

A Staff Ride at the Joint Readiness Training Center

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As a senior observer-controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, Louisiana, I was challenged to provide relevant leader development training to my infantry observer-controller task force of some thirty captains and two majors. All of these officers were bright and talented and, because they spent two to two-and-a-half weeks of every month in the field "on rotation," had limited time for training. One of the teaching devices I used was the staff ride, a visit to a historic battlefield following a systematic study of the operation. While my approach to the staff ride was hardly unique, the experience confirmed in my mind the legitimacy of this leader development tool. From this experience, I can make several observations to guide others in the use of the staff ride in developing leaders for the Army of the future.

I was drawn to the staff ride for several reasons. First, my previous experience as a staff ride participant and leader in various assignments, and my background as a military history instructor at West Point, predisposed me to consider the integration of military history into our overall leader development program. Second, the fortuitous proximity of Fort Polk to the scene of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks' Red River campaign of April 1864 afforded an opportunity that was logistically simple. I was pleased to find that the terrain is largely unchanged since the Civil War and that the battle sites have been preserved largely intact by the State of Louisiana and by private entities. Third, I thought that a staff ride could build on and utilize the skills of the observer-controllers, who are trained in the arts of tactical analysis and of the after-action review. Thus, the staff ride could serve the dual purposes of supporting our mission essential task list (METL) proficiency as well as contributing to the development of my officers for their future responsibilities.

Having decided that a staff ride was a feasible training exercise for my unit, I set about the practical matter of organizing it. I found the service of the post library at Fort Polk to be invaluable. To my very great surprise and pleasure, an enterprising reference librarian there, Mr. Freeman Schell, had recognized that persons assigned to Fort Polk likely would be interested in the Civil War, and had acquired a complete set

of the *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (OR)*. Also, the library arranged through interlibrary loan to borrow several key primary and secondary sources from nearby Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana. Finally, the library set aside all of our acquired references on closed reserve for the duration of our exercise.

Because there was precious little time between rotations, as well as many other demands on my officers, an early start was imperative. We collected the needed references and published the staff ride directive in February 1994, but did not conduct the actual terrain walk until the following June. This interval permitted the officers to integrate successfully their research and preparation with their other activities. The organization of the staff ride followed the concepts laid out in the Center of Military History's publication, *The Staff Ride*, by William G. Robertson, which we obtained at no cost from the Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The staff ride consisted of preliminary study, field study, and the integration phase. The field study was subdivided further into "stands," or stops at important sites arranged to follow the campaign chronologically.

The central purpose of this staff ride was "to train officers in the art of war by critically examining a historical military campaign in great detail," and this purpose drove all the particulars of actual execution. (1) I wanted the officers to improve their tactical and operational judgment through the vicarious experience of combat that one can achieve during a staff ride. To do this, I wanted them to analyze critically the leadership on both sides—at several key junctures in the campaign—by placing themselves as historical actors into the given situation. In this way, I hoped to convey to them the powerful dynamics of warfare, where issues such as logistics, intelligence, morale, and so forth, are not separate, but are interdependent and simultaneous influences on the opposing forces physically locked in their respective commanders' contest of wills.

Several requirements derived directly from this goal and defined our preliminary study phase. First,

the officers had to appreciate the art of the possible in 1864. I found that some selective reading in Jack Coggins' *Arms and Equipment of the Civil War* made them sufficiently familiar with weapons, organization, logistics, communications, and tactical doctrine. Second, each officer needed to comprehend the historical context of the campaign. Alvin Josephy's *The Civil War in the American West* provided two excellent chapters to fulfill this purpose. (2) Third, I wanted the officers to study from primary sources, principally the *OR*. This led to some frustration, as anyone who has worked in the *OR* will understand, but it was compensated for by the opportunity to consider the actual participants' words. Fourth, I assigned each stand to a team that consisted of one or more officers to represent each side, Union and Confederate, at that particular point.

I enjoined the officers to focus on leadership and command by asking the right questions of the sources: What was the mission? What was the situation, actual and perceived? What actions did the leaders take, if any? Why? What other choices did they have? What was the outcome of their action or inaction? Why? By addressing these questions of decisionmaking in teams, from the simultaneous and comparative perspective of each combatant, I hoped to capture some of the "force on force" dynamics of combat. Each team opened its stand by briefing what happened there as a prelude to general discussion and group analysis. This technique allowed us to feel the campaign unfold as we followed it chronologically from stand to stand on the actual ground.

It is not my purpose to recount the Red River campaign, except as may be necessary to illustrate some points about the opportunities and pitfalls of the staff ride. Because it was a campaign of relatively little consequence in the Civil War, and because Union General Banks retains a well deserved reputation for having fumbled its execution rather thoroughly, I at first feared that there might be little my officers could learn.

At first glance, the campaign seemed simple enough: General Banks set out from New Orleans, Louisiana, in the spring of 1864 to seize Shreveport, in the northwest corner of the state, by advancing up the Red River, accompanied by a flotilla of gunboats and transports under Rear Adm. David Porter. Just above Natchitoches, more than two-thirds of the distance to Shreveport, Banks' army left the immediate river bank to follow a single track road west and north through the forest. There they encountered three Confederate

divisions hastily concentrated from Arkansas and Texas and under the command of Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor. In two sharp fights at Sabine Crossroads and Pleasant Hill, the Union forces were narrowly defeated, withdrew and eventually retreated all the way to New Orleans, never to threaten Confederate Louisiana, or Texas, again. The two main battlefields, though well preserved, are very small compared to any of those most often the focus of staff rides.

As I studied the campaign as a prospective staff ride subject, my first impressions of relative infertility gave way to cautious optimism and then to enthusiasm (abetted, no doubt, by the absence of alternatives!). The campaign was rich in potential teaching points, probably the more so because it was a failure—for the Union certainly, and nearly so, ironically, for the Confederacy. While not all the teaching points could be captured in our staff ride, thinking about them helped me organize the stands, guide the preparatory efforts of my officers, and contribute to and stimulate discussion as we walked the ground. Even the brief duration and limited geographic scope of the culminating days of the campaign were a benefit, as they made feasible a very adequate field study phase in a single day.

Although the actual campaign took place over several weeks and hundreds of miles, we concentrated on the culminating days in April that led to the two decisive battles and to Banks' withdrawal. The events of those days took place from the point at Grande Ecore, Louisiana, where Banks moved his army west and away from the Red River, north to the site of the battle at Sabine Crossroads near Mansfield, Louisiana. Our first stand was along the route the Union Army took prior to any significant contact with the enemy. At this point, we discussed several major issues. (3)

First, we considered Banks' plan of campaign, discussing and critiquing his stated and apparent objectives. These are not clear today, probably because they were not entirely clear to Banks himself at the time, thus providing us with a wonderful opportunity to consider such concepts as commander's intent, strategic and operational objectives, and center of gravity. We briefly considered the lack of any formal command relationship between Banks and the commander of his naval component, Potter, and the reasons why these two men might perceive the campaign in different terms. We considered the problems of coordinating the movements of Union forces in Arkansas—also independently commanded—and the problems and opportunities that interior operational lines presented to the

Confederates. Finally, because it became such a significant factor in the later conduct of the battles, we took a detailed look at Union combat service support (CSS) arrangements.

One of our officers made the point with an excellent, detailed diagram based on original research in the *OR* that Banks' army was barely fully deployed along the road from Grande Ecore when its lead elements made contact; that it was stretched out along twenty miles of crude road with dense woods on either side; and that the bulk of that length was the trains of the various leading elements, there being no overall organization or doctrine for battlefield CSS. Here is an example of how the staff ride can serve to give us the sort of detail that makes our history come alive, while at the same time confronting us with issues of immediate relevance. As observer-controllers, we had seen time and again how inattention to the organization of a unit's CSS had frustrated execution of an otherwise good plan. To see the same phenomenon in a historical setting helps confirm the validity of one's perceptions, while providing a basis for comparison that sharpens judgment—exactly the sort of effect I intended.

Our next two stands, at Wilson's Farm and Carroll's Mill, were the scenes of relatively minor skirmishes between leading Union cavalry and covering Confederate cavalry, both casually reinforced with infantry and artillery. These were very important stands for my purposes, because they enabled us to consider the actions of commanders attempting to develop an unknown situation. This situation leads us to the twin issues of intelligence and organization of the reconnaissance effort. Such stands are tailor made for the investigation of tactical command.

Because there was very little recorded about these actual engagements, we focused on the decisions, actions, and reports of commanders senior to those engaged. At the tactical level, we investigated how one "develops" the situation. What are—and what should be—the actions a commander takes as his lead units make contact? What are the sources of friction? Were these accounted for in advance by the organization of and orders to the lead elements? We looked at intelligence at higher levels. What can initial contacts tell a commander about the enemy and how does this new information affect his decisionmaking? Did the commander anticipate probable enemy dispositions and organize his reconnaissance to confirm or to refute them, or did he just stumble into the enemy? In this instance, it appears that Banks did not envision where he might encounter the enemy and did not expect more

from his lead cavalry than security.

The Confederate perspective was no less instructive as we considered the delay mission executed by Brig. Gen. Hamilton Bee's cavalry. Here, understanding of intent, organization of terrain, innovative tactics, and an excellent, even audacious, sense of timing were the key factors. I believe that the situation of two forces in motion making initial contact with each other is one of immense instructional value in the development of tactical and operational leaders, and in the Civil War *OR* we have nearly complete records of both sides in the same language. This situation is ideally suited to the comparative situational decision-making model of conducting a staff ride described earlier.

Our longest stand, and the centerpiece of our staff ride, was at the scene of the battle of Sabine Crossroads (or Mansfield), now a Louisiana State Commemorative Area. I had arranged for the park historian, Mr. Scott Dearman, to accompany us as a participant and resident expert, and his services were invaluable. I made it clear, however, that I did not want him to serve as a tour guide. I have experienced so-called staff rides where the military officers nearly are passive players, escorted about the battlefield by a historian who may or may not fully appreciate the learning objectives of such a group. While time and circumstance may necessitate such tours on occasion—and they have merit—officers gain the most from their own research and analysis. Park historians can add immeasurable value to the experience by confirming or challenging officer conclusions, contributing points of fact and detail that add realism and color, and by otherwise participating with the group as resident experts, but they should not be enlisted as tour guides.

On the battlefield itself, General Taylor drew up his three divisions astride the road leading north to Mansfield so as to confront the Union army. The site chosen was one of the few clearings along the route. Taylor arranged his forces in an "L" shape in the wood lines on the northern side of the clearing, facing the reverse slope of a gentle east-west ridge line called Honeycutt Hill, which the Union army had to cross as it moved north. The Union forces detected the Confederate positions and began to organize their line of battle along this ridge. Before they could complete their deployment, however, the Confederates attacked, first on the Union right with Brig. Gen. Alfred Mouton's division, and then generally all along the line. The result was a double envelopment of the leading third of Banks' army (two divisions of Brig. Gen. Thomas E.G. Ransom's XIII Corps) and its pursuit off the battle-

field. Banks was not able to reinforce his units in contact because of the congestion along the single road created by the long line of wagon trains. Panic ensued when assaulting Confederate infantry reached these men, and the Union forces generally fled some fourteen miles south to the village of Pleasant Hill.

As with any major engagement, a vast number of issues can be studied about this battle. The team assigned the stand did an excellent job of capturing the more salient points. Probably the richest discussion of the day centered around the question of commander's intent. We asked ourselves what Taylor intended by selecting this particular site, allowing the Union army to deploy for two hours, and then launching the attack at the time and in the manner he did. General Taylor, of course, has not answered this question in the documents and, therefore, much must be carefully coaxed from the available evidence. Although this is the historian's craft, it also is highly instructive to the professional officer, and is the sort of experience where the historian and the soldier both can benefit.

The evidence that a staff ride offers is in the terrain, and this is a factor that must be considered on site for one truly to appreciate the probable minds of the commanders. To this end, two points are important. First, military or U.S. Geological Survey topographical maps help tremendously in confirming historical locations, by allowing one to compare with historical maps. Second, as is the case at Mansfield, historical vegetation patterns often have changed dramatically and must be identified for staff ride participants to appreciate cover, concealment, intervisibility, trafficability, and fields of fire. These are important considerations for the preliminary study phase, as well as a potential service to a local park historian.

Our stands next followed the retreating Union and pursuing Confederate forces back along the route by which they (and we) had advanced in the morning. The Confederate assault at Sabine Crossroads took place at about 1600, and so the resulting pursuit occurred in the fading light of 8 April. We convened a stand at a spot called Pleasant Grove, some two miles south of the main battlefield, where Brig. Gen. William H. Emory's 1st Division, XIXth Corps, was able to form a line of battle and check the Confederate pursuit, buying time for the Union commanders to gain control of their fractured and demoralized forces. Here a number of issues allowed our group to feel the dynamics of combat.

From the Confederate perspective, we considered whether a pursuit actually had been intended or or-

dered, or simply resulted from initial momentum gained and the desire of zealous, successful frontline commanders and soldiers to keep an enemy on the run. It appears that it was the latter. We identified five factors that most likely ground the pursuit to a halt: the terrain did not lend itself to rapid chase, because the only road was congested with now captured Union trains; the Confederates lost control of many of their forward elements, as the soldiers stopped to loot the trains; there was no resupply of water; daylight was fading; and, of course, some Union forces resisted. That Taylor appears not to have anticipated the magnitude of his success by organizing an immediately available pursuit force bears on his original intent discussed earlier. It is this sort of example that adds the very real friction of war to the officer's doctrinal repertoire, and makes military history on location so instructive. General Emory's Union soldiers at Pleasant Grove must get very high marks for courage and steadiness under the worst of conditions. He and his brigade commanders left us an excellent, firsthand account of their withdrawal under pressure and clandestine disengagement. (4)

The trail element in General Banks' long column was the XVI Corps under Maj. Gen. A.J. Smith. (5) Hearing the sound of battle to his front on 8 April, he moved into position at the village of Pleasant Hill, a piece of high ground dominating the road junction where the trail back to Grande Ecore met the north-leading road on which the Union army had advanced. He thus provided Banks with an organized force on which to fall back and organize a defense. This is what took place on the night of 8 April, setting up the battle of Pleasant Hill on 9 April, our next stand.

The battle of Pleasant Hill was much less a set piece affair than had been the battle at Sabine Crossroads. The undulating terrain, patchwork of woods and fields, and the village itself, made for a very dissected battlefield. Neither force was ready when the engagement began at 1500 on 9 April. Many Union soldiers were still straggling into position from the previous day's disaster, and elements of the XVI and XIX Army Corps were intermingled. The Confederates were in little better shape, the two assaulting divisions having conducted a forced march from north of Mansfield during the night. (6) The resulting battle was loosely coordinated and became a melee of vicious small unit actions on both sides. The Confederates, despite a desperate attempt and heavy casualties, neither seized the road junction nor destroyed the Union force and so broke off the fight that night, exhausted, to regroup. To

their considerable surprise, Banks negated the prospect of a battle the following day by ordering a general retreat during the night back to Grande Ecore, leaving many of his dead and wounded on the field.

Once again, the battle provided more teaching points than could easily be covered in a staff ride. The most valuable lessons in this stand involved small unit actions and the generalship of Nathaniel Banks in making the decision to withdraw. To the degree that the Confederates were able to mount a coordinated attack on the Union position, it was during an attempted envelopment of the Union left flank by a division under Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Churchill. This command became misdirected in the dense undergrowth, and turned too early toward what they presumed was an open Union left flank. Although they overran an isolated Union brigade, they emerged from the woods in front of Union troops and were themselves taken under enfilading fire, counterattacked in flank, and driven from the field. This action appears to have been at the initiative of Col. William F. Lynch, commanding the 1st Brigade, 3d Division, of A.J. Smith's corps, luckily posted far to the Union left. Meanwhile, on the other side of the battlefield, what amounted to a Confederate supporting attack overran the forward Union elements, causing the 32d Iowa Infantry Regiment, under Col. John Scott, to be surrounded and forced to make its way back to Union lines by moving with the Confederate attack. Such actions bring the real fog and friction of the battlefield into the participants' study of leadership, and provide inspiration as well as instruction.

As night settled on the battlefield, the Confederates withdrew six miles north to regroup and to consider their options. General Banks elected almost immediately to retreat to Grande Ecore. This sort of situation presents an outstanding opportunity, because both the Confederate and Union decisions can be analyzed and critiqued in the light of available evidence concerning the situation both commanders faced. In retrospect, Banks' reasons do not seem compelling.

In his report to Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, recently appointed commanding general of the Union armies, Banks cited the extent of casualties, lack of water, his inability to communicate with Porter's fleet, and the belief that he lacked the relative combat power to continue his advance toward Shreveport. (7) These factors should not have blinded him to the advantage he now held, however. He was in possession of the battlefield. The Confederates had, at least temporarily, exhausted their available combat formations. He had

relatively fresh troops in the commands of A.J. Smith and Brig. Gen. T. Kilby Smith's provisional division still embarked on Porter's flotilla. His subordinate commanders seemed to expect exploiting their advantage with a pursuit the next morning. That Banks could not bring himself to order anything of the kind underscores several continuing themes in his generalship of this campaign.

Banks' intelligence and reconnaissance were poor, probably because Banks himself did not think about his enemy very much, and so did not demand information. He did not know the enemy's situation. He was unable to overcome logistical difficulties such as the shortage of water, rations and ammunition, and the encumbrance of large numbers of dead and wounded, because he had given little thought to the organizational details of sustaining his forces in the field. Although he showed personal courage on more than one occasion on the battlefield, he seemed to lack the warrior's instinct for taking the fight to the enemy.

In fairness, several external factors weighed on Banks that are highly instructive for illustrating the difference in perspective between the operational commander that he was and his subordinates occupying the tactical level. He had a fast-approaching suspense date for releasing A.J. Smith's corps back to Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's command at Vicksburg, Mississippi; he knew the water in the Red River was falling, thus threatening the fleet with capture and making the problem of sustaining his force at Shreveport—should he get there—problematic; and he had been ordered by an impatient General Grant to complete his expedition by 30 April, even if it meant giving up the objective. These circumstances cannot excuse Banks, however, because they clearly were foreseeable and should have been fully considered in his decision to launch the expedition in the first place. He committed his forces, not on the basis of a deliberately accepted risk, but on wishful optimism, and then lacked both the technical competence and tenacity to prevail over the enemy. That many soldiers died as a result is a powerful condemnation. Such insights help young officers grasp some of the essentials of generalship, made all the more clear by a negative example. (8)

Our final stop was back at Grande Ecore. The entrenched position Banks occupied for another ten days on a bluff above the Red River is still very visible in the largely undeveloped land. We gathered at a vantage point above the river not far from where Banks' headquarters probably sat, and conducted what Dr. William G. Robertson called the "integration phase,"

and what observer-controllers would know as the after-action review. It was a retrospective summing up of what we had individually and collectively gained from our experience on the battlefields. The lessons for each officer were many: leadership, generalship, logistics, intelligence, campaign planning, joint operations, discipline and training of troops, audacity, combined arms, perseverance, as well as other issues. An equally important number of issues, not explored in this essay, await future staff riders of the Red River campaign.

It seems fitting, then, to make some brief observations about the staff ride as a leader-development tool in a military unit. The staff ride can be a great training multiplier. It takes some planning and organization, but the doctrine for all of that is available in Dr. Robertson's staff ride book (CMH Pub 70-21) in readily usable form. With a little imagination, a staff ride can be tailored to a particular unit's needs. (9) Because staff rides may be viewed by some participants as an extra-curricular activity distracting from the primary mission, they should be relevant, fun, and fairly painless, but without transferring the burden for professional growth away from the participant. The leader can help tremendously by carefully arranging the source material and by directing the preliminary study phase to avoid wasted time. Staff rides can include very valuable public relations opportunities, but these should not become the proverbial dog-and-

pony show that distracts from the objective, which is learning.

Perhaps the most cogent lessons I took away from the experience were those about the profession of arms and how to develop those who follow it. First, past military operations involving thousands of soldiers and sailors cannot fail to be valuable learning experiences, if properly approached. No matter that they may not be the best known or most studied, or may not have involved any of our legendary great soldiers. Second, the 10,000 or so Americans of both sides who died for cause and country in the failed Red River campaign make even the hard-scrabble pinewoods of western Louisiana hallowed ground, and profoundly underscore the moral imperative of competence in our chosen profession. Few training techniques can underscore these points as clearly or profoundly as the well-conducted staff ride.

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Notes

1. Memo, Paul H. Herbert to All Officers, Task Force 1, sub: Staff Ride, 14 June 1994, 18 Feb 94.
2. In addition to the *OR*, other titles in our preliminary study phase included Norman D. Brown, ed., *Journey to Pleasant Hill: The Letters of Captain Elijah Petty*; Ludwell Johnson, *Red River Campaign*; John D. Winters, *The Civil War in Louisiana*; and Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. 4, *Retreat with Honor*.
3. Throughout this paper, I use current doctrinal terms to describe actions that took place in 1864. One must be careful of the inherent tendency in a staff ride to impose modern doctrine on historical events, which is why the preliminary study phase must establish a baseline knowledge among the participants of the historical art of the possible. With this caveat in mind, the historical action can be of tremendous value in sharpening our judgment about our own doctrine.
4. See rpts of Brig. Gens. William H. Emory, James W. MacMillan, and William Dwight (nos. 60, 68, and 69

respectively) in *OR*, series 1, part 34, vol. 1, pp. 389-424.

5. XVI Army Corps was on loan to Banks from Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's Army of the Tennessee at Vicksburg, Mississippi, and was due to be returned to Sherman not later than April.

6. The two divisions were Churchill's and Walker's. They were held back from the action at Sabine Crossroads until too late by Lt. Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith, [ed: not to be confused with Union Gen. T. Kilby Smith, mentioned in text] Taylor's superior, illustrating the interior lines dilemma Smith faced by the simultaneous but uncoordinated advance of Union General Steele's force south from Arkansas. Released to Taylor's control late on 8 April, these divisions made a hard march of forty or so miles to be at Pleasant Hill on 9 April. The timing of their release was one of several disagreements that were sources of acrimony between Taylor and Smith for the remainder of the war and afterwards.

7. N.P. Banks to Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant, 13 Apr 64, *OR*, series 1, part 34, vol. 1, pp. 181-85.

8. My officers were quick to conclude from this critique that Banks' failure can be attributed to his status as a "political" general, unschooled in the profession of arms. This judgment, of course, overlooks the many instances in our history of citizen soldiers mastering command very successfully. The issue

provides the opportunity to discuss the duality in our army of professionalism and militia roots, and to emphasize that competence, however gained, is the issue.

9. I have conducted staff rides for soldiers and sergeants, faculty members, combat leaders, Reserve Component officers, and advisers in a Readiness Group.

Native Americans in World War II

Thomas D. Morgan

In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "This generation has a rendezvous with destiny." When Roosevelt said that he had no idea of how much World War II would make his prophecy ring true. More than fifty years later, Americans are remembering the sacrifices of that generation, which took up arms in defense of the nation. Part of that generation was a neglected minority, Native American Indians, who flocked to the colors in defense of their country. No group that participated in World War II made a greater per capita contribution, and no group was changed more by the war. As part of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of World War II, it is fitting for the nation to recall the contributions of its own "first citizens."

The Vanishing American

At the time of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the New World, the Native American population living in what is now the United States was estimated at about one million. By 1880, only 250,000 Indians remained and this gave rise to the "Vanishing American" theory. By 1940, this population had risen to about 350,000. During World War II more than 44,000 Native Americans saw military service. They served on all fronts in the conflict and were honored by receiving numerous Purple Hearts, Air Medals, Distinguished Flying Crosses, Bronze Stars, Silver Stars, Distinguished Service Crosses, and three Congressional Medals of Honor. Indian participation in World War II was so extensive that it later became part of American folklore and popular culture.

The Warrior Image

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor seemed to

waken an ancestral warrior spirit in many Native Americans. Thousands of young Indians went into the armed forces or to work in the war production plants that abruptly emerged during military and industrial mobilization. A 1942 survey indicated that 40 percent more Native Americans voluntarily enlisted than had been drafted. Lt. Ernest Childers (Creek), Lt. Jack Montgomery (Cherokee), and Lt. Van Barfoot (Choctaw)—all of the famed 45th "Thunderbird" Infantry Division—won Medals of Honor in Europe. Childers had first distinguished himself in Sicily, where he received a battlefield commission. Later in Italy, unaided and despite severe wounds, he destroyed three German machine gun emplacements. During the Anzio Campaign in Italy, Montgomery attacked a German strongpoint single-handed, killing eleven of the enemy and taking thirty-three prisoners. During the breakout from Anzio to Rome, Barfoot knocked out two machine gun nests and captured seventeen prisoners. Subsequently, he defeated three German tanks and carried two wounded men to safety. All of these exploits reinforced the "warrior" image in the American mind. Maj. Gen. Clarence Tinker, an Osage and a career pilot, was the highest ranking Indian in the armed forces at the beginning of the war. He died leading a flight of bombers in the Pacific during the Battle of Midway. Joseph J. "Jocko" Clark, the first Indian (Cherokee) to graduate from Annapolis, participated in carrier battles in the Pacific and became an admiral. Brumett Echohawk (Pawnee), a renowned expert in hand-to-hand combat, trained commandos.

A Tradition as Fighters

The Iroquois Confederacy, having declared war on Germany in 1917, had never made peace and so auto-