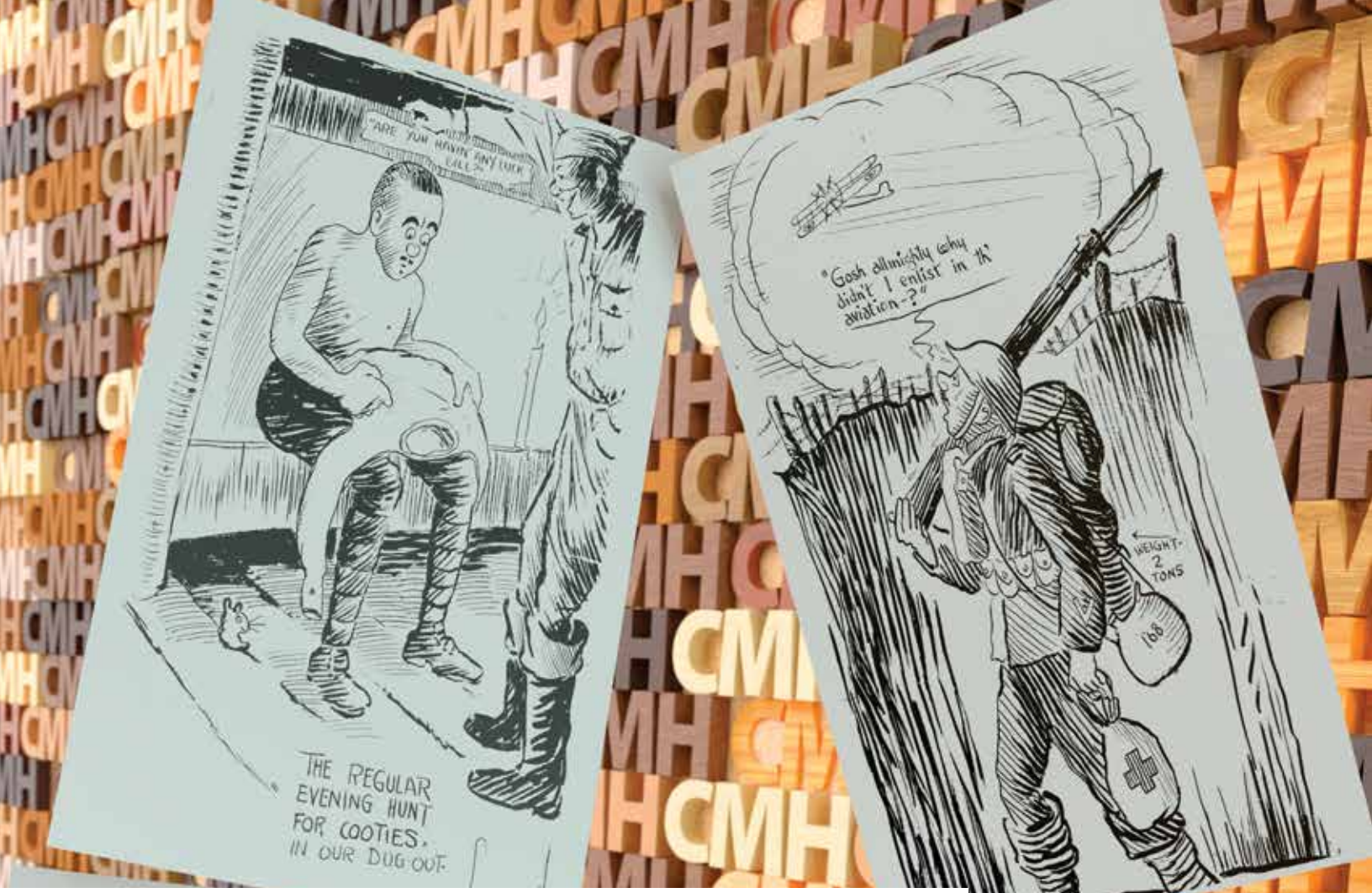
This summer, we recognize 250 years of America's Army. Please join me in remembering generations of military historians who chronicled each tactical maneuver, strategic decision, and operational lesson to write our official history. From Colonel Varick in the Revolutionary War to military history detachments on the ground in four areas of responsibility today, help me celebrate Army historians who weave the threads of heroic deeds and the practical challenges of warfare into a rich tapestry of national defense. In every preserved order, every examined maneuver, and every doctrinal update, military historians ensure that operational history remains the backbone of our national defense. Their enduring legacy inspires today's commanders and informs tomorrow's strategies, ensuring that the Army's storied past—every operation recorded, and every lesson learned—continues to guide our future and remind us that understanding how battles are fought is as crucial as remembering why they are fought.

AH

Notes

1. Samuel K. Fore, "Richard Varick," George Washington's Mount Vernon, https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/richard-varick.

2. Terence J. Gough, "The U.S. Army Center of Military History: A Brief History," 1996, Research, U.S. Army Center of Military History, https://history.army.mil/Research/Reference-Topics/A-Brief-History/.



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