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Staff Ride to El Alamein

Kenneth R. Bowra

From the rocky, weathered fighting positions, facing to the northeast, we had excellent fields of fire and nearly unlimited observation of the battlefield. All was quiet now, as it has been for fifty-one years, following the most critical battle of the North African campaign. Here, at 21:40 on 23 October 1942, Lt. Gen. Bernard L. Montgomery, commanding the British Eighth Army, launched his anticipated offensive with an intensive artillery barrage along the entire front. The battle of El Alamein had begun.

On this summer day in July 1993, I was retracing the defensive positions of the German forces located in the southern sector of the Axis positions. The purpose of my visit was to prepare a staff ride for my officers of the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), who would be in Egypt for an exercise later that year.

A staff ride of the El Alamein battlefield was an ideal training event for the 5th Group, the Special Forces Group oriented to CENTCOM (U.S. Central Command), since desert operations are the cornerstone of most missions the group must be able to undertake. The 5th Special Forces Group conducted a numer of successful desert missions during Operation DESERT STORM. The requirement to have a mounted capability for all of the deployed Operational Detachment As (the Special Forces twelve-man A teams) was inherent in the mission letters and operations plans supported by the unit. The group used the DMV (Desert Mobility Vehicle), a modified HMMWV. In desert operations, mobility equates to survivability.

Leaving the coast road at the small town of El Alamein, we traveled with our Egyptian military liaison officer to the southwest, toward the Qattara Depression. We passed the former positions of the Italian *Bologna Division*, located to the northwest of the Ruweist Ridge. The desert was empty, except for occasional herds of camels. Within several kilometers of this location, to the south of Deir el Shein, we came upon a rise in the terrain which offered excellent defensive postions. A review of the German maps of 1942 indicated that this could very well be the positions of the German *Ramcke Brigade*, a *Fallschirmjager* brigade.

The *Ramcke Brigade* was a *Luftwaffe* paratroop formation sent to the *Afrika Korps* in the summer of 1942. It was commanded by *Generalmajor* Bernhardt Ramcke. The brigade was composed of four infantry battalions, an artillery battalion, an antitank company, and a pioneer company. It took up a position in the German-Italian line between the Italian *Bologna* and *Brescia Divisions*, facing the southern sector of the El Alamein line.

As we climbed the high ground off to the north of our road, we immediately saw numerous fighting positions, with rocks piled around each. We used our GPS (Global Positioning System) to lock in our coordinates in an attempt to confirm if, in fact, that was the *Ramcke Brigade* position. After several different readings, the correct coordinates placed our center of mass where the brigade was to have been located, at grid 762983. As we walked through the sand-filled trenches, it was not clear what forces had occupied the postion. Slowly, we searched the area, finding remnants of ration and water cans, the majority of the ration tins being sardine and meat cans. Veterans of the *Afrika Korps* referred to the cans of Italian military sausage as "Old Man" (in German, *Alten Mann*), for the initials "AM" that were marked on these cans. The sardine tins also were a basic ration of the *Afrika Korps*, and were from occupied Norway and Italy. They were found lying next to nearly every position, from fighting positions to the communications trenches connecting all the positions. My first thoughts were of the absolutely poor camp hygiene and policing of the positions— thinking that the leadership must have been terrible to condone such a mess. Then, after reviewing the actual events, I realized that this position was held until approximately 4 November 1942—about twelve days—under intense artillery fire. Accordingly, the former occupants of this position were forced to remain

dug in, tossing out their ration cans. As we continued to search the area, we found the remains of many boots. Presumably, so many boots littered the area because of casualties and fatalities.

An examination of the boots also revealed the identify of the force, with German markings on the soles. Some still had remnants of fabric, indicating they were the German tropical boot issued to the *Afrika Korps*. Other artifacts quickly were identified: remains of a German K-98 leather ammunition pouch, baked into a hardened, twisted form, with the metal "D" ring still attached; a German grenade; sections of still-intact German newspapers, preserved beneath the cloth sandbags and sand near the fighting position; a German K-98 shell casing, dated 1941; remains of a tropical tunic exposed by the shifting, blowing sands; and the remnants of a German tropical pith helmet.

Being there on that remote position was like stepping into a time machine and returning to October 1942. As I stood in the German positions, most likely those of the *Ramcke Brigade*, I could not help but think of a photograph of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel and General Ramcke overlooking these very positions shortly before the battle of El Alamein. They had been standing very near—possibly exactly—where I stood. What were their thoughts at that time? Looking to the northeast, I could feel what thoughts a defender would have reviewed in his mind. Were the mines properly positioned, not only to the front, but also for a 360-degree-defense, in the event the position were by-passed? When and where will the British main effort come? How long could the position hold? I tried to answer all of these difficult questions from my vantage point overlooking the terrain, and from my knowledge of the past.

Step by step, we found many fragments of British mortar and artillery shells and unexploded ordnance. We also found a piece of a helmet, a pistol magazine, a link of German MG-42 ammunition, all indicators of the intense fighting which took place. Upon tracing the forward edge of the German defensive positions, we finally found what we also hoped to avoid: antitank and antipersonnel mines, some with fuzes still intact, others with the body rusted away. One was set to detonate electrically, the batteries rotted and fused together. These mines were the reason the position was as untouched as it was, since the local Arabs avoided the area.

After a day on the position, one could not help but sense the tactical situation that the *Ramcke Brigade*

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faced. El Alamein and the gateway to Alexandria and the Suez Canal had almost been within reach. Here, in their last position, they faced an inevitable defeat at the hands of the British Eighth Army. The coastal road and the Mediterranean Ocean were so near, and yet so far from them.

Finally forced to withdraw, the veterans of the *Ramcke Brigade* abandoned their now worn positions and, in the confusion of the German retreat to the west, were presumed lost. But despite the odds against them, the brigade made a 200-mile retreat to Fuka, where they rejoined the German forces. Their movement across open desert dominated by the British was a remarkable feat. Along the way they captured a British convoy intact, thus enabling them to reach their own lines.

Today, all that remains of the *Ramcke Brigade*'s position are the pieces of equipment and the sand-filled trenches. As the desert wind blows, more of the unit's past is exposed to the visitor. The rusted bits of barbed wire, the mines, the remnants of a paratrooper's helmet, a soldier's ring, remind us of the human dimension of war. Technology, tactics, and weapons have changed, but not the individual soldier. Standing in the *Ramcke Brigade* positions, overlooking the battlefield to the northeast, was like being on Little Round Top at Gettysburg, recalling and sensing the struggle that took place at that location. A staff ride is, without a doubt, the closest way to capture the human dimension of war and to learn directly from the past.

A trip to the El Alamein battlefield should begin at the museum located off the coastal road in the still small village of El Alamein. There, an electric map presents an overview of the North Africa campaign. Additionally, there are excellent displays of equipment, uniforms, and weapons used by all of the forces. Outside the museum, the weathered remains of tanks, vehicles, and artillery pieces salvaged from the battlefield stand in silent tribute to the soldiers who fought.

Following a stop at the museum, a visit to the Commonwealth, German, and Italian cemeteries is recommended. Each site has its own unique characteristics and mystique. The Commonwealth cemetery consists of grave markers inscribed with the name and regiment, or nationality, of the fallen, often with a personal inscription from a family member. Flowers grow around each headstone, in defiance of the desert sun and sands. The German cemetery features a stone, castle-like structure situated overlooking the Mediterranean at El Alamein, a view not seen by the defenders in 1942. Here, all of the names of the fallen are

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

GORDON R. SULLIVAN
General, United States Army
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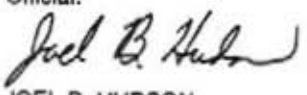

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inscribed in stone in the castle's inner courtyard. The remains of those Germans killed in the battle also are interred within. The absolutely beautiful view from this location is in sharp contrast to the remote and distant positions held so long ago. The Italian cemetery, likewise, is located overlooking the sea. A new monument and chapel are located here, with the remains of the Italian fallen located inside the chapel. The names of the units and the individual soldiers are inscribed in white marble. Inside, an atmosphere of peace and beauty overcomes the horrors of war one senses these soldiers experienced.

Local Arab citizens may approach you at these cemeteries and monuments to sell an assortment of relics found on the battlefield: cap and regimental badges, rusted helmets, rings, shields from German tropical pith helmets, medals, rusted remains of bayonets and other weapons. All of these belonged to soldiers who lost their youths, their futures, and their lives. They fought an epic battle that resulted in an Allied victory. The lessons learned from this struggle, and from the campaign in North Africa, continue to instruct us today. The only way to learn from them and to appreciate them fully is to do a staff ride to the El Alamein battlefield.

Brig. Gen. Kenneth R. Bowra is Commander, Special Operations Command, U.S. Southern Command.

Recommended Reading

Desmond Young, *Rommel: The Desert Fox* (New York: Harper, 1950).

B.H. Liddel-Hart, ed., *The Rommel Papers* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1953).

Dal McGuirk, *Afrikakorps Self Portrait* (Shrewsbury, U.K.: Airlife Publishing Ltd., 1992).

Gordon Williamson and Ron Volstad, *Afrikakorps, 1941-43* (London: Osprey Publishing, Ltd., 1991).

Editor's Journal

With this issue, *Army History* bids farewell to our long-running World War II Chronology, and I certainly want to thank Mr. Ned Bedessem for all his work on that feature. It has been an important part of the Center's fiftieth anniversary commemoration of the war.

This is a combined spring/summer issue. Many of us will be occupied these next several months with military history workshops, conferences, and—let's face it—with vacations.

Please note that in April the Center came under the new TEMPO telephone system, so our numbers have been changed, or at least, the prefixes to our numbers: the old 504 commercial prefix is now 761; the old DSN 285 prefix is now 763.

A.G. Fisch, Jr.

Siena College World War II Conference

Siena College, Loudonville, New York, will hold its Tenth Annual Multidiscipline Conference 1-2 June 1995. The conference theme is World War II—a fifty-year perspective. Conference organizers hope to include papers devoted to the air war, the war in northwestern Europe, the war in the Pacific and Asia, governments in exile, literature, art, film, Yalta and Teheran, popular culture, minority issues, women's studies, religion, pacifism, conscription, and the homefront.

For more information, contact the conference codirector, Professor Thomas O. Kelly II, Department of History, Siena College, 515 Loudon Road, Loudonville, NY 12211-1462, or call (518) 783-2595, FAX (518) 783-4293.

The Chief's Corner

John W. (Jack) Mountcastle

I have only recently returned to my desk at the Center after six weeks as a student in the Joint Flag Officers course known as CAPSTONE. Mandated by the terms of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1987 and conducted by the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., the course is required attendance for all newly selected flag officers. It's great to be back!

The course provided the forty brigadier generals and rear admirals in my class an excellent opportunity to learn more about the missions, organization, and functions of this nation's joint headquarters, as well as the operation of the Joint Staff in Washington. We were addressed by the various service chiefs, the Secretary of Defense, and most of the warfighting commanders-in-chief. We visited the Department of State, the National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

As a part of the course, the class was divided into three groups, with these groups traveling either to Europe, to the Pacific, or to the Western Hemisphere. During this period of overseas travel, CAPSTONE students met with U.S. ambassadors, their country teams, and whatever MILGROUPs or military cooperation efforts were ongoing in the country visited. Of course, we also were able to visit the defense establishments of these foreign nations.

The final week of the course found us back in Washington, where we participated in a computer-based, operational-level war game being used by the National Defense University to train students at the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. We also were addressed by the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives. Having achieved an acceptable state of jointness, I am now more "purple" in my outlook and equipped with an expanded Rolodex containing the names and numbers of classmates from all the services who I know will give me straight information should I ask for it.

My interest in sister-service history made our visits to Camp Lejeune, Pope Air Force Base, and the U.S.S. *America* (while at sea) very worthwhile. I am always struck by the extent to which even a minimal amount of knowledge of other service roles, missions, and organization is hailed by members of those services. (It's akin to the warm smiles one garners from other nationalities when you try to speak to them in their language.) When I asked a young seaman on the *America* for directions to the nearest "head," he exclaimed: "Wow, General, you speak Navy!"

The extraordinary competence of America's soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen was everywhere evident. The very demanding operating tempo that results from today's frequent contingency operations has not caused discouragement or resentment. In fact, we heard next to no complaints, although some commanders expressed concern over the length and frequency of deployments by some specialized units that are frequently called upon to deploy on short notice.

Throughout the course, I found my classmates to be very supportive of history programs in their own services, and most were convinced that "History Strengthens." They report that, like the Army, the other services are fighting their daily resource battles. Their history programs, like ours, have clearly been challenged to continue first-rate support with fewer personnel, less money, and old facilities. I am convinced that we can learn from one another in this regard. Certainly, we in the Army history program are anxious to leverage the success of our associates if we can contribute more fully to our many constituents by doing so.

All of my classmates were pleased to receive copies of the excellent World War II commemorative campaign brochures produced by the Center of Military History over the last three years. Incidentally, we are continuing to publish these and will do so until all of the planned brochures are completed early in 1996.

Because of my extensive travel, I was out of the country when a living legend at the Center of Military History made her transition to retirement. I know that you will join me in wishing Hannah Zeidlik all the best in her well-deserved retirement. We will certainly miss her and two other CMH mainstays who also recently retired, Gerry Sanders and Cathy Armstrong. We wish them well.

I hope that each of you will have a most enjoyable summer, and that you will stay in touch with those at the Center who may be able to support you in the accomplishment of your many missions.

Cave Warfare on Okinawa

Dale E. Floyd

This article originally appeared as an essay in Builders and Fighters: U.S. Army Engineers in World War II. *Reprinted with permission of the general editor, Dr. Barry W. Fowle.*

By the fall of 1944, the United States was in the final phase of its war against the Empire of Japan. The ultimate goal of American operations in the Pacific was the industrial heart of Japan, the south coast of Honshu. Throughout most of 1944, the Americans planned an invasion of Formosa, Operation CAUSEWAY, to support the attack on the Japanese home islands. When General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, attacked Leyte in October rather than December, Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, felt that the possibility of an early advance into the central Philippines opened a direct approach route north through the Ryukyus rather than by way of Formosa.

Thus was born Operation ICEBERG, the attack of the largest of the Ryukyu Islands, Okinawa. The island was within medium bomber range of Japan and, with airfield construction, could sustain a force of 780 bombers. Good fleet anchorages were available in the Okinawa island group, and from these air and naval bases the Americans could attack the home islands and support the invasion of Kyushu and finally Honshu.

Okinawa is 69 miles long and from 2 to 18 miles wide, comprising a total area of 485 square miles. With a subtropical climate, Okinawa's temperatures range from 60-83 degrees Fahrenheit and high humidity makes it oppressive during the monsoon season, from May to November. This rough, generally mountainous, coral island has two types of terrain. The northern part, roughly two-thirds of the island, is generally rocky with a high ridge running its length covered with forests and heavy undergrowth. The southern one-third of the island, where most of the people live and practically all cultivation occurs, comprises rolling hills dotted with deep ravines and sharp limestone ridges.

American knowledge of the terrain and enemy situation was acquired over a period of months and with some difficulty. While limited information was gathered from old publications and captured documents, the bulk of the data came from aerial photos. The engineers constructed models of particular objectives based on intelligence and reconnaissance work, including a highly accurate one of the Mount Shuri/Shuri Castle area, which would be the most heavily defended real estate in Okinawa. With cloud cover hindering full coverage, the 1:25,000 scale target map had incomplete detail, especially in the south.

It was in the south that Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima, Japanese *32d Army* commander, decided to make his stand. As a beach defense would subject his troops to murderous American naval gunfire and a defense in the north would not deprive the Americans of the airfields and harbors of the south, Ushijima determined that the best use of the force available to him was a defense of southern Okinawa.

Southern Okinawa, south of Kuba on the east coast, was ideally suited for defense. The soft limestone ridges included numerous caves with natural cover and concealment. The Okinawans had converted some of the caves into burial tombs.

The Japanese, already known as tenacious fighters, would maximize their capabilities by establishing a strongpoint defense utilizing cave warfare. Lt. Gen. Cho Isamu, General Ushijima's chief of staff, who was one of Japan's foremost experts on strongpoint defense, took overall charge of the defensive operations. Japanese unit commanders from brigade to company level determined the location and design of defenses in their own sector while subordinates oversaw actual construction at particular sites. Reserve units set up antiaircraft defenses.

In August 1944, the Japanese began in earnest to construct their defenses. Besides their own men, commanders used Okinawa home guards, called Boeitai; attached labor personnel; and local village conscriptees, including school children, to do the work. In adapting the defense to the terrain, the Japanese built blockhouses and pillboxes into the hills and fortified the natural caves, even the tombs.

Some of the hundreds of fortified caves were more than one-story high. Practically every cave had multiple exits and tunnels connecting to other caves. For

the first time in the Pacific war, the Japanese had adequate artillery and mortars, which they thoroughly integrated into the defenses. The size of cave exits varied, but most were small, even as little as two feet square, to escape detection because they doubled as weapons embrasures and to provide as little space as possible for the entry of enemy artillery shells.

Although the Japanese generally lacked concrete and steel for cave lining, some of the latter was available for covering entrances. Logs often shored up the caves. Once inside the small entrances, the caves opened up into larger spaces, often comprising more than one room. Some caves had separate rooms for various purposes, including barracks, mess, ammunition storage, and radio transmission.

The main defensive positions were on the reverse slopes. All of the defenses, including the ordnance, were cleverly camouflaged. After the construction work ceased, the Japanese placed mines and booby traps in their defenses.

Although few enemy minefields existed, the Americans did discover effective ones at crucial tank approach points such as road junctions, turnoffs, and defiles. The Japanese used a newly developed mine on Okinawa—an antipersonnel fragmentation mine, that the rocky terrain made difficult to detect. They also dug ditches and created tank traps covered by supporting fire. From the time an American tank entered an avenue of approach, it was under constant attack from direct and indirect fire.

Manning the defenses was the Japanese *32d Army*. Its infantry strength consisted of the *62d* and *24th divisions*, the *44th Independent Mixed Brigade* and some converted naval units. A tank regiment, four machine gun battalions, and four artillery regiments supplemented the divisional units. The artillerymen, veterans of several campaigns, were considered among the best in the Japanese Army. Conscripted Okinawans and the Boeitai were forced to serve with the army. At the time of the American attack, the *32d Army* strength was over 100,000 men.

On 1 April 1945, Easter Sunday and April Fool's Day, the American Tenth Army assaulted the island of Okinawa. The Tenth Army consisted of two corps: the XXIV Corps had three Army divisions, the 7th, 77th and 96th, and the III Amphibious Corps had three Marine divisions, the 1st, 2nd and 6th. Operation ICEBERG required an attack directly across the island to capture the two airfields and split the enemy force. Then, while the Marines held in the north, XXIV Corps would attack and overrun Japanese defenses in the south. Once that was accomplished, they would attack the Japanese forces in the north.

The Japanese expected the Americans to use the good west coast beaches and immediately strike out for the nearby airfields, Yontan and Kadena. A week before, the American 77th Division had seized the Kerama Islands as a fleet anchorage and the Keise Islands as an offshore artillery platform for the Okinawa beach assault. Thus, the Japanese did not defend the beaches and the Americans quickly seized the two airfields and cut the island in half. By 3 April it was clear to Lt. Gen. Simon B. Buckner, Jr., Commanding General, Tenth Army, that there were few Japanese in the north. In a change of plan he sent the Marines there while at the same time he pushed the XXIV Corps south toward the main Japanese defenses.

While the Japanese high command was determined to hold Okinawa and intended to use bomb-laden planes guided to naval targets by suicide pilots, the navy's *Kamikaze Corps*, General Ushijima was more realistic and decided that the best he could do was to hold out for as long as possible and inflict maximum casualties. He made his stand on strongly fortified, concentric defense lines constructed in the south around the Shuri Heights high ground. In accordance with Japanese defense doctrine, each position protected its own location as well as an adjacent one; the key was mutual support through coordinated fire.

The 96th Division reached the first Japanese defense line, Kakazu Ridge, by 8 April. The next day, in a surprise attack without artillery support, the 383rd Infantry Regiment made a frontal assault. It seized the forward slope and reached, but could not hold, the ridge line. The reverse slope defense system of pillboxes, tunnels, and caves—with machine guns, mortars, and artillery covering all avenues of approach—was too strong for a direct infantry attack. This attack taught the Americans that the key to success was an attack on the reverse slope defenses while a large force engaged and prevented the forward slope defenders from providing any support.

The next attack on the Kakazu Ridge line was corps-size with the 7th and 27th Divisions added to the 96th. From 18 April to 24 April, these XXIV Corps units, supported by twenty-nine artillery battalions plus air strikes and naval gunfire, fought the Japanese along this initial defense line. The 102d Engineer Combat Battalion built a foot bridge, two Bailey bridges, and a ponton bridge to place the 27th Division in position for an attack. The 7th Division, even though supported by the first use of armored flame throwers of

the 713th Tank Battalion, was unable to dislodge the Japanese from reverse slope positions along Skyline Ridge. By 20 April, only the 27th Division was in a position to attack into the rear of the Japanese defense line; the 7th and 96th Divisions would have to continue the frontal attacks.

The rear of the Kakazu Ridge was the 27th Division's target. The 102d Engineers sealed Japanese caves along the forward slopes of the Pinnacles, depriving the reverse slope defenders of covering fire. On 24 April, the Japanese began an orderly withdrawal from the outer Shuri defense as their line was penetrated and the strongpoints battered.

American veterans of the Pacific war recognized the techniques and tactics of the Japanese defense: intricate and elaborate underground positions, and full use of cover and concealment soundly based on a reverse slope concept. They had experienced it all the way from Guadalcanal to Leyte. But, on Okinawa, the Japanese used all their experience to produce the strongest defense the Americans confronted in the Pacific war.

As the Americans reviewed the campaign, they realized that the enormous amounts of heavy explosives used did deny the Japanese freedom of movement above ground but did not have much of an effect on underground positions. Something else was needed, and the solution proved to be the tank-infantry team supported by armored flame throwers, artillery, and engineer demolition squads. The tactics involved a highly coordinated effort by all members of the team. As the artillery battered a position to force the defenders back into a tunnel, tanks took up direct fire positions while the infantry protected the tanks from Japanese infantry attack. Flame-thrower tanks were used to destroy many positions but, where the terrain was not suitable for armor, the engineers used a portable flame thrower with a range of forty yards.

The need to destroy Japanese positions completely to preclude their reuse, and heavy infantry casualties, made the use of engineers as demolition squads necessary. An engineer squad of six to twelve men assisted infantry units up to battalion size and usually camped near the infantry headquarters to be readily available.

The demolition squad's initial responsibility was to clear the area of mines as the tank-infantry team approached the objective. Upon nearing the target, one engineer with a charge and a phosphorus grenade took the lead while several others followed with spare satchels, the usual weapon employed by the demolition squads. A standard charge weighing twenty-four pounds was fuzed by an engineer special blasting cap and had either a waterproof fuze lighter or a 15-second delay igniter. While the infantry provided covering fire, the lead engineer threw the phosphorus grenade into the cave to blind the defenders and then, to gain maximum effect, delivered the satchel charge as far as possible into the position.

For large positions, the engineers often resorted to pumping gasoline from trucks into the openings and igniting it with tracer bullets or phosphorus grenades; the 13th Engineers, 7th Division, used a 1,000-gallon water distributer and two to three hundred feet of hose to pump gasoline into caves. In a three-week period, the 77th Division's 302d Engineer Combat Battalion (ECB) destroyed 925 Japanese defensive works using an average of 3,500 pounds of explosives per day. The 302d Battalion expended a total of sixty-five tons of explosives during the entire campaign on Okinawa and the nearby islands. General Buckner called this the "blowtorch and corkscrew" method; the blowtorch was the liquid flame and the corkscrew was the explosive.

When possible, the demolition squad obtained a foothold above a cave opening and attacked down the hill in what were termed "straddle attacks." This method denied the defenders direct fire against the attackers. In all instances, mutual supporting defensive fire had to be silenced before the demolition squads could go into action. The tanks and infantry waged the battle, but frequently it was the flame and demolition that destroyed the position.

The Tenth Army included all of these attack methods in the tactics of an army-size assault on the Shuri defense system. Since the northern operations were over, the Marines and the 77th Division came south. Then, with the Third Amphibious Corps on the right and the XXIV Corps on the left, the Tenth Army planned an attack to double envelop the final Shuri line.

As the Americans were getting into position, the Japanese counterattacked on 4 May. When General Ushijima realized that the Americans were not going to conduct an amphibious operation in the south, he moved the *44th Independent Mixed Brigade* and the *24th Division* into the Shuri area. With that additional strength, he chanced an attack to try to push the Americans off the island. By 8 May he knew he had failed, and on 11 May the Americans resumed the offensive.

In the center of the line, the 77th Division and the 1st Marine Division had slow going in frontal assaults on strong Japanese positions. The 77th Division brought

all available fire to bear on limited objectives, seized forward slopes to clear reverse slope covering fire, and expended huge amounts of gasoline and napalm to seal Japanese defensive positions as it fought south along Route 5 through hills given American names such as Chocolate Drop and Flattop. The 1st Marine Division attacked the Shuri Heights and, in spite of the fortified caves, made steady progress by concentrating on one specific objective at a time. The Marines called it "processing." By 21 May both divisions were ready to break into the final Shuri position.

The enemy flanks were now the key to success for the Americans. On the right, the 6th Marine Division had a difficult fight taking two flanking hills before they could get tanks into the rear of Sugar Loaf Hill and reduce the Japanese reverse slope positions. The seizure of Sugar Loaf opened the way into the rear of the Shuri defenses from the right.

When the 96th Division took Conical Hill on the left flank, the Shuri rear area was open to attack. By 21 May, the possibility of a double envelopment of Shuri existed. Then the rains came.

General Ushijima knew his position was untenable so, under cover of the rain, he began his withdrawal from the Shuri defense system on 22 May. By 31 May the Americans occupied Shuri, but the Japanese made good the escape of some of their force to a final defense position on the southern tip of the island.

The Americans continued the drive south, and by 9 June were in position to attack the final Japanese defenses—the Yaeju Dake Escarpment. The terrain there was good for armor. The tank-infantry teams and the demolition squads were more experienced and the Japanese artillery was depleted. But some of the largest cave defensive positions were in the area. It took the Americans three weeks to reduce the Yaeju Dake. No wonder that in one-month's fighting on Okinawa, the combat engineers in the three regimental zones destroyed one thousand Japanese caves, pillboxes, bunkers, and defensive positions. Organized resistance was declared over on 21 June.

The Okinawa campaign proved to be expensive in men and material. In the final days, four general officers were killed. On 18 June, General Simon B. Buckner, Jr. was killed by artillery fire and, the next day, Brig. Gen. Claudius M. Easley, assistant commander of the 96th Division, was killed by machine-gun fire. On 22 June Lt. Gen. Ushijima and Lt. Gen. Isamu Cho committed suicide.

American divisions formed a skirmish line on 23 June across the island and began moving north in a final mop-up. The army either dug out or sealed the remaining Japanese in caves, pillboxes, and tombs. On 26 June the 321st Engineer Combat Battalion of the 96th Division used 1,700 gallons of gasoline and 300 pounds of dynamite to seal a cave which reportedly served as the headquarters of the Japanese *24th Division*. Finally, on 2 July 1945, Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell, new commander of the Tenth Army, declared the Okinawa campaign over.

On Okinawa, the engineers played a major combat role in addition to their normal supply and construction duties. Some engineer units had significant losses: the 302 ECB sustained 20 percent casualties in one three-week period. Of the total force on Okinawa when the fighting ended, approximately 31,400, or 18.6 percent, were engineer troops. The victory on Okinawa was made possible by the combat accomplishments of the engineers.

Mr. Dale Floyd is a historian with the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program. He previously served as an archivist in the National Archives, Navy & Old Army Branch, and as a historian with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Office of History. Mr. Floyd specializes in military architecture and nineteenth century military history. He is the author of Military Fortifications: A Selective Bibliography.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Good full-length studies of the Okinawa campaign include the official U.S. Army History, Roy E. Appleman, James M. Burns, Russell A. Gugeler, and John Stevens, *The War in the Pacific; Okinawa: The Last Battle*, in The United States Army in World War II Series (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Historical Division, 1948. Karl C. Dod, *The Technical Services; The Corps of Engineers: The War Against Japan*, in The United States Army in World War II Series (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1966), and Leigh C. Fairbank, Jr., "Division Engineers: Part IV, Ryukyus Islands (Continued)," *Military Engineer*, 39, July 47: 294-99, address the Army engineers' participation in the campaign.

U.S. Army Center of Military History
New Publications and Ordering Information

The following is the March 1995 supplement to the current CMH catalog, reprinted for the benefit of our readers.

NEW PUBLICATIONS:

Anderson, Charles R., *Leyte* - GPO S/N 008-029-00300-7, $2.00. CMH Pub 72-27.

Anderson, Charles R., *Western Pacific* - GPO S/N 008-029-00302-3, $2.00. CMH Pub 72-29.

Ballard, Anthony; Brown, Paul W.; Burkhalter, William E.; Eversmann, William W. Jr.; Feagin, John A. Jr.; Mayfield, Gerald W.; Omer, George, E. (Burkhalter, William E., ed.), *Orthopedic Surgery in Vietnam* - (cloth) GPO S/N 008-029-00315-5, $23.00. CMH Pub 83-7.

Bellafaire, Judith A., *Army Nurse Corps* - GPO S/N 008-029-00295-7, $1.50. CMH Pub 72-14.

Bellafaire, Judith A., *The Women's Army Corps in World War II* - GPO S/N 008-029-00263-9, $1.50. CMH Pub 72-15.

Birtle, Andrew J., *Sicily* - GPO S/N 008-029-00272-8, $1.75. CMH Pub 72-16.

Cirillo, Roger, *Ardennes-Alsace* - GPO S/N 008-029-00299-0, $2.50. CMH Pub 72-26.

Clarke, Jeffrey J., *Southern France* - GPO S/N 008-029-00305-8, $1.25. CMH Pub 72-31.

Fuson, Jack C. (cloth) *Transportation and Logistics: One Man's Story* - (cloth), GPO S/N 008-029-00314-7, $18.00. CMH Pub 70-62. CMH Pub 70-62-1 (paper).

Hammond, William M., *Normandy* - GPO S/N 008-029-00274-4, $2.25. CMH Pub 72-18.

Hirrel, Leo, *Bismarck Archipelago* - GPO S/N 008-029-00280-9, $1.75. CMH Pub 72-24.

Laurie, Clayton D., *Anzio* - GPO S/N 008-029-00275-2, $1.75. CMH Pub 72-19.

Laurie, Clayton D., *Rome-Arno* - GPO S/N 008-029- 00276-1, $1.50. CMH Pub 72-20.

Newell, Clayton R., *Burma, 1942* - GPO S/N 008-029-00277-9, $1.25. CMH Pub 72-21.

Schubert, Frank N., *Mobilization* - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00304-0, $1.25. CMH Pub 72-32.

Smith, Kenneth V., *Naples-Foggia* - GPO S/N 008-029-00273-6, $2.00. CMH Pub 72-17.

Wright, Burton III, *Eastern Mandates* - GPO S/N 008-029-00279-5, $1.75. CMH Pub 72-23.

D-Day: The 6th of June (Historical Map Poster) - GPO S/N 008-029-00294-9, $2.75. CMH Pub 70-53.

On Operational Art - (paper). CMH Pub 70-54.

Department of the Army Historical Summary, Fiscal Year 1984. CMH Pub 101-16.

Department of the Army Historical Summary, Fiscal Year 1988. CMH Pub 101-20.

FIRST CMH EDITIONS:

King of Battle: A Branch History of the U.S. Army's Field Artillery (co-imprint with TRADOC) - (paper). CMH Pub 70-27.

History of Personnel Demobilization in the United States Army (DA Pam 20-210) - (paper) GPO S/N 008-029-00285-0, $16.00. CMH Pub 104-8.

SELECT REPRINTS:

Three Battles: Arnaville, Altuzzo, and Schmidt - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00269-8, $28.00. CMH Pub 11-7-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from Three Battles: Arnaville, Altuzzo, and Schmidt - CMH Pub ll-7-1 (Maps).

Cross-Channel Attack - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00020-2, $29.00. CMH Pub 7-4-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from Cross-Channel Attack - CMH Pub 7-4-1 (Maps).

Leyte: The Return to the Philippines - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00288-4, $25.00. CMH Pub 5-9-1.

Cassino to the Alps - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00286-8, $34.00. CMH Pub 6-4-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from Cassino to the Alps - CMH Pub 6-4-1 (Maps).

Campaign in the Marianas - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00289-2, $30.00. CMH Pub 5-7-1.

Seizure of the Gilberts and Marshalls - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00290-6, $23.00. CMH Pub 5-6-1.

Breakout and Pursuit - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00309-1, $41.00. CMH Pub 7-5-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from Breakout and Pursuit - CMH Pub 7-5-1 (Maps).

The Lorraine Campaign - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00293-1, $44.00. CMH Pub 7-6-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from The Lorraine Campaign - CMH Pub 7-6-1 (Maps).

The Siegfried Line Campaign - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00311-2, $37.00. CMH Pub 7-7-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from The Siegfried Line Campaign - CMH Pub 7-7-1 (Maps).

The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00296-5, $37.00. CMH Pub 7-8-1.

The Last Offensive - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00297-3, $31.00. CMH Pub 7-9-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from The Last Offensive - CMH Pub 7-9-1 (Maps).

The Fall of the Philippines - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00312-1, $32.00. CMH Pub 5-2-1.

Triumph in the Philippines - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00291-4, $40.00. CMH Pub 5-10-1.

Okinawa: The Last Battle - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00310-4, $30.00. CMH Pub 5-11-1.

Salerno to Cassino - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00255-8, $28.00. CMH Pub 6-3-1.

A Portfolio of Maps Extracted from Salerno to Cassino - CMH Pub 6-3-1 (Maps).

Omaha Beachhead - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00128-4, $15.00. CMH Pub 100-11.

St-Lo - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00127-6, $13.00. CMH 100-13.

Utah Beach to Cherbourg - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00129-2, $21.00. CMH Pub 100-12.

The Employment of Negro Troops - (paper), GPO S/N 008-029-00282-5, $39.00. CMH Pub 11-4-1

The Signal Corps: The Emergency - (paper). CMH Pub 10-16-1.

Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific, Volume I - (cloth). CMH Pub 13-3.

Merrill's Marauders: Combined Operations in Northern Burma in 1944

Gary J. Bjorge

This paper is derived from a paper Dr. Bjorge originally prepared for the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force-U.S. Army Military History Exchange, Washington, D.C., June 1994. The original paper came complete with 106 endnotes, which are not reproduced here. Interested readers may contact the Editor for a copy of the notes.

"Merrill's Marauders" is the popular name given to the U.S. Army's 5307th Composite United (Provisional) (also known by its code name GALAHAD), a regiment-size unit organized and trained for long range penetration behind enemy lines in Japanese-held Burma. The 5307th had a short history. Recruitment for the unit began 1 September 1943, and on 10 August 1944 the force was disbanded. The unit did not reach India until 31 October 1943 and was only in combat in Burma from the end of February 1944 to the first days of August. But during that period, the 5307th established an impressive record. In fighting against Japanese forces and in a constant struggle against disease, harsh terrain, leeches, insects, and the weather, the "Marauders" earned the following Distinguished Unit Citation:

The 5307th Composite Unit (Prov) was the first United States ground combat force to meet the enemy in World War II on the continent of Asia. After a series of successful engagements in the Hukawng and Mogaung Valleys of North Burma, in March and April 1944, the unit was called on to lead a march over jungle trails through extremely mountainous terrain against stubborn resistance in an attack on Myitkyina. The unit proved equal to its task, overcame all the obstacles put in its way by the enemy, and the weather and, after a brilliant operation 17 May 1944, seized the airfield at Myitkyina, an objective of great tactical importance in the campaign, and assisted in the capture of Myitkyina on 3 August 1944. The successful accomplishment of this mission marks the 5307th Composite Unit (Prov) as an outstanding combat force and reflects great credit on Allied Arms.

The accomplishments of the 5307th, however, were achieved at a tremendous human cost. Total strength of the unit at the beginning was 2,997 officers and men. Rear-echelon assignments, such as parachute riggers and "kickers"—who kicked bundles of supplies out of transport planes during air drops—further reduced to 2,750 the number of men who actually set out on the first mission on 24 February. After this operation ended with the capture of Walawbum on 7 March, about 2,500 remained to carry on. The unit's second mission, 12 March-9 April, resulted in 67 killed and 379 evacuated because of wounds or illness. Thereby reduced to about 2,000 men, the 5307th was augmented by Chinese and native Kachin soldiers for its third mission, the operation to take the Myitkyina airfield. This mission began on 28 April, and only 1,310 Americans reached the objective. Between 17 May and 1 June, the large majority of those men, most of whom were suffering from disease, were evacuated by air to rear-area hospitals. By the time the town itself was taken, only about 200 of the original GALAHAD force was present. Utterly worn out and depleted, a week after Myitkyina fell, the 5307th was disbanded.

Why did the 5307th end up in this fashion? Why was this first American combat unit to fight in Asia driven until it suffered over 80 percent casualties and experienced what an inspector general's report described as, "an almost complete breakdown of morale in the major portion of the unit?" Col. Charles Hunter, the ranking or second-ranking officer of the unit during its entire existence, knew from the start that heavy casualties were expected. In briefings at the War Department in September 1943, he was told that casualties were projected to reach 85 percent. But at the end of the 5307th's campaign, he felt that the unit had been badly misused and had suffered unnecessarily. Years later in a book entitled *Galahad* about the 5307th, he placed the blame for what happened squarely on the personality and the personal ambition of the campaign commander, Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell:

GALAHAD Force was the most beat upon, most misunderstood, most mishandled, most written about, most heroic, and yet most unrewarded regimental size

unit that participated in World War II. That it was expendable was understood from its inception; what was not understood and has never been adequately explained, is why it was expended to bolster the ego of an erstwhile theater commander such as "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell.

Colonel Hunter's account of events is compelling and moving. It is easy to understand why he feels that Stilwell sacrificed the 5307th to serve his ego. But when criticizing Stilwell, it must not be forgotten that during this period he was acting under orders from above, and was under pressure to achieve specific military objectives set by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). In addition, Stilwell had to cope with the problems created in the China-Burma-India theater of war (CBI) by coalition warfare and by the need to conduct combined operations. In this theater, more than in any other in which the United States fought during World War II, the problems peculiar to coalition warfare reared their heads. Yes, the coalition partners of the United States in the CBI—China and Great Britain—helped stretch American resources and thus contributed to the war against Japan, but they also created obstacles to action that forced Stilwell to lay heavy burdens on the 5307th. It can be said that in the end, it was not so much that the 5307th was a victim of Stilwell's ego, but that the 5307th and Stilwell were victims of coalition warfare and combined operations.

Coalitions by nature are somewhat delicate creations. They are formed by sovereign nations who join together to provide strength of numbers for pursuing a common goal or goals. But national differences in strategic aims can diminish the force a coalition can bring to bear at a particular place and time. Also, differences in military capabilities, warfighting doctrine, cultural traditions, social values, and language can make it difficult for coalition forces to achieve unity of effort in combined operations. All of these debilitating conditions were present in the CBI, where the three coalition partners were seeking to fight the war against Japan in the way most supportive of their particular rational objectives. Interestingly, because of these different objectives, neither Great Britain, the former colonial ruler of Burma, nor China, which would regain a land link to the outside world if northern Burma were retaken, were as committed to retaking northern Burma as were U.S. officials. These different viewpoints had created tensions in the coalition since the start of the war. In 1944, lack of agreement about what to do in Burma contributed greatly to the fate of the 5307th.

The British lack of concern about retaking northern Burma was rooted in doubts about Chinese military capabilities and in the belief that reestablishing a land link to China would not make much difference in the war against Japan. Great Britain's primary focus remained on Europe and on the Mediterranean area. The British did not want to commit large forces to retaking Burma, and at the great war conferences of 1943 they consistently argued for reducing the scale of operations to be undertaken in Burma altogether, or for bypassing Burma and going to Sumatra.

China's position was that of President Chiang K'ai-shek, who was also commander of the Chinese Army. His government was weak and faced many internal challenges, especially from the communists. He did not want to see his military forces consumed in battles with the Japanese, because he would have fewer troops to support him in internal disputes. He welcomed American aid and sought ever more. Yet he also was leery of training and assistance programs, because they might strengthen his domestic rivals. As Stilwell told General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff in mid-1943, "[Chiang] did not want the regime to have a large, efficient ground force for fear that its commander would inevitably challenge his position as China's leader." Chiang's fundamental approach to the war with Japan was to adopt a defensive posture and to let the United States win it for him, preferably with air power. He was more interested in expanding the airlift from India to China than in reestablishing a land link.

In contrast to Great Britain and China, U.S. planners took an activist position on Burma and on China itself. As opposed to Britain's negative view of what China could offer, the United States saw China's geographic position and large manpower pool as great assets. American officials believed that it was possible to improve the Chinese Army and to have it make a positive contribution to the coming offensive against Japan. Even before it became an active belligerent, in May 1941 the United States had begun sending Lend-lease materiel to China. In July 1941, the American Military Mission to China had been established to help China both procure weapons to fight its war against Japan and to train personnel in their use. General Stilwell had been sent to China in February 1942 to expand this effort, with specific orders to, "increase the effectiveness of United States assistance to the Chinese government for the prosecution of the war and to assist in improving the combat efficiency of the Chinese

Army." After the Japanese occupied Burma in the spring of 1942 and cut China's last land line of communication to the outside world, the U.S. planners made reestablishing that land link a high priority. Overland transportation was seen as essential to providing more aid to China.

The notion of Burma as the route to China led the United States to continually stress at the 1943 war conferences the need to retake Burma. At the Casablanca Conference in January, the American JCS put an offensive to retake Burma high on the agenda and obtained British agreement to conduct the operation in the winter of 1943-44. At the TRIDENT Conference, held May 1943 in Washington, U.S. participants agreed with the British that developments in Europe made it advisable to scale back this offensive to cover just northern Burma. But at American insistence, it also was agreed that a land link to China through this area had to be gained during the coming winter dry season.

Three months later the QUADRANT Conference, held 19-24 August in Quebec, Canada, reaffirmed the need for restoring land communication with China. Looking to the future, American and British planners envisioned U.S. forces in the Pacific and Chinese forces converging on the Canton-Hong Kong area. Once there, these forces would drive north together to liberate north China and to establish staging areas for operations against Japan. 1947 was set as the year for operations against the Japanese home islands. Retaking northern Burma and constructing the Ledo Road south through Myitkyina to the old Burma Road was a fundamental part of this strategic plan, because the road would bring in supplies for the Chinese forces that would move toward Canton from the northwest.

The QUADRANT Conference also was important for the American decision finally to send a combat unit, GALAHAD, to the CBI to participate in the coming winter offensive. The U.S. Army had long had a large number of support units in the theater. In late December 1942, the U.S. 823d Engineer Aviation Battalion had taken over construction of the Ledo Road from the British. Medical personnel, quartermaster units, and air corps units had steadily increased in number during 1942-43. But despite Stilwell's requests (since July 1942) for an American corps, or at least a division, no combat units had been sent to the theater. Now, one was going, perhaps to show the seriousness of American interest in retaking northern Burma. Or, perhaps, it was being sent as a reward to General Orde C. Wingate for the kind of aggressiveness that the United States had found in short supply among the British generals in India.

Wingate was the creator of the organizational/operational concept of the Long Range Penetration Group (LRPG) and was thus, in a real sense, the father of GALAHAD. He had gained experience in guerrilla warfare in Palestine and Ethiopia, and had studied Japanese operations in Burma in spring 1942. Looking at Japanese tactics, he decided that the key to their success was superior mobility. Time and time again, Japanese units had moved quickly along small trails in the jungle to outflank and envelop road-bound Allied units. Wingate's answer to this tactical challenge was to free Allied units from reliance on roads. He proposed forming highly mobile units, supplied from the air, that could outmaneuver the Japanese and attack their lines of communications at will. Following the cancellation of an offensive into Burma scheduled for March 1943, General (later Field Marshal) Sir Archibald P. Wavell, supreme commander in India, authorized Wingate to carry out a raid into Burma to test the validity of his theories. Despite heavy losses and having done little lasting damage, the raid captured the public imagination with its daring. Winston Churchill invited Wingate to London for a personal briefing and then took him to Quebec to attend QUADRANT. There, Wingate won approval from the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) for an expanded program of LRPG operations. General Marshall and General Henry H. Arnold, Commander of the U.S. Army Air Corps, were so impressed by his presentation that they agreed to send approximately 3,000 American infantrymen to India to form a LRPG code named GALAHAD. They also decided to send two of the Air Corps' best airmen, Col. Philip G. Cochrane and Lt. Col. John R. Alison, to India to, "activate and command No. 1 Air Commando, a custom-made aggregation of liaison aircraft, helicopters, light bombers, fighters, gliders, and transports," that would support Wingate's LRPG operations.

While the GALAHAD force was forming in the United States and moving across the Pacific, plans were being made by the newly established Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) to implement the TRIDENT/QUADRANT decisions. SEAC had been established by the British to provide stronger direction to the coming operations in Burma. Its geographical area of responsibility included Burma, Ceylon, Sumatra, and Malaya—but not India or China. Reflecting the preponderance of British forces in the theater, a British officer, Vice Adm. Lord Louis Mountbatten, was named

supreme Allied commander. Stilwell was appointed Mountbatten's acting deputy, but Stilwell's American operational theater, the CBI, was not made subordinate to SEAC. Also, Stilwell, in his position as Allied Chief of Staff to Chiang K'ai-shek was not subordinate to Mountbatten. Related to the establishment of SEAC was a crisis in Stilwell's command relationship to Chiang. When Mountbatten went to Chungking, China's wartime capital, on 16 October to meet Chiang and establish a personal relationship, he was told that Chiang not only did not want Stilwell appointed to be Mountbatten's deputy, he wished to have Stilwell recalled to Washington. Mountbatten objected strongly to such a change so close to the start of the upcoming planned offensive into Burma and precipitated two days of negotiations that ended with Stilwell ostensibly returned to favor. But ritual smiles and professions of a new, deeper level of mutual understanding could not reverse the damage that had been done. Stilwell became more distrustful of Chiang, and a cloud hung over their relationship.

Based on QUADRANT decisions the CCS gave SEAC two objectives. One was to carry out operations, "for the capture of Upper Burma to improve the air route and establish overland communications with China." The other was, "to continue to build up and increase the air routes and air supplies of China, and the development of air facilities with a view to a) keeping China in the war, b) intensifying operations against the Japanese, c) maintaining increased U.S. and Chinese air forces in China, and d) equipping Chinese ground forces."

To achieve these two objectives, the capture of Myitkyina was deemed essential. Myitkyina lay south of the high mountain range or "Hump" that was such an obstacle to the transport flying to China. Its airfield was a base for Japanese fighter planes which could harass that air route. Taking Myitkyina would greatly improve the air transport link between northeast India (Assam) and China because it would make a more direct route at lower altitude for transport aircraft, thereby saving fuel and increasing their payloads. Also, Myitkyina was on the existing prewar road network in Burma, so once the Ledo Road was extended through Mogaung to Myitkyina, it would be relatively easy to complete the segment down to the old Burma Road.

SEAC planners developed a multifaceted plan termed CHAMPION to retake northern Burma, and presented it at the SEXTANT war conference held in Cairo, Egypt, in November 1943. The first phase of the plan called for the advance of the Chinese Army in India (CAI) into northwest Burma to provide a protective screen for the engineers constructing the Ledo Road. This phase was already underway by the time of SEXTANT, as road building had resumed in earnest in October, following the end of the summer monsoon. In the second phase, two British corps were to invade Burma from the west and southwest in mid-January. In February, three LRPSs were to be landed in central Burma. There was also to be a major amphibious landing. In the meantime, fifteen Chinese divisions (the Yoke Force, or Y-Force, that had been equipped and trained by the United States) were expected to attack westward from Yunan province in China into eastern Burma. In January 1943 Chiang K'ai-shek had withdrawn his agreement to employ this force, and thereby scuttled the offensive, scheduled for March

American Military University Revisited

An item in the Fall/Winter 1992/1993 issue of *Army History* (no. 24) first introduced our readership to the American Military University (AMU). A privately owned "distance education" school, AMU provides study-at-home courses for military professionals and interested civilians. Since we first reported on AMU, the school's founder has advised *Army History* of two recent developments: accreditation by the Distance Education and Training Council (recognized by the U.S. Department of Education), and approval by the State Council on Higher Education for Virginia to issue the master of arts in military studies degree.

Interested readers can write for more information to American Military University, 9104-P Manassas Drive, Manassas Park, VA 22111. Phone (703) 330-5398 or FAX (703) 330-5109.

A.G.F.

1943. Now, at Cairo, he was meeting with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill for the first time, and they hoped that his firm commitment to join in this new operations could be obtained.

Once again, however, the vagaries of coalition warfare intervened. The SEXTANT conference ended without a clear commitment on Chinese participation in CHAMPION from Chiang. Then, after SEXTANT, decisions reached by Churchill and Roosevelt after meeting with Joseph Stalin at Teheran ensured that Chiang would not give one. At Teheran Roosevelt and Churchill committed themselves to a cross-Channel assault and landing in southern France as soon as possible, and Stalin promised to enter the war against Japan after Germany was defeated. This scenario led Churchill to voice strong opposition to the amphibious landing that was a part of CHAMPION, even though Chiang had made it clear that such an operation was a prerequisite for his sending the Y-Force into Burma. Churchill at this point felt that China really did not matter much in the war against Japan. He believed that Stalin's promise to join the war in Asia after Germany was defeated meant that Russian bases soon would be available, and in his opinion, such bases would be better than anything the Chinese could offer. Furthermore, Churchill wanted the amphibious landing craft allocated to CHAMPION shifted to the Mediterranean Sea to be used in the southern France landing. On 5 December Roosevelt reluctantly agreed to Churchill's request (overruling the JCS for the only time during the war), and a message was sent to Chiang explaining their decision. Chiang replied that without an amphibious landing to divert Japanese forces, he could not risk sending the Y-Force into Burma.

Stilwell returned to Chungking from Cairo on 12 December and tried to change Chiang's mind about employing the Y-Force. He was unsuccessful. On 18 December, however, Chiang made a significant concession and gave Stilwell complete authority over the CAI. The entry in Stilwell's personal diary reveals the excitement and hope that this move engendered:

19 December. First time in history. G-mo [Generalissimo Chiang K'ai-shek] gave me full command of the Ledo troops. Without strings—said there would be no interference and that it was 'my army.' Gave me full power to fire any and all officers. Cautioned me not to sacrifice it to British interests. Otherwise, use it as I saw fit. Madame [Chiang's wife] promised to get this in writing so I could show it to all concerned.

It took a long time, but apparently confidence has been established. A month ago I was to be fired and now he gives me a blank check. If the bastards will only fight, we can make a dent in the Japs. There is a chance for us to work down to Myitkyina, block off below Mogaung and actually make the junction, even Yoke sitting on its tukas. This may be wishful thinking in a big way, but it could be.

In a nutshell, this diary entry captures the nature of Stilwell's problems. In keeping with the QUADRANT/SEXTANT goal of retaking northern Burma, he was focused on the objectives of capturing Myitkyina and linking up with the Y-Force (Yoke Force) from Yunan. But without an attack by the Y-Force, he was not sure that the Ledo Force (the two-division CAI, or X-Force) could reach Myitkyina and make the linkup alone. He acknowledged that all hope of success was possibly wishful thinking, but he was determined to give it a try. A letter written to his wife on the same day further reveals his thoughts:

Put down 18 December 1943 as the day, when for the first time in history, a foreigner was given command of Chinese troops with full control over all officers and no strings attached.... This has been a long uphill fight and when I think of some of our commanders who are handed a ready-made, fully-equipped, well-trained army of Americans to work with, it makes me wonder if I'm not working out some of my past sins. They gave me a shoestring and now we've run it up to considerable proportions: The question is, will it snap when we put the weight on it? I've had word from Peanut [Stilwell's name for Chiang K'ai-shek] that I can get away from this dump tomorrow. That means I'll spend Christmas with the Confucianists in the jungle.... Until this mess is cleaned up I wouldn't want to be doing anything but working at it, and you wouldn't want me to either, thank God.

Stilwell's reference to the shoestring that had been run up to "considerable proportions" is to the CAI, a force that was very much his own creation. In May 1942, he had looked at the 9,000 Chinese soldiers who had retreated from Burma into India, and had seen the nucleus of a force that could play an important role in a campaign to retake northern Burma. Overcoming British doubts, resistance from the government of India, and Chiang's reluctance, he had obtained agreement to equip and train, not only those 9,000 troops, but 23,000 more soldiers who were to be flown in from China. A former camp for Italian prisoners of war,

located northwest of Calcutta at Ramgarh, was selected as the training site, and on 26 August 1942 the Ramgarh Training Center was activated. On 20 October the first of the Chinese soldiers to be sent from China arrived in India. The first goal was to train two complete divisions, the 22d and the 38th. Later, the training program was expanded to include another division, the 30th, and the Chinese 1st Provisional Tank Group, commanded by Col. Rothwell H. Brown, U.S. Army.

For Stilwell, building the CAI was a way to obtain the military force that he feared the United States would never be able to provide him. He also viewed it as an opportunity to test his deeply held belief that Chinese soldiers, if properly trained, equipped, fed, and led, would be the equal of soldiers anywhere. In an agreement reached on 24 July 1942, Chiang K'ai-shek had given Stilwell command of the CAI at Ramgarh and control of its training. The Chinese were to handle administration and discipline. With this much freedom of action, Stilwell initiated an American-style training program with American instructors. They taught the use of rifles, light and heavy machine guns, 60-mm. and 81-mm. mortars, rocket launchers, hand grenades, 37-mm. antitank guns, and the functional specialties required by modern warfare. Artillery units learned how to use the 75-mm. pack howitzer, 105-mm. and 155-mm. artillery pieces, and assault guns. All units received training in jungle warfare. For medical service personnel, special emphasis was given to field sanitation, so that the diseases that had taken a heavy toll in Burma in the spring of 1942 could at least be partially prevented.

As Stilwell flew toward Burma on 20 December 1942, he was not worried about the technical proficiency of the CAI. That had been developed and tested at Ramgarh. What concerned him was the lack of aggressive leadership on the part of Chinese officers. The CAI's 38th Division had entered the Hukawng Valley in October to screen the engineers building the Ledo Road and had been stopped by elements of the Japanese *18th Division*. Stilwell was unhappy with the inability of the 38th Division to move forward, and after arriving at the front on 21 December he tried various methods to develop some forward momentum. He talked directly to the division commander, Sun Li-jen, and issued him firm, detailed orders. He also went down to the front to observe what was happening and to force action. One battalion commander from the 38th Division recounts how Stilwell would drive down to regimental headquarters in his Jeep and stay until the regimental or, in some cases, even the division commander took action to have an enemy position destroyed that was blocking forward movement. Stilwell acknowledged that the Japanese were a tough foe and that the terrain was very difficult. But he also saw the Chinese failure to advance as resulting, in large measure, from their own errors: "Dissipation of force....Piece-meal action....Extreme caution and extreme slowness of movement....Fear of imaginary terrors....Bad recon and security....Fear of going around....Result—loss of men. Loss of chance to bag Japs."

Stilwell looked to the 5307th as a solution to several of these errors, especially the "fear of going around." GALAHAD had been formed (as previously noted) to be an LRPG under Wingate. Its training was focused on developing the cross-country mobility that would enable Stilwell to conduct the end-run (enveloping) maneuvers he felt were needed to encircle the Japanese and to dislodge them from their dug-in defenses. But Stilwell would not be able to employ the 5307th in such an operation until the end of February. In December he would have to wait, satisfying himself with the knowledge that at least he finally had taken control of the unit away from the British.

When Stilwell had learned that GALAHAD would be coming to India to be part of Wingate's force he had been very angry, as the following entry in his diary for 1 September 1943, makes clear:

What's the matter with our people? After a long struggle, we get a handful of U.S. troops, and by God, they tell us they are to operate under WINGATE! We don't know enough to handle them, but that exhibitionist does! And what has he done? Made an abortive jaunt to Katha, got caught E. of the Irrawaddy and come out with a loss of 40 percent—net result, cut the RR that our people had already cut [by air attacks]. Now he's an expert. This is enough to discourage Christ.

Stilwell then began trying to have operational control of GALAHAD assigned to himself, and this effort finally reached the point where General Marshall felt compelled to send him a message confirming Wingate's operational control over the 5307th and reminding him that coalition warfare required compromise:

All American troops in China, Burma, India (including GALAHAD) are under your command. As deputy commander to Mountbatten you are to employ

your forces, including Chinese troops attached by the Generalissimo, so as to ensure an effective united effort by South-East Asian Command. GALAHAD was dispatched to India to take part in long-range penetration operations. If these operations are to be commanded by Wingate, the American group should operate in combat under his central direction. The individual and unit training as well as administration and supply must remain the responsibility of General Stilwell. However, their training must be closely coordinated with that of the British.... We must all eat some crow if we are to fight the same war together. The impact on the Japs is the pay-off.

Stilwell, however, did not give up his pursuit of GALAHAD. At the SEXTANT Conference, he and his chief of staff for plans and operations, G-3 for CBI, Col. Frank D. Merrill, discussed the employment of GALAHAD with General Marshall, and finally convinced him to support a transfer of operational control of the unit to Stilwell. Before the conference ended, a decisions was reached that Stilwell would be assigned GALAHAD.

On 1 January 1943, GALAHAD was officially designated the 5307th Composite Regiment. The next day the name was changed to Composite Unit (Provisional). Apparently, this name change was necessitated by the realization that the man chosen by Stilwell to command the unit, Frank D. Merrill, now was a brigadier general and should command more than a provisional regiment. Merrill arrived at the 5307th's training area in central India on 4 January and immediately assumed command. Within days, despite Colonel Hunter's feeling that the 5307th needed another month of training, Merrill radioed Stilwell that the unit's "training had advanced to a state which would permit its being committed to action." On 8 January, the 5307th was attached to Stilwell's field command in northern Burma and directed to move to Ledo by 7 February.

After completing the 1,000-mile train trip to Ledo, the 5307th marched 140 miles on the newly completed Ledo Road to Ningbyen, a small village in the northern Hukawng Valley. There the unit assembled during the period 20-21 February, received its first real air drop of supplies, and prepared for its first mission.

While the 5307th was moving toward the front, CAI performance on the battle line was improving. In a message sent to Marshall on 28 January, Stilwell expressed satisfaction with the Chinese soldiers and also hinted at British unwillingness to recognize their accomplishments:

My opinion of the Chinese soldier is what it has always been. With good training, equipment, and leadership, he is as good as anybody.... The foregoing is heartily concurred in by all liaison officers with whom I have talked. P.S. I will keep you informed of developments, since I suspect you will hear very little about us in SEAC communiques.

On 24 February Stilwell told Marshall that a mistake by the 22d Division's 66th Regiment had cost them a chance to encircle some Japanese, but he gave Marshall a favorable assessment for both the 22d and 38th Divisions. He reported high Chinese morale and said that he was hoping for a "better performance during the next step." This step was to be the 5307th's first operation.

Even as the CAI was making progress in the field and 5307th was advancing to join the fighting, at the strategic/political level there was some backsliding by the coalition partners. Chiang K'ai-shek's continued refusal to send his Y-Force across the Salween River into Burma was evidence of the low priority China gave the campaign. The CAI's slow rate of advance reflected Chinese fear of failure. This situation, in turn, encouraged the British feeling, long held, that nothing worthwhile could be accomplished in northern Burma. Firm British support for the north Burma campaign was essential because Burma was in a British theater, and Stilwell had two British superiors. In his position as the acting deputy commander of SEAC, Mountbatten was his superior. In addition, on 31 December, Stilwell had placed his field combat command under Lt. Gen. William J. Slim, Commander of the British 14th Army. In early January, however, the British planners in SEAC began trying to torpedo Stilwell's offensive. Looking at the Ledo Force's slow rate of advance, they decided that it was very doubtful that Myitkyina could be taken soon enough to allow the Ledo Road to be constructed that far before the monsoon rains came. Without this road link, they concluded, Myitkyina could not be held. In lieu of Stilwell's campaign, they revived (and Mountbatten approved) an earlier plan to bypass Burma and to attack Sumatra as a step toward retaking the Dutch East Indies and Singapore. This development led Stilwell on 8 January to write angrily in his diary:

Louis [Mountbatten] welshes on entire program [for Burma offensive]. G-mo's fault of course. Limey

program: (1) Stop road at Ledo. (2) Do not attack Burma. (3) Go to Sumatra. (4) Include Hong Kong in SEAC!

Stilwell's anger deepened when he learned that Mountbatten was going to dispatch a mission to London and Washington in February to promote his new plan. Without notifying Mountbatten, he sent his own mission, led by Brig. Gen. Hayden L. Boatner, his chief of staff and deputy commander of the CAI, to Washington to present his views to the JCS. After the Joint Chiefs strongly opposed Mountbatten's plan, Mountbatten blamed Stilwell's mission for influencing their actions and asked that Stilwell be relieved of his SEAC duties on grounds of insubordination. General Marshall quickly intervened and saved Stilwell's job by explaining to the British that the JCS had consistently opposed the concept underlying Mountbatten's proposed operation, and that Stilwell's mission had not affected their position. In characteristic fashion, he also sent a message to Stilwell on 2 March directing him to see Mountbatten at once to reestablish good personal relations. The meeting was held on 6 March and achieved this objective. Mountbatten assured Stilwell that he supported his campaign.

While Stilwell was meeting with Mountbatten, the first combined operation involving the 5307th and the CAI was drawing near to a successful conclusion. This strengthened Stilwell's position that the Japanese could be defeated, northern Burma could be retaken, and the Ledo Road completed. But, Stilwell told Mountbatten, holding northern Burma would take more than two Chinese divisions. He encouraged Mountbatten to put pressure on Chiang K'ai-shek to get the Y-Force committed. He also asked Mountbatten to help stop the belittling of the American-Chinese campaign in northern Burma. That, in Stilwell's opinion, was hurting his own efforts to build up Chinese confidence and make Chiang feel that his troops in Burma were gaining glory for both China and for Chiang himself.

The first operations involving the 5307th had begun on the morning of 24 February, with the front line approximately fifteen kilometers north of Maingkwan, the former administrative center of Hukawng Valley and the largest town in northern Burma. While the main body of the Chinese 38th and 22d Divisions and the Chinese 1st Provisional Tank Group put pressure on the *18th Division* front north of Maingkwan, the 5307th, with the 38th Division's 113th Regiment following, moved east around the *18th Division*'s right flank. Stilwell's intention was to have the 5307th establish a roadblock well behind the front and trap the *18th Division*. On 28 February Stilwell decided that the roadblock should be located at Walawbum, a small village some fifteen kilometers south of Maingkwan, and sent out a liaison aircraft to deliver his order to move there as rapidly as possible. On 2 March the 5307th crossed the Tanai River approximately twenty kilometers northeast of Walawbum, set up an assembly area, and received their final orders from Stilwell's headquarters. Movement toward Walawbum began at dawn on 3 March. During the day, the 1st Battalion secured an area for a drop zone at Lagang Ga, and the 3d Battalion set up heavy weapons commanding the road south of the town. On the morning of 4 March, the 2d Battalion reached the road about a mile and a half west of town and set up a roadblock.

The Japanese response was quick in coming. After learning of the 5307th's presence, Lt. Gen. Shinichi Tanaka, commander of the *18th Division*, decided that he could use a small rear guard to delay the cautious Chinese and turn the bulk of his two regiments to face the threat in his rear. On 3 March, just as the 5307th was moving forward to establish its positions, the *55th Regiment* began to move south toward the 5307th's right flank, while the *56th Regiment* began to move southeast toward the American's left flank.

Heavy Japanese attacks began on 4 March and continued through the next day. The 2d Battalion received especially heavy blows and, after fighting for thirty-six hours without food and water, and with ammunition running low, it abandoned its roadblock on the night of 5 March and withdrew to Wesu Ga. During this fighting, Allied aircraft were bombing and strafing any concentration of Japanese soldiers they could see. This diminished General Tanaka's ability to execute his plan. But the greatest reason for his failure to destroy the 5307th was the arrival of the Chinese tank force led by Colonel Brown. On the afternoon of 5 March, this unit pushed into an area between the *18th Division* headquarters and *56th Regiment* headquarters and, without realizing the significance of their target, began firing on General Tanaka's command post. Also, the tanks were blocking the trail that the *55th Regiment* had intended to use for its attack. Faced with this situation, late on 5 March Tanaka decided to move his force to the west between the advancing 22d Division and the 2d Battalion roadblock to reestablish a line across the Kamaing Road south of Walawbum. Due to the slow advance of the 22d Division, he was able to accomplish this maneuver and to escape what

could have become a trap.

On 7 March, in keeping with Stilwell's orders to keep casualties low, Merrill arranged for the 113th Regiment to take over the 5307th's positions, and the 5307th withdrew from the battle. Its first mission thus ended as a success. Casualties had been light. Only 8 men had been killed and 37 wounded during the fighting, in which an estimated 800 Japanese had died. The 5307th had proven its ability to move across country, supported by long distance radio communication and regular air drops. It also had successfully worked with the Chinese and another group that had become part of the combined force, the native Kachin people.

The importance of support from the local inhabitants cannot be overestimated. General Slim has noted the value of the help the Burmese gave the Japanese in the spring of 1942: "For warning of our proximity they relied largely on Burman informers, and for their routes on local guides." Charlton Ogburn, a veteran of the 5307th, writes in his book, *The Marauders*, that in northern Burma the situation was reversed to the great benefit of the Allies:

> The advantage the Japanese had in having only to hide and wait and hold on...would have forced us to pay an exorbitant price for any successes, despite the Allies' superiority in numbers and virtual command of the air, but for one asset we had: the local population was with us. Thinly settled as the hills of northern Burma were, that factor made a critical difference.

The Americans made a conscious effort to gain and nurture this asset. General Boatner directed the medical units attached to the CAI, "to furnish medical attention to the natives as far as practicable in order to obtain their friendship for the U.S. Army." Hunter mentions how the 5307th never watered their pack animals at village springs and sometimes carried water a fairly long distance to avoid damaging the springs and "irritating the natives in whose good graces we wished to remain." Ogburn notes that enlisting the cooperation of the Kachins was, "an important job of one of the most important members of the 5307th, our British liaison officer, Capt. Charles Evan Darlington." Darlington had served as a political officer in the area before the war and had lived in Maingkwan for five years. He was known and respected among the Kachins and, in Ogburn's words, "was indispensable not only as a supplier of guides, but as a guide himself."

The 5307th's first mission also showed its ability to coordinate action with CAI units. Despite the significant differences between the Chinese and American soldiers, they developed a feeling of mutual respect. The Americans understood that they needed the numbers provided by the Chinese. Because the 5307th had no artillery, the Americans also appreciated Chinese firepower. Ogburn describes the warm welcome given the Chinese artillery when the 113th Regiment relieved the 5307th at Walawbum:

> As the columns moved past each other, we heard cheering in American voices from up ahead. It grew louder, coming down the line toward us, and when it reached us, we could see the cause. In the Chinese column, a battery of pack artillery was moving forward with the infantry. We, too, cheered while the Chinese beamed. The pieces were only 75-mm. howitzers and hardly a match for the 105s and walloping 150s with which the Japanese had visited humiliation on us, but all the same, they were guns and they could throw shells and they were on our side and they were a stirring sight.

Unfortunately for the 5307th, however, even as the Chinese were helping them fight the Japanese at Walwabum, they were unintentionally seriously degrading the health of the unit by contaminating the drinking water. Hunter notes that before the 5307th pulled out of Walawbum, 350 cases of amoebic dysentery were diagnosed because of drinking contaminated water: "Only too late...did we learn that the Chinese units were using the stream...as a latrine. Those men who, through force of circumstance or by choice, relied on halazone tablets to purify their drinking water soon became the victims of amoebic dysentery of the worst type." This situation was undoubtedly exacerbated by a difference in Chinese and American habits. Ogburn states that the Chinese took time to boil their water, while "many of the Marauders could not even be bothered to await the action of the halazone tablets in the canteens, but would pop the tablets in their mouths like aspirin and wash them down with a pint of water dipped from a trail-side stream."

After the battle for Walawbum, the Japanese retained control of only a small part of the southern Hukawng Valley. To keep the momentum of the CAI advance, push the Japanese out of the Hukawng Valley and enter the Mogaung Valley, Stilwell now directed the 5307th to undertake another envelopment of *18th Division* positions. The 1st Battalion, followed at a day's interval by the 113th Regiment, was to conduct

a shallow envelopment and block the Kamaing Road south of the Japanese positions along the Jambu Bum ridge, the high ground that divided the Hukawng and Mogaung Valleys. Meanwhile, the 2d and 3d Battalions were to swing further east around the Japanese and then move west to block the road in the Inkangahtawng area some five miles south of the 1st Battalion roadblock. At the same time, the 22d Division and the 1st Provisional Tank Group were to launch an attack south along the Kamaing Road over the Jambu Bum ridge.

The movement of the 5307th began on 12 March. Rugged terrain and delaying actions by the Japanese made the advance of the 1st Battalion quite slow. It was not until early on 28 March that the force established a roadblock just below Shaduzup. At this point, they were some ten miles south of the 22d Division's lead elements. Fighting was heavy throughout the day, with the Japanese using artillery to support repeated infantry assaults. During the night the 113th Regiment moved in to relieve the 1st Battalion from its roadblock responsibility. On 29 March the battalion moved a mile to the northeast to rest near a mobile hospital unit. In action on the Kamaing Road, the battalion lost eight men killed and thirty-five wounded.

General Merrill's instructions to the 1st Battalion were to rejoin the main body of the 5307th after its mission was completed. Accordingly, on 30 March the battalion began to backtrack north to Japan. Orders were to make this march in easy stages, because the route was difficult. In one area a day's march of ten hours yielded only one mile of progress.

On 1 April the importance to the 5307th of long distance communication was shown when a sack of grain being dropped from a supply plane fell on the 1st Battalion's only long-range radio and put it out of operation. On 3 April, after two days out of contact with his headquarters, the battalion commander felt so uneasy that he decided to go to Shaduzup to find out what was happening. Using the Chinese radio net there, he learned that the 2d and 3d Battalions were in desperate straits at Hsamshingyang and Nhpum Ga. He also received orders to move to that area as quickly as possible to render assistance.

The difficulty now facing the 5307th had been caused by Stilwell's decision to divide the force in an attempt to accelerate the destruction of the *18th Division*. When planning for this operation had begun, Merrill and Sun Li-jen, the 38th Division commander, had advocated keeping all of the 5307th and the 113th Regiment together to establish a single roadblock at Shaduzup. Stilwell, however, wanted two roadblocks, one at Shaduzup and a second one ten miles further south in the Inkanghtawng area. He believed that a force making a wide swing around the right flank of the Japanese could make a deep penetration without being detected. His concept then was to have two simultaneous attacks on the Kamaing Road while the 22d Division attacked on the Jambu Bum front. He assumed that with Japanese attention divided three ways, it would be impossible for them to mount a coherent defense. It also was assumed that soon after the 2d and 3d Battalions established their roadblock, the 113th Regiment moving down from Shaduzup would make contact with them.

Simultaneity in these attacks, however, was not achieved. During the night of 22 March, Stilwell sent a radio message to Merrill: "Japs withdrawing down the road. Jambu Bum fell today. Come fast now." As a result, on 23 March Merrill ordered the 2d and 3d Battalion force to rush forward. They therefore reached the Kamaing Road thirty-six hours earlier than originally planned, while the 1st Battalion had fallen far behind schedule, due to rough terrain, and was still four days from Shaduzup. Nevertheless, because of Stilwell's message, after the 2d Battalion reached the area north of Inkangahtawng early on the morning of 24 March, it proceeded to attack the village. If the Chinese had moved south from Jumbu Bum more quickly, and if the 1st Battalion roadblock had been established at this time, this attack might have worked. But with a slow Chinese advance and no distracting roadblock at Shaduzup, the Japanese were able to concentrate their forces against the 2d and 3d Battalions. Soon these two units were in a critical situation. The lay of the land had forced them to move into a position where they had a long exposed left flank and were susceptible to being cut off. While protecting the Kamaing Road at !nkangahtawng, the Japanese also began moving to do exactly that.

After a day of heavy fighting that failed to take Inkangahtawng, the 2d Battalion commander decided that he had no choice but to withdraw back eastward toward Manpin. As this withdrawal was taking place on 25 March, the danger presented by the reinforced Japanese battalion striking north from Kamaing became clear. If this force reached Auche before the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 5307th did, the 5307th would be cut off from its route of withdrawal northward to Nhpum Ga. To slow the Japanese advance, two platoons were sent to block the two trails running north from Kamaing. They successfully fought a series of delaying actions 26-28 March, allowing the main body

to pass through Auche.

With the 2d and 3d Battalions retiring from the Kamaing Road, Stilwell decided that this was an opportune time to travel to Chungking to meet with Chiang K'ai-shek. As he flew to China on 27 March, however, events were taking another dramatic turn. A Japanese sketch was brought to Stilwell's headquarters showing the enemy's intention to continue moving north through Auche to threaten the left flank of the 22d Division. Since this could not be allowed to happen, the 2d and 3d Battalions were ordered to stop the Japanese advance at Nhpum Ga.

In response to this order, General Merrill placed the 2d Battalion on the high ground at Nhpum Ga and deployed the 3d Battalion to defend an airstrip at Hsamshingyang, some three miles to the north. This division of his force was necessary because he had over one hundred wounded who required evacuation by air, and the Nhpum Ga heights dominated the airstrip. The 3d Battalion also was to provide a reserve force and to be responsible for keeping the trail between Hsamshingyang and Nhpum Ga open.

The stage was now set for one of the most difficult periods in 5307th history. The 2d Battalion had hardly finished building its defensive perimeter on 28 March when the Japanese began attacking. This same day, General Merrill suffered a heart attack and was relieved by Colonel Hunter. Then, on 31 March, the Japanese succeeded in cutting the trail between Hsamshingyang and Nhpum Ga. For more than a week they repulsed all attempts to reopen the trail and kept the 2d Battalion isolated, except for airdrops. During this time, repeated Japanese artillery barrages and infantry assaults inflicted serious casualties on the 2d Battalion, and disease, inadequate nourishment, fatigue, and stress also took their toll. On 7 April a very tired and hungry 1st Battalion arrived after a grueling march and the next day they added their strength (only 250 men from the battalion physically were able to join in the effort) to another attempt by the 3d Battalion to break through to the 2d Battalion. Slight progress was made on 8 April, but on the afternoon of 9 April, the Japanese suddenly withdrew. The battle had been won, but the cost to the 5307th had been high. In fighting involving the attempted roadblock at Inkanghtawng, 7 men had been killed and 12 wounded. The Nhpum Ga battle resulted in 52 men killed and 302 wounded. In addition, 77 sick soldiers were evacuated after the fighting ended.

Following the battle at Nhpum Ga, the 5307th was given several days of rest. New outfits of clothing were issued, and nutritious ten-in-one rations were delivered. Mail arrived for the first time in two months. But baths and new clothes could not alter the reality, described in James H. Stone's *Crisis Fleeting*, that the unit was badly worn out:

> Terribly exhausted; suffering extensively and persistently from malaria,diarrhea, and both bacillary and amebic dysentery; beset by festering skin lesions, infected scratches and bites; depleted by 500 miles of marching on packaged rations, the Marauders were sorely stricken. They had lost 700 men killed, wounded, disabled by nonbattle injuries, and, most of all, sick[ness]. Over half of this number had been evacuated from 2d Battalion alone. Many remaining in the regiment were more or less ill, and their physical condition was too poor to respond quickly to medication and rest.

Clearly, at this point the 5307th was facing a building health crisis that called into question the unit's ability to undertake another mission. Combat losses, even including the heavy losses suffered in the fighting at Nhpum Ga, were below projected levels. Nonbattle casualties that required evacuation, however, were much higher than expected and were rising rapidly. For the February-March period, they totaled 200. In April alone, they were to number 304 as the effects of the harsh battlefield conditions at Nhpum Ga began to be felt. At Nhpum Ga the 5307th had suffered because it was ordered to fight in a static defensive role for which it was neither trained nor equipped. Then the heat and diseases of tropical Burma combined to add to the unit's misery, described in *Crisis Fleeting*:

> The deserted villages of Hsamshingyang and Nphum Ga...became saturated with insect pests and disease organisms produced in decaying animals and men, foul water, and fecal wastes. Mental health, too, was imperiled for the troops on the hill...[as] their casualties accumulated on the spot, visible and pitiable testaments to the waste of battle and the fate that might befall the entire force. Scrub typhus appeared. Malaria recurrences flared up ominously. The diarrheas and dysenteries became rampant. Chronic disabilities took acute forms. When the siege lifted, the men nearly collapsed with exhaustion and sickness.

Outwardly, the 5307th seemed to recover as it rested and received good food and good medical treatment at Hsamhsingyang, but the exhaustion and illness

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of the soldiers could not be overcome with just a few days' rest. Many, if not most, of the soldiers were beginning to suffer from malnutrition, due to extended use of the K-ration, which Hunter noted was, "a near starvation diet...designed to be...consumed only under emergency conditions when no other food could be made available." Also, numerous soldiers suffered from chronic diseases that were sure to flare up again as soon as they began to experience anxiety and to exert themselves. The consensus among the men of 5307th was that the unit needed to go into monsoon quarters somewhere to recover and reorganize for the next dry season.

This was not to happen. Higher authorities wanted Myitkyina taken. Stilwell was motivated by his own deep desire to take the Myitkyina airfield and the town before the onset of the summer rainy season, and the JCS had also made their position clear: the minimum objective in north Burma was, "the seizing and holding of Myitkyina this dry season." Furthermore, developments within the coalition at the strategic/political and operational levels were putting pressure on Stilwell to act. Since the tactical situation and the nature of the forces under his command meant that Myitkyina could only be reached and attacked by a task force led by the 5307th, the die was cast. The 5307th would be ordered to undertake a third mission.

The pressure that Stilwell was feeling from the coalition partners to take Myitkyina was the result of new British and Chinese support for his north Burma campaign. Because that support was, in large measure, a response to American pressure, he knew that he could not now slacken his efforts. When General Boatner had met with President Roosevelt on 18 February during a mission to Washington for Stilwell, Roosevelt had expressed his frustration with the situation in Burma. He had told Boatner that he was more dissatisfied with the progress of the war there than in any other place. In response, Boatner had urged the President to ask the British and Chinese to be more aggressive in Burma. This the President had done. He expressed his views to Churchill, and in a letter delivered to Chiang K'ai-shek on 20 March, he had diplomatically praised the accomplishments of the Ledo Force, while asking for action by the Y-Force to take advantage of Japanese dispersal.

Chiang K'ai-shek responded to Roosevelt's letter on 27 March, the day before he met with Stilwell in Chungking. In his reply, he again expressed his regrets about conditions in China making it impossible to send the Y-Force into Burma, but he did make a major concession, saying, "I have...decided to dispatch to India by air as many troops in Yunnan as can be spared...to reinforce the troops in Ledo, thus enabling the latter to carry out their task of defeating the enemy."

This letter did not satisfy President Roosevelt. On 3 April he sent Chiang a more strongly worded message about the need to send the Y-Force into action immediately. Roosevelt stated plainly that the United States had been training and equipping the Yoke Force for just such an opportunity and that if it did not move now, this effort could not be justified. A week later Marshall followed up this message with one to Stilwell telling him to stop Lend-lease shipments to the Y-Force. To forestall this from happening, on 14 April the Chinese agreed to order an offensive by the Y-Force into Burma.

In mid-April, therefore, Stilwell knew that President Roosevelt had personally intervened with Churchill and Chiang K'ai-shek to gain more support for his campaign. He also had received the benefits of that intervention. During his 28-29 March meetings in Chungking, the Chinese had agreed to send two divisions, the 50th and the 14th to north Burma. Then roughly two weeks later, they had agreed to send the Y-Force into Burma. If, after all of this was accomplished, Stilwell did nothing, he would be wasting Roosevelt's efforts and embarrassing the President in front of the Chinese. Stilwell also felt that he would be wasting the support he had been receiving from the British, especially General Slim.

The British support was extremely important because of the major Japanese offensive into eastern India that had been launched on 8 March, just two days after Stilwell and Mountbatten had met to settle their misunderstandings. The offensive had been anticipated, but its strength had not. Three Japanese divisions advanced to surround Imphal and Kohima, and by the beginning of April it seemed possible that the Japanese might cut the lines of communication supporting both Stilwell's forces and the airfields used to fly supplies into China. Stilwell had seen the seriousness of the threat and, after returning from Chungking, had decided to offer General Slim the use of his 38th Division, even though he knew that this would mean the end of his advance and all hope of reaching Myitkyina before the monsoon rains came. But to his great surprise and relief, when he had met with Slim, Mountbatten, and Maj. Gen. W.D.A. Lentaigne—General Wingate's successor—at Jorhat, India, to discuss the situation, the British stood firmly behind him. Slim had told him that he could keep the 38th Division, and also the two new Chinese divisions that were arriving. Slim also guaranteed that any possible interruption of the line of communication to Ledo would not exceed ten days, and that the LRPGs (nicknamed "Chindits") flown into central Burma in early March would continue to support Stilwell's campaign in the north, instead of shifting their attention to the west.

At the Jorhat meeting Slim and Stilwell also discussed the possibility of reaching Myitkyina ahead of the rains. Since Slim was leaving him in control of the three CAI divisions (the 22d, 30th, and 38th), the two new divisions (the 14th and 50th), and GALAHAD, Stilwell was optimistic that he could still do it. On 3 March, when Slim had visited Stilwell's headquarters at the start of the operation to take Maingkwan and Walawbum, Stilwell had told him about his idea for a rapid thrust across the Kumon Range to approach Myitkyina from the north. Whether he actually could do it, Stilwell said, depended on how things went and when he captured Shaduzup. Shaduzup was taken on 29 March. On 3 April, with his force of more than five divisions left intact, Stilwell told Slim that he expected to be in Myitkyina about 20 May.

Originally, when Stilwell had taken field command of the CAI in December, his vision of how to take Myitkyina had been for the 22d and 38th Divisions simply to advance across the Hukawng Valley, push over the Jambu Bum ridge, move down the Mogaung Valley to Mogaung, and then attack northeastward to Myitkyina. The 5307th was to aid this advance by making deep flanking movements that cut Japanese lines of communication and disrupted Japanese defenses. Stilwell also had hopes that at some point a Y-Force offensive would facilitate his advance by drawing Japanese forces away from north Burma. However, the slow progress of the CAI December-February, coupled with the failure of the Y-Force to move, had made it less and less likely that following this plan would bring his force to Myitkyina before the rains came. Then in February, Brigadier J.F. Bowerman, commander of the British Fort Hertz area in northern Burma, had suggested to Stilwell that a little-known pass through the Kumon Range east of Shaduzup could be used by a mobile force like GALAHAD to attack Myitkyina from the north. This idea had appealed to Stilwell because it offered the chance to make up for

lost time. Not only could he break free from the slow pace of CAI movement, but also his force could outflank the Japanese forces defending the Mogaung Valley and achieve surprise at Myitkyina. This was the plan that Stilwell discussed with Slim on 3 March and again on 3 April. This is what Slim knew Stilwell intended to do when he told him on 3 April to "push on for Myitkyina as hard as...[he] could go."

So, in mid-April, Stilwell had pressure to take Myitkyina coming from many directions. At the same time, he felt confident that his deep strike, code-name END RUN, would work. Studies of the terrain and trail network indicated that a task force could cross the Kumon Range. The new Chinese divisions would soon be available. The airlift of the 50th Division into Maingkwan was almost completed and the 14th Division was assembling at airfields in Yunnan. The only major question remaining was the condition of the 5307th after the battle at Nhpum Ga.

To answer this question, Stilwell sent his G-3, Col. Henry L. Kinnison, to Hsamshingyang shortly after the fighting ended to see first-hand how the men looked. Kinnison told Colonel Hunter about Stilwell's intention of organizing a task force to go over the Kumon Range and approach Myitkyina from the north, and the two of them, as Hunter recalls, "discussed the condition of the men and animals in detail." During this time Hunter apparently did not object to sending the 5307th on this mission. He only states that he asked for, "one week's rest before leaving Hsamshingyang." Merrill, too, did not object to the mission. Perhaps both he and Hunter believed taking Myitkyina justified additional sacrifice on the part of the 5307th. Maybe they felt that objections were futile because of Stilwell's view that willpower could overcome some of the debilitating effects of tropical diseases, and that soft-hearted medical officers probably were contributing to the high evacuation rate for illness in the 5307th. In any case, when Stilwell told Merrill that he knew he was asking GALAHAD for more effort than could fairly be expected, and that he had no other option but to do so, he left Merrill with no basis for opposing the operation.

Stilwell had no choice but to use the 5307th, because the nature of the forces he commanded made it necessary for Americans to lead the Myitkyina task force. The Chinese were not trained for long distance cross-country maneuver through the jungle. They also lacked the aggressiveness for such an undertaking. Moreover, any attempt by Stilwell to send a Chinese force alone against Myitkyina certainly would have been opposed by Chiang K'ai-shek as being too risky. Another problem was that a Chinese force would have needed Kachin guides, but the Kachins did not like the Chinese. General Slim notes that in the retreat from Burma in April-May 1942, the Chinese troops fleeing north through the Mogaung and Hukawng Valleys had looted villages with, "no law and little mercy." As a result, in Ogburn's words, "the Kachins disliked and feared the Chinese at least as much as the Japanese." To ensure full, effective participation by the Chinese and the Kachins, the force moving on Myitkyina had to be a combined force under American command.

On 17 April, two days after the 50th Division had completed its move from Yunnan to Maingkwan, Stilwell met with his staff and with General Merrill to discuss Stilwell's plan. On 21 April, Stilwell set up the task force to seize Myitkyina. Because the 5307th had lost approximately 50 percent of its strength and was down to about 1,400 men, it needed to be augmented by Chinese and Kachin soldiers. Three combat teams commanded by Americans were created and Merrill was given overall command. H Force, under Colonel Hunter, contained the 1st Battalion of GALAHAD, the 150th Regiment of the 50th Division, the 3d Company of the Animal Transport Regiment, and a battery of 22d Division artillery. K Force, under Colonel Kinnison, contained the 3d Battalion of GALAHAD, and the 88th Regiment of the 30th Division. M Force, under Lt. Col. George McGee, Jr. (2d Battalion commander), contained the 2d Battalion of GALAHAD and 330 Kachins.

On 22 April, two days short of the full week of rest that Hunter had requested, the 5307th left Hsamshingyang and began the twenty-mile march to Naubum. There the battalions set about organizing the combat teams and preparing for the operation. On 28 April, K Force moved out, followed two days later by H Force. M Force departed on 7 May.

Despite their illness and fatigue, the soldiers of the 5307th set out for Myitkyina in fairly high spirits. When they first heard of this mission, they had been filled with disbelief and resentment. They had felt that Stilwell's headquarters was either ignorant of the unit's condition, indifferent to their plight, or simply crazy. Their outlook improved, however, when they were promised that after capturing the Myitkyina airstrip they would be relieved and flown to a rest and recreation area. As Ogburn states, "We had it from General Merrill himself that...we would be...given a party to cause taxpayers a shudder...and given furloughs." This vision gave them the will to see the new mission through.

The hard reality of the march—the rain, the mud,

the steep narrow trails, where exhausted animals slipped and fell down mountain sides with their precious loads, the effects of disease and malnutrition, and the attacks of insects and leeches—all of these things soon began to sap that will. The conditions were far more difficult than any previously encountered, and many soldiers had to be evacuated because they were too sick and weak to continue. At some spots, groups of men were left behind with the promise that help would be sent. Yet most of the soldiers did manage to keep moving forward, and on 17 May Task Force H attacked and captured the main Myitkyina airfield.

The men of the 5307th thought that this victory meant release from their hardship, but despite the earlier promises, it was not to be. Again, tactical necessity and the nature of combined operations made it impossible to relieve them. Instead of being flown out, they were committed to a positional battle against a growing Japanese force that was vigorously defending the town of Myitkyina and threatening to recapture the airfield. As General Boatner explained later, Stilwell felt that he had to keep GALAHAD at Myitkyina for four reasons: (1) GALAHAD was the only U.S. combat unit in the theater available for the assault on Myitkyina; (2) The Chinese regiments that marched over the Kumon Range with GALAHAD, in spite of their heavy casualties, had few evacuations for sickness/fatigue; (3) Since early May Stilwell had been resisting heavy pressure to evacuate the 3d Indian Division [Lentaigne's LRPG Chindit force]; and (4) the Japanese lines were only 1,500 yards from the airstrip, which was the only base and source of supply.

Reason four summarizes the tactical need to keep the 5307th at Myitkyina. It reflects the simple requirement to have sufficient soldiers in Myitkyina to handle the Japanese. This was a growing requirement as Japanese strength increased. After 21 May, Stilwell even was forced to pull two battalions of Army engineers off Ledo Road construction work to rush them to Myitkyina as reinforcements. There was no possibility of relieving the 5307th. Instead, staff officers in the rear were encouraged to comb their areas for earlier GALAHAD evacuees to send them back to the unit.

Reasons one through three demonstrate that coalition warfare and the nature of combined operations were making relief of the 5307th out of the question. The fact that the 5307th was the only American combat unit in the theater gave it a symbolic significance beyond the combat power its members could generate. Stilwell wanted the Chinese to continue fighting, and he wanted the units of the Indian 3d Division that were withdrawing northward toward Mogaung and Myitkyina to stand their ground. To achieve these goals, he needed the presence of the 5307th on the battle line. Facing a classic problem inherent in combat operations, Stilwell was determined not to create the impression that he was withholding American troops in a sector where he—as the Allied commander—was keeping British and Chinese soldiers engaged.

Keeping the 5307th in Myitkyina, therefore, was Stilwell's way of addressing a fundamental requirement of combined operations—maintaining teamwork and trust, and keeping all forces united in their efforts. *FM 100-5, Operations* (1993 edition) clearly states that in combined operations, "missions should be perceived as appropriate and achievable for the forces to which they are given and equitable in terms of burden and risk sharing." In combined operations, the surest way to create discord is to foster the impression that the units of one nation are being favored in some way over the units of another. When units of one nation are under the command of an officer from a different country, the danger of such impressions being formed is especially high. This is why *FM 100-5, Operations* states that, "national contingents normally retain command of their own forces." Stilwell, an American, was commander of the CAI, and since 17 May the Chindits had also been attached to his command. As the combined force commander, he certainly didn't want to be seen as playing favorites with the 5307th.

Stilwell's situation already was delicate because of high Chinese casualties and a feeling among the Chinese that their tasks were more difficult than those assigned to the 5307th. Lt. Gen. Zheng Dongguo, who had been sent to India to command the CAI in the field if Stilwell did not, felt that the Americans were giving the Chinese the hardest and most dangerous missions, while they looked for something that could be taken easily. Then, when the Americans got into trouble, as at Walawbum, they would call on the Chinese for help. The deputy division commander and chief of staff of the 38th Division, He Junheng, had the same complaint. Certainly in terms of combat casualties, the Chinese were paying a heavier price than the Americans. By 15 April Chinese casualties in north Burma were as follows: 22d Division, 800 men killed and 2,000 wounded; 38th Division, 650 killed and 1,450 wounded. Reflecting the heavy fighting around Myitkyina, by 20 May the 150th Regiment of the 50th Division had taken 671 battle casualties. General Boatner was well aware of the Chinese concerns and felt embarrassed in his dealings with the Chinese

because of the 5307th's withdrawals from its roadblocks. Under these circumstances, withdrawing the 5307th from Myitkyina and sending it back to India undoubtedly would have harmed the sense of unity in the combined force.

Chinese attitudes also were a concern for Stilwell as he dealt with General Lentaigne's requests to allow the Chindits to withdraw quickly to the north. The Chindits were wearing out just as the 5307th was, and Lentaigne felt that they no longer were fit for service. But, Stilwell worried, what would happen to Chinese morale if troops who had entered combat only in March passed through their lines on the way to India. Also, following closely behind the Chindits were Japanese moving northward. If the Chindits did not hold their blocking positions south of Mogaung, these Japanese units would move north to fight against the 38th and 22d Divisions in the Mogaung Valley and reinforce the Japanese at Myitkyina. Thus, Stilwell refused Lentaigne's request and ordered him to hold the Japanese well south of Mogaung. Stilwell's response to statements about the greatly weakened physical condition of the Chindits was to say that the 5307th had been through as much, if not more, and the unit was still in the field.

This, then was Stilwell's solution to the problem of equitable burden sharing. Every nation's units were to suffer equally. Looking at the 5307th's experience from this perspective, it is evident that the unit was not sacrificed, as Colonel Hunter charged, to satisfy Stilwell's ego. It just happened that it was the only American combat unit available, and the combined force that he commanded needed American participation. Stilwell, as he told General Merrill, had no choice but to ask GALAHAD for more than normally could be expected. Without GALAHAD to help hold up the coalition banner of shared suffering, the combined force would have lacked a crucial unifying element and a catalyst for action.

Stilwell's desire to keep the 5307th in the battle, however, could not change the reality of the unit's wretched condition. Fatigue, disease, malnourishment, and the stress of battle continued to weaken the soldiers. Added to this was the feeling of being lied to and abused—a feeling that spread like wildfire through the unit once the men realized that they were going to be kept at Myitkyina. Morale fell precipitously, and with it went the will to stay healthy and well. Shortly after the 5307th had reached Myitkyina, the regimental surgeon and the battalion surgeons had recommended that the entire unit be withdrawn because of its very poor physical condition. For the reasons set forth above, their advice was not heeded. In actuality, even with the directive to hold down medical evacuations and efforts to beat down fevers with medication, during the last two weeks of May evacuations because of illness ran about 75-100 per day, with a peak day of 134. Steadily, the unit faded away. By the end of May the 2d Battalion, which had started for Myitkyina with 27 officers and 537 men, had only 12 men left in action. The situation in the 3d Battalion was about the same. Only the 1st Battalion still had some strength—a handful of officers and 200 men. In his diary entry for 30 May, Stilwell was forced to write, "GALAHAD is just shot."

By this time, the 5307th truly was "shot," but it was to continue in existence for two more months. On 25 May, 2,500 GALAHAD "replacements" landed in Bombay, India, and were rushed to Myitkyina as quickly as possible. In early June these soldiers and the remnants of the 5307th were organized into one "old" and two "new" GALAHAD battalions. Together with the two engineer battalions (grouped on 8 June into a provisional regiment), they maintained the American presence in what was now the siege of Myitkyina. But the "new" GALAHAD was not the "old" GALAHAD and never really could be. It was fitting, therefore, that after Myitkyina fell, the 5307th was disbanded. The fate of the organization thus mirrored what had happened to virtually all of the men who had served within it. In the campaign to reach and take Myitkyina they had reached the limit of what they could do, and they could do no more. There, at that strategic objective, the unit and the soldiers in both came to the end of the line.

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World War II Chronology

1945

July-September

1 Jul - American and British troops begin to withdraw from the zones in Germany which will be occupied by the Soviets.

2 Jul - The Ryukyu Islands campaign is declared ended.

3 Jul - American and British forces begin moving into Berlin to assume responsibility for their zones of occupation.

5 Jul - General Douglas MacArthur announces that the Philippines campaign is "virtually closed," although mopping-up continues.

7 Jul - The War Department announces that 101 U.S. soldiers have been executed during the war as a result of courts-martial convictions for murder and/or rape. A single additional soldier was executed for the crime of desertion.

14 Jul - The Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, is officially discontinued at 0001, and is replaced by the United States Force, European Theater.

16 Jul - The final major Allied conference of the war, codenamed TERMINAL, opens in Potsdam, Germany, with President Harry Truman, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Premier Joseph Stalin in attendance. Discussions center around Japanese surrender terms and post-war military and political issues.

- The world's first atomic bomb is detonated at the Trinity test site in Socorro County, New Mexico.

26 Jul - The Allied leaders at Potsdam issue an ultimatum warning Japan of the "utter destruction" the nation will face if it does not surrender unconditionally.

30 Jul - Japan rejects the Potsdam ultimatum.

2 Aug - The Potsdam conference ends.

6 Aug - The B-29 "Enola Gay" drops an atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

8 Aug - The Soviet Union declares war on Japan.

9 Aug - The B-29 "Bock's Car" drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

10 Aug - Japan offers to surrender on the condition that Emperor Hirohito's status remains intact.

11 Aug - The Allies agree to allow Hirohito to remain as Japanese emperor, provided Japan recognizes that he is subject to the rule of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers.

12 Aug - Soviet forces enter Korea.

14 Aug - Japan consents to unconditional surrender terms.

- General MacArthur is appointed Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers.

15 Aug - The Allies cease offensive operations.

21 Aug - President Truman orders the cessation of all Lend-Lease operations.

30 Aug - The 11th Airborne Division lands at Atsugi Airfield to commence its occupation duties in Japan.

1 Sep - President Truman declares 2 September V-J Day.

2 Sep - Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu signs the official documents of surrender aboard the U.S.S. *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, formally ending World War II.

This is the last of Army History's *World War II chronologies, prepared by Mr. Ned Bedessem of the Center's Field Programs and Historical Services Division. The first appeared in issue no. 14, five years ago, as we began to note the fiftieth anniversary of World War II. We thank Mr. Bedessem for his tireless efforts in compiling these quarterly chronologies. His work has been an important part of the Center's commemoration of the Army's role in that war.*

1995 Military History Writing Contest Rules

Eligibility: All students attending officer advanced courses or the Sergeants Major Academy during calendar year 1995 are eligible to enter the competition (contest may be entered only once). **Be sure to include your advanced or Sergeants Major Academy Course title, number, dates attended, and your current and forwarding address and telephone number.**

Entries: Submit two copies of previously unpublished manuscripts, typed, double-space. **Maximum length of papers is 2,500 words (approximately ten double-space pages). Papers that exceed this length will not be accepted.** Documentation is required, but footnotes or endnotes do not count in computing length. Submit graphics, illustrations, or photographs as if the article were to be published.

Topics: Essays should develop **a limited theme** related to the history of the U.S. Army. Some suggested topic areas:

-Civil War, World War I, Korean War, etc.
-World War II (this is the fiftieth anniversary period)
-Minority soldiers and their experiences
-Leadership
-Training
-Unit cohesion and stress in combat
-Fighting outnumbered and winning
-Logistics

Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by midnight 31 December 1995.

Submission: Send two copies of the manuscript, along with any accompanying photographs, maps, or other graphics to: U.S. Army Center of Military History, ATTN: Writing Contest (Mr. Arthur), 1099 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005-3402.

Judging and Prizes: A panel of military historians will judge each entry based on the following criteria: **historical accuracy, originality, and style and rhetoric.** First place, $500 and publication in *Army History*; second, $250; third, $100 or as the judges direct. Winners should be announced by 30 April 1996.

Point of contact is Mr. Billy Arthur, DSN 285-5368, or (202) 504-5368.

World War II in the Pacific History Symposium Set

A history symposium, "World War II in the Pacific," sponsored by the Air Force History and Museums Program, will be held 20-21 July 1995, at the Bethesda Naval Officers Club, Bethesda, Maryland. Commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of World War II in the Pacific, the symposium will address a wide range of subjects, including grand strategy, combat operations, the air war, intelligence, military technology, and the decision to drop the atomic bomb. Because seating is limited, those interested in attending should register early.

For further information, please contact Mr. Jack Neufeld, AFHSO/HOX, 170 Luke Avenue-Suite 400, Bolling AFB, D.C. 20332-5113. Phone (202) 767-5088, Ext. 229, or FAX (202) 767-5527.

Contribution to Victory
The Distribution and Supply of Ammunition and Ordnance in the Pacific Theater of Operations

Herbert P. LePore

This article is based on a paper Dr. LePore presented to the Center of Military History's Conference of Army Historians in Washington, D.C., June 1994.

Introduction

As we historians study the World War II period, we sometimes fall prey to being episodic: we study great battles, campaigns, leaders, tactics, and the like, because they evoke great interest and make good historical copy. However, as significant as the above elements were, seeming pedestrian variables such as logistical and materiel support—including ammunition—were also important. Without them, the great battles would not have been waged, the great leaders would not have emerged, and the war itself would not have been won.

The precis of this study, if there is one, is that the distribution and supply of ammunition in the Pacific Theater of Operations brought about unique challenges. Distance, transportation, priorities, availability, training of ordnance personnel, storage and tactical and strategic exigencies were variables that all World War II combatants, Allied and Axis, had to face regarding the supply and distribution of ammunition. However, this paper will argue that the distribution and supply of ammunition was a far more arduous undertaking in the Pacific Theater of Operations than in other theaters during the war.

World War II in the Pacific: Early Uncertainty and Indecision

History has amply chronicled that, when the United States suffered the ignominy of surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, the nation was ill prepared for war—at least for a Pacific war. The vicious attack of 7 December 1941 on the capital ships moored at Pearl Harbor and on the unsuspecting naval facilities was Japan's gamble at creating a *mare clausum* scenario in the Pacific. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's call for a declaration of war, issued the following day, and the subsequent declaration of hostilities on the United States by Adolf Hitler's Germany, ensured that the United States and its principal ally, Great Britain, would be fighting a global conflict. Earlier, through the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 and the Atlantic Charter, both nations had shown their determination to counter Nazi Germany's aggression in Europe. Thus, even after Japan's perfidious attack on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines, the United States and Great Britain, ironically, placed first priority on Europe, with an emphasis on aerial bombardment of Germany and on the defeat of German troops in North Africa beginning in 1942. The United States Army, in tune with the diplomatic priorities, had been undergoing large-scale 1941 maneuvers that fit a European continental scenario. These maneuvers were to prepare the Army for fighting on large land masses with mechanized armies capable of rapid movement, battlefield maneuver, and long supply over long transportation routes. Little, if any, training had been implemented for fighting in what would be the Pacific Theater of Operations, which for the most part was very different from what it would be like to fight in the European Theater of Operations (ETO). Similarly, the bulk of military support, including personnel, materiel, and ammunition, would be sent to the nascent European theater, irrespective of what was happening in the Pacific.

Meanwhile, in what would become the Pacific Theater of Operations, early 1942 was a time to test the resolve and resiliency of America's few military forces in Hawaii, Australia, and the Philippines to withstand—if not defeat—the Japanese military juggernaut. There was a paucity of ammunition and materiel, especially for American troops in the Philippines and Wake Island, who by their valor and resolve, traded their blood at Bataan, Corregidor, and on Wake Island, for time. American troops on Corregidor in early 1942 were in such dire straits with the ammunition shortage that Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright, commander of the forces in the Philippines, sent an urgent message to the Chief of Ordnance, asking the adjutant general's office if he could use 60-mm. ammunition in 3-inch mortars. He was advised he could use such munitions, provided that no more than four increments were used in the charge. Meanwhile, Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, had his deputy, Maj. Gen. Dwight

D. Eisenhower, supervise the shipping of additional ammunition. The exigencies for ammunition on Corregidor were such that President Roosevelt directed that the shells be sent to the Philippines by six converted World War I destroyers, but delays in assembling crews and selecting safe sea routes were such that these ships never reached their original destination. Instead, they had to offload at Cebu, and of the 10,000 tons of ammunition on the vessels, only 1,000 tons ever made to Corregidor. Out of desperation, submarines were used to transport 3,500 rounds of 3-inch antiaircraft ammunition and 1 million rounds of .30-caliber and .50-caliber ammunition. Tragically, these efforts were not sufficient to prevent the Japanese from overwhelming the defenders, and on 6 May 1942 General Wainwright surrendered his forces on Corregidor.

Although the emphasis and priority for both tactics and support lay in the ETO, the first major offensive by American forces was the Guadalcanal campaign in the Solomon Islands in August 1942, involving both U.S. Marine Corps and Army troops. This campaign became the litmus test for the supply and distribution of ammunition in the Pacific, as opposed to procedures in the ETO. In the European Theater of Operations it became standard procedure to offload and move ammunition to ammunition supply points inland, with further movement by truck to the front. The scenario was the converse at Guadalcanal and subsequent amphibious operations in the Pacific. In the early stages of this campaign, and others similar to it, munitions piled at ammunition supply points on the beaches often underwent exposure to Japanese aerial attack, shore bombardment, and artillery or mortar attacks. An effort was made to address this problem by having combat units transport along with them a "basic unit of fire"—a concept that will be developed later. Attempting to negotiate through the humid jungle with various kinds of ammunition, often on foot, was arduous and certainly time consuming. Since the Guadalcanal campaign was the initial effort to wrest islands in the Pacific from the Japanese, gauging the amount of ammunition necessary for an operation was difficult. The situation was not helped by the fact that a reduction in available ships led the commanding general of the 1st Marine Division to deploy essential personnel, with an ammunition level cut by half, to a sixty-day supply. It was exhausted, however, in less than thirty days—155-mm. shells were depleted especially quickly. More ammunition had to be brought hurriedly to Guadalcanal from rear area bases close to the *Imperial Navy*'s patrolling stations. The marines and Army troops who fought at Guadalcanal found they were fighting three enemies: the Japanese, malaria, and insufficient supplies of ammunition. American military planners became acutely aware that supply integrity and availability had to be addressed, along with better contingency planning and estimation of needs, before future campaigns were undertaken.

With the invasion of North Africa in November 1942, ammunition and manpower priorities shifted to the ETO. In 1943, however, with the close ongoing support of the Navy in the Pacific, U.S. marine and Army units slowly began gaining momentum in their island-hopping campaigns. Tarawa and Buna were two of the first strongholds to be retaken from the Japanese. During 1943 the Chief of Ordnance Office was striving to solidify actual routes for essential supplies, such as ammunition. Earlier, in 1942, the general routing of materiel and ammunition to respective theaters of operation was initiated either on the east coast or the west. All supplies for the Pacific theater ostensibly would be sent from west coast ports, while the east coast ports handled materiel bound for the ETO. However, this all changed when certain types of shells needed in the Pacific Theater of Operations in 1943 were being manufactured in parts of the United States closer to eastern or southern ports. Thus, it became easier to ship ammunition out of these ports, through the Panama Canal, to Hawaii or on to Australia. Another problem that had to be addressed concerned the issuance of ammunition from a depot on one coast having to be sent to a port on another coast. It was not unusual for ammunition waiting for loading at Pacific coast depots to be loaded quickly aboard freight cars and sent across country for deployment to Europe. Although the War Department made an effort to ameliorate the ammunition shortages in the Pacific, diplomatic and tactical exigencies in the ETO precluded any satisfactory resolution of the Pacific ammunition shortfalls in 1943.

While most of the munitions being manufactured in 1942 and 1943 were being shipped to the ETO, the North Africa and Sicily campaigns proved significant because they provided the War Department with much needed data on the utilization and performance of weapons such as 57-mm. and 75-mm. guns. Both of these weapons performed well during these operations, were easy to deploy, and would be ideal for use in jungle and mountainous terrain. The War Department decided to give these two weapons highest priority for shipment to the Pacific. These weapons, along with concomitant ammunition and ordnance support teams, were to be sent either by ship or air—whichever was

available. The expansiveness of the Pacific Theater of Operations made either means of transport expensive and time consuming, especially since it was late 1944 before ammunition and ordnance could be moved directly from the United States to the theater or area of operations. Before 1944, ammo and ordnance were sent to Australia, then to the specific area where needed. By mid-1944, however, Liberty ships were being used in the Pacific as "floating depots," supplying fast-moving parts and ammunition to widely scattered islands within the theater.

Men and Ammunition: The Role of the Ordnance Companies in the Pacific Theater of Operations

The Army purportedly had an axiom, "ammunition is expendable, but men are not." However, this was not entirely true. Throughout World War II, American military forces dealt with periodic shortages of ammunition in all theaters of operations, particularly in the Pacific. As a means of ameliorating ammunition shortages, the unit of fire formula was used as the applicable yardstick in determining how much ammunition was distributed or was to be distributed to individuals and organizations. The expression, "unit of fire," was a tactical term used in a theater by military planners to determine the number of rounds of ammunition necessary for each weapon. Units of fire for a specific operation were, at times, also predicted on actual availability of a certain type of ammunition, and as confirmation of the anticipated expenditure of ammo. The variables for determining units of fire were sometimes difficult to understand, because of the confusion that existed concerning what constituted a "day's supply"—a computation of how much ammunition was expended by an individual soldier or artillery weapon on a daily or average basis. The confusion caused in all theaters of operations by the military planners' inability to define the differences between unit of fire and the day's supply was frustrating. A unit of fire could entail one or more day's supply, and thus military planners had to consider not only tactical situations, but also the availability of ammunition to the theater or tactical area. Commanders in fact tended to favor the unit of fire means of computing the outlay of ammunition and ordnance. By mid-1944, individual soldiers in the Pacific were receiving five units of fire: 100 rounds for the M1 rifle; 1,500 rounds for the .30-caliber machine gun; and 600 rounds for the .50-caliber machine gun. Larger, crew-served weapons, such as the 60-mm. and 81-mm. mortars, received 275 rounds each, with 250 rounds for the 105-mm. howitzer, and 150 rounds for the 155-mm. howitzer. In most instances, these figures could be adjusted upward.

The Army in the Pacific had to depend upon the availability of ordnance maintenance companies, organizations under the suzerainty of the U.S. Army Services of Supply. These ordnance maintenance companies were responsible for the movement and servicing of ammunition and ordnance from the time it was to be unloaded from shipboard until it reached its ultimate destination: the soldier or unit needing it. Unlike conditions in the ETO, the ordnance maintenance companies in the Pacific suffered from a shortage of trained ordnance maintenance personnel. In 1944 Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger, Commanding General, Eighth Army, at times despaired because of the lack of ordnance maintenance companies in theater needed for major operations. He knew he would have to be resourceful in the use of those men he had. General Eichelberger, therefore, did something contemporary Army commanders might not do—he decided that excess headquarters staff could best benefit the Army by being transferred to ordnance maintenance units for training as ordnance personnel. Although General Eichelberger's actions were laudable, they were the exception rather than the rule.

Perhaps the most cardinal problem concerning ordnance maintenance companies lay in the fact that not enough personnel were sent to the Pacific Theater of Operations. In fact, after 6 June 1944, it was taken for granted in the Army that the War Department's priority for ordnance personnel and ammunition was the ETO, and that when the war in Europe was over, then ordnance maintenance companies and extra munitions would be sent directly to the Pacific for the invasion of Japan.

As the intensity of the Pacific campaign heightened during 1944, and as preparation for retaking of the Philippine Islands began, American forces invaded the Marshall Islands, the Marianas, the Admiralty Islands, and Dutch New Guinea (all taken after hard-fought campaigns), Kawjalein, Saipan, Guam, Peleliu, and Hollandia. By occupying these islands, American forces were able to create new forward supply bases. These new sites meant that heretofore circuitous routing of ammunition and ordnance from the United States, through Hawaii, to Australia, and then to the battle zone was no longer the primary method for transporting troops and supplies to the Pacific. The newly acquired islands now became munitions storage centers from which ammunition ships could load ammo and ordnance for the Philippine Islands campaign. Though strategically and tactically speaking, Allied forces had "turned the corner" against the Axis in 1944,

the deployment of ammunition still was directed toward the ETO, and to contingencies, such as the battle in the Ardennes. Ammunition for the eventual Philippines campaign actually was acquired over a two-year period. It was during this particular campaign that deployment and distribution of ammunition to front-line troops underwent significant change and perturbation.

Ordnance and Munitions Support during the Return to the Philippines

As American and Allied forces moved in 1944 inextricably closer toward what military planners thought would be the ultimate confrontation with the Japanese, the invasion of the home islands, they had to decide whether the thrust of military operations should favor a Philippines strategy or an invasion of Taiwan. Both objectives had potential as strategic objectives in 1944. The Navy favored the Taiwan operation because the Japanese were reinforcing it to the extent that further delay would only make taking the island more difficult. The Army Air Forces wanted Taiwan as a staging area for B-29 operations against Japan. General Douglas MacArthur, however, was determined to press forward with an invasion of the Philippines. His rationale was rooted, not only in his famous "I shall return" promise, but also in the belief that by taking the Philippines, American forces would have an easier access to Okinawa—a necessary stepping stone for any invasion of the Japanese home islands. After much discussion, the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to proceed with an invasion of the Philippines, with particular emphasis on the main island of Luzon. Luzon is a large land mass, with built-up areas such as Manila, which made this operation atypical of most of the earlier island operations in the Pacific. The terrain was conducive to movement on foot, but was marked by a poor road net. Maneuverability and some large-scale tactical operations were possible, however. The invading Americans had to deal with a large Japanese force in fortified positions in both open and mountainous terrain. The American Sixth and Eighth Armies constituted the primary landing forces in the Philippines campaign, the largest American offensive endeavor in the Pacific during World War II.

From the beginning to the end, this operation was plagued with problems in the supply and distribution of ammunition. Although this was an extremely large-scale operation, there was a dearth of ordnance maintenance companies and personnel to support it. There were ammunition shortages before the campaign ever got underway; some 7 million rounds of .30-caliber carbine ammunition and 152,000 81-mm. mortar rounds, were supposed to be sent from stateside stocks either by air or ship to the theater of operations. The two Army commanders, Lt. Gen. Robert Eichelberger (Eighth Army) and Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger (Sixth Army), several times during the operation were forced to ration certain types of munitions because of supply and expenditure problems. Both commanders tried to enforce rationing by requiring the issuance of requisitions for ammunition. But this approach was antithetical to the acquisition of ammunition, because it took so long for the requisitions to wend their way to higher headquarters to be acted upon, after close scrutiny. When General MacArthur decided not to have the Army Air Forces bomb Manila, but instead to use artillery fire against enemy positions, a shortage of both 105-mm. and 155-mm. rounds quickly appeared. For a short time this shortage led to restrictions on the use of these types of ammunition until munitions were replenished.

Another problem involved the paucity of trained ammunition/ordnance personnel, a factor reflected in poor loading techniques and poor maintenance of ammo. Ammunition was loaded on the wrong ships or for the wrong place, munitions were loaded with insufficient dunnage, and Liberty ships delegated to carry munitions often were laden with other materiel that had to be offloaded before the ammo could be removed. All these consumed time and hampered the supply of munitions to the troops. Additional problems surfaced if the ammunition supply points were not accessible to the fighting men, or if they were exposed to Japanese artillery and air attacks.

The most significant problems were the lack of transportation for ammo and the shortage of trained people to move it. The road net on Luzon was such that, until the rail system was repaired in the latter stages of the campaign, most ammunition was hauled by trucks and amphibious tractors, and by animals such as the carabao. Ammunition was also brought in by air or dropped by parachute to Army units. When the city of Manila was retaken, however, its harbor was repaired to the extent that ammo and supplies finally could be brought in by ship, quickly offloaded, and transported to the tactical units. The problem of not enough ordnance maintenance companies and support personnel was one that, unfortunately, was never completely solved. On the positive side, damage control of ammunition was surprisingly good (compared to the subsequent Okinawa operation). Munitions were lost to hostile action, but replenishment was accomplished, albeit sometimes slowly. Moreover, once the Japanese

fleet was defeated in the battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944, American naval vessels were able to protect the supply line to the Philippines.

The Final Distribution of Ammunition in the Pacific: the Battle of Okinawa

The battle for the Ryukyu Islands was the last major land battle in the Pacific Theater of Operations. Fought by the soldiers and marines of the U.S. Tenth Army, the campaign for the Ryukyus was the costliest of the Pacific War in terms of battle casualties and materiel losses—including ammunition. The invasion of Okinawa began on 1 April 1945 and the battle lasted until late June. The operation was a logistician's nightmare because of stubborn Japanese resistance, rough terrain, inclement weather (including tidal surges), and increased *kamikaze* attacks on American naval ships, including ammunition ships. The tenacity of the Japanese defense necessitated more ammunition, including napalm, and mortar and artillery rounds. As in the Philippine Islands operation, there was the problem of not enough trained ammunition personnel or ordnance companies. Often, other Army Service Forces troops, not specifically trained in handling ammunition, had to be used to offload and transport the ammo.

As in other theaters of operations, ammunition usage was difficult to predict, and military planners in the Okinawa campaign strove to devise a game plan by which ammunition exigencies could readily be met. As American forces neared the Japanese home islands in late 1944 and early 1945, the Japanese became more determined to exact a heavy toll in both men and supplies. *Kamikaze* attacks sank three ammunition ships during the battle for Okinawa, resulting in a loss of 21,000 tons. Tenth Army forces consumed close to 100,000 tons during the campaign. Over 1 million rounds of 105-mm. ammunition were consumed of the available supply of 1.2 million. Fortunately, contingency plans were made to have resupply needs met by air shipments and, if necessary, ammunition from the stockpile being readied for the invasion of the Japanese home islands. After V-E (Victory in Europe) day, munitions were also being sent from the ETO to the Pacific. The ammo was not needed for the invasion of Japan, however, because the Japanese formally surrendered in September 1945, bringing the war in the Pacific to an end.

Conclusion

As in most theaters of operations during World War II, the supply and distribution of ammunition in the Pacific was not easy. For two of the four years in the theater, American troops were fighting a holding actions of sorts, while the tactical exigencies of the war in Europe drained away men and materiel, including munitions. The great distances involved in Pacific operations compounded the problems faced by planners in the war against Japan. Distances between ports in the continental United States and supply points in Hawaii or Australia meant that supply lines were long and replenishment of ammo often was difficult. Because of the logistical problems, ammunition shortages were almost commonplace in the Pacific Theater of Operations. In addition, ordnance personnel needs were difficult to meet because of requirements in the ETO. The aforementioned shortcoming notwithstanding, adjustments were made as necessary, such that no individual campaign in the Pacific was delayed because of protracted ammunition shortages. Military planners learned to be more flexible with requirements, such as units of fire, ordnance vehicles and personnel, and the availability and types of ammunition, and to be eclectic in finding ways to meet the ammunition needs of the fighting men, thus contributing to the hard fought but ultimate victory in the Pacific.

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A Note on Sources

This paper is based on selected published and unpublished sources. The primary unpublished materials include: Records of the War Department General Staff (WDGS), especially the Eighth Army History, 1940-48, and those of the Director of Plans and Operations, Pacific Theater of Operations, RG 165, NARA; the Records of the Office of Chief of Ordnance, Executive Division, RG 156, NARA; Adjutant General's Office, WW II Operations Reports, 1940-48, Eighth Army, RG 94, NARA; and the records of HQ, Eighth Army, RG 95, NARA; COMNAVFORPHIL, Operations in the Pacific Ocean Areas rpts, and COMNAVFORRYUKYUS, Action rpts, both in RG 313, NARA.

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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

...Recently the spring and summer 1994 issues arrived, each one having articles of extraordinary interest to me.

The lead article by Barry W. Fowle, "The Normandy Landing" (*Army History*, no. 30), was noted...since I was a combat engineer and a proponent of the Assault Training Center (ATC) [and] a portion of the article describes functions of the ATC.

As far as I know, the ATC was a U.S. Army training facility, not British, under Lt. Col. Paul W. Thompson...headquartered in the Woolacombe Bay Hotel in Woolacombe, North Devon. The facility of thirteen training grounds and Nissen facilities with roads was built by the two Engineer general service regiments in the fall of 1943.

My friend Dick Bass of Exeter, England, has written a fine book detailing the ATC and listing those killed in action at Normandy who trained there....

I have long believed that the ATC never received the attention and publicity deserved, since tens of thousands of various assault troops trained there over a six months' period....

William B. Leesemann, Jr.
WW II veteran, 101st Combat Eng Bn
26th Inf Div (Yankee Division)

Editor:

Dr. Barry Fowle's article, "The Normandy Landing," (*Army History*, no. 30, Spring 1994), is excellent in every respect—with one exception. Dr. Fowle, a fine historian and a stickler for accuracy, has American assault teams training at "the *British* Assault Training Center, Woolacombe, England" (emphasis added). The name was "the *U.S.* Assault Training Center." Located on the bleak Atlantic coast of North Devon, it was American through and through.

I will say this for the British: they made the Woolacombe beaches available to us, and as it turned out, these beaches, with their slight slope, their 25-foot tides, their heavy surf, and the attending uncertain weather—were close to dead ringers for the beaches on which we would presently land.

The good citizens of Woolacombe remember with affection the American presence in their midst back in the dark but exciting days of 1943 and early 1944. Two years ago they erected a modest but touching monument dedicated to the U.S. Assault Training Center, its all-American staff, and the thousands of American soldiers who, on the Woolacombe beaches, not only got realistic training for what they would encounter on the Normandy beaches, but also got a touch of life in that remote corner of England—North Devon.

My wife and I were privileged to attend the dedication of the Woolacombe monument. I understand it has already become a popular attraction for tourists.

But more power to Barry Fowle for documenting the key role which Army Engineers play in amphibious operations!

Paul W. Thompson
BG, USA (Ret.)
Former Commander, U.S. Assault Training Center

Book Review: Edgar F. Raines, Jr. Reviews Edward M. Coffman's *The Old Army*

This review is based on a paper Dr. Ed Raines presented to the Military Classics Seminar, Fort Myer, Virginia, on 16 April 1991.

During the early 1820s, the regimental commander of the First Infantry was a drunkard who climaxed his career on the night of November 17, 1825. In a 'drunken fit' after tattoo, he ordered his command out to the parade ground, where he ran them through live ammunition drills, aimed at the officers' quarters at Camp Morgan. One ball hit the bedclothes and another went through the coat of one Dr. Cosby, who had unwisely stayed in his room. Undoubtedly life was easier in that regiment after the court-martial board cashiered Talbot Chambers in 1826.

This passage from *The Old Army* by Edward M. Coffman aptly epitomizes the book: A tight focus on the experience of individuals, some even more obscure than Colonel Chambers and the hapless Dr. Cosby; the use of well-limned anecdotes to advance the argument of the book—anecdotes that are usually humorous and often, as in the one just quoted, containing a delicious touch of malice; and superb writing. This is the masterwork of one of the leading contemporary military historians in this country.

Edward M. Coffman was born sixty-one years ago in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Like many southern boys, he was early fascinated by soldiers. His father, Howard B. Coffman, introduced him to the first ex-Regular he ever met, Mansfield Robinson, an elderly black man who had served on the frontier in the 24th Infantry. Young "Mac," as his friends call him, used to visit Mr. Robinson and ply him with questions about his experiences. This was not Mac's only connection with the Regular Army, however. His elder brother, his father's namesake, graduated from West Point when Mac was fourteen and soon deployed to the European Theater of Operations in command of a combat engineer company and won a Bronze Star before the German surrender.

Mac had other career goals in mind. He entered the University of Kentucky where he majored in journalism, graduating in 1951. More to the point of his immediate future, he had entered ROTC while in the university. 1951 was a war year. He was called to active duty and two years later found himself in Korea. The war ended, however, before he actually saw combat. These years of service reawakened his earlier interest in the military, and he sought a Regular commission. His commanding officer, however, thought differently. He endorsed the application to the effect that Lieutenant Coffman had no real interest in the Army.

And so he returned to civilian life, but with somewhat different ambitions than when he left. He entered the graduate program in history at the University of Kentucky. Professor Thomas D. Clark became his advisor, mentor, and inspiration. Mac received his M.A. in 1955 and his Ph.D. in 1959. From the beginning he was interested in military and social history. His first published article, "Army Life on the Frontier, 1865-1898," which appeared in *Military Affairs* in 1956, combined these two concerns and grew out of a seminar paper he wrote at the University of Kentucky for a course in social and cultural history. He formally interviewed Mansfield Robinson for the first time, putting his journalism skills to good purpose. His first book, a revision of his dissertation, was a biography of one of the World War I chiefs of staff of the U. S. Army, General Peyton C. March. The University of Wisconsin Press published *The Hilt of the Sword: The Career of Peyton C. March* in 1966. Mac financed part of the research on that volume by acting as a research assistant for his fellow Kentuckian and surrogate mentor Forrest C. Pogue when Dr. Pogue was working on his first volume of *George C. Marshall*. I might add, parenthetically, that Dr. Pogue was one of the founding members of this organization, and introduced Mac Coffman to it. He attended regularly while he was in Washington. When I first joined Classics, now more than ten years ago, two veteran members took me aside to ask me how "young Mac Coffman" was doing. It was a conversation that took me aback. The suggestion that your mentor was once as young as you are is always disconcerting the first time someone makes it.

Two years after *Hilt of the Sword* came the book that was reviewed in Classics a few years ago, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience*

in World War I. The immediate origins of *The Old Army* lies in the period following publication of this work. Mac originally thought to attempt another biography—of one of March's proteges and an officer whom Mac had interviewed at length about his association with March shortly before his death—General of the Armies Douglas MacArthur. However, Mac heard that Professor D. Clayton James of Mississippi State University had the first volume of a multivolume biography in manuscript. Mac knew that James was a good scholar and doubted that his interpretation of MacArthur would vary greatly from James' conclusions, so he cast about for another topic. He had uncovered much interesting material about March's early career—which the University of Wisconsin Press had forced him to cut before publication, some 30,000 words—and had reflected more than once that life in the peacetime Army was an interesting topic on which very little work had been done. During the 1969-70 academic year he was a visiting professor at Kansas State University with time to give his next project serious thought. A chance meeting with Father Paul Prucha, the author of *Broadaxe and Bayonet* and the volume in the Macmillan series on the frontier Army prior to the Mexican War, served as a catalyst that caused him to define the project with more precision and begin systematic research.

Initially, Mac planned to write a book focusing on the twentieth century, with only a background chapter on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The volume, as he then envisioned it, would be in the same format as his World War I book—100,000 words in length and unfootnoted, but with an extensive essay on sources. He immediately prepared a questionnaire and distributed it to survivors of "the Old Army," officers, enlisted men, wives, and children, supplemented by in-depth interviews with more than a few. He already had a sizable collection of untranscribed interviews—most notably "Charlie" Roberts, Chief of Staff of the 81st Division in World War I, but earlier a Medal of Honor winner in the Spanish-American War, and earlier still a twelve-year-old witness to Geronimo's surrender to General Crook in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico. (His father, who was Crook's aide, and Crook were the only other white participants.) For the background chapter Mac intended to depend mainly on published primary and secondary sources, although the Roberts interview, for example, gave him a window on Army life as far back as the 1880s.

This initial concept soon broke down. One factor was simply the Coffman definition of what constituted adequate research in printed, primary documents. I remember him telling me, about 1970 or 1971, with a kind of wonderment in his voice: "You know, no one has ever read all the Secretary of War reports in the nineteenth century." As if there was no good reason for historians to overlook such an obvious and important source. But, of course, there was. Now, I take pride in being a hard worker and a thorough researcher. Once I read and took notes on all the Secretary of War and Chief of Staff Army reports between 1903 and 1912, and I patted myself on the back for months thereafter. Then, just to show that I am a masochist, somewhat later I read all the Quartermaster General reports between 1906 through 1917. So I have an inkling of the effort involved in what Mac did. He read and took notes on all the Secretary of War reports from the beginning until 1898, all the Commanding General reports, all the Adjutant General reports, and all the Surgeon General reports. He also read selected reports of the other bureau chiefs. I recall meeting Mac on numerous occasions during the early 1970s in the Wisconsin Historical Society Library where he had a research carrel. His body would be moving, but his eyes were glazed over. Obviously his brain had died some time before. He would say something about how many reports he had looked at on that day, and I would compliment him about all the progress. If the American Historical Association awarded Purple Hearts for intellectual wounds suffered during research, Mac Coffman would have earned one many times over for all the official prose that he waded through. Mac himself attributes the decision to opt for a separate volume on the pre-1898 Army to a conversation that he had with Russell Weigley in the mid-seventies. I personally think that such a decision was implicit in the magnitude of his research effort and the new perspectives that it gave him on the United States Army in the nineteenth century. More about this last point later.

The Old Army is concerned with the peacetime denizens of the United States Army between 1784 and 1898—officers, enlisted men, wives, and children—how they lived and, to the extent the record permits, what they thought during the extended intervals of peace, which Coffman defines as the absence of major international conflict. "The Old Army" is the institution that existed in the memory of participants before the last war. Coffman identifies three such old armies in this period—1784 to 1812, 1815 to 1861, and 1865 to 1898. However, continuities in Coffman's view are rather more important than discontinuities during most

of this period. This is perhaps not surprising because the service's major missions—acting as a frontier constabulary and manning coastal defenses—began to change, and then only in part, toward the end of the nineteenth century.

Perhaps the greatest change among the groups that Coffman considers occurred among the officers. During the first period, Northerners dominated the officer corps. Initially Revolutionary War veterans predominated, although the tables of mortality produced a steady decrease over time. They were supplemented and eventually replaced by men who secured appointment from civil life. The first West Point graduates joined the Army during this period, although they were relatively small in number and junior in rank prior to the War of 1812. The government expanded the Army in times of crisis and contracted it once the danger had passed. A commission often provided little job security as the government also expanded and contracted the officer corps. A few men were able to make the Army their life's work, and in their careers Coffman finds the first stirrings of professionalism. Colonel Thomas Hunt of Massachusetts is perhaps typical of these men. A Minuteman at the time of Lexington and Concord, he served throughout the Revolution, rising to captain, and was a member of the last Continental regiment mustered out in 1784. He joined the Army in the fall of 1790 in the expansion following Harmar's defeat and remained in service continuously until his death in 1808 as colonel commanding the 1st Infantry. He was also, in Coffman's phrase, one of the Army's "first patriarchs," the founder of a military family that stretched through at least three generations. Two of his sons became officers and his grandson, Maj. Gen. Henry J. Hunt, commanded the Union artillery at Gettysburg.

Between 1815 and 1861 the officer corps remained small, and West Point sufficed to fill most of the vacancies. Although officers appointed from civil life prior to the War of 1812 dominated the senior ranks, the officer corps was predominantly West Point educated by 1861. The Academy nurtured the nascent professionalism but attempts to go beyond it—to establish postgraduate schools and military journals—proved impossible to sustain. At the same time, the Army became much more a life career. Congress provided no system of retirement until August 1861. This meant that officers became superannuated in grade and remained in the service until their deaths. John Whistler, for example, entered the service in 1801, was promoted colonel of the 4th Infantry, when the venerable regimental commander, attempting to take the field in the Mexican War, collapsed and died while drilling his men. Whistler hung on until 1861—60 years of active duty—when he finally retired after Congress belatedly approved a limited retirement list. Northerners still predominated in the officer corps, although southerners made up a higher percentage than they had before the War of 1812, and dominated some units, such as the 2d Cavalry.

Northerners, Civil War veterans, and non-West Pointers accounted for most of the officers in the years immediately after the Civil War. New officers entering the service after the immediate postwar reorganization tended to come from West Point—which, because its classes were recruited on a national basis, lessened the northern preponderance. In the 1890s, Congress, at the urging of Secretary of War Redfield Proctor, made it easier for rankers to obtain commissions. Since the Army recruited most enlisted men from northern cities, this relatively small source of commissioned officers reinforced the northern bias. During this period, of course, sustained postgraduate education became possible for the first time—most notably at the Infantry and Cavalry School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This story has been told before, but it is useful to have such an authoritative account told in brief compass. If I might characterize the change in the officer corps in the nineteenth century as described by Coffman, at the beginning the Army contained gentlemen who happened to be officers while at the end it contained officers who were considered gentlemen by virtue of their commission.

This synopsis of his account of the evolution of the officer corps does violence to what Coffman has written in at least two different ways. First, it is much more abstract than the book. As I mentioned before, the argument proceeds by example, and the focus is very much on individuals. Second, he covers a vast array of themes that I can only indicate rather than discuss: attitudes toward Indians, civil-military relations on the frontier, attitudes toward blacks—first as slaves and then as soldiers—opinions on the great political and reform issues of the day—nullification, temperance and the related issue of drunkenness (Col. Talbot Chambers was not alone.), the secession crisis, reconstruction, industrialization, and "the problem," as Victorian gentlemen would have phrased it, "of labor."

Coffman was able to locate considerably less information on enlisted men than officers during the period of "the first Old Army," 1784 to 1812. He was

only able to reconstruct the biographies of two enlisted men from this era, and it was probably the uniqueness of their life histories that caused them to be written down. Thus, for example, Andrew Wallace, born in Scotland in 1730, fought for "Bonnie Prince" Charlie at Culloden in 1746 and then fled to the New World. During the French and Indian War he enlisted and served as a sergeant in the Braddock Expedition. He served, again as a sergeant, in the Pennsylvania Line throughout the American Revolution. He served two enlistments in the Army under the Articles of Confederation and then reenlisted in the Army under the Constitution in 1791. He served continuously thereafter until 1811, when he was discharged for age. He was 81. There was no pension and there is no record of how he supported himself, but he lived in Philadelphia until his death in 1835 at age 105.

Coffman is able to discuss some topics in the first section on enlisted men that he covers in his subsequent two chapters on them—geographic origins, discipline, the relationship of officers and enlisted men, living conditions, and training. However, these later chapters are much fuller. He is able to introduce such subjects as attitudes of enlisted men toward Indians, the secession crisis, strike duty, black-white relations at so-called "mixed" posts after the Civil War, sports, sex, and many others. Desertion continued to be a major problem throughout this period. Whereas officers regarded it as violation of a sacred oath, enlisted men looked upon the Army as "just another job." Unpleasant employers and uncongenial conditions were best left quickly behind as in civil life. The general public shared the same view, so that desertion was, for most of the period, a very common method of leaving the service. In 1834 21 percent of the entire Army deserted; in 1856, 20 percent. The average annual desertion rate between 1820 and 1860 was 14.8 percent. Many officers at the time attributed the problem to low pay. Making use of the latest work of economic historians, Coffman shows that with few exceptions—the three years before the Panic of 1837 and California at the height of the Gold Rush—pay for both officers and enlisted men compared favorably to that of their civilian counterparts. He finds the precipitating causes in isolated and often dilapidated posts, constant calls for soldier labor to build roads and posts, cultivate gardens and even farms, and act as servants for officers and their families, and the often brutal discipline that some officers inflicted on their men. The War Department, largely at the urging of Henry Dearborn, abolished whipping in 1812, and Congress reinstated it after the War of 1812 only for the crime of desertion. Many officers disagreed with the law and ignored the ban. Colonel Josiah Snelling personally beat enlisted men in the privacy of his own office. Of course, this was a violation of the Articles of War, and the victims had the right to seek redress from the post commander—but Snelling *was* the post commander. At isolated garrisons, enlisted men had no effective means of appeal. And woe to anyone assigned to a company commanded by Captain Nathaniel Lyon. Lyon was one of the few abolitionists in the antebellum officer corps, but in his relation to his men he was, to quote Coffman, "an intelligent sadist." While poor communications often forced the isolated garrisons to farm to survive, there was, particularly in the antebellum Army, a tendency to overdo agricultural pursuits. Enlisted attitudes were probably mirrored by a German private in the 1850s, who flatly refused to care for a sow and her newborn litter: "To hell mit der piggins, I'm no swiny doctor." Tensions between officers and men could be exasperated because the officer corps was generally of old American stock, Protestant in religion, and often rural or small town in background, while the enlisted ranks were usually urban in origin, often of German or Irish birth, and at least nominally Catholic in religion. Sometimes a simple misunderstanding was involved. Col. Zachary Taylor of the 1st Infantry used a punishment known as "wooling"—which consisted of grabbing a culprit's ears in a hard grip and shaking vigorously. One day in Florida, early in the 1830s, the regiment was lined up for inspection when Taylor saw one man out of line. He shouted "dress," but the man made no move to properly align himself. Taylor strode up and proceeded to apply his standard punishment, whereupon the private hauled off and decked the colonel. The private was a German immigrant and spoke not a word of English. Taylor, however, instantly perceived the situation and called out before his horrified officers could intervene: "Leave that man alone. He'll make a good soldier." This incident suggests why "Old Rough and Ready" was popular with the rank and file. Or as one ex-private told his ex-captain, a Medal of Honor winner in the Indian Wars, "I followed you to Hell, and you never looked back." Not everyone deserted. Good leadership was often the difference.

The real solution to the desertion problem did not come until the 1890s. Then Secretary of War Redfield Proctor and the Commanding General, Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield, united to push through a variety of reforms—an increased ration that included fresh vegetables, and a reduction in the enlistment period from five to three years. Equally important, they closed

many small posts and concentrated fairly large bodies of troops near rail lines. They established new permanent posts with large, airy barracks, adequate washroom facilities, and even indoor plumbing. The end of a need to grow foodstuffs or continuously reconstruct a temporary post allowed officers and men to concentrate on physical conditioning, marksmanship, and tactical training. By the conclusion of the decade, some British Army observers called for their service to emulate the American rather than the German Army in treatment of enlisted men and small unit training.

Coffman has the least information about women and children. Actually these chapters might more accurately be labeled "families and mistresses" as his treatment includes courtship by officers, parenting by both husbands and wives, and even extramarital dalliances. Other subjects include childbearing, wives' attitudes towards Indians and blacks, and sex. As with enlisted men, his treatment of wives and other women is slight for the period before the War of 1812. He tells us that Mrs. Josiah Harmar accompanied her husband on campaign and nursed a sick sergeant back to health. There were four laundresses authorized per company, and many died bravely fighting beside their husbands in the St. Clair Massacre. Of children we learn little more than that some were present. Coffman has much more information about women and children and related topics for the periods 1815 to 1861 and 1865 to 1898. Perhaps his most innovative discussion—certainly one of the most difficult to research—is his straightforward account of sex in an age that was anything but straightforward on the subject. He has, in fact, documented a wide range of behavior. One incident at Jefferson Barracks in 1856 is worthy of inclusion in Baccaccio's *Dacameron*. Two young lieutenants attended a dance in St. Louis and one became quite smitten with a local beauty. While returning to barracks he confessed to his companion that he was suffering from a severe case of unrequited lust. His friend, however, had a solution. He was conducting an affair with a local widow. All the lieutenant needed to do was enter her bedroom window and pretend to be his friend. No sooner did the one officer state the plan than the other executed it to both his and the widow's apparent mutual satisfaction. Unfortunately for the conspirators, he fell asleep. The widow discovered the deception in the morning—to the discomfort of both officers. And then there was Martha Summerhays, wife of an Army officer stationed in the Southwest, who insisted in good Victorian fashion, on having a servant help her around the house. But she insisted that the Apache Indian she hired, Charlie, dress in native costume of a loin cloth—for "aesthetic" reasons—and then commented in her memoirs on the supple, bronze male pulchritude thus on display. Coffman uses Mrs. Summerhays as a device to explore the question of sexual tensions in white-Indian relations. This is not a fully developed theme—but it is a very provocative one that historians might well pursue in the future.

To understand the importance of *The Old Army* it is necessary to take a brief digression into historiography. Modern social history in the United States dates from Edward Eggleston's *The Transit of Civilization from England to America*, published in 1899. The burden of Eggleston's book is aptly stated by his title: How did English material culture and social customs adapt to conditions in the New World? Eggleston asked significant questions and organized his research to provide the answers. As a consequence, his work had an overriding theme. But his achievement was not emulated for many years. He was an independent scholar with no university affiliation and consequently, no coterie of students to carry on what he had begun. He died before he could complete any more volumes in his projected multivolume social history of the United States. When social history made its appearance in American academe during the 1920s, most notably in the "A History of American Life" series edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., and Dixon Ryan Fox, it was as if Eggleston had never lived. And the consequences were mainly unfortunate. While the best of these volumes are still useful, all too often the authors were overwhelmed by their research and produced descriptive compendiums of facts with little understanding of their relationship or the context that gave them significance.

The first wave of books associated with "the new social history" appeared about the time that Professor Coffman began serious work upon *The Old Army*. The authors, John Demos, Philip Greven, and Stephan Thernstrom among others, like Eggleston asked questions of their material and tried to place "social facts" into their historical context. They explicitly drew upon the behavioral "sciences" and often engaged in statistical manipulations of data.

If you juxtapose the "Old Social History" against the "New Social History," then *The Old Army* compares more closely with the former rather than the latter. Coffman's purpose is primarily descriptive—to give the reader an accurate snapshot of how life was lived in the old Army in each of the three periods under consideration. To be sure, he is well versed in the major sociological and political science studies of the

Army dating from the 1950s and 1960s—Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier*, Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State*, and Paul Y. Hammond's *Organizing for Defense*. Coffman asks many of the same questions of his materials that Janowitz and Huntington asked, and in particular demolishes the historical portions of *The Professional Soldier*. Coffman, however, is too much the gentleman scholar to call attention to the ruin he has left. One key difference between Coffman and the new social historians, thus, is that his use of the behavioral sciences is implicit rather than explicit. As a consequence, they are much more concerned with theoretical frameworks than he is. Often, their books are organized around a single theme; Coffman's volume deals with a multiplicity of themes and is, as a consequence, much more diffuse. While he uses statistics generated by others that he discovered during his research, he does not attempt to produce any of his own, unlike most of the new social historians.

The above is simply an attempt to categorize the book, not evaluate it. To do the latter: *The Old Army* is one of the best products of the "Old Social History." Its excellences are many. Let me detail a few. I have already mentioned that the depth and scope of the research is simply superb, as is the writing, but these points bear reiterating. Coffman is also very careful not to go beyond what his evidence will support. A good example is his treatment of officers' attitudes toward religion during the period 1815 to 1860. I quote:

> While considering those few officers who had religious interests and left records of their views, it is easy to lose sight of the more numerous others who, as far as we know, appear to have been little concerned about such matters. An incident in a Florida camp in the 1850s illustrates the problem. Upon seeing a gathering of his fellows, Ambrose P. Hill assumed that it was a 'toddy-making occasion.' Walking over to the tent, he threw open the flap and inquired, "What the devil is going on here?" The grizzled old colonel who was leading the group in their devotions looked up, smiled, and invited the shocked lieutenant to join them. We do not know if he did. Nor do we know what effect this had on religious life. All we do know is that Brevet Colonel Justin Dimick held such a meeting and that some officers attended.

Coffman not only handles his evidence with a sure hand but he also chooses the right kinds of evidence to handle. *The Old Army* integrates medical history, for example, into the rest of his narrative better than any other general history of the Army that I know. Moreover, for all the clever and amusing anecdotes, Coffman has done the hard and demanding research into statutes and general orders so that when he discusses the system of officer promotion or the pay and benefits of enlisted men, his account is authoritative. Since he never burdens the reader with his research, the degree of difficulty involved in digging out these often obscure details may be lost on his audience—particularly since Coffman is congenitally incapable of making his text dry and boring, the typical method by which an author signals a reader that he has engaged in tremendous labor on the reader's behalf.

What contribution does *The Old Army* make to our understanding of the United States Army and to the literature about that institution, the historiography? Most importantly, *The Old Army* is the first comprehensive treatment of officers, enlisted men, and military families between 1784 and 1898. There have been other studies of the social history of the U. S. Army in peacetime, most notably Don Rickey, Jr.'s 1963 *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, Jack D. Foner's 1970 *The United States Soldier Between Two Wars: Army Life and Reforms, 1865-1898*, and Patricia Y. Stallard's 1978 *Glittering Misery: Dependents of the Indian Fighting Army*, but they are much more restricted in subject matter and in the time period covered.

As to specific contributions to the interpretative literature, Professor Coffman sees four main ones. First, it is quite apparent from his account that the Proctor-Schofield reforms were much more far-reaching and important than most historians have heretofore recognized. Jack Foner is an exception, but since he concentrated on the enlisted man, the sweep of these reforms is not as evident in his book as Coffman's. In any event, Coffman and Foner call into question the traditional idea that modernity begins with the Root reforms after the Spanish-American War.

Second, Coffman reinforces an ongoing critique of a thesis first argued by Samuel P. Huntington—that the American officer corps could become professional only by cutting its ties with the rest of American society and turning inward on itself. Coffman shows that professional reform consisted of concentrating forces in larger posts nearer to centers of population—in effect making it less isolated.

Third, as I have previously mentioned, he demolishes the standard theme that officers and men were less well compensated than their civilian contemporaries during the nineteenth century.

Fourth, he demonstrates the extent to which the

cities of the Northeast acted as the primary source for recruits to the enlisted ranks throughout the nineteenth century. This was true even for black troops. After enlisting ex-slaves initially, the War Department shifted its recruiting efforts to the black communities in the cities of the North and continued to draw from those locales for the remainder of the century.

To these achievements I would add at least two others—his careful delineation of promotion and retirement policies for officers throughout the period and his demonstration that Army officers came from a wide variety of backgrounds and circumstances, thus refuting Peter Karsten's attempt to apply his *Naval Aristocracy* model to the Army officer corps in the nineteenth century.

Every book has its flaws. What are those of *The Old Army*? First, by excluding the major wars of the nineteenth century, Coffman skews his account of the professionalization of the officer corps away from some of the most formative and influential professional experiences that can ever befall soldiers. After all, one of the key distinguishing criteria between a professional and a nonprofessional officer corps is that members of the former spend much time and effort during peace to identify and assimilate the "lessons" of the last major international conflict in order to perform better during the next one.

Second, Coffman defines the phrase, "Old Army," as the service as it existed prior to the last major international conflict. In the period covered by his book he defines three such intervals, 1784 to 1812, 1815 to 1860, and 1865 to 1898. Such a periodization, however, ignores one major international conflict, the Mexican War. Professor Coffman believed that the thirteen years between the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the firing on Fort Sumter is too short a term to sustain three chapters, yet he had too much good material to compress into one. Moreover, he saw a great deal of overlap in attitudes and behavior between the years before and the years after the Mexican War. This is the explanation that he shared with me. He should have also shared it with his readers. The very act of doing so would have assisted him to clarify what was distinctive about each time period and what were the continuities between them. I should add, however, that because the Mexican War remains, Coffman's account of the officer corps between 1815 and 1860 is very strong.

Third, the account of "the First Old Army" between 1784 and 1812 is the weakest of the three periods. Coffman devoted one chapter to it; three chapters to each of the succeeding periods. While a paucity of sources had much to do with this, I suspect that if he was a specialist in the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812 rather than World War I, the coverage might have been a little better. Of course, his treatment of the period 1865 to 1898 is probably the strongest of the book and would probably have been weakened if he was not a specialist in that era.

Fourth, there is no detailed consideration given to the colonial and Continental Army origins of the United States Army. We know that considerable regional differences existed in the United States in 1784. Did these regional cultures exhibit different views about the military—about what constituted a good officer, a good soldier? The first officers in the United States Army were drawn exclusively from the Pennsylvania Line. Did concepts specific to the Middle Atlantic region have any lasting impact upon the officer corps?

Fifth, Coffman does not provide a satisfactory conclusion encapsulating his main themes and emphasizing his major discoveries. I read the book shortly after Oxford University Press published it and told Mac that this was my one major reservation. He said that he really did not have a theoretical mind and that he preferred to allow the reader to draw his own conclusions. I would still beg to differ. Professor Coffman literally knows more about this topic than anyone in the world and is very modest, too modest, about his considerable abilities. It is a tragedy not to share some of this distilled wisdom with the world. While I quite agree that there are too many themes to summarize in short compass, he could pick out two or three he considers the most important. His failure to provide a summary statement has probably restricted the influence of the book in the history profession to those few scholars already specialists in nineteenth century American military history. This big book requires a close and careful reading to yield all its interpretative secrets—unfortunately most academics cannot devote such time to a volume that falls outside their own narrow specialization. The same is even more true of graduate students, collecting theses in their frenzied rush to prelims. The ideas are there, but hard to extract—most will not make the effort. I suspect that *The Old Army* will not have as much influence within the profession as it ought to. Still, I believe that Professor Coffman's fine writing and marvelous anecdotes will continue to attract readers for years to come—from members of the general public already interested in the subject and from university lecturers—who will probably mine Coffman's stories until the libraries turn to dust.

Clearly, *The Old Army* will become the foundation stone on which subsequent studies of the social history of the eighteenth and nineteenth century U. S. Army will be erected. We can expect a host of narrow monographs exploring topics that Coffman only touched upon. Eventually someone will synthesize all the research and write an overview volume intended to replace Coffman's work. This is in the nature of the historical profession. I would not expect to see another social history of the Army from 1784 to 1898 written from primary sources. In this sense, *The Old Army* should always remain one of a kind—at least until Professor Coffman completes volume two, covering the period 1898 to 1940.

I began this study by focusing on the author. I would like to end it that way. I can do no better than quote another of Mac's graduate students, Joseph T. Glatthaar, who in the Acknowledgements to his book *The March to the Sea and Beyond: Sherman's Troops in the Savannah and Carolinas Campaigns* wrote:

Finally, I would like to thank my adviser and friend, Dr. Edward M. Coffman. In every sense of the word he is a true scholar, devoted to research, writing, and undergraduate and graduate education. He is also one of the most interesting and enjoyable people I have ever met. As his graduate student, he assisted me in every stage of my study, even during his one-year sabbatical to teach at the Air Force Academy. My admiration and affection for Dr. Coffman are such that words do not do him justice. The best I can do is wholeheartedly encourage anyone interested in the study of American military history to go work under him. You positively cannot do better.

I know those are my sentiments and are, I am sure, shared by all of my colleagues who have worked with Mac.

Dr. Edgar F. Raines, Jr., is a historian in the Center's Histories Division. He currently is working on a manuscript covering the history of Army aviation.

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