

# ARMY HISTORY

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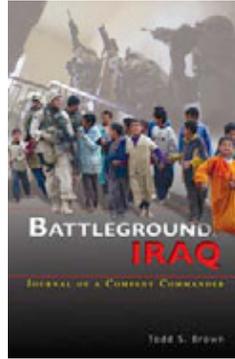
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# NEWS NOTES

## Center of Military History Publishes Iraq War Journal



The Center of Military History has published *Battleground Iraq: Journal of a Company Commander* by Robert “Todd” S. Brown. The book prints edited journal entries written in Iraq between 21 April 2003 and 15 March 2004 by a then Army captain who served as an assistant operations officer on the staff

of the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and, beginning on 10 July 2003, as commander of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry, an element of the same division. Brown was in the antagonistic Sunni city of Samarra with the brigade headquarters, and his company operated there and near Balad, between Samarra and Baghdad. The journal entries are grouped into monthly chapters, each of which is prefaced by a concise discussion of the most important developments in Iraq in the period. The entries examine the relationship between combat operations and the effort to win Iraqi support for a democratic governing structure, while they illuminate the emotions of soldiers exposed to unrelenting attack and the loss of friends in battle. In addition to the journal entries, the book also prints as appendixes papers containing the author’s reflections on his company’s combat missions in Samarra and on countermortar operations.

The book has been published in paperback as CMH Pub 70–107–1. Army publication account holders may obtain it from the Directorate of Logistics–Washington, Media Distribution Division, ATTN: JDHQSVPAS, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63114-6128. Account holders may also place their orders at <http://www.apd.army.mil>. The Government Printing Office is offering the book for sale for \$34 at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>.



### By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

GEORGE W. CASEY, JR.  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

Official:

JOYCE E. MORROW  
Administrative Assistant to the  
Secretary of the Army

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Chief of Military History  
Dr. Jeffrey J. Clarke

Managing Editor  
Dr. Charles Hendricks

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Cover Illustration: *U.S. Army soldiers rest during an operation in Iraq, 14 May 2007. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tierney Nowland)*



## The Chief's Corner

**Dr. Jeffrey J. Clarke**

After six months of hard work the Center of Military History has published the new strategic plan for the Army's history and museum community. I commend it to you. The plan addresses everything from records collection to art and artifacts, history and heritage to staff support, and education and training to combat deployments. Printed copies should be available by the time this column appears, and you can find an electronic version at the Center's Web site at <http://www.history.army.mil/html/documents/stratplan/CMHStratPlan.html>.

Your new "Strat Plan" is quite different from most of the others that populate the government and private sectors these days. It did not begin with a vision statement—although that was added later and should not be a surprise to anyone. Nor was it constructed of the allegorical building blocks, keystones, cornerstones, transoms, columns, vectors, and so forth that are common to most such documents. Instead, conceptually it began with specific objectives, actions that many of your own program leaders believed needed to be accomplished—or at least begun—now or within

a year, or perhaps in two or three years, which is about the limit of our collective "farsightedness" at this point. Although the plan is partially the creation of CMH, it is also, more significantly, the product of several specialized committees with members representing the entire Army. Moreover, it assigns just as broadly the responsibility for developing the actions needed to achieve specific goals within a reasonable span of time.

We have included extensive front matter as well, though this information is primarily for people outside the community. It will remind them who we are, what we are about, and how our accomplishments mesh into the larger Army effort. In sum, the substance of the new plan is found in the roughly one hundred actions it divides into six topical areas: history, heritage, education, professional development, museums, and Army support. The actions themselves will be monitored and updated on a timely basis, closed as objectives are reached, and expanded or altered as appropriate.

To all those who participated directly or indirectly in this initial effort, I offer my heartfelt thanks and congratulations, but the work has just begun.

Once again, thanks for everything you do for our Army at war.



## The Chief Historian's Footnote

**Dr. Richard W. Stewart**

The Center of Military History will come under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) late this fall. Some Army historical offices in the field have already begun the transition to this new personnel system while others have yet to do so. For the moment, NSPS will only affect non-bargaining unit employees (in the Center that will be some GS 13s but primarily GS 14s and above), but eventually it will have an impact on all historians and curators throughout

the Army. Because it is such a radical departure from the past, there is a great deal of uncertainty about NSPS. It will change all the rules about grade levels, step increases, and even how an employee's basic salary is derived. That uncertainty has led some to fear the new system and complain, even before experiencing it, about its complexities. NSPS certainly seems to be a very complicated system, but the more I have studied it over recent months, the more I realize that it needs to be complicated if it is to work. The system must have a number of checks and balances built into it as it seeks to translate specific, measurable job elements

*continued on page 26*

“DESPITE THE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS  
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— *Ben R. Simms  
and Curtis D. Taylor*

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# THE BATTLE

## FOR SALEM STREET



By Ben R. Simms and Curtis D. Taylor



In October 2006, a reinforced American tank platoon from Company D, 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, supported by a platoon of Iraqi Army infantry, came into heavy contact with a large, well-equipped Shia militia force while conducting a raid deep in the heart of a hostile city.<sup>1</sup> The battle lasted over four hours and resulted in at least thirty militiamen being killed in action and in the complete destruction of one U.S. M1A2 Abrams tank. Miraculously, no American or Iraqi Army soldiers were hurt in the action. First and foremost, this battle showcased the bravery and versatility of the young American soldiers that populate our enlisted and noncommissioned officer ranks. Second, the M1A2 tank proved again to be an indispensable asset in urban warfare—particularly against a well-equipped enemy. Finally, this incident demonstrated, once more, the absolute importance of the combined arms team. This essay will summarize the action in those four hectic and confusing hours and offer lessons learned from the experience.

### SITUATION

In late August 2006, a large force of Shia militia loosely

affiliated with the Jaish al-Mahdi organization of Moqtada al-Sadr overran a platoon-size contingent of Iraqi Army soldiers in the city of Diwaniyah, the capital of Qadisiyah Province. With a population of about half a million, Diwaniyah lies about twenty kilometers east of Najaf in southern Iraq, and it has a history of involvement with radical, Shia-based insurgent groups. After overrunning the platoon, the insurgent leaders at the scene had their men gather seventeen Iraqi Army prisoners and publicly execute them in front of a large crowd of onlookers. After this event, the remaining Iraqi Army forces evacuated the city to the security of their nearby compound. This effectively left the Shia militia in control of the city.

Within hours of this incident, the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, based at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, eighty kilometers to the north in Babil Province, received a call to prepare to deploy to Diwaniyah to restore order and enable the Iraqi Army to regain control of the city center. The battalion, an element of the 2d Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry

Division, initially deployed two mechanized infantry company teams and one armor company team to Diwaniyah. When the American heavy armor arrived in Diwaniyah, the majority of the militia fled the city, and a combined U.S.-Iraqi task force was able to clear portions of it with virtually no resistance and temporarily regain control of the more hostile neighborhoods. The two infantry company teams redeployed immediately after the operation. The armor company, the battalion's Delta Company "Dragoons," remained in the city to support Iraqi Army operations designed to kill or capture the militia leaders responsible for the massacre of the Iraqi soldiers.

### THE BATTLE

On the evening of 8 October 2006, the Dragoons received intelligence on the location of

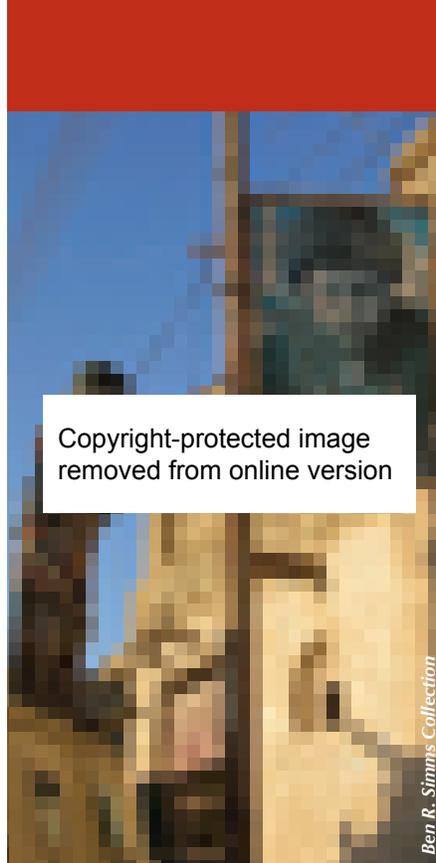


*A sport utility vehicle belonging to a Coalition contractor destroyed by an improvised explosive device in Diwaniyah, c. September 2006*

a prominent sheik accused of ordering the execution of the Iraqi soldiers. He was videotaped brandishing a handgun he had taken from the body of the commander of the captured Iraqi soldiers. A local Iraqi offered to lead Coalition forces to the house and positively identify the sheik.

The targeted sheik was located one block west of Salem Street (pronounced SAH-lem), a thoroughfare that ran through a well-known Jaish al-Mahdi stronghold. The Iraqi source thought we could approach using a side street, thus avoiding the dangers of Salem Street altogether. The most recent aerial photography seemed to support this. The force package for the raid consisted of five M1A2 SEP tanks, which were operated by the company commander and members of the 2d Platoon of Delta Company, and three Iraqi Armored Up-Armored HMMWVs, operated by Iraqi Army personnel.<sup>2</sup>

Urgent security concerns in the normal sector of the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, had forced the Army to redeploy all of the battalion's infantry platoons back to Kalsu. Up to this point, Iraqi Army infantry had fought well beside U.S. forces, and the battalion's officers believed that a mix of U.S. tanks and Iraqi infantry would provide the combined arms versatility that is absolutely essential in urban warfare. To further complicate matters, for security reasons the Iraqi source and an interpreter both needed to stay with U.S. forces, so they rode in the loader's position in two of the tanks. This reduced the combat effectiveness of those two tanks.



*An Iraqi Army soldier removes a poster of Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr from a street in Diwaniyah.*



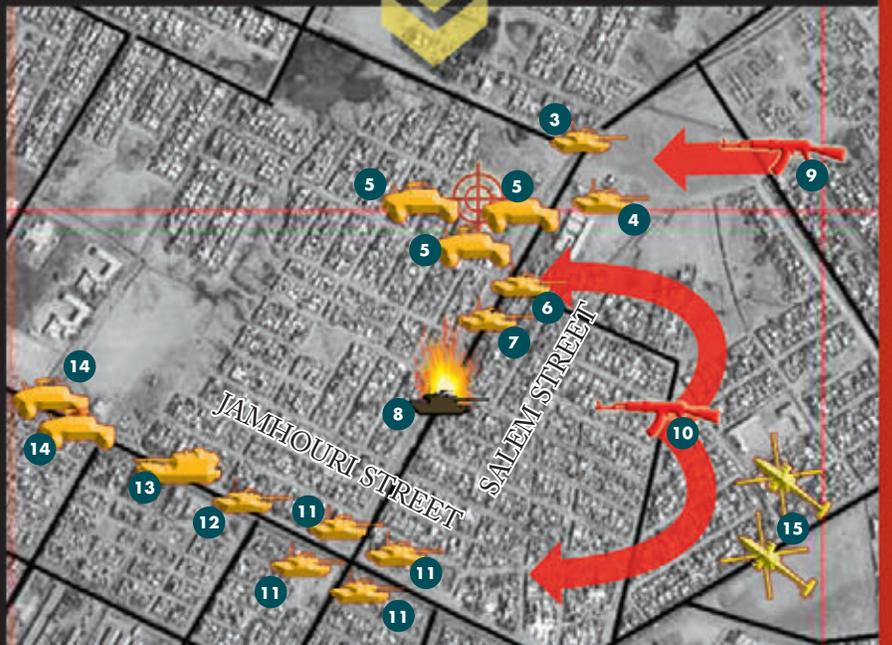
The combined raid force rolled out of the Iraqi Army compound shortly after midnight on 9 October and headed into the city. While the force moved along Jamhuri Street on its final approach to the turn to the target's house, all the lights in the city went out, shrouding the column in darkness. We were never able to determine whether the power failure was a planned reaction to our approach or an unintentional blackout, nor could we easily guess. Both types of power outage had occurred frequently in this area of operation and elsewhere in Iraq. Either way, the darkness was of little concern to us, and we continued forward without delay.

As the force approached the target, Sfc. Jonce Wright, who commanded the lead tank, observed that the planned route would not support the movement of tanks. The next best option was to use Salem Street to carry the tanks to the vicinity of the target, located less than 600 meters away. As Sergeant Wright's tank, D24, turned north onto Salem Street, it was immediately attacked by a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) fired from around the corner of a building to its front. Sergeant Wright's crew immediately fired an M1028 canister round from the tank's 120-mm. main gun and charged into the enemy ambush.<sup>3</sup> The RPG gunner leaned around the corner and fired a second time but again missed. While the crew of D24 reloaded the main gun, the tank commander returned fire with his .50-caliber, flex-mounted machine gun. As the tank crossed into the intersection where the enemy was last spotted, an RPG struck its right side, causing an enormous shower of sparks and



## LEGEND

- 1 - Target House
- 2 - Intended Route
- 3 - D24 (M1A2 SEP Tank)
- 4 - D23 (M1A2 SEP Tank)
- 5 - Iraqi Army Platoon Vehicle
- 6 - D66 (M1A2 SEP Tank)
- 7 - D21 (M1A2 SEP Tank)
- 8 - D22 (M1A2 SEP Tank)
- 9 - 20 to 30 Fighters
- 10 - Over 30 Fighters
- 11 - Relief Force Vehicle
- 12 - HQ63
- 13 - M88 Recovery Vehicle
- 14 - Iraqi Army Company Vehicle
- 15 - Two AH-64D Apache Helicopters



flame. The main gun was already aimed over the side of the tank, down the alley, and the crew was able to observe the location of the RPG team as it fired. There were two RPG gunners taking cover behind a car parallel-parked on the right side of the road, and a third rifleman hid behind a van across the street. The tank's main gun returned fire, sending a high-explosive antitank (HEAT) round into the car. When the obscuration cleared, the tank's crew observed that the car was destroyed and resting on the bodies of the two RPG gunners. The man who had been behind the van was now lying dead in the street. Almost immediately, someone came out of a house and dragged his body away.

Meanwhile, at the intersection of Jamhuri and Salem Streets, the Iraqi Army platoon that had been following the lead section of tanks heard the firing, stopped, and refused to move forward. Since the street was not wide enough to allow a tank to pass the Iraqi HMMWVs, this cut the element in half and prevented the raid force from proceeding the limited remaining distance to the objective. The Iraqi lieutenant in charge was visibly shaken after seeing the lead tank ambushed by RPGs. He frantically claimed he had orders to return to his camp. After the company commander, Capt. Ben Simms, made several appeals and threats, the Iraqi lieutenant finally agreed to continue his advance toward the target. While

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*Above: Iraqi Army soldiers on a foot patrol in Diwanayah, with the soldier in foreground carrying a rocket-propelled grenade*

*Below: Lieutenant Merchant*

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Captain Simms was trying to negotiate with the lieutenant, a rifleman appeared to the left rear of his tank. First Lt. Andrew Merchant, who was following the commander's tank in D21, identified the rifleman, engaged the attacker with his .50-caliber machine gun, and had his gunner engage with the tank's 7.62-mm. M240 coaxial machine gun, destroying a bus that the rifleman was using as cover and neutralizing the threat.

After the Iraqi Army platoon resumed movement, the lead section of tanks led the force to the target's house and set a cordon around the access routes to it. The Iraqi Army soldiers quickly entered the building and accomplished their mission. Within minutes they rejoined us and reported that they had captured the target and recovered the slain Iraqi officer's pistol. As the raid on the house began, an RPG team attacked the trail tank, D22, commanded by S. Sgt. Russell Chapman, from the same alley where D24 had destroyed the previous RPG team. The RPG round struck the tank in the side, detonating on a side skirt. The blast disabled the commander's optics and started a fire in the engine. Sergeant Chapman continued to fight in the tank using night-vision goggles, while his gunner immediately returned fire down the alley with a canister round. The RPG gunner was firing from around a corner approximately

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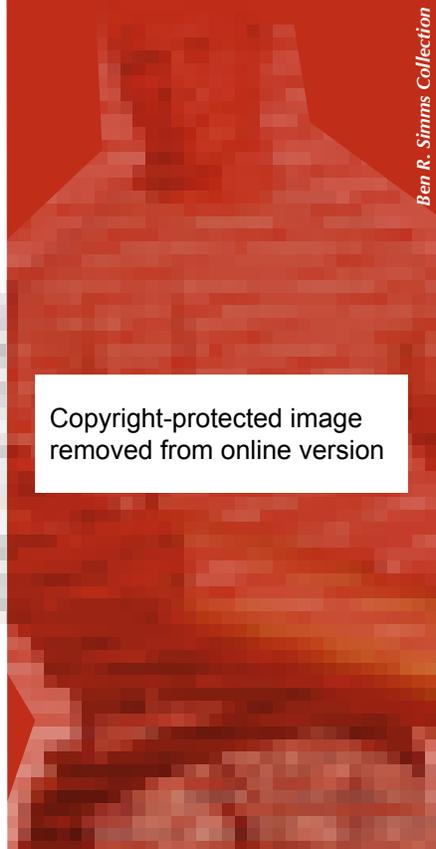


Alleyway off Salem Street near where tanks D23 and D24 engaged attacking Iraqi militiamen on 9 October 2006

150 meters away. Because of the obscuration created by the canister round, determining if it had any effect was impossible. Another RPG team fired from the end of the alley and missed. For several more minutes, Sergeant Chapman and his crew continued to exchange fire with individuals armed with RPGs at the end of the alley while the fire in his tank engine grew in intensity. After Sergeant Chapman realized that the fire was going to consume the engine, he ordered the evacuation of the tank. Seconds before the crew evacuated, the gunner, Sgt. Jason Carroll, identified two men with an RPG at the end of the alley. He fired a final HEAT round dead on target and destroyed the RPG team, before abandoning the burning tank.

By this time the Iraqi Army soldiers had completed their raid and were back in their vehicles. Captain Simms asked the forward

*Sgt. Joseph Schumacher, gunner of tank D23, prepares to load a HEAT round.*



command post of the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, to provide immediate close air support and additional armor support. S. Sgt. Jimmy Brown, commanding D23, meanwhile smashed his tank through a compound wall in order to quickly secure a key alleyway and protect the team's northern flank. At the same time, Lieutenant Merchant in D21 and Captain Simms in D66 moved back to the burning tank. Sergeant Chapman's last report was that his tank was on fire, had fired at an RPG team, and was being evacuated. As the two tanks approached, they could see Chapman's crew taking cover behind the tank and firing at a rooftop.

The crewmen were pinned down near the burning tank by a rifleman on the roof above them. Sergeant Chapman's decision to stay until the last possible moment on the burning tank probably

saved them by allowing them to destroy the RPG team. This way they were able to take cover from the rifleman instead of facing attackers from both directions. The two supporting tanks engaged the rifleman with fire from their coaxial M240 machine guns, while Chapman's crewmen fired at him with their personal weapons. The rifleman went down in a hail of M240 fire, and the raiding force did not receive any more fire from that rooftop the rest of the night.

With the rifleman gone, Sergeant Chapman's crew quickly split up among the four remaining tanks, which were disposed as follows: Sergeant Wright in D24 faced the north on Salem Street, Sergeant Brown in D23 secured the northeast alleyway, Captain Simms in D66 secured the southeast alleyway, and Lieutenant Merchant in D21 secured the burning tank to the south. Almost immediately Sergeant Brown observed an individual carrying a sniper rifle at the end of his alley. He fired his tank's .50-caliber machine gun and killed him. An RPG team appeared next and his gunner engaged it with a HEAT round. A second RPG gunner moved down Salem Street toward D24. Sergeant Wright engaged him with a canister round, destroying the insurgent and detonating the RPG round on his shoulder. Another RPG gunner tried to maneuver on D23, and Sergeant Brown destroyed him with .50-caliber fire from his tank commander's position. Several minutes later, yet another RPG team appeared, and D23 destroyed it with a multipurpose antitank (MPAT) round.<sup>4</sup> Sergeant Brown then reported that his turret was

partially disabled due to cold electrical wires that had wrapped around it as he smashed through the security wall. With the turret frozen in place, the crew continued to fight by pivot-steering the tank left and right.

Because D22's crew had split up among the rest of the platoon, this contact took place while each of the tanks carried five men. With the exception of Sergeant Chapman, who displaced the Iraqi intelligence source from the loader's position in Sergeant Brown's tank, each of the dispersed American crew members, rifle in hand, had to share the loader's station with the loader of the tank he had selected, while the crew kept the tank in the fight. This greatly complicated the tasks of the loader, who had to maneuver in an already cramped space, hit a knee switch, select a round from the ready rack, and then

pivot and maneuver the 50-pound main gun around into the breach. Once the main gun was loaded, the loader and the extra crewman both had to ensure that they were clear of the path of the gun's recoil in a space designed for one man. All this occurred while the tanks were in a quick-draw battle with RPG gunners and snipers. Having yielded his position to Sergeant Chapman, the Iraqi civilian who had identified the target voluntarily moved to the top of Sergeant Brown's tank. Because the turret was entangled with wires, he had to hang on to the armor on the top of the tank while the main gun fired round after round down the crowded alleyways. To his credit, despite being terrified by the firefight and repeatedly jolted by the recoil of the main gun, the young Iraqi man never lost his composure.

Approximately forty minutes into the battle, as Sergeant Brown was engaged in a toe-to-toe fight on the north end of Salem Street, a flight of two Air Force F-15s arrived on the scene and contacted the battalion's forward command post and ground elements on the command's frequency. Captain Simms assessed that the enemy was moving in two groups.

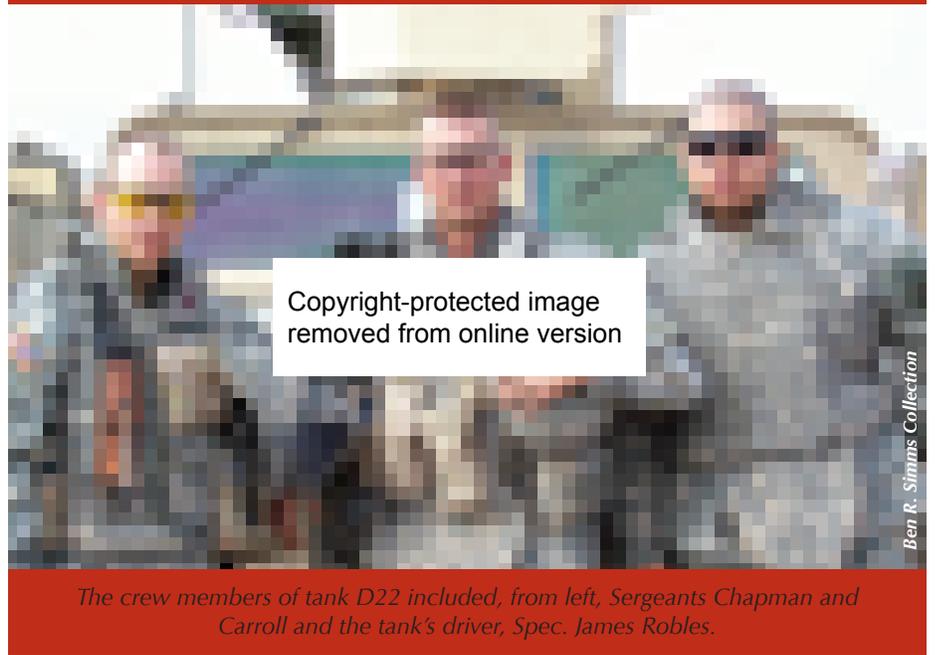
The first group, at the north end of Salem Street, was trying to outflank Sergeants Brown and Wright to get into position for a clean RPG flank shot on either tank. The second group was moving along a street parallel to and east of Salem Street and attempting to seize the rooftops around the burning tank. Captain Simms requested repeated shows of force over Salem Street



and 500 meters to the east. The flames from the burning tank were now reaching three stories high and were drawing the local chapter of the Mahdi militia like a magnet. The F-15s needed to provide a quick deterrent or the situation could soon escalate out of control. The enemy appeared to be coordinating the movement of the two groups in order to envelop the small force and cut off its line of communications. This was a level of enemy sophistication that the battalion was not used to seeing. Fortunately, the militia members had no appreciation of American night-vision systems or of the futility of seeking cover behind vehicles or walls. When they crouched behind a car or a wall, the tanks simply fired at and obliterated the obstruction. Still, the threat of envelopment was real and growing more serious with every minute.

Using the burning tank as a reference point, the pilots began to report what they were seeing directly onto the command net. The enemy was approaching from the northeast and lining up along a road that roughly paralleled Salem Street 300 meters to our east. After several low, ear-shattering passes from the F-15s, the enemy started to grow more disorganized and less reluctant to charge down the alleyways. On several occasions, the pilots identified hostile movement on the rooftops around the burning tank. They immediately illuminated the enemy positions with a directed infrared beam that the tank commanders picked up with their night-vision goggles.

Back at the battalion forward command post, the primary concern was how to prevent the



*The crew members of tank D22 included, from left, Sergeants Chapman and Carroll and the tank's driver, Spec. James Robles.*

encirclement of the force and how to protect the long line of communications back to the compound. Clearly, the enemy's most logical course of action would be to lay deadly roadside bombs along our approach routes in order to cut us off from any relief. To prevent this, a quick reaction force of four tanks from the battalion's Company C rapidly closed the distance to the burning tank and established a strongpoint at the intersection of Salem and Jamhuri Streets. This intersection gave the relief platoon a wide field of view in four directions and allowed it to defeat any attempt to emplace explosives on either route. As soon as the relief force arrived at the intersection, it came into contact with an RPG team from a nearby alley. The soldiers opened fire immediately with a canister round. The F-15s reported men on the rooftops immediately above the tanks. Unable to see the attackers above them because of the angle, the crews opened fire with their .50-caliber machine

guns, aiming for the bottom of the bright infrared light beams coming down from the aircraft. Men scattered off the roofs as the armor-piercing rounds entered the buildings near their top floors and burst through the ceilings.

While the relief force fought off the enemy attack, D66's crew spotted an RPG team trying to move down the alleyway that it was securing. A small pack of dogs and several startled birds betrayed the presence of the enemy team before it rounded the corner. This cued Captain Simms to take aim down the alley. He had a good defilade position from which he could look down the alley from the tank commander's cupola and cover it with his tank's .50-caliber machine gun, while his gunner secured the school and large wall to his north. Captain Simms fired at the RPG team members as they rounded the corner and saw flashes from the armor-piercing incendiary rounds in their midst and on the wall next to them. When Simms stopped firing, the enemy had moved back north.

Also during this time, another RPG gunner appeared from the north on Salem Street. He fired at Sergeant Wright from around a corner but missed. Wright returned fire with a HEAT round, destroying the RPG gunner. Due to the lack of gaps between the adjacent townhouse-like residences that lined the alleys, those alleys offered the enemy almost no concealment or cover from our weapons. Further, the varied heights of the buildings prevented the enemy from simply moving from rooftop to rooftop to envelop the tanks. With Sergeant Wright securing the northern flank on Salem Street and the relief force holding Jamhuri Street to the south, we had “refused right” and “refused left” to the enemy on the blocks east of Salem Street. We were effectively in a standoff. The enemy fighters could not enter any of the alleyways that led to Salem Street nor could they envelop us. We could not get at them in the parallel street to the east of Salem because of the RPG threat and the necessity to secure the burning wreckage of D22.

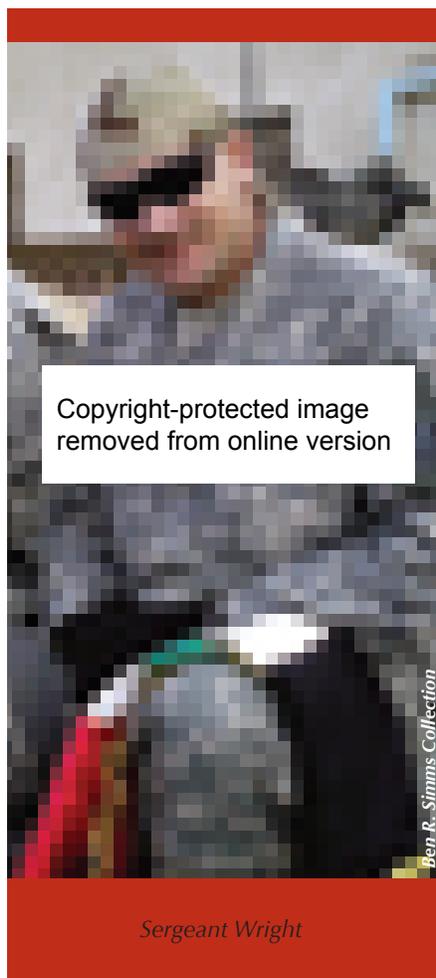
About this time the F-15 flight lead reported that he was leaving the net to conduct a tanker refuel. This was the last we heard from our close air support, although the flight stayed in the air for several more hours. Before the aircraft returned from the tanker stop, Air Force ground control directed the flight to talk only on high-frequency radios and only to the nearest Air Force ground control team eighty kilometers north at Forward Operating Base Kalsu. For the troops of the battalion on the ground to communicate with the pilots, they had to contact the battalion’s forward command post, which would relay their

messages through an online chat system to the ground control team at Kalsu that would finally pass the message to the aircrew. This effectively ended the crew’s close coordination with the troops in contact and eliminated the superior situational awareness the airmen had provided to the ground tactical commander.

Just after Sergeant Wright’s engagement, a second relief force led by Maj. Curtis Taylor, the battalion operations officer, arrived with one tank, one M88 recovery vehicle, and a company of Iraqi Army soldiers. The Iraqi company immediately established a screen along Jamhuri Street to secure the exit route. The tank, HQ63, and the M88 moved toward the burning wreckage that was once Sergeant Chapman’s

tank. The small engine fire had grown to consume the entire vehicle. Flames reached high above the buildings, and the heat could be felt at 100 meters. Small puddles of molten aluminum were beginning to form at the base of the tank as the tracks and road wheels melted into the asphalt.

Two Apache helicopters also arrived at the scene at the same time as the Iraqi company. As the gunships made their first pass, the members of another RPG team attempted to maneuver down Sergeant Brown’s alley to the northeast. Brown could see their RPG poking up into the air as they moved behind a low wall. He destroyed the wall and the RPG team with a HEAT round. Once the Apaches spotted the friendly tanks, they immediately reported dismounts on the street to the east. Captain Simms confirmed that there were no friendly dismounts. The Apaches reported taking enemy fire and requested clearance to engage. Major Taylor cleared the fire, and the Apaches began a series of gun runs down the long street parallel to Salem, catching the enemy in enfilade. The pilots reported two to four enemy dismounts killed. The fire from the helicopters pushed the members of another RPG team into Sergeant Brown’s alley, and he destroyed them with a HEAT round. As attack aviation continued to search for targets, Sergeant Brown identified another group of armed individuals. He engaged them with an MPAT round but was unable to determine the effect. Attack aviation identified a final RPG team and destroyed it with 30-mm. cannons. This was the last contact with the enemy. The attack aviation proved to be

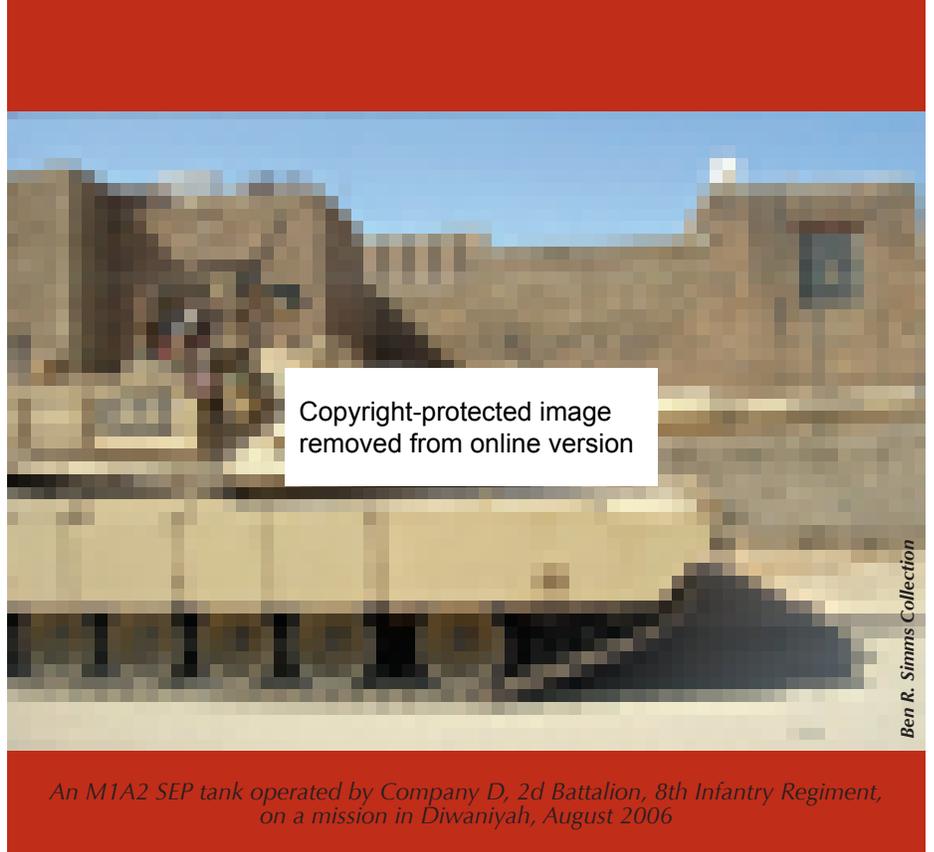


Sergeant Wright

the ideal weapon at the perfect time. Unable to move against the tanks, the enemy was pinned down in the parallel street. When the Apaches spotted them hiding along the street, the enemy fighters ran out of options. Most of the survivors slipped into the nearest house and blended in with the local civilians. The engagement had lasted four hours from first to last contact. Throughout the night, a steady stream of unarmed people policed up the enemy remains, but the raiding force made no effort to interfere.

Near sunrise, the tank had burned down enough for the local Iraqi fire department to extinguish the flames. We positioned our vehicles around the damaged tank to provide better security from the crowds that started forming right at sunrise, while members of the Iraqi company began to search the surrounding neighborhoods. They found a rocket at the school on Salem Street and took eight detainees. We owned the center of Mahdi-controlled territory for a total of fourteen hours as we continued our efforts to recover the destroyed tank with a complex ballet of cranes and heavy equipment trailers.

Throughout the day large crowds gathered on all sides of the perimeter we established around the recovery operation. The crowds would get as close as we would let them. Children would run to within fifty meters of the tank and throw rocks at the men and equipment involved in the recovery mission. The rocks were no more than a nuisance, but on two separate occasions grenades emerged from behind the crowd of children and



detonated in front of us. One of these grenades slightly wounded Captain Simms's interpreter in the arm. On a third occasion, a sniper hiding in or near a crowd fired a round that hit a telephone pole near the recovery work. As dangerous and frustrating as this was, the soldiers never lost their composure, and no civilians were injured. By midafternoon we had lifted the derelict tank onto the back of a trailer and were on our way back to Camp Echo on the south side of Diwaniyah.

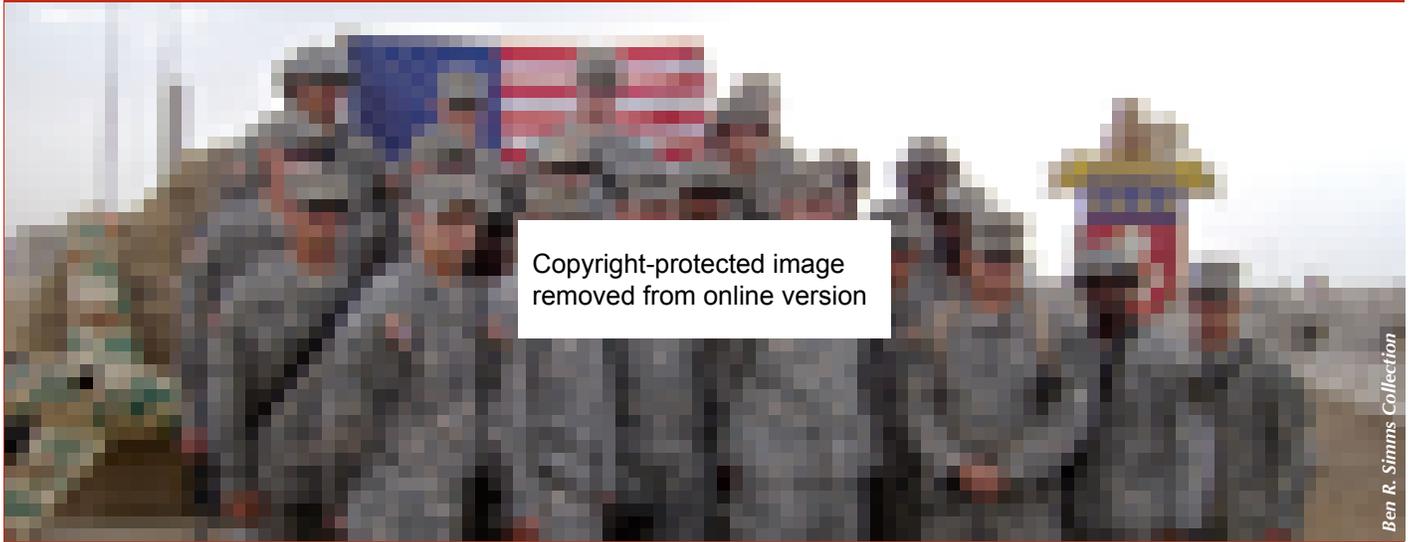
#### LESSONS LEARNED

The four-hour battle for Salem Street reconfirmed the value of the M1A2 tank as an indispensable weapon on the urban battlefield. In the chaotic first minutes of the attack, the tanks became fortresses from which we could dominate the battlefield. The prior night we had actually considered executing the raid with HMMWVs in order to improve our chances of

surprise. The result would have been disastrous.

Even at night, the .50-caliber, flex-mounted machine gun proved to be a very versatile and effective weapon that enabled commanders to protect their tanks from envelopment while their gunners scanned for targets. It was also a highly effective defense against the enemy on the rooftops above the tanks, and its superior ability to penetrate the masonry and medium constructions typical of Iraqi urban areas was extremely useful. API (armor-piercing incendiary) and API-T (armor-piercing incendiary-tracer) ammunition facilitate the use of the flex .50 by providing a readily observable flash on impact, especially in low light conditions.

The HEAT, MPAT, and canister rounds all proved valuable in denying the enemy virtually any cover from direct fire. Unlike the laser-tag battlefield of training exercises, here, if an enemy force



*Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, commander of the 4th Infantry Division, pays a congratulatory visit to the victors of the Battle for Salem Street at Forward Operating Base Kalsu on 18 October 2006. Standing in the first row, from left, are Lieutenant Merchant, Captain Simms, General Thurman, Major Taylor, and Sergeant Wright.*

sought cover behind a wall or a vehicle, the tanks simply destroyed the cover and eliminated the threat.

Armor in the city must have the support of effective, well-trained infantry. Delta Company had an attached platoon of infantry but had redeployed it a few days earlier to address urgent needs in another sector. This left us completely dependent on Iraqi Army infantry support. While we had seen incredible heroism only days before from the Iraqi battalion that was supporting us, such heroism was absent on that particular morning from the Iraqi platoon that joined the raiding force. This is not an indictment of the Iraqi Army but a reminder that a unit is only as brave as its commanding officer. In this case, the young Iraqi lieutenant was not up to the challenge.

The close air support and close combat attack provided by the Air Force and the Apache gunships were indispensable. The F-15s first seized the initiative from the enemy by intimidating and disorganizing his movement, while providing

real-time situational awareness to the ground commander. The Apaches then ended the fight with a vertical envelopment after the enemy had been pinned down by heavy armor. By expanding American force projection into a three-dimensional package, the aircraft protected the tanks at the bottom of a deadly urban canyon and denied the enemy the ability to use the rooftops to gain a positional advantage. The aircraft's bird's-eye view was absolutely critical in an urban environment where the ground element's ability to acquire and kill was limited block by block. The use by the Air Force crews of infrared designators (known as Sparkle) instantly allowed the tankers to fix their sights on enemy movements and destroy them. The decision to force the aircrews to communicate through a ground control team eighty kilometers from the battlefield was unfortunate. Air Force pilots should never release ordnance without approval from trained personnel on the ground, but when their aircraft are serving

in a reconnaissance and target-designation role, the pilots' communication requirements should be relaxed to simplify and accelerate coordination.

The show of force by the F-15s and the gun runs from the Apaches provided an immense psychological advantage to our troops. The insurgents saw that we were capable of dominating the contested streets until every soldier and every piece of hardware was safely out of harm's way. The application of airpower must also have been an absolute shock to the enemy, who suddenly had to worry about attacks, detection, and designation from overhead, especially once the Apaches began to fire into the alleys.

Finally and most important, the outcome of this action was decided largely by the ingenuity and bravery of the two junior tank commanders on the scene. Sergeant Chapman and his crew fought from his burning tank for almost fifteen minutes and then safely abandoned it under fire. Despite enemy attack from nearby rooftops, he moved his

crew to safety and then continued the fight as the loader of another tank that was also in heavy contact. His decision to continue the fight from his burning tank undoubtedly protected his crew members, as it enabled them to destroy the RPG team that would have tried to kill them after they dismounted. Further, it prevented the crew from being caught in a crossfire between the RPG team and the rooftop sniper that engaged the soldiers as they exited the tank. Sergeant Chapman's actions and leadership brought the crew of D22 unscathed through extreme peril.

Sergeant Brown's decision to aggressively seize the key northeastern alley and his subsequent efforts in close combat with the enemy to retain it most likely saved the unit from being overrun. Sergeant Brown and his crew proved absolutely fearless in the face of wave after wave of enemy attack. Since his turret was partially locked due to power lines, Sergeant Brown was forced to keep his tank out of cover in the middle of the alley or risk being unable to react to enemy dismounts advancing on the company's position. Despite this, he fought on, aiming his main gun by pivot-steering and suppressing or destroying the enemy with his .50-caliber machine gun and his loader's M240. His tank single-handedly defended the alleyway that proved to be the enemy's most heavily used avenue of approach. He also initially fought the attackers with an Iraqi civilian, our local guide, riding in his loader's hatch. Once Sergeant Chapman climbed aboard, he continued the fight with a disabled turret and a civilian on the top of the tank whose identity and safety had to be

fiercely protected. For the duration of the fight, Sergeant Brown and his crew were seemingly immune to defeat, fear, and enemy fire.

Despite the millions of dollars worth of advanced technology we brought to Salem Street that morning, the talent and skill of our noncommissioned officers decided the outcome of the fight. This is a valuable lesson. An investment in the training and care of our noncommissioned officers and junior leaders will always produce greater results in the long run than a comparable investment in technology. After all, wars are ultimately won by people, not machines. The battle of Salem Street is a powerful reminder that the resourcefulness and courage of the American soldier remains our Army's greatest asset.



#### THE AUTHORS

**Capt. Ben R. Simms** is an assistant professor of military science at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. An armor officer, he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1998. Simms served in Kosovo from December 2000 to May 2001 and in Iraq from March 2003 to March 2004 and November 2005 to November 2006. **Maj. Curtis D. Taylor** is the assistant operations officer of the 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. Also an armor officer, he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1994. He served in Korea from October 2000 to December 2001, in Afghanistan from November 2003 to May 2004, and in Iraq from November 2005 to November 2006.

#### Notes

1. This article is a somewhat expanded version of the essay that took first place in the Center of Military History's 2007 James Lawton Collins Jr. Special Topics Writing Competition.

2. The M1A2 SEP tank had received a System Enhancement Package that added a global positioning system, digital terrain maps, crew-compartment cooling and air-conditioning, provisions for an underarmor auxiliary power unit, and other improvements to the basic M1A2 tank introduced in 1993. The Armored Up-Armored HMMWV carried additional armored protection produced by the Armor Holdings, Aerospace & Defense Group, beyond the light armor installed by the reconnaissance vehicle's manufacturer, AM General. Even the windows of this enhanced vehicle contained the same level of armored protection as the rest of its body. For details, see Christopher F. Foss, *Jane's Armour and Artillery, 2005–2006* (Alexandria, Va., 2005), pp. 156–59, 283–84.

3. The M1028 is a 120-mm. shell consisting of 1,200 quarter-inch tungsten balls encased in a disintegrating canister. The round contains no fuse and no explosives and is designed to be used in close quarters against dismounts and soft-skinned vehicles, turning the 120-mm. main gun into a large, open-choked shotgun.

4. The M830A1 MPAT (multipurpose antitank) round is a 120-mm. shell fired from the main gun of the Abrams tank. The round is subcaliber and uses a sabot to improve its velocity over the original M830 HEAT round, providing a flatter trajectory and shorter time of flight. A true multipurpose round, it contains a shaped charge and fragmenting case warhead and utilizes a fuse set by the loader for proximity bursts that are more effective when engaging a helicopter.



**IMAGE REMOVED BECAUSE PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE  
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*Lt.-Gen. Sir John Monash* by James Peter Quinn, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 63.8 cm, France and London, 1918

# “WE HAVE FOUND EACH OTHER AT LAST”:

By Mitch Yockelson

AMERICANS AND AUSTRALIANS AT THE  
BATTLE OF HAMEL IN JULY 1918

**I**ntroduction

The relationship between the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) and the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in 1918 provides a significant, albeit much-neglected, example of coalition warfare in World War I.<sup>1</sup> Although the commander in chief of the AEF, General John J. Pershing, rejected calls for full-scale amalgamation and insisted on an independent American army, he sent ten U.S. divisions—the 4th, 27th, 28th, 30th, 33d, 35th, 77th, 78th, 80th, and 82d—to the British sector for training.<sup>2</sup> Administratively, Pershing organized the divisions into the U.S. II Army Corps and in mid-June 1918 selected Maj. Gen. George W. Read as its commander. One historian describes Read, an 1883 West Point graduate, as “a handsome, tall cavalryman who looked to one acquaintance as if he might have been a model for one of Frederic Remington’s drawings of a frontier cavalry officer.”<sup>3</sup>

The British transported their American comrades overseas. British and dominion forces supervised the training of these ten U.S. divisions and provided them with the necessary equipment, arms, and food. With President Woodrow Wilson’s authorization, General Pershing concluded a training agreement with British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, and one element of the agreement was that in an emergency the

Americans would be permitted to serve with the British in battle.<sup>4</sup> The commander of the British Army on the Western Front, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, along with senior French commanders, had previously requested to use the Americans in line, but Pershing had rebuffed them.<sup>5</sup> As a result, relations between him and the Allies were often tense. During the first week of July 1918, the relationship took a turn for the worse. The friction occurred over the latest proposal to use Americans for an operation, this time involving an assault on the village of Hamel, France.<sup>6</sup> General Read was caught in the middle of the controversy. This was his first real test as a corps commander, and he handled it poorly.

## Background

The British deemed this operation strategically essential because the German Somme offensive of 1918 had pushed a bulge into the British lines where the Germans had occupied Hamel, located just south of the Somme River a dozen miles east of Amiens. The ridge on which the village was situated provided the Germans with a clear observation of Australian-held positions and made them easy prey for enfilading fire. The operation would provide the new commander of the Australian Corps, Lt. Gen. John Monash, an opportunity to showcase the innovative doctrine he and other senior officers of the

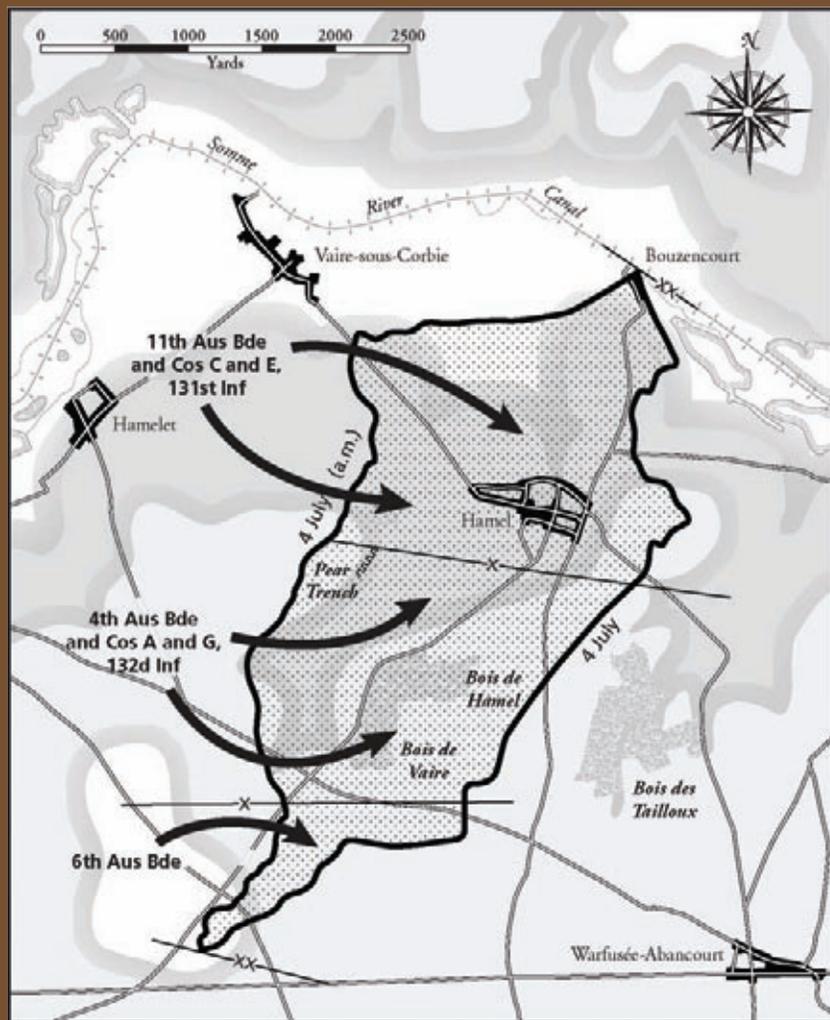
British Expeditionary Force had developed to utilize infantry and tanks together. It would also be the first time that American and Australian soldiers operated together on a battlefield, initiating a coalition that remains strong today.

The battle plan, designed meticulously by Monash, aimed to shorten and straighten the Australian line by capturing the low ridge on which Hamel sits. His objective was to take the village, the woods near it, the Vaire woods to the south, and the spur toward the Somme. British intelligence reported two German divisions of mixed ratings with an estimated 3,000 troops defending the area. The British rated the German 13th Division, which contributed three of the four regiments in the area, as first class, but the 43d Reserve Division was rated third class. While the woods and village were well fortified, German trenches in the area were generally shallow and noncontinuous, and the wire barriers were poor. If the plan was successful, Hamel would become the staging area for a larger operation to take place later. General Sir Henry Rawlinson, commander of the British Fourth Army, suggested including ten U.S. companies (a total of about 2,500 men) in the attacking force of ten severely depleted battalions of infantry and five companies of tanks (7,500 men), so that some of Monash’s troops, in line for several weeks, could have a much-needed



General Read

National Archives



Attack on Hamel, 4 July 1918

Chris Robinson

rest. Rawlinson sought to draw the American companies from the U.S. 33d Division, which was attached to the Fourth Army and had been instructed primarily by the Australian Corps and the British III Corps.<sup>7</sup>

The 33d was composed of Illinois National Guard troops under the command of Maj. Gen. George Bell Jr., a career infantry officer who had graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1880. The division had shown growing promise after its somewhat inauspicious arrival in late May. Upon seeing the Americans for the first time, an Australian soldier recalled how “we amused ourselves watching a lot of very brand new looking Yanks arriving with their

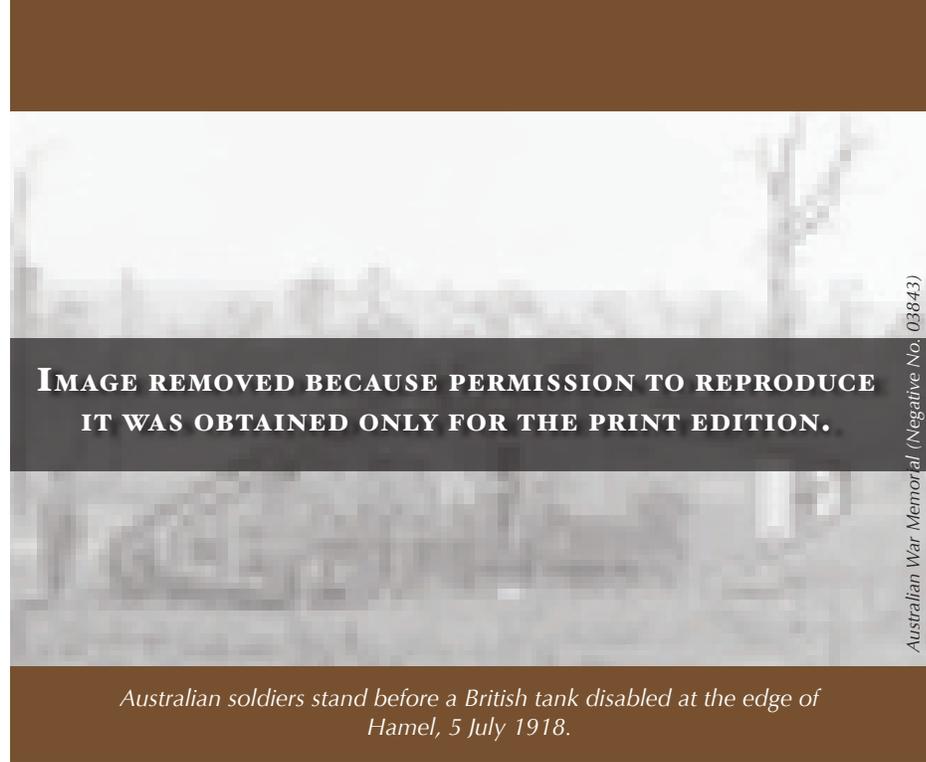
extraordinary-looking equipment. Some of the officers carried leather suitcases and umbrellas and looked more like commercial travelers than soldiers.”<sup>8</sup>

Monash was pleased to have the Americans since he had come to know many of them in France. It was commonplace for U.S. officers to billet with the Allies before reaching permanent stations, and Monash had hosted several AEF officers while in command of the 3d Australian Division in late 1917. Like many who were unfamiliar with Americans, Monash found his impression of them formed by reading American fiction. Monash read voraciously, and one of his favorite authors was the American

William Sydney Porter, who wrote under the pen name O. Henry.<sup>9</sup>

Monash quickly discovered the Americans were dedicated soldiers like him. “With but very few exceptions,” he wrote his brother, “I have formed a very high opinion of the excellent qualities, both mental and technical, of these officers. My impression is that some of the divisional commanders are rather old, and not as receptive of new ideas as may be desirable, but their attitude toward these problems is in every way satisfactory, and they show themselves open minded and receptive to an admirable degree.”<sup>10</sup> He would also soon learn that not all Americans were as open as those he had previously met.

Rawlinson visited with Read at his headquarters on 24 June and requested the use of men from the 33d Division for the upcoming battle. Read was reluctant to give him an immediate answer. After consulting with his chief of staff, Col. George S. Simonds, he waited three days before agreeing, concluding that the operation would be “valuable training for which due credit may be taken, if accomplished, as part of the weekly schedule under the Program of Training.”<sup>11</sup> The experience would be enhanced by the fact that each of the American companies participating in the attack at Hamel was assigned to an Australian battalion, with most of the Americans distributed by platoons to Australian companies that were so depleted as to be little if any larger than the American platoon with which they partnered.<sup>12</sup> Read’s adjutant informed Bell that “the Commanding General of the 4th British Army has requested . . . that certain smaller units of your Division be permitted to take part in a raid of some kind which it is contemplated to make against the enemy some time in the near



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*Australian soldiers stand before a British tank disabled at the edge of Hamel, 5 July 1918.*

Australian War Memorial (Negative No. 03843)

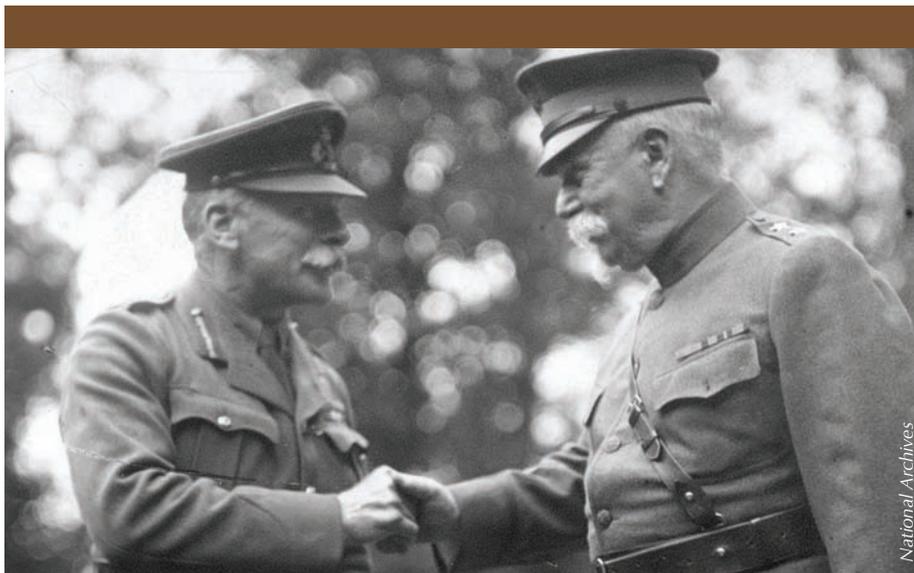
future.”<sup>13</sup> Bell selected eight companies of the 131st Infantry and two of the 132d Infantry, ordering them to report to the 4th and 11th Australian Brigades.<sup>14</sup>

According to Rawlinson, he chose the date of 4 July for the operation because of its significance to the Americans. However, this is not entirely correct. The original date he selected was 2 July, but Monash needed two more days for his troops to prepare. Rawlinson

agreed and postponed the operation to 4 July. Because the new date coincided with American Independence Day, the British used this to their advantage as an enticement to bring the doughboys aboard.<sup>15</sup>

### The Battle Plan

Surprise was the key to Hamel’s success, and attaining it required that the men and equipment move forward under cover of darkness. There would be no preliminary bombardment, used effectively in previous operations to disrupt the enemy’s morale and clear wire, because it would alert the Germans to the impending attack. Instead, Monash instructed his artillery to fire consistently at German dumps, trenches, and headquarters for two weeks prior to the attack as a form of harassment. If wind conditions allowed, he would add 4.5-inch howitzers with chemical shells to the mix. Once the ground attack had been launched, he would have his twenty-nine brigades of artillery, eleven of which had been assigned to his corps specifically for the attack on Hamel, lay down an intense barrage that would



*Field Marshal Haig, left, and General Bell exchange pleasantries, August 1918.*

National Archives

advance in front of the attacking troops, while simultaneously engaging in counterbattery fire against the German artillery in the Cerisy Valley, two miles east of Hamel. A substantial portion of the counterbattery fire would involve chemical shells. This combination of preparatory harassment and intense bombardment just prior to the arrival of the attacking infantry would, Monash hoped, inflict significant enemy casualties so that all the Allied infantry would need to do would be to mop up the trenches. Tanks were an important element in the attack plans. Although in limited use since 1916, the early tanks were clumsy and ineffective without infantry support. In the summer of 1918, the Mark V tank was introduced and promised to be faster, agile, and better-armed. Monash had high expectations for the tanks. In the intensive maneuver exercises held before the attack, the tanks “would throw themselves

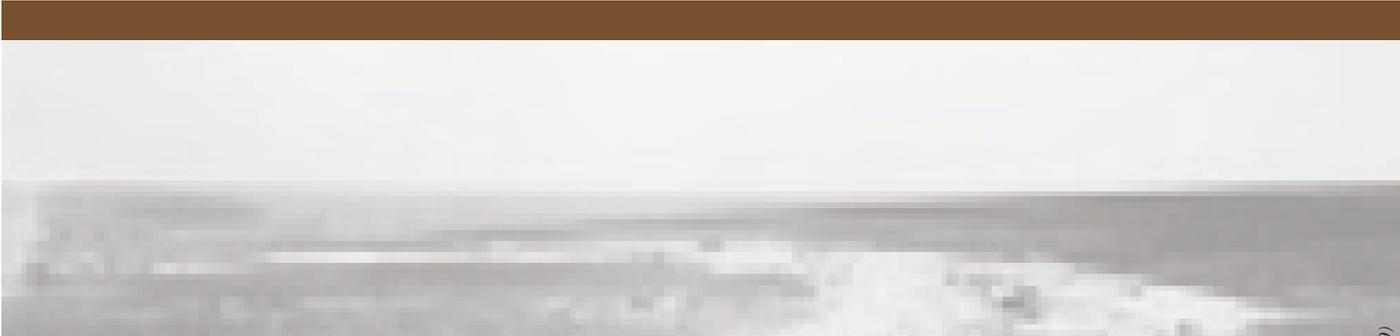
upon these places [trenches identified as enemy strongpoints], and, pirouetting round and round, would blot them out, much as a man’s heel would crush a scorpion,” he reported.<sup>16</sup>

If everything went as planned, Monash expected the operation to last no more than ninety minutes. Such detail, the result of time and energy spent in planning an operation, was by now a Monash trademark. In the attack on Mesines, Belgium, the previous year, in which the attackers blew up 500 tons of explosives in tunnels that they had built under the German lines, Monash had boasted that “everything is being done with the perfection of civil engineering so far as regards planning and execution.”<sup>17</sup> With plans for Hamel well under way, Haig called him “a most thorough and capable commander who thinks out every detail of any operation and leaves nothing to chance.”<sup>18</sup> The meeting

notes for Hamel confirm this assessment. They contain several pages that cover every aspect of the operation, including possible failures. Monash had a staff officer calculate visibility on the night of 3–4 July. With this information he knew that “movement could be observed at 9 pm, but cannot” be observed a half-hour later. Because Monash wanted the attack to be a surprise, he worried that moonlight would cast a shadow and allow the Germans to see troops and tanks moving toward the front.<sup>19</sup> Still, there was one important piece of the battle plan missing. No one had informed Pershing that some of his troops were about to go into battle, a clear violation of the U.S.-British training agreement.<sup>20</sup>

### Pershing Intervenes

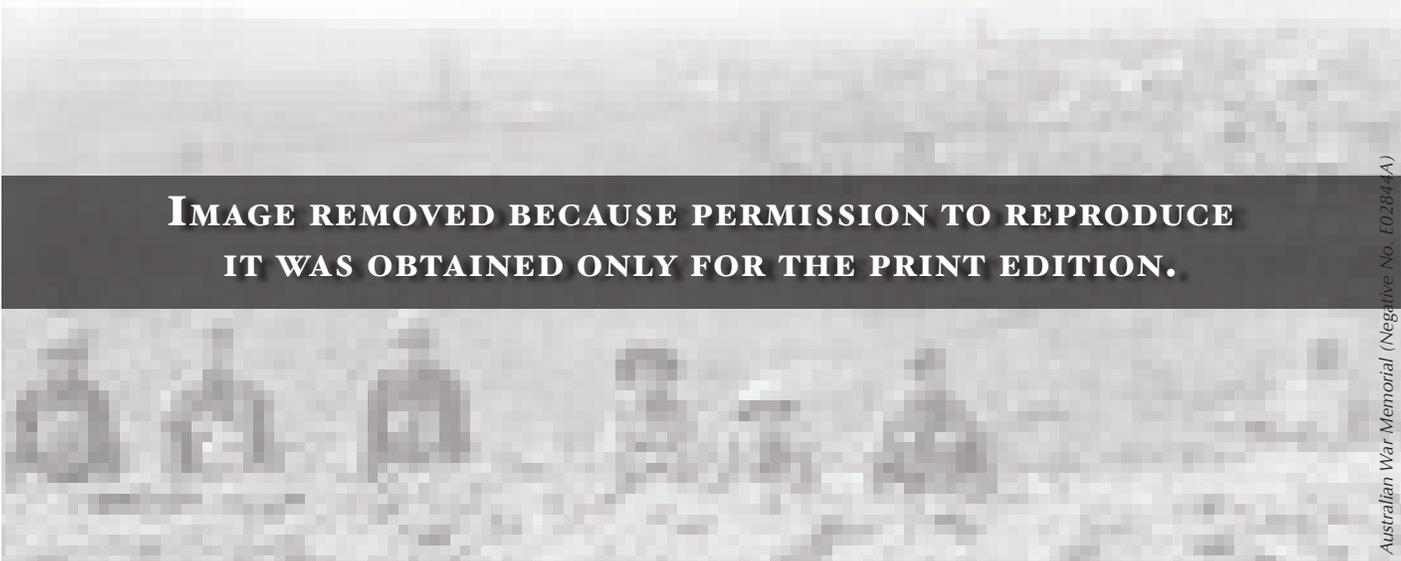
General Pershing learned of the operation five days after Read gave his approval, and he was angered by the news. Conferring with Read



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Australian War Memorial (Negative No. E0270)

*Pear Trench west of Hamel, 4 July 1918*



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Australian War Memorial (Negative No. E02844A)

*Two U.S. soldiers, first and third from left, and four Australian soldiers east of Hamel, with the destroyed village behind them, 4–5 July 1918*

on 2 July at II Corps headquarters, Pershing immediately told the corps commander to withdraw the men; they were not allowed to fight. The next day Pershing met with Haig and told him the same thing. Hamel was a “radical departure from the program of instruction of this division,” he lamented, “and an exercise for which these men are not yet prepared.”<sup>21</sup>

Haig had little choice but to abide by Pershing’s demands and told Rawlinson to have Monash withdraw the Americans. Monash balked at this order and countered that without the Americans he would have to abandon the attack. He also protested that if the attack had to be called off on account of the Americans, “No Australian would ever fight beside an American again.” Rawlinson agreed with his corps commander and attempted to contact Haig to voice his opinion, but the BEF commander was on his way to meet with Pershing in

Paris and could not be reached. During their discussion in the French capital on the afternoon of 3 July, Haig promised Pershing that “he quite agreed with the decision to forbid American troops from participating.” Haig was of course not yet aware of the situation at the front and thought the withdrawal order had been obeyed. Further complicating the matter was the fact that the U.S. units were already in the line when the withdrawal order was issued. Only six of the ten companies received it, as Rawlinson and Monash did not act to pull Companies C and E of the 131st Infantry and A and G of the 132d Infantry from the line of attack. Haig learned of these developments later that afternoon. He was still in Paris when a message from Rawlinson reached his chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Herbert Lawrence. Lawrence informed Haig of the problem, and just before 1900 hours, the BEF commander approved going ahead

with the operation with the four companies of Americans involved, despite Pershing’s objections.<sup>22</sup>

### The Operation

By 0130 hours on 4 July the tanks had moved up to the starting line, one thousand yards in the rear of the infantry. The noise made by the tanks was drowned by the harassing fire of artillery and a squadron of low-flying planes bombing over the German line. The attack commenced as scheduled at 0310, with the barrage catching the Germans by surprise. Facing only pockets of resistance, notably around Pear Trench where the Australian 15th Battalion confronted wire entanglements unscathed by the bombardment and had to attack without the assistance of the tanks assigned to support it, the Australians and Americans gained all their objectives in ninety-three minutes. Of the sixty tanks that started, fifty-seven reached their

objectives. As British intelligence had surmised, the German divisions were unprepared for an attack. They were driven from Hamel, the surrounding woods, and the ridges.<sup>23</sup> The Americans lost 24 men killed and 131, including 8 officers, wounded, and they reported 21 men missing. Australian losses at Hamel were about 1,400. Although the exact figures for the Germans are unknown, the estimate is they exceeded two thousand.<sup>24</sup>

The Americans performed well in their first fight, prompting Capt. William J. Masoner of Company G, 132d Infantry, to say his men “acted like old veterans.”<sup>25</sup> Capt. Carroll M. Gale of Company C, 131st Infantry, observed that “more real good was done to this company by this small operation with the Australians than could have been accomplished in months of training behind the lines.”<sup>26</sup> Several Americans exhibited particular bravery. In one instance, north of the Pear Trench, determined German fire stopped



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*The British Military Medal*

Australian War Memorial (Negative No. REL30220.002)

everyone in the flank platoon of Australian Capt. R. C. Sexton’s company in the 43d Battalion, except for one Lewis gunner and attached U.S. Cpl. H. G. Zyburt of Company E, 131st Infantry. The Lewis gunner enabled Zyburt to rush a machine gun emplacement and bayonet three of its crew. Zyburt was awarded the British Military Medal.<sup>27</sup>

The heroics of Cpl. Thomas A. Pope, also in Company E, 131st Infantry, earned him the Medal of Honor. He was advancing with his company behind the tanks when enemy machine gun fire became too intense and the doughboys were forced to halt. Pope then went forward alone and rushed a machine gun nest, killing several of the Germans with his bayonet. He managed to hold off other enemy soldiers until reinforcements arrived and captured them. Pfc. Christopher W. Keane, a member of the Medical Detachment, 131st Infantry, also went beyond the call of duty by treating the wounded in an area under constant artillery and machine gun fire. When two of his stretcher bearers were killed, Keane impressed German prisoners into service carrying the wounded back to the aid station. For his actions Keane was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Both Pope and Keane also received British decorations.<sup>28</sup>

Preparations were made for a quick withdrawal of the U.S. troops, but they did not leave the lines until the evening of 5 July. While the four companies waited for relief, they and the Australians to whom they were attached repulsed numerous enemy counterattacks, and on 5 July the Americans absorbed further



*Officers and enlisted men of the 33d Division prepare to receive British decorations for their bravery in the Battle of Hamel, with Private Keane at the far right, 12 August 1918.*

National Archives

casualties from a chemical attack. Company E, 131st Infantry, was the hardest hit with thirty-four men seriously affected.<sup>29</sup>

Australian officers and men also reported that the American troops fought well but observed that at times they were so impetuous as to pass into the barrage.<sup>30</sup> After entering Hamel and moving beyond the objective line, the Illinois soldiers had to be told that “it was not up to them to go on and take the next town.”<sup>31</sup> As Monash had assured Read, the Australians kept a close eye on the Americans by pairing messengers and stretcher-bearers with them as they advanced toward the enemy lines. On one occasion a lieutenant leading an American platoon was wounded after his company encountered resistance near Hamel’s western edge. A combat-experienced Australian messenger took charge of the desperate situation and helped clear the Germans.<sup>32</sup>

Pershing received word of the battle on 5 July when a II Corps staff officer told him “about participation of our troops in the action with the Australians.”<sup>33</sup> Later in the day the AEF commander received a note from Haig, written the night before, confirming that “the operation of which I spoke with you yesterday was carried out this morning with great success. Everything was done in accordance with your wishes to relieve all your troops before this operation began,” he inaccurately told Pershing, “but a few detachments that could not be removed acquitted themselves with great distinction and fought like tigers. I feel sure that this morning’s success at the beginning of your great anniversary augurs well for still greater successes in the future.”<sup>34</sup>



*King George V prepares to pin the British Distinguished Conduct Medal on the uniform of Pvt. Harry Shelly, Company A, 132d Infantry, as General Pershing, far left, watches.*

Rawlinson seconded Haig’s praise of the American performance. He wrote his brother that “the American troops conducted themselves admirably and have won the undying admiration and affection of the Australians, who were heard to remark: ‘I’m damned glad they are on our side.’”<sup>35</sup> Monash further echoed this sentiment when he said, “the contingent of them who joined us acquitted themselves most gallantly and were ever after received by the Australians as blood brothers.”<sup>36</sup>

### Aftermath

General Pershing ordered General Read and Colonel Simonds to Paris on 5 July and reprimanded them. They listened as he lectured about his difficulties with the British. Even though Pershing admitted the operation was a success, he added, “You will have to watch those people.”<sup>37</sup> He ultimately concluded that “the incident, though relatively unimportant in itself, showed clearly the disposition of the British to assume control of our units, the very thing which I had made such

strong efforts and had imposed so many conditions to prevent.”<sup>38</sup>

Pershing had obviously overreacted by not allowing one of his corps commanders more discretion in the use of his troops, but Read also deserves some blame. His lack of experience as a commander was exposed. Read took a passive approach to the situation and should have had the sense to seek approval before agreeing to the battle plan. Had the operation resulted in large numbers of U.S. casualties, Pershing would likely have sacked him. A few days after the battle, Simonds wrote to Col. Fox Conner, who was serving as assistant chief of staff for operations, G-3, at the AEF’s general headquarters, to tell him his side of the story. A “careful inquiry from all possible sources as to the outcome of the operation was made,” the II Corps chief of staff said, and the “accounts are unanimous that the few men we had in this thing did, as we hear everywhere else of our men, excellent work.” Simonds then qualified this statement with “we always have to make due allowances for their [our Allies’]

enthusiasm over getting us into these scraps.”<sup>39</sup>

News of the victory spread throughout the Front. The British liaison officer at French Army headquarters told his American counterpart, “We have found each other at last.”<sup>40</sup> Rawlinson’s modern biographers termed Hamel “a fairly minor affair,” and this was true, considering the number of troops involved. It certainly was not on the scale of the battles of the Somme or Passchendaele.<sup>41</sup>

What were the broad implications of the Hamel operation for the U.S.-British coalition? The episode certainly showed that this military relationship was far from perfect, especially when the strong personalities of Pershing, Haig, Rawlinson, and Monash clashed. The hurt feelings the dispute over Hamel caused were soon put aside, however, and cooperation between the two armies continued. The British paid little attention to Pershing’s ravings, although in private they mocked him as being obstinate and stupid.<sup>42</sup> The 33d Division continued to train under British supervision, and the British would again receive its assistance in battle. The division’s 131st Infantry joined the British Somme Offensive some four miles east of Hamel on 9 August, a day after it began, and in two days of attack the American regiment pushed the Germans back nearly three miles, capturing 100 machine guns and 700 prisoners.<sup>43</sup>

General Pershing attended an awards ceremony at the division’s headquarters at Molliens-au-Bois on 12 August at which King George V of England pinned military medals on the chests of twelve of the nineteen Americans awarded British honors for their gallantry at

Hamel. (The other seven remained hospitalized recovering from their wounds.) The king also bestowed the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath on the AEF commander and in another ceremony on the same day knighted General Monash. But Pershing would have the last word when he pulled three more divisions, including the 33d, from the British sector in late August and placed them in the newly organized U.S. First Army. Pershing allowed Haig to retain two divisions, the 27th and 30th, which came under tactical control of the BEF in two operations before being withdrawn from the line in late October 1918. These two divisions fought under the British Second Army in the Ypres-Lys campaign in Belgium and then under the British Fourth Army in the Somme Offensive campaign.<sup>44</sup> In September and October 1918 the 33d Division fought at the right of the U.S. First Army advance in the Meuse-Argonne campaign, crossing the Meuse at Consenvoye. On 10–11 November 1918 the 33d joined in the U.S. Second Army’s advance against the German lines protecting the fortress city of Metz.<sup>45</sup>

With the help of the Americans the Allies forced the Germans into an armistice that was effectively a surrender. After the war Pershing and Haig developed a warm relationship that continued until the British commander’s death in 1928. This fragile association between these two First World War commanders would in many ways be repeated during World War II with the strained cooperation between General Dwight D. Eisenhower and Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery in 1944–45.



## THE AUTHOR

### Dr. Mitch Yockelson

has been an archivist at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration since 1988, and he has specialized in the military records of the World War I period. He currently works in the Office of the Inspector General of the National Archives investigating stolen documents cases. In 2006 he received a doctoral degree in history from the Royal Military College of Science, Cranfield University, Shrivenham, England, where he wrote a dissertation on the U.S. Army’s II Corps in 1918. The University of Oklahoma Press plans to publish Yockelson’s manuscript on that subject, “Borrowed Soldiers, Americans under British Command, 1918,” as a book in the spring of 2008.

## Notes

1. This article is a revised version of a paper that the author presented at the 2004 annual conference of the Society for Military History in Bethesda, Maryland. The United States government designated the military units it sent overseas in 1917 as the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). The AEF consisted of American troops not only on the Western Front in France and Belgium, but also soldiers in Great Britain, Italy, and Russia. Hence the use of the plural “Forces.”

2. Historical Division, Department of the Army, *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War. American Expeditionary Forces: General Headquarters, Armies, Army Corps, Services of Supply, and Separate Forces* (Washington, D.C., 1937), pp. 223–25; Charles R. Shrader, “‘Maconochies Stew’: Logistical Support of American Forces with the BEF, 1917–1918,” in *The Great War, 1914–1918: Essays on the Military, Political and Social History of the First World War*, ed. R. J. Q. Adams (College Station, Tex., 1990), pp. 101–03.

3. Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (New York, 1968), p. 286.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–71.

5. Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4 vols., Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918 (Sydney, 1929–42), 4: 277.
6. The French call this village Le Hamel, but most English-language sources refer to it simply as Hamel.
7. James E. Edmonds, *Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1918*, 5 vols., History of the Great War (London, 1935–47), 3: 198–99; Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 258, 262–64.
8. Gunner J. R. Armitage quoted at [www.awm.gov.au/1918/soldiers/sammy](http://www.awm.gov.au/1918/soldiers/sammy), a page of the Australian War Memorial Web site.
9. War Letters of General Monash, vol. 11, 3DRL/2316, ser. 1, Australian War Memorial, Canberra (hereafter AWM).
10. Ltr, Lt Gen John Monash to Leo Monash, 7 Jan 1918, Ms. 1884, AWM.
11. Ltr, AG, II Corps, AEF, to CG, 33d Division, AEF, 27 Jun 1918, sub: Detail of Smaller Units of 33rd Division for Participation in Raids against Enemy, 33d Division files, Entry 267, Record Group 120, Records of the American Expeditionary Forces (World War I), National Archives (hereafter RG 120, NA). This letter is printed in Frederic Louis Huidekoper, *The History of the 33rd Division, A.E.F.*, 3 vols. (Springfield, Ill., 1921), 2: 351.
12. Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 262.
13. Ltr, AG, II Corps, AEF, to CG, 33d Division, AEF, 27 Jun 1918.
14. Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 1: 37–38.
15. Ltr, Monash to Rawlinson, 23 Jun 1918, 3DRL/2316/60, AWM.
16. Albert Palazzo, *Seeking Victory on the Western Front: The British Army and Chemical Warfare in World War I* (Lincoln, Neb., 2000), pp. 167–70; Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 257; John Monash, *The Australian Victories in France in 1918* (1920; reprint, Nashville, 1993), p. 50 (quote).
17. P. A. Pedersen, *Monash: As Military Commander* (Melbourne, 1985), p. 166.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 230; Haig Diary, 1 Jul 1918, Haig Papers, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (hereafter NLS).
19. Monash Diary, 28 Jun 1919, 3DRL/2316/60, AWM.
20. Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 277.
21. John J. Pershing Diary, 2 Jul 1918, Pershing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
22. Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 278–79 (first quote, p. 279), 331; John J. Pershing Diary, 3 Jul 1918 (second quote).
23. Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 280–98, 307.
24. Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 1: 41; Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 326–27.
25. Report of Capt William J. Masoner, Company G, 132d Infantry, Report of Operations of the 132d Infantry, Hamel and Vaire Woods, 4 Jul 1918, in Entry 267, 33d Division, RG 120, NA.
26. Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 266, 331 (quote, p. 331).
27. *Ibid.*, 4: 289; Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 2: 432.
28. War Department, Office of the Adjutant General of the Army, *Congressional Medal of Honor, The Distinguished Service Cross, and the Distinguished Service Medal Issued by the War Department since April 6, 1917* (Washington, D.C., 1920), pp. 16, 167–68; Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 2: 432. Pope received the British Distinguished Conduct Medal; Keane received the British Military Medal.
29. Bruce Jacobs, “July 4, 1918: A National Guard ‘Model Company’ from Chicago Goes to War—over General Pershing’s Protest—and Fireworks Follow!” *National Guardsman* 32 (Jul 1978): 39.
30. Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 286–87.
31. Cpl Henry Gordon Taylor, 17th Australian Battalion, The Mob that Shot the Camel, Ms. 863, pp. 154–55, AWM.
32. Dale Blair, “‘Diggers’ and ‘Doughboys’: Australian and American Troop Interaction on the Western Front, 1918,” *Journal of the Australian War Memorial* 35 (Dec 2001): 3; Bean, *Australian Imperial Force in France*, 4: 295.
33. Pershing Diary, 5 Jul 1918.
34. Ltr, Haig to Pershing, 4 Jul 1918, copies in Pershing Papers, Library of Congress, and Haig Papers, NLS.
35. Ltr, Rawlinson to Sir Sidney Clive, 7 Jul 1918, Rawlinson Papers, British National Army Museum, London.
36. Monash, *Australian Victories in France*, p. 59.
37. George S. Simonds, Confidential Stenographic Notes of a Talk by Brig. Gen. George S. Simonds on the Operations of II Corps, AEF, Given at Historical Section of the Army War College, 14 October 1931, copy in Entry 310C, RG 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, NA.
38. John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, 2 vols. (New York, 1931), 2: 138.
39. Ltr, Simonds to Connor, 7 Jul 1918, Entry 268, RG 120, NA.
40. Ltr, Maj. Paul H. Clark to Pershing, 5 Jul 1918, pp. 1–2, Entry 18, John J. Pershing Papers, RG PRSHG, NA.
41. Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, *Command on the Western Front: The Military Career of Sir Henry Rawlinson, 1914–18* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), p. 295.
42. Haig, Rawlinson, and other British officers referred to Pershing’s perceived obstinacy and stupidity. See Robert Blake, ed., *The Private Papers of Douglas Haig, 1914–1919* (London, 1952), p. 325; Ltr, Rawlinson to Clive, 7 Jul 1918; Brian Bond and Simon Robbins, eds., *Staff Officer: The Diaries of Walter Guinness (First Lord Moyne), 1914–1918* (London, 1987), p. 217.
43. Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 1: 43–50; American Battle Monuments Commission, *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe* (Washington, D.C., 1938), pp. 410–11.
44. Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 1: 51–52; Historical Section, Army War College, *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War, American Expeditionary Forces, Divisions* (Washington, D.C., 1931), pp. 135–39, 165–69, 195–97, 311–13, 331–33; American Battle Monuments Commission, *American Armies and Battlefields*, pp. 371–81, 389–93, 402–04; Monash, *Australian Victories in France*, p. 132.
45. Historical Section, Army War College, *Order of Battle, Divisions*, pp. 199–201; Huidekoper, *History of the 33rd Division*, 1: 61–83, 104–38, 204–29; Frederic Louis Huidekoper, *33rd Division, A.E.F., from Its Arrival in France until the Armistice with Germany, November 11, 1918* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 7–8, 12–13.

into concrete salary increases or bonuses in a fair “pay for performance” system.

As part of our ramp-up to NSPS, I have been attending pay pool member training over the past few months. Pay pools are groups of supervisors from a variety of offices and agencies within a larger organizational structure who meet to assess employee evaluations and determine the type and amount of any pay increases or bonuses for those employees. Pay pools are a critical part of the entire process of trying to ensure fairness and consistency across the system. During my pay pool training and the running of a mock pay pool in June, I have learned a great deal about NSPS that I would like to share with you.

The emphasis of the entire NSPS is to establish an understandable and transparent system of rating and pay for performance that will produce a scrupulously fair and objective final determination of pay increases and bonuses. This is certainly a laudable goal. Those who demonstrably work hardest and perform their duties so well that their organization meets or exceeds its goals will get higher salaries and bonuses than those who do not. Implementing this goal will require a system that establishes clear performance standards, measures accomplishments against those standards, and documents how the standards were met. Those evaluations will then be carefully scrutinized by a higher level board so that specific monetary decisions on pay increases or bonuses will be firmly based on fact and not favoritism or whim.

Perhaps the greatest responsibility for making the new system work will fall on the raters/supervisors who will have to improve their ability to communicate clearly and regularly with their employees. How well they write the performance objectives will drive the entire evaluation system. Employees will also have a role since they will have to provide a written self-assessment of their performance to their raters and reviewers as part of the evaluation form. Thus NSPS will force employees and their supervisors to work closely together to draft clear, concise, and measurable standards for what work is to be performed and to what standard.

Both elements—the employee’s self-assessment and the rater’s final evaluation with written justification—will be sent, after approval by a

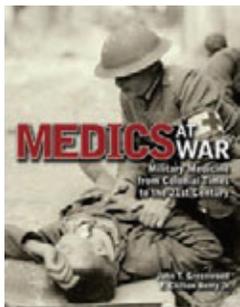
higher level reviewer (formerly the senior rater), to a pay pool consisting of senior managers. This pay pool will scrutinize the evaluation in conjunction with others in the organization and determine if the rating is justified. If it is not, or if the language is ambiguous, pool members can request clarification from the rater. The pay pool will thus provide a higher level of evaluation of each rating to ensure that pay for performance is based on written, demonstrable, performance and not on favoritism or bias, a common fear of many employees unfamiliar with how the new system will work. Only after the pay pool has completed its examination of a rating and had its judgment confirmed by a Performance Review Authority (another check on the system) will the rating become final and serve as the basis for determining the size of the yearly pay raise and/or bonus.

What should you as historians and curators be doing now, even if you have not yet transitioned to NSPS? For now, the best way you can prepare is to watch out for training opportunities on the new system and ensure you take advantage of them. Training in using the right language to set the right performance standards—so-called SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) objectives—is essential for both raters and employees! Also, everyone should look critically at assigned duties, focus on three to four critical tasks (job objectives) that must be accomplished to perform those duties, determine ways to measure the standard of performance for those tasks, and then identify the contributing factors that can help clarify how those tasks are to be performed (communication, critical thinking, leadership, etc.). When levels of pay or bonus are directly on the line, there can be no excuse for poorly written performance objectives or poor communication between rater and employee. Begin thinking now about how to focus on critical mission tasks and how you will measure them.

The National Security Personnel System is coming, and it behooves each of us to prepare for it if we are to achieve the twin goals of improving the mission performance of our organizations and taking care of our employees. I’ll have more to say on this in the next issue of *Army History*.

To learn more about NSPS training opportunities, see <http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps/training.html>.

# BOOK REVIEWS



*Medics at War: Military  
Medicine from Colonial  
Times to the 21st Century*  
By John T. Greenwood and  
F. Clifton Berry Jr.  
Naval Institute Press for the  
Association of the United  
States Army, 2005,  
214 pp., \$36.95

Review by Vincent J. Cirillo

*Medics at War* is more than a paean to the sacrifices and heroism of U.S. Army and Navy medics who provided critical care for wounded servicemen on the front lines. It is also a good summary of American military medicine from the Revolutionary War through the current conflict in Iraq. Although the focus is on the Army, there is ample coverage of Navy medicine. The newest branch, the Air Force Medical Service, which was established in 1949, also receives attention.

Since they practiced mainly in a marine environment, Navy doctors faced different types of injuries (such as burns) and diseases (such as scurvy) from those of their Army counterparts, and they established different specialties like submarine medicine. The Army's abysmal camp sanitation in the 19th and early 20th centuries led to debilitating diseases such as typhoid fever and chronic diarrhea, which left thousands of men unfit for combat. The Navy sidestepped many of the Army's sanitary problems, except those generated by overcrowding on troop transports during the influenza pandemic of 1918–19.

Medics suffered high casualty rates because they routinely shared the dangers of those they served. Army medics in the European and Pacific theaters during World War II, for example, suffered a total of 20,163 battle casualties, of which 3,739 were fatal. The authors describe numerous incidents involving medics who risked their lives by treating and evacuating wounded men while under heavy enemy fire. Some brave souls even protected fallen soldiers with their own bodies. As a result of such conspicuous gallantry, seventy-one Army and Navy

medical personnel were awarded the Medal of Honor, some posthumously.

Certain themes reoccur throughout the 230-year history of the U.S. Army: line officers disregarded the advice of medical officers because the former failed to appreciate the importance of disease prevention to the fighting strength of their commands (for example, line officers were to blame for the typhoid epidemic that ravaged the Army during the Spanish-American War); the Army Medical Department downsized after every war and thus was perpetually unprepared for future wars (for example, in 1950 Congress had to authorize a separate draft for physicians to reverse the loss of medical officers caused by the post-World War II demobilization); and the Army Medical Department, organized for the previous war, was deficient in the next war (for example, the medical force in the Persian Gulf War of 1991 was designed to support a land war against the Soviets in Europe).

Of particular interest are the sections of *Medics at War* that deal with medical evacuation and surgical innovations fueled by the urgency of war. The authors rightly state that time is the most formidable enemy of the critically wounded. The quicker an evacuee reaches a rear-area hospital where state-of-the-art surgery and medicines are available, the more likely the outcome will be favorable. The use of helicopters in Korea and Vietnam revolutionized medical evacuation. In Vietnam, wounded soldiers reached a hospital within two hours of injury. As a result, nearly 98 percent survived, an astonishing survival rate, exceeded only by that (99.4 percent) of the Persian Gulf War, where air-transportable hospitals raised the life-saving efficiency of the Army's medical treatment system to a new level.

Amputation, the hallmark of Civil War surgery, was done chiefly to control wound infection. As late as World War II, 50 percent of all wounds of the extremities ended in amputation. Arterial repair, the outstanding surgical innovation of the Korean War, vastly reduced the number of amputations. Sophisticated vascular repair became commonplace in the Vietnam War, further decreasing the need for amputations. Unfortunately, this trend has been reversed in the current war in Iraq, due to the

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irreparable damage to limbs caused by improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In Iraq, IEDs have replaced the small arms fire of previous wars as the number one killer of U.S. troops.

*Medics at War* contains a number of errors. Most mistakes are minor, such as the misspelling of General Santa Anna's name (p. 9) and the mislabeling of a Spanish-American War photograph (p. 50). The only African American infantry regulars in that war were the 24th and 25th Infantry regiments.

Most disturbing is the discrepancy between Greenwood's and Berry's 10:1 ratio of disease deaths to combat deaths in the Continental Army (p. 5) and the 3:1 ratio reported in Howard Peckham's *The Toll of Independence: Engagements and Battle Casualties of the American Revolution* (Chicago, 1974; p. 130). In this regard, the casualty charts in *Medics at War* would have been more useful if the number of disease deaths in each war had been reported separately, instead of being concealed within the devitalizing category "other deaths in service." Throughout the nation's first century and a half, more U.S. soldiers died from infectious diseases than from enemy bullets. Death tolls per se understate the true impact of disease. Sickness caused an enormous drain on the Army's resources, thus compromising its fighting power. The 20,738 cases of typhoid fever that occurred during the Spanish-American War were the equal of twenty infantry regiments out of action.

War shatters minds as well as bodies. Yet, the authors pay only lip service to psychological casualties. The great insights into war neuroses gained during World War II are ignored. Army psychiatrists concluded that every soldier had a breaking point, which the average individual reached after about eighty to ninety days of combat.<sup>1</sup> Importantly, psychological casualties were not cowards or weaklings, but normal people breaking down under extraordinary stress.

Most of the 224 illustrations—72 in color—are of high quality and pertinent to the story. Two images of sailors, one coated with oil after his ship was sunk and another severely burned in a kamikaze attack, bring home the harsh realities of combat (pp. 95, 112), while a photo of U.S. Army medics treating wounded German prisoners

portrays compassion toward the enemy (p. 76). One poignant picture shows a nurse fixing her hair during a break at a field hospital in Normandy in 1944 (p. 93). She later became the first Army nurse killed in the European Theater.

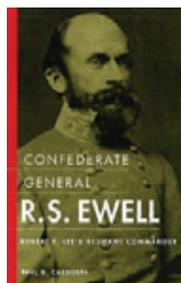
Despite its imperfections, *Medics at War* succeeds in providing a balanced overview of a very important subject. As such, it is best suited for undergraduate survey courses. Since it lacks notes and a comprehensive bibliography, *Medics at War* will find only limited use among professional historians of military medicine.

*Dr. Vincent J. Cirillo is the author of Bullets and Bacilli: The Spanish-American War and Military Medicine (New Brunswick, N.J., 2004).*

*Dr. John T. Greenwood served as chief of the Office of Medical History in the Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Army, from 1998 to 2007.*

### NOTE

1. John W. Appel, "Preventive Psychiatry," in *Neuropsychiatry in World War II*, ed. Albert J. Glass and Robert J. Bernucci, Medical Department, United States Army, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1966–73), 1: 405.



***Confederate General R. S. Ewell: Robert E. Lee's Hesitant Commander***  
By Paul D. Casdorph  
University Press of Kentucky,  
2004, 474 pp., \$39.95

**Review by Joseph Pierro**

Even by Confederate standards, soon-to-be Lt. Gen. Richard Stoddert Ewell was fated to shoulder an impossible burden: replacing Lt. Gen. Thomas Jonathan Jackson at the head of the Army of Northern Virginia's Second Corps after the legendary "Stonewall" was mortally wounded in the spring of 1863. As the senior division

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commander in General Robert E. Lee's army, with a record of prodigious service under the prickly and demanding Jackson, Ewell appeared to be the best candidate for the thankless task. Unfortunately, his subsequent performance proved a mixed one, and his failings were magnified by inevitable contrasts to Jackson's former glories. Few commentators, then or since, challenged Lee's wisdom in removing him from the post after a year's time.

Ewell's difficulties may have been an instance—not uncommon in military affairs—of an officer being promoted beyond the level of his competence. Perhaps the causes were more personal. A bullet to the kneecap during the opening clash at Second Manassas in August 1862 resulted in the amputation of his left leg and a series of related health problems ever after. Ewell assumed his new duties after a physically painful recuperation of nine months, during which time the 46-year-old general had acquired a domineering and ambitious wife whose influence at headquarters was felt keenly and resented widely by his subordinates. Many contemporaries soon voiced the suggestion, echoed by countless historians, that the Richard Ewell who returned in the summer of 1863 to take command of one-third of Lee's infantry only four days before the start of the Gettysburg campaign was not the same man who had performed so capably in the first year of the war.

According to Paul D. Casdorff, however, Ewell was a life-long psychological cripple, a soldier incapable of taking offensive action on his own initiative, "a yes-man, who found great difficulty in making decisions beyond the reach of his immediate superiors" (p. 152). These traits, the author maintains, could be observed from his earliest days as a junior officer in the antebellum U.S. Army to the end of his Confederate service. It is a charge without foundation. As Donald C. Pfanz noted correctly in his comprehensive 1998 study, "An analysis of Ewell's career . . . shows him to have been a remarkably talented officer who knew how to handle troops in combat. . . . As to his supposed incapacity for independent command, one needs only to examine the record. Of the four major engagements in which Ewell exercised

field command, he won decided victories at three: Cross Keys [1862], Second Winchester [1863], and Fort Harrison [1864]. The remaining battle, Sailor's Creek [1865], found him overwhelmed by a Union force more than twice his size. Even then he surrendered only after his corps was surrounded."<sup>1</sup> Although Casdorff's bibliography includes some of the groundbreaking tactical studies that have been produced in recent years, few are referenced in his text or notes. Instead, he relies almost exclusively on outdated scholarship to support discredited canards, such as the idea that Ewell lost the battle of Gettysburg, and thereby the entire war, by failing to seize the easy-to-capture Cemetery and Culp's Hills at the end of the first day.

During one of his innumerable attacks on the general's battlefield performance, Casdorff pauses to note that, "for the armchair historian writing more than 130 years after the fact, it is difficult to fathom Ewell's blindness" (p. 118). The reason for the author's perplexity is all too obvious. Instead of allowing a thesis to emerge from his research, he undertook his study with a conclusion—a faulty conclusion—fixed immovably in his mind. He confesses this unwittingly in his introduction: "My serious interest in Ewell first surfaced while working on an earlier book . . . when I began to wonder why a man with such defects of character should reach a high station at a time of national crisis" (p. xi). Firm in his opinion of Ewell's innate unsuitability for command, Casdorff never allows the facts to dissuade him. Decisive actions either pass without comment or are labeled aberrations; instances displaying discretion or caution are trumpeted as irrefutable evidence of the author's dubious contention.

Further, his handling of primary sources is highly suspect. Exculpatory materials are too often omitted when extracting quotations from orders and after action reports. In other instances, Casdorff's stated conclusions are contradicted explicitly by the very evidence he quotes—sometimes in the preceding sentence or clause. In one particularly egregious passage the author commits both errors simultaneously. Attempting to arraign Ewell for the failure of the Confederates to annihilate the

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Union army under Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell at Manassas and win the war in its opening battle, Casdorph states

[General P. G. T.] Beauregard's finely reasoned report of August 26 [1861] refrains from labeling Ewell as a malingerer, but it is nonetheless critical. In at least four instances he refers to a "miscarriage of my orders" before coming out with it: "In connection with the unfortunate casualty of the day, that is the miscarriage of my orders sent by courier to Generals Holmes and Ewell to attack the enemy in flank and reverse at Centreville, through which the triumph of our arms was prevented from being more decisive . . ." Clearly Beauregard regarded Ewell's hesitancy on the morning of July 21 as cause for the Confederate inability to crush McDowell totally. (pp. 116–17)

To those who approach this selection of Beauregard's report without prejudice, there is nothing clear about his opinion of Ewell. Beauregard laments a miscarriage of orders, and that is precisely what he meant. Ewell did not mishandle the order, it was never carried to him by the courier from Beauregard's headquarters.

More damning is Casdorph's attempt to selectively edit the report. Note the difference in meaning of the last sentence in its unexpurgated form (emphasis added).

In connection with the unfortunate casualty of the day, that is, the miscarriage of the orders sent by courier to Generals Holmes and Ewell to attack the enemy in flank and reverse at Centreville, through which the triumph of our arms was prevented from being still more decisive, *I regard it in place to say a divisional organization, with officers in command of divisions, with appropriate rank, as in European services, would greatly reduce the risk of such mishaps, and would advantageously simplify the communications of a general in command of a field with his troops.*<sup>2</sup>

Beauregard was criticizing the organizational decisions of his superiors in Richmond, not the efficiency of one of his subordinates in the field. Such mishandling of evidence, whether inadvertent or deliberate, abounds throughout the book.

Much of Casdorph's analysis rests on negative appraisals of Ewell by fellow officers whose standing or veracity is not subjected to proper critical scrutiny. Even when the sources are unimpeachable, the uses to which Casdorph puts them are made suspect by his apparent deficiencies in military science. Casdorph castigates Ewell for decisions that merit approval from any knowledgeable soldier or military analyst, such as refusing to begin a complicated, *en echelon* offensive involving units outside his scope of authority without first receiving a positive attack order from headquarters or ordering the erection of field fortifications when called on to prepare his command to disengage from contact with a superior enemy and reinforce another sector.

A weak presentation reinforces these analytical failings. The flow of Casdorph's narrative is shattered by long digressions and frequent non sequiturs, a habit so pronounced in the book's early chapters that one imagines the author was attempting simply to fill pages covering periods for which he had little information regarding his subject. (A series of lengthy descriptions of battles in which Ewell took little or no part constitutes the bulk of one chapter devoted to the Mexican War.) His constant habit of referencing future events not yet explained renders the chronology needlessly confusing. Direct quotations often appear without any attribution in the text, and the unfortunate decision to allow a single endnote to meet the demands of numerous citations across multiple paragraphs makes virtually impossible the task of determining whether a particular offering comes from a primary or a secondary source, let alone identifying the speaker. Even the maps are substandard, as few offer more than the barest geography of an entire campaign. Readers unfamiliar with the battles discussed will find them of little aid, as no troop positions or movements are marked—a remarkable oversight in a discussion of a commander's tactical ineptitude. Such practices are unfortunate in any work of nonfiction, but in a publication from a university press they border on the derelict.

Even after a century and a half, the career of Richard Ewell—like that of many leading Confederates—is a topic still rich in scholarly opportunity. Sadly, Casdorph squandered his, and the result is a hyperbolic and overly simplistic caricature argued unconvincingly.

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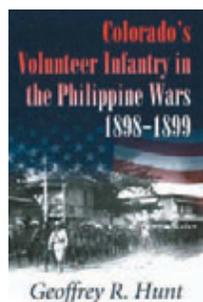
As one of the leading participants in the conflict that defined the modern United States, the general deserved a better treatment of both his failings and his triumphs.

*Joseph Pierro is a freelance author and journalist, and he holds a master's degree in history from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. From 2001 to 2005 he served as executive director of Civil War Williamsburg, a public history concern dedicated to promoting greater understanding of the Peninsula and Seven Days battles. He is the editor of "The Maryland Campaign of September 1862: Ezra A. Carman's Definitive Study of the Union and Confederate Armies at Antietam," to be published by Routledge in September 2007.*

## NOTES

1. Donald C. Pfanz, *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1998), pp. xiv–xv.

2. Rpt of General P. G. T. Beauregard on the Battle of Manassas, 26 Aug 1861, printed in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1880–1901), ser. 1, vol. 2, p. 502.



*Colorado's Volunteer Infantry  
in the Philippine Wars,  
1898–1899*

By **Geoffrey R. Hunt**  
**University of New Mexico  
Press, 2006, 299 pp., \$39.95**

**Review by Roger D. Cunningham**

Counterinsurgency warfare is proving to be a challenge for U.S. soldiers serving in Iraq, just as it was for their forebears more than a century ago in the Philippines. Geoffrey R. Hunt, professor of history and chairman of the Social Sciences Department at the Community College of Aurora in Colorado, examines the experiences

of one regiment of citizen-soldiers that fought both Spanish forces and Filipino insurgents in *Colorado's Volunteer Infantry in the Philippine Wars, 1898–1899*.

When the United States declared war on Spain in April 1898, the 28,000-man Regular Army was too small to fight the Spanish Army in its colonial possessions—Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines—so President William McKinley called for a 200,000-man volunteer army to augment it. Each state, territory, and the District of Columbia was assigned a volunteer unit quota and urged to fill it as far as possible with militia. Colorado's primary contribution was one infantry regiment, while two cavalry troops joined the 2d U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, and an artillery battery was also federalized.

Colorado had ensured that its National Guard was fully equipped for field duty because it relied on the guard to deploy during miners' strikes. The state faced the problem, however, of transforming sixteen understrength militia companies into one new regiment with twelve companies drawn more or less evenly from the northern and southern sections of the state. After bruising some egos, especially in the allocation of commissions, the state accomplished this conversion, and in May the 1st Colorado Volunteer Infantry mustered into federal service in Denver. Instead of heading for Cuba, the unit was surprised to be deployed to the Philippines, via San Francisco.

The expeditionary force that sailed to the Philippines was the Eighth Army Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. Wesley Merritt, and it was a mix of Regular Army and state volunteer units, with the latter coming primarily from the West. (Only two of the corps's fourteen state regiments came from east of the Mississippi River.) Merritt's troops arrived off Manila, and in August the Coloradans played a prominent role in attacking the enemy in trenches near Fort San Antonio de Abad, the southwestern anchor of Manila's defense lines, and ultimately in taking the city. The Spanish defenders had decided to offer only a token resistance, but the regiment nevertheless suffered its first casualties, including one private who was mortally wounded. As the author points out,

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the citizen-soldiers “had answered the nation’s call, trained aggressively, and performed well in combat, and . . . had quickly folded into combined brigades with regular soldiers” (p. 96).

After defeating the Spanish, the Americans occupied Manila and refused to share occupation duties with the forces loyal to Emilio Aguinaldo, leader of the Filipino nationalists. Aguinaldo’s men withdrew beyond the city limits but were allowed to enter Manila as long as they were unarmed. The two sides cautiously eyed each other, separated by cultural and language barriers. Filipinos traded with the U.S. soldiers, with each group trying to take advantage of the other. At first, locals thought that larger American coins were always worth more than smaller ones and found themselves shortchanged. They, in turn, inflated their prices. Bananas initially selling five for a penny soon cost a penny each. Amazingly, the Filipinos happily bartered for hardtack, and the Americans eagerly parted with their indestructible crackers.

Emilio Aguinaldo was anxious to be rid of the Americans. His men occupied outlying Spanish fortifications—trenches and a line of fifteen blockhouses surrounding Manila—and in January 1899 he proclaimed that an American advance outside the city would be considered a declaration of war. After six months of boring occupation duties, such as garrisoning Bilibid Prison, many of the Coloradans were eager to fight, and they got their chance in February, when Nebraska troops broke the peace by firing on a small patrol of Filipinos, killing three of them. In the ensuing fighting, the 1st Colorado Volunteers engaged the enemy and helped to capture the Manila waterworks, suffering three fatalities. In March, as the Coloradans advanced across rice paddies toward the enemy, Capt. John Stewart was killed—the regiment’s only officer fatality. Stewart’s death and other casualties indicated that Filipino marksmanship with captured Spanish Mauser rifles had improved. That same month, the 1st Colorado Volunteers became the first volunteer regiment to exchange its obsolete .45-caliber Springfields for the Krag-Jorgensen magazine rifles that armed the regulars. This increased the Coloradans’ combat effectiveness, as the war

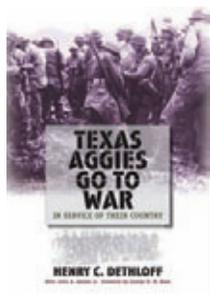
“settled down into a pattern of long-range sniping punctuated by periodic forays in strength into the Philippine countryside” (p. 190).

As more Regular Army units began to arrive in the Philippines, states began bombarding Washington with requests that their troops be allowed to return home. The 1st Colorado Volunteer Infantry was happy to leave the Philippines in July 1899, although about 10 percent of its men opted to stay behind, some as regulars. The regiment sailed back to San Francisco, mustering out of federal service in September. Thirty-five of its men had died, almost two-thirds of them from disease. Unlike a year before, when the Coloradans had deployed wearing blue wool uniforms and carrying Springfields, they came home wearing khaki uniforms and carrying smokeless-powder Krags. They also carried “the memories of a conflict that had devolved from trench warfare to guerrilla tactics. In a symbolic sense, the . . . Regiment enlisted in the nineteenth century and returned home in the twentieth” (p. 4).

The author has produced a well-researched history of one volunteer regiment’s service in the Philippines, and his tale is illustrated with effective maps and more than a score of photographs, most selected from the collections of a Denver Veterans of Foreign Wars post. The book should be enjoyed by all readers interested in the military aspects of America’s long-ago quest for empire.

*Retired Lt. Col. Roger D. Cunningham served as an infantry and military police officer in the United States and Korea and as a foreign area officer in Pakistan, Egypt, and Nepal. He was the U.S. defense attaché in Kathmandu in 1991–92. His article “‘The Loving Touch’: Walter H. Loving’s Five Decades of Military Music” appeared in the Summer 2007 issue of Army History (No. 64).*

# BOOK REVIEWS



*Texas Aggies Go to War: In Service of Their Country*  
By Henry C. Dethloff with  
John A. Adams Jr.  
Texas A&M University Press,  
2006, 449 pp., \$35 95

Review by Bradford A. Wineman

Henry C. Dethloff and John A. Adams, the two authors who have provided the bulk of Texas A&M University's introspective historical writing of the last generation, have compiled a new monograph chronicling their alma mater's legendary military tradition and its contribution to the U.S. armed forces. *Texas Aggies Go to War* is a tribute to the fifty thousand former students who served their country in combat in honor of that tradition.

This study chronologically examines the contributions of the university's alumni to America's military from the Spanish-American War to the invasion of Iraq. Since the actions of individual graduates serve as the centerpiece for this book, legendary Aggie military idols such as Lt. Col. James Earl Rudder, hero of the Pointe du Hoc raid of D-Day, and Maj. Gen. George F. Moore, commander of the garrison captured at Corregidor, draw much of the historical attention. The narrative also details the accomplishments of lesser known alumni, such as Ensign George H. Gay, the lone survivor of the infamous Torpedo Squadron 8 from the Battle of Midway. The authors balance the larger strategic and operational context to provide greater validity to the catalog of individual stories of heroism, providing enough background on campaigns and operations to improve the understanding of what certain Aggies accomplished in combat.

The lion's share of the text (about one-third) examines Texas A&M's role during World War II as this conflict cemented the school's military tradition with over twenty thousand alumni serving in uniform. This war produced all seven of the school's Medal of Honor recipients and most of its alumni who achieved general officer

rank and had a major impact on the school's culture, notably inspiring the uniforms of its corps of cadets and its Aggie muster ceremony. Aggies played crucial roles in Bataan, the Doolittle Raid, North Africa, Normandy, and the recapture of the Philippines. The major conflicts of the Cold War, Korea and Vietnam, also saw substantial participation from A&M graduates. The book gives a brief nod to those who recently served in the Middle East during Operations DESERT SHIELD, ENDURING FREEDOM, and IRAQI FREEDOM. The remaining chapters examine, with less fervor and detail, the events between the major wars of the twentieth century, in which the university also distinguished itself with graduates serving in the various contingency operations as well as training for combat readiness.

There is no thesis here to examine critically, as the authors have shaped the book more as a memorial to the service of Texas A&M graduates than as a standard historical analysis. The research draws heavily from the university archives as well as hundreds of oral history interviews from Aggie veterans. The narrative is also supplemented with ample maps, charts, and several appendixes which do more to elucidate general military terminology than to provide further information on the school's role in war.

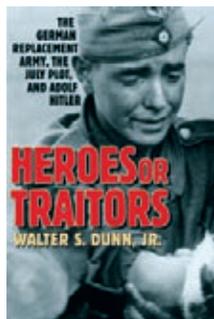
The book's major fault rests in the lack of analysis of where the school's military contribution fits among its peers. The book provides no real context to judge how Texas A&M's involvement compares to other military schools such as the federal service academies, Virginia Military Institute, The Citadel, Norwich University, and other militarized land grant schools like Clemson and Virginia Tech. While the authors provide an operational context for Aggies' individual combat actions, they do not present perspective, statistical or narrative, of Texas A&M's involvement compared to other American colleges overall, particularly during the world wars, where numerous students and alumni from nearly every institution of higher learning served in the U.S. military with distinction.

Today, Texas A&M is no longer an exclusively military school. Indeed, its corps of cadets makes up only a small portion—less than 5 percent—of

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its now mega-university student body of over forty-five thousand students, and only a fraction (about one-third) of those in the corps pursue military service. The proud tradition of the “citizen-soldier,” a principle heralded by the authors as an essential element of the school’s institutional ethos since its founding, now only applies to a thin slice of the school’s enrollment. This book, much like Adams’s *Keepers of the Spirit: The Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University, 1876–2001* (College Station, Tex., 2001), takes a proud, yet sentimental, look back to a time when the military was the nucleus of the college’s function and culture, its once irrefutable *raison d’être*. The intended audience of this book, Texas A&M graduates from this era, will draw the most benefit both historically and nostalgically, while those readers with no direct attachment to the school or military education will probably find it overly school-spirited.

*Dr. Bradford A. Wineman is an assistant professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He has written articles about the origins and early graduates of the Virginia Military Institute, his alma mater. He holds a doctorate in history from Texas A&M University. A staff sergeant in the Marine Corps Reserve, he served on active duty in Al Anbar Province, Iraq, in 2005.*



***Heroes or Traitors: The German Replacement Army, the July Plot, and Adolf Hitler***  
By Walter S. Dunn Jr.  
Praeger, 2003, 180 pp., \$46.95

Review by Michael A. Boden

Walter S. Dunn Jr.’s *Heroes or Traitors: The German Replacement Army, the July Plot, and Adolf Hitler* provides a wide array of challenges for the reviewer. On the one hand, Dunn offers an excellent summary of the ebb and flow of Germany’s divisional strength, and the role of the

Replacement Army in it, through the course of the Second World War and clearly demonstrates irregularities in the drift of units within the system. On the other hand, the conclusions that the author draws from this detailed and excellent narrative are disjointed and, in the final analysis, not substantiated. Dunn knows where he starts from, where he wants to go, and how he wants to go about getting there in this work. Unfortunately, those three elements do not come together seamlessly, and this book, which contains many exceptional “parts” on different levels, fails to combine to form a complete “whole.”

Dunn’s thesis is readily apparent throughout the book. He asserts that, first, “the German catastrophes that occurred in the East and the West and hastened the end were direct results of the lack of reserve divisions and replacements” (p. xiv) and, second, “the reason for the lack of the usual flow of new units, replacements, and new equipment to the fronts from Germany was that the leaders of the coup that attempted to kill Hitler were retaining units and equipment in Germany to be used after the assassination to take control of Germany from the Nazi Party” (p. 162). Taken together, this thesis, although at face value not surprising, is a concept not asserted in conventional historiography. In order to prove his contention, Dunn proceeds to lay out the chronology of German reinforcement efforts from the beginning of the Second World War until the catastrophes of the final year. The chapters are divided sensibly into conceptual blocks focusing on sequential periods of the war.

The individual chapters, for the most part, are the strongest elements of Dunn’s work, focusing on the details of how Germany created the new units that went off to the various theaters of operation or rebuilt divisions shattered by combat. He admirably demonstrates the relative success of Germany’s remanning efforts in the first years of the war. Even though the actual number of soldiers sent back to the fronts was below requirements, the quantity remained far above expectations given the tremendous losses increasingly suffered by the German forces through the course of the war. Finally, coming to the spring of 1944, Dunn examines the sudden reduction of new divisions

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and soldiers sent to the front lines in the months leading up to the June Allied offensives in both East and West, which conveniently coincided with the attempted assassination of Hitler. These shortfalls, says Dunn, were the direct result of Replacement Army actions (or inactions), as its leaders knowingly held back units from the front to support the anticipated aftereffects of the coup. Inadvertently, these actions also played a key role in the course of the war, depriving depleted German armies of needed manpower as they tried to stop massive Allied offensives during the spring and summer of 1944. The final two chapters do not live up to the standard of the rest of the book, the seventh drifting into a summary of Operation BAGRATION and the eighth offering and discarding a conclusion based on counterpoints to Dunn's thesis, with the author posing softball questions he wants the reader to ask and not the challenging questions that serious scholars would pose.

Within the narrow scope of a pure statistical examination, Dunn's argument is sensible and coherent. Unfortunately, statistics can only tell a portion of the story, and, without any supporting documentation or discussion, numerous problems with the conclusion are evident, and the thesis becomes merely unproved conjecture. First, in Dunn's paradigm, all German divisions were created and should be considered equal; he reflects no qualitative distinctions between unit types. Admittedly, different tables of organization defined capabilities and limitations of each division structure, but, within that structure, Dunn does not address the qualitative differences between, for example, a panzer division that has fought in the front lines for years and a fortress division made up of older conscripts who have never fired a shot in anger. Additionally, the problems with arming and equipping these forces remain unaddressed. Dunn explains away the problems of weapon and equipment limitations by asserting that adequate resources were obtainable from "captured Czech, Polish, French, and Russian" stockpiles. He also minimizes individual soldier training opportunities by accepting juvenile experiences with the Hitler Youth or other state-run programs as sufficient military training.

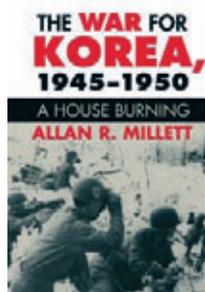
The gravest shortcoming, however, is the total lack of individual agency in the asserted conspiracy. Dunn's statistical overview and compilation are thought-provoking at the least and present a strongly implied case for actions far beyond mere coincidence. But without any specific focal point of causal activity, Dunn cannot bring his thesis from statistical inference to provable argument. The instrument of conspiracy here is "the Replacement Army," a bureaucracy that is too benign as a whole to accomplish what Dunn charges without particular individuals directing its actions. Nowhere in the book does Dunn tie any German leader or any document to a conscious decision to withhold frontline troops in support of a coup. There has been a large enough body of literature written about the anti-Hitler movements, and the German military's role in them, to make even a small connection easily visible. Without such detection, assessing blame for any action or inaction is difficult; the fault of the Replacement Army becomes simply a matter of an organization not doing its job very efficiently rather than consciously or deliberately trying to sabotage Hitler's government. As a result, Dunn is forced to seriously overuse the passive voice—omissions were made, subterfuge was used, and actions were taken. But without subjects on which one can focus analysis, the actual level of Replacement Army complicity is difficult, if not impossible, to determine.

In the end, the argument fails to convince, although it is a solid effort. Dunn freely admits to finding no tangible documentation supporting his charges that the Replacement Army's leadership knowingly halted the flow of replacements to the armies at the front during the crucial months of early 1944. Instead his evidence consists entirely of statistics and numerical data. While these are extremely persuasive and detailed, the lack of any individual causal agency makes this book one of tremendous intrigue and interest but of no enduring scholarship. *Heroes or Traitors* deserves a place on most historians' bookshelves because of the in-depth numerical examination of the Replacement Army and the manning of the German Army through the Second World War. But although it presents a fascinating theory, Dunn's one-

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dimensional statistical study of the topic does not prove the culpability of the leaders of the German Replacement Army.

*Lt. Col. Michael A. Boden is the deputy commander of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at Mosul, Iraq. He served during 2002 in Kosovo as executive officer of the 1st Battalion, 77th Armor, and during the Persian Gulf War in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait with the 1st ("Tiger") Brigade, 2d Armored Division. He also served as an assistant professor of history at the U.S. Military Academy. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and a Ph.D. candidate in history at Vanderbilt University.*



*The War for Korea, 1945–1950:  
A House Burning  
By Allan R. Millett  
University Press of Kansas,  
2005, 348 pp., \$39.95*

**Review by Richard A. Mobley**

The five years preceding the outbreak of the Korean War were complex and controversial, and our understanding particularly of North Korean behavior has been muddled by widely different interpretations of relatively scarce Communist-origin primary sources. Allan Millett, now a professor at the University of New Orleans, clarifies this controversial period by exploiting newly available archival sources, particularly those of China and Russia. The fruits of this research make for fascinating reading about Pyongyang's relationship with benefactors in Beijing and Moscow, and they highlight Kim Il Sung's eager and complex preparations for his invasion of South Korea in June 1950.

In this first of two volumes he intends to write on Korea between 1945 and 1954, Millett

provides a chronological backdrop to the North Korean invasion. He traces the origins of expatriate Korean revolutionary movements during the Japanese occupation before turning to the complex story of the peninsula under U.S. and Soviet occupation between 1945 and the creation of two Koreas during 1948. These chapters address initial U.S. and Soviet pledges for a unified Korea, the handoff of the Korea problem to the United Nations, and the preparations of the two independent Koreas for war. Subthemes include the consolidation of power in the north under Kim Il Sung contrasted with violent rivalries in the southern peninsula.

Millett argues that the war resulted from the competition of revolutionary movements in northern and southern Korea. Both were trying to replace the old order, but neither had gained legitimacy in its respective period of wartime exile during the Japanese occupation. The author suggests, in fact, that had more Koreans fought for liberty during the wartime occupation, thereby establishing legitimate nationalist movements, fewer might have died during 1948–53. Instead, the leaders of these movements returned to Korea with little legitimacy and governing experience and faced a considerably more difficult task of rallying support and eliminating opposition. Millett's richly detailed accounts of their contrasting success are striking. Soviet occupation forces ensured that Kim Il Sung could dominate the Communist faction that had spent the war in China as well as his own Manchurian-based group by disarming competitors and then merging them. The North's story is one of relative political stability assisted by the rapid buildup of internal security forces and ultimately the North Korean army.

The southern story was much more violent as different factions—all seeking significant changes—fought for power. The author contends that the Korean war, defined initially as an intra-Korean conflict, actually started in 1948 with a general strike; a major uprising on Cheju-do Island, which is situated fifty miles from the mainland and is currently a resort; and mutinies within constabulary units in the South. The ensuing two-year insurgency was con-

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ducted by guerrilla bands scattered often in remote areas throughout South Korea, and its ultimate cost is conservatively estimated at 30,000 lives. Internal security incidents—largely independent of northern Korean involvement—were the norm in South Korea until the outbreak of the conventional war in mid-1950, although Seoul seemed to make progress in its counterinsurgency campaign. The author provides detailed accounts of these guerrilla operations and associated U.S. assistance to South Korean forces in suppressing them.

Millett argues that war probably would have occurred among the disparate revolutionary parties in the North and South even without external military intervention. Elites in both South and North pursued independent agendas, sometimes at variance with those of international sponsors. The author does an excellent job in balancing accounts of the internal developments in the northern and southern peninsula with the policies crafted by international sponsors, particularly in Washington and Moscow. Using U.S. archival material and extensive interviews, he portrays a U.S. leadership preoccupied with other challenges worldwide, the desire to demobilize, and the requirement to slash defense spending. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were willing to retain only a residual military assistance team of nearly 500 personnel. Washington had no interest in keeping even a regimental combat team on the peninsula, let alone the two understrength divisions based there until 1948, because the troops would be of little use in a general war in which the Korean peninsula would probably be expendable. Washington also turned a deaf ear to repeated requests from Seoul for combat aircraft and ships—equipment which Moscow generously provided its ally along with overwhelming numbers of artillery tubes and T-34 tanks. The author suggests that the twin U.S. failures to retain forces and to provide adequate equipment to balance the far superior North Korean army probably encouraged the North to attack and help account for Seoul's inability to slow the North's fast moving invasion in 1950.

I found the most fascinating portions of Millett's book used newly released archival

material highlighting Kim Il Sung's repeated approaches to Moscow and Beijing for military assistance and for concurrence in his war plans. Rather than being a puppet, Kim eagerly sought the opportunity to fight and probably would have invaded at least the Ongjin Peninsula in mid-1949 had he secured Soviet permission to do so. Fearing that the incursion would lead to general war before the North Korean army was fully prepared, the Soviet country team and ultimately Stalin restrained Kim, for the time being. Nevertheless, Moscow continued to provide extensive military hardware, planning, and training assistance—which the book describes in detail.

Millett ties together these complex themes of international rivalries, domestic consolidation of power, and war preparations in an eminently readable style. He brings new information to the table from extensive research and interviews, and *War for Korea* includes an excellent bibliographical essay. The book also provides several very helpful order of battle charts as well as depictions of areas of guerrilla operations in the South. With this book's excellent backdrop, I look forward to reading the author's promised sequel on the Korean War.

*Commander Richard A. Mobley, U.S. Navy, Retired, was a career naval intelligence officer who served as chief of indications and warning at U.S. Forces, Korea, in the late 1990s. He has a master's degree in history from Georgetown University and has published several articles about North Korea. His article "North Korea: How Did It Prepare for the 1950 Attack?" appeared in the Spring 2000 issue of Army History (No. 49). The Naval Institute Press published his book, Flash Point North Korea: The Pueblo and EC-121 Crises, in 2003.*

★★★★★

## NEWS NOTES

News Notes continued from page 2

### Center Historians Garner Two Army Historical Foundation Writing Awards

Historians at the Army Center of Military History received two of the five awards made by the Army Historical Foundation for writing on the history of the U.S. Army published in 2006. Andrew J. Birtle's book *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1942–1976*, was honored as the outstanding book addressing an aspect of the history of the U.S. Army since 1899. Lt. Col. W. Shane Story's article "Transformation or Troop Strength? Early Accounts of the Invasion of Iraq," which appeared in the Winter 2006 issue of *Army History*, obtained the foundation's award in the Army professional journals category. The winners were announced at the foundation's annual meeting in June.

### Center of Military History Refashions and Moves Its Web Site

The Center of Military History has launched a new Web site design. Intended to be more streamlined and professional, the refurbished site offers animations and crisp graphics. Users can interact with a slide show, which will be updated monthly, highlighting artwork or photographs depicting events in the history of the U.S. Army. Another feature, the "artifact of the month," will showcase a historical item selected from an Army museum. The Center introduced the new Web look to enhance its communication with the public and the young men and women serving in the Army by offering a more modern and appealing appearance. Despite the visual changes, no content has been deleted in this redesign. The Web site also obtained a new address—[www.history.army.mil](http://www.history.army.mil)—at the time of the transformation, but the old Web address will continue to lead to the Center's site for now.

### Center of Military History Announces Collins Writing Competition Winners

The Army Center of Military History has selected the winning essays in its 2007 James Lawton Collins Jr. Special Topics Writing Competition. The goal of this contest was to obtain firsthand accounts from junior leaders in the Army describing how their units responded to particular challenges in the current war. The Center wants to capture the small unit-level view of this conflict for inclusion in its publications.

Capt. Ben R. Simms and Maj. Curtis D. Taylor jointly authored the first-place entry, "The Battle for Salem Street." An expanded version of this essay appears in this issue. The essay describes an intense four-hour nighttime battle between a reinforced U.S. armor platoon and antagonistic Iraqi militiamen in Diwaniyah, Iraq, that occurred in October 2006. At the time of the battle, Captain Simms commanded Company D, 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, an element of the 2d Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. The platoon that fought in this engagement was an element of his company. Major Taylor was the battalion's operations officer. He was serving his first tour of duty in Iraq; Captain Simms, who had served there from March 2003 through March 2004, had deployed to Iraq a second time. Taylor is now the assistant operations officer of the 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. Simms is presently an assistant professor of military science at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

The second-place award went to Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jimmy J. Jones for his essay "Arabic Sands," which describes a harrowing night flight of a pair of Black Hawk helicopters into a sand storm. Jones is presently attending officer candidate school at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

The first-place authors shared a prize of \$500, while the second-place winner will receive \$250. Each awardee is also receiving a certificate signed by the chief of staff of the Army. The Center of Military History plans to use the first-place entry as the basis for a chapter in a future book tentatively titled "Tip of the Spear: U.S. Army Small Unit Action in Iraq."

The Center of Military History will sponsor another Collins writing competition in 2008. Specific information about the topics and requirements for this competition will be posted on the Center's Web site in late fall 2007.

## Center of Military History Staff Members Continue to Participate in the Army's Work in Iraq

Several staff members of the Center of Military History have contributed directly to the Army's mission in Iraq in recent months. Eugene G. Fleming Jr., a museum specialist in the Center's Museum Division, served as a member of an eight-person budget team for the Gulf Region Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Baghdad from December 2005 to December 2006. His team handled accounting and financial management of contracts relating to the reconstruction of Iraq. Fleming, whose work at the Center involves budgetary work for the Army museum program, is a military veteran of Operation DESERT STORM in Kuwait and Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY in Haiti.

Joanne M. Brignolo, a senior editor in the Center's Publishing Division, went to Iraq in August 2006 to serve as an editor in the Audit Directorate of the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. She worked in the U.S. Embassy Annex in Baghdad, a building that was once Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard Palace. Although her days were long and intense due to quarterly audit cycles, she found time to participate in marathons, visit wounded soldiers at a nearby military hospital, and support local outreach programs. Brignolo will return to the Center in September 2007.

William W. Epley, a senior historian and branch chief in the Center's Field Programs and Historical Services Division, traveled to Iraq in March and June of 2007 for month-long information-gathering visits. More trips will follow. Epley has been assigned to write a history of the operations of Lt. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno's III Corps headquarters in Iraq in 2007. During the Persian Gulf War, Epley, then an Army major, served as command historian for the 22d Support Command in Saudi Arabia.

M. Sgt. Christopher W. Thiel, the Center's artist in residence, deployed to Iraq from April to June 2007 to obtain subjects for projected paintings portraying Army activities in that country. While in Iraq, he was attached to the 90th Military History Detachment, and he assisted that unit's efforts to document U.S. Army operations there by conducting dozens of oral history interviews. Sergeant Thiel

participated in ground and air combat missions with elements of the 1st Cavalry Division and the 1st and 2d Infantry Divisions.

Dale Andradé, a senior historian in the Center's Histories Division, traveled to Iraq in May 2007 to gather information for a narrative history of the operations of the 3d Infantry Division during its current deployment there. Andradé has accompanied elements of the division on operations outside Baghdad. He will be engaged in this project for a year and will probably spend a majority of that time in Iraq, interspersing his visits to that country with periods engaged in writing in Washington.

In late May 2007, Army Reserve Col. Gary M. Bowman, an individual mobilization augmentee with the mobilization assignment of deputy commander of the Center of Military History, traveled to Kuwait during his annual period of active duty. Bowman assessed the historical records of the Third Army, which is responsible for the reception, staging, and onward movement of all U.S. forces deploying into and out of Iraq. His visit has led the Center to prepare to send a team to Kuwait later this year to conduct oral history interviews with key Third Army personnel and to review the command's records.



*Andradé, left, and Spec. Thomas Hope, a machine gun operator, upon their return from patrolling an area near Baghdad International Airport in the HMMWV (high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle) at rear, May 2007*

# NEW CMH PUBLICATIONS

See pages 2 – 3.

