

Perspectives in HISTORY

ALPHA BETA PHI
CHAPTER
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**Perspectives
in
HISTORY**

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FOREWORD

I am extremely pleased that we are able to present this all-military history issue, which covers a broad length of time and an equally wide spectrum of issues, conflicts, and results. Military historians have traditionally been labelled as “militants” or “militarists” bent on glorifying wars. The modern military historian, however, is not only a product of the Vietnam years, but of all the wars in the 20th century. All of those wars were costly not only in monetary or industrial terms, but the most precious resource—lives. I can safely speak for the chapter as I sincerely hope that five, 10, or 20 years from now these pages do not contain any words describing costly battles from the current operation known as “Desert Shield” or any other possible future conflict.

A special thanks to Ms. Shirley Raleigh, History & Geography’s Academic Department Assistant, and our Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Ramage, both of whom never tire in their devotion to Alpha Beta Phi Chapter.

One final note, I am not comfortable with printing my own work as editor. It appears within, as I was fortunate to share the best student paper award at the Regional Phi Alpha Theta conference at Centre College on April 21, 1990, with Robin J. Bowen. Her article, “Kentucky Rural Schools in the 1930s: the Taylor County Experience” is scheduled to appear in Volume 6, Number 1 of this journal. I had intended to solicit the contest’s winner for possible publication in the journal, a practice that I hope will continue for future issues.

Panic on the Ohio: The Defense of Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport September 1862

by
Roger C. Adams

"The Siege of Cincinnati"

Who saved our city, when the foe
Swore in his wrath to lay it low,
And turned to joy our tears of woe?

Lew Wallace.

Who taught us how to cock the gun,
And aim it straight, and never run,
And made us heroes, every one?

Lew Wallace.

And told us how to face and wheel,
Or charge ahead with pointed steel,
While cannon thundered, peal on peal?

Lew Wallace.

Who, when all in bed did sleep,
About us watch and ward did keep,
Like watch-dog round a flock of sheep?

Lew Wallace.

Who made us all, at his commands,
With fainting hearts and blistering hands,
Dig in the trench with contrabands?

Lew Wallace.

Who would have led us, warriors plucky,
To bloody fields far in Kentucky?
But Wright said, No?—and that was lucky?

Lew Wallace.

Who sat his prancing steed astraddle,
Upon a silver-mounted saddle,
And saw the enemy skedaddle?

Lew Wallace.

And who, "wha hae wi' Wallace" fed,
On pork and beans and army bread,
Will e'er forget, when he is dead,

Lew Wallace?¹

Marked by controversy, contempt, and confusion for Federal and Confederate forces alike, Edmund Kirby Smith and Braxton Bragg's 1862 Kentucky invasion

Roger C. Adams is a senior history major, president of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter, and editor of *Perspectives in History*. He delivered this paper at the Regional Conference at Centre College on April 21, 1990 and was co-winner of the best paper award.

has been widely studied: from the disastrous Federal rout at Richmond, to Union General George Morgan's "evacuation" of the Cumberland Gap, to the fiasco at Perryville. A much smaller and now largely forgotten facet of this campaign is the defense of Cincinnati. As approaching Rebels threw the citizens of Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport into a frenzied panic, an overwhelming show of Federal and civilian force turned the invasion into little more than a large-scale raid.

On August 30th, 1862, the *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer* reported that Smith with 20,000 men had boldly bypassed General George Morgan in the Cumberland Gap and invaded Kentucky.² This really came as no surprise to anyone in and around the state. Confederate activity within the Commonwealth had steadily increased since Colonel John Hunt Morgan's raids began in July. Additionally, reports came into Cincinnati the day before from the East that John Pope's Army of the Potomac had fled the field at Bull Run almost exactly as it had done under Irvin McDowell the previous year. Ominously, the *Enquirer* continued, "[Smith's army] was at London, 60 miles from Lexington, on Wednesday, marching into the interior of the State with the evident intention of reaching the Ohio River. His troops are well drilled, and are said to be the pick of the South-west Confederate army." Optimistically it was added, "They will be met before reaching Lexington by General Nelson and his army of fresh troops, and their advance will certainly be checked.... Nelson will have to attend to him with what troops are now in that State, and we doubt not his ability to gain a decisive victory."³ What readers did not know, though, was that as they read, William "Bull" Nelson's fresh and very green forces were being routed, captured, or destroyed by Smith's hardened veterans at Richmond. Word soon came that over 4,000 Federal soldiers were captured, 206 killed, and 372 wounded (including Nelson); whereas, the Rebels' losses only amounted to some 78 killed and 372 wounded.⁴ Captain Elijah B. Treadway, who was commanding a small, veteran detachment of the 3rd Kentucky, wrote to his wife soon after the battle:

I thank God that I am yet alive and well. We was in the most desperate Fight on the day before yesterday that I ever witnessed[,] it was Fought all around Richmond[,] there is only seven of my men here with me that has yet come up,...[,] I cannot give you any description of the Fight at present. I fear we have lost several in Killed[,] wounded[,] and prisnors[,] We were all scattered by a Cavelery Charge two miles before Richmond on the Clays Ferry Pike[,] we lost several hundred men on our side besides all of our Cannon[.]⁵

The defeat was highly demoralizing to the Federal troops at Richmond. Men who had been captured and immediately paroled by the Confederates made their way back to Indiana and Ohio, while some drugged back to Louisville hoping to rejoin their broken regiments. Elated with their success, Smith's men snatched up 10,000 captured muskets, rested the night, and began marching on Lexington the next morning. Needless to say, this disastrous defeat fanned embers of fear into flames of panic throughout Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana.

On September 1, General Horatio Wright, commander of the Department of the Ohio, was quickly forming his plans. It was obvious to him that Smith would try to take Lexington, and if successful, would push on to Frankfort. Thereafter he was not certain what would happen; however, both Louisville and Cincinnati were likely targets. General Don Carlos Buell was still in Tennessee with the Army of the Ohio keeping watch on Bragg's force. But Wright realized that even if Smith's plans were successful the campaign could not be extended if Louisville and Cincinnati remained in Federal hands. Wright organized a small defensive force for Lexington and left for Louisville at five o'clock that afternoon. Before leaving, though, he telegraphed General Lew Wallace, "If you have not left Cincinnati please remain there and take command of the troops there and arriving there."⁶ Lew Wallace began his preparations in Cincinnati almost immediately. The *Enquirer* reported the next day, "The most active movements are progressing to give Smith a warm reception when he approaches the border. Our citizens are fully awake to the exigencies surrounding them, and a determination is every-where manifest to give General Wallace all the assistance in their power."⁷

Although a political appointee, Wallace was a capable general. As colonel of the 11th Indiana he had performed ably and rose quickly to the rank of major general—one of the Federal army's youngest at the time. He has been vindicated in recent years for what his contemporaries deemed incompetence the first day at the battle of Shiloh, but such was not the case in 1862. As Confederate troops entered Kentucky, Wallace was at his retreat on the Kankakee River anxiously awaiting the opportunity to command troops in the field again. He received a telegram from Governor Oliver P. Morton requesting that he take command of a regiment which would be sent to Kentucky to thwart the rebel invasion. Wallace accepted and reported to Brigadier General Jeremiah T. Boyle in Louisville. Boyle, uncomfortable having a major general under his command, ordered Wallace to march his regiment to Lexington, assume command of the small Union force there, and relieve Morgan at Cumberland Gap. Assessing the reported condition of Morgan's men and the entire situation, he decided that for his small, green force a defensive position on the north bank of the Kentucky River would prove most advantageous. The site he chose was not far from Boonesboro, about 15 miles from Lexington. The locks on the river were closed to flood the fords, all boats within miles were confiscated, while the position itself was naturally flanked by sheer limestone cliffs. Unfortunately, Colonel Leonidas Metcalfe was attacked at Big Hill by Colonel John Scott's cavalry, which was the advance unit of Smith's army, and forced to retire toward Richmond. Being outflanked, Wallace wanted to detach one regiment to get behind Scott, thus enveloping him and delaying Scott's force long enough to enable the remainder of his command to fall back safely on Cincinnati. However, before any move was made, Nelson arrived on August 24 with orders from Wright relieving Wallace of his command. This was, undoubtedly, through some maneuvering from Halleck, who distrusted Wallace. Wallace, with his staff, returned to Lexington where he hoped to receive further orders. He returned to Cincinnati and received a telegram from Wright ordering him to return to Lexington to take

command of what was left of the Federal forces. It was at Paris that he received the aforementioned telegram from Wright ordering him to remain in Cincinnati. Wallace eagerly entered into this command with full determination to clear his name by saving the Queen City of the West. T. Bush Read reported an incident as Wallace returned to Cincinnati:

...Wallace was asked by one of his aids—

“Do you believe the enemy will come to Cincinnati?”

“Yes,” was the reply. “Kirby Smith will first go to Frankfort. He must have that place, if possible, for the political effect it will have. If he gets it, he will surely come to Cincinnati. He is an idiot if he does not. Here is the material of war,—goods, groceries, salt, supplies, machinery, etc.—enough to restock the whole bogus Confederacy.”

“What are you going to do? You have nothing to defend the city with.”

“I will show you,” was the reply.⁸

The resources at his hands were plentiful, but greatly disorganized. The only defensive positions were seven earthwork battery redoubts and one fort on the hilltops south of Covington and Newport; the eastern and western river approaches to Cincinnati were guarded by two small redoubts. However, all of these positions had been built in the fall of 1861. Many were in disrepair and in all, only 15 heavy guns, dismounted, without crews and ammunition, stood poised to offer any resistance. In the three cities Wallace had but the 96th Ohio Infantry, two companies from the 18th U.S. Infantry at the Newport Barracks, and about 800 militia.⁹ These few men were not sufficient to cover seven miles of weak frontage. Wallace issued this proclamation:

The undersigned, by order of Major General Wright, assumes command of Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport.

It is but fair to inform the citizens that an active, daring, and powerful enemy threatens them with every consequence of war; yet the cities must be defended, and their inhabitants must assist in the preparation.

Patriotism, duty, honor, self-preservation call them to the labor, and it must be performed equally by all classes.

First. All business must be suspended at nine o'clock to-day. Every business house must be closed.

Second. Under the direction of the Mayor, the citizens must, within an hour after the suspension of business (ten o'clock, A.M.) assemble in convenient public places for orders. As soon as possible they will then be assigned to their work.

This labor ought to be that of love, and the undersigned trusts and believes it will be so. Anyhow, it must be done.

The willing shall be properly credited; the unwilling promptly visited. The principle adopted is, Citizens for the labor, Soldiers for the battle.

Third. The ferry-boats will cease plying the river after four o'clock, A.M., until further orders.

Martial law is hereby proclaimed in the three cities; but until they can be relieved by the military, the injunctions of this proclamation will be executed by the police.¹⁰

Only under martial law could the three cities be defended. At 9:45 that night from Louisville, Governor Morton telegraphed Secretary of War Stanton: "The operator at Lexington has just bid good-bye. He says the enemy were within 3 miles at 7 this evening. The loss of Lexington is the loss of the heart of Kentucky and leaves the road open to the Ohio River."¹¹ Governor James Robinson and the state papers were already en route from Frankfort to Louisville. Smith settled into Lexington that night without resistance. Margaret Breckinridge wrote: "On Tuesday, the 2d of September, Kirby Smith and his body-guard rode into Lexington, and took formal possession of the town without the firing of a gun. 'Lor, massa,' said one of his negro attendants, 'dis de easiest took town we got yet.'" She added, "[Smith] found the good people of Lexington crowding around a train of Union ambulances, that were taking the wounded from the battle at Richmond, Kentucky, on to Cincinnati,—bidding them good by, filling their haversacks and canteens, and whispering to them, 'Every one of you, bring a regiment with you when you come back.'"¹² Scott's cavalry was sent ahead the next day to occupy Frankfort. The roads to Cincinnati and Louisville were wide open, but no one knew exactly which one the Rebels would take. Wallace sent the 99th Ohio from Cincinnati to help defend Lexington. A private in the 99th wrote to his brother:

We started in a southern direction for Lexington[,] Ky[—]Distance 100 miles[—]when within 18 miles of our destination we recd. a dispatch to stop at a town called Paris... Our forces had been defeated about 20 miles from there the day before and the Rebels were marching on to Paris.

[The 99th retreated to Cynthiana, joined the 45th Ohio there, then retreated to Butler.]

It was the greatest panic I ever saw. The officers acted like a set of Damned fools. I don't like to run till I see some thing to run from.

But for my part I feel a little bored over this retreating arrangement. It may be all for the best. But I would rather fight than be called a coward.¹³

Conditions in Louisville were much the same as they were in Cincinnati. Wright,

who kept his headquarters in Cincinnati, remained in Louisville until 3 p.m. on September 3rd to ensure that General Jeremiah Boyle could handle the task of organizing that city's defenses. Buell, who was still in Tennessee just watching Bragg, telegraphed Wright: "I need not tell you that the security of Louisville above all other points is of the most vital importance to our position in Tennessee. It is the point the enemy will aim for, and should be protected by every possible means."¹⁴ Wright knew the situation more fully than his subordinate and simply ignored Buell's impetuosity. All the Union's defenders could do was sit and wait for the Rebels to move.

Smith, however, was not moving. He and Confederate sympathizers in Lexington began organizing a provisional state government. One of his divisional commanders, Henry Heth, approached him and asked to be sent to take either Cincinnati or Louisville. "About midnight," Heth wrote, "he came to my room and said I might take such and such brigades and make a *demonstration* on Cincinnati."¹⁵ Heth took four infantry brigades and one cavalry brigade with a total strength of about 8,000 men and began his march to Cincinnati the morning of the 4th.¹⁶

Meanwhile, Wallace was securing for Smith's entire force. By the 4th he had already organized a makeshift flotilla of sixteen converted steamboats to ply the Ohio River's waters above and below Cincinnati. The situation was so serious in Wallace's mind, that he seized the gunboat USS *Indianola*, which was partially unfinished, and had her launched on the 4th—much to the chagrin of the contractor—to help patrol the river.¹⁷ He employed a local engineer to construct a pontoon bridge out of coal barges from Cincinnati to Covington.¹⁸ With Ohio's governor, David Tod, in Cincinnati, Wallace was able to get newly organized regiments sent directly to Cincinnati. Indeed, Tod put out a call to all the men of Ohio to make their way to the city. "Our southern border is threatened with invasion....," he declared, "Gather up all the arms and furnish yourselves with ammunition for the same... The soil of Ohio must not be invaded by the enemies of our glorious government. Do not wait. *None but armed men will be received.*"¹⁹ These "Squirrel Hunters," as they were called, poured into the city until their number exceeded 50,000.²⁰ Not everyone saw the Squirrel Hunters as heroic "minute men" defenders. A member of the 102nd Ohio contemptuously wrote:

While at...camp we heard of the "Squirrel Hunters" from all parts of Ohio. We heard that two hundred were in Cincinnati from Old Wayne County. We were expecting to see them in camp; but afterward were told that they were afraid to come over the river for fear they might have an opportunity of doing thirty days' duty for their country. Patriotic men of Old Wayne, we will ever remember you, the "Squirrel Hunters," for the great services you rendered your country. We were not afraid to come for three years, and go through all the hardships that a soldier is subject to.²¹

Newly mustered regiments arrived daily and at all hours from Ohio and Indiana. Local citizen relief groups fed the arriving troops at the Fifth Street Market House.

Sergeant Benjamin Strong of the 101st Ohio Infantry remembered, "Arriving at Cincinnati in the morning the Regiment marched to the market house where they were provided with a bountiful breakfast, and were marched across the river and up a long hill to Covington Heights, where the Union Forces were...."²² Wallace sent regiments across the river to Covington and Newport as quickly as possible to man the defenses. However, not all martial formalities were dispensed with. Captain J. B. Foraker of the 89th Ohio reminisced in a speech after the war:

In front of [the Burnet House] we were unceremoniously hauled up, knapsacks and all, to be reviewed by some of the great men of the land, among whom were Major General Lew Wallace and Governor Tod. We were unanimously pronounced the best, and the bravest and the finest-looking body of men that had yet left the State, as was Dan McCook's Fifty-second regiment, that crossed the river the day before and as was a regiment of "Squirrel Hunters," with shot guns, that crossed over the day following.²³

Nearly all of the regiments were ill-equipped and armed with obsolete Belgian or Austrian muskets. The regimental surgeon of the 96th Ohio admitted that "...our guns would, in action, have been practically valueless."²⁴ While a private in the 104th Ohio remembered, "...I was more concerned in what...the Austrian musket might do to me. I probably would have fired on the enemy and permitted the recoil of the musket to land me in a new position out of enemy reach."²⁵ The same soldier in the 102nd Ohio who thought little of the Squirrel Hunters thought even less of his rifle, "We did not bear anything but our 'very fine Austrian muskets'—some of Fremont's damaged or refused guns that he bought for the United States. But few of them will explode a cap without being snapped a half dozen times."²⁶ Likewise, many of the units were partially uniformed and without tents, canteens, and other necessary supplies. A private in the 45th Ohio wrote to his father, "you said that i should tell you how far our camp was from Covington[.] it is two miles from Covington[.] you said you was coming to see me[.] I hope you will come[.] well father if you come i would like you for you to bring me a good pare of boots along with you[.]"²⁷ And an artillery officer in the 21st Indiana Battery wrote to his sister:

We have not received our tents. I don't know how soon we will—perhaps this week—maybe not for weeks—in the meantime we quarter as best we may. Some take the canvas of the caissons and make coverings therewith. Some find quarters in the quartermaster's room and others do as I did last night—spread their blankets beneath a tree and there rest with the stars in clear view above... Should the weather change, however, we wouldn't get along so pleasantly.²⁸

Despite the urgent need for men, many regiments were delayed. Private Garrett Larew of the 86th Indiana, which was still in Indianapolis on September 5, wrote in his diary, "[We] Have marching orders for Cincinnati but we wont march worth a cent untill we get our uniforms and bounty and arms." Three days later he wrote:

We left Indianapolis and went to Cincinnati and stayed there until Monday and went to Covington, Ky., and got marching orders to march on the enemy. We are still waiting in line ready to start, in five minutes... If we go into battle we go in raw for we have not drilled any yet.²⁹

Other newly organized regiments were also very green. Private Fernando Pomeroy of the 18th Michigan wrote in his diary on September 6, "The regiment exercise some in bayonet charge up a hill and have three men wounded by accident...."³⁰ While a man in the 52nd Ohio wrote, "We spent the afternoon [of the 5th] in what we would now call very awkward squad drill. Still it was all a matter of great moment to us. The great trouble was that it was like the 'blind leading the blind' the drill officers not knowing any more than the men they were drilling."³¹

As Heth's column neared, Wallace's problems increased. Nearly all parts of Kentucky were parched by one of the worst droughts in memory. Water had to be be constantly hauled to the men in the lines, which were four miles south of Covington and Newport. The terrible heat and anticipation of an unknown number of enemy troops could have had untold adverse effects with so many new units and irregular civilian volunteers. It is to the highest credit of the officers and local relief groups that order was maintained.

Wallace had many of the local citizens organized into fatigue parties. Their tasks included digging rifle pits and felling trees as a hasty defensive measure to bolster the weak line. The laborers were working too slowly or not at all and demanding high wages. Though Cincinnati was notoriously known for anti-black sentiments, Wallace wanted to use the freedmen of the city to assist in the preparations. The Cincinnati police, who were acting as provost guards, arrested any black men found on the streets. They were herded at bayonet point into a hog pen on Plum Street across from St. Peter in Chains Cathedral. The black men had gathered bricks and blocks of wood to sit on in a shaded portion of the pen. Wallace was notified of the brutal treatment by William Homer, who had been placed in charge of the conscripting gangs by Mayor George Hatch. One particular incident was recalled by Peter Clark, the historian of the reorganized Black Brigade: "Coming into the yard, ...[Homer] ordered them all to rise, marched them to another part, then issued the order, 'Damn you, squat.' Turning to the guard, he added, 'Shoot the first one who rises.'"³² Wallace assigned Judge William Dickson, an abolitionist who advocated the enlistment of blacks as soldiers, to reorganize the Black Brigade. Dickson placed the men into three battalions, complete with companies, officers, and colors. They were not armed, but this was the first time blacks had been officially enrolled and paid for military service by the Federal government.

The second incident involving the Black Brigade almost became a disaster by accident. On September 6, Colonel J. R. Taylor of the 50th Ohio ordered a nearby battery to open fire on a small detachment of the Brigade. The incident was not recorded in the 50th's regimental history, but Major Thomas Thoburn recorded it in his diary:

In the afternoon the long roll was beat. That implied that the enemy

was near at hand. We were ordered to fall in at once and we stood in line of battle for over an hour. Some amusing things happened in this connection. Colonel Taylor of the 50th was terribly excited, and galloped along the line ordering sick and everybody else into line, saying "Get a gun or if you have not got a gun, take a club," evidently thinking that the entire issue of the war would be decided there and then.

While we were standing in line of battle, this same man Taylor, saw quite a large squad of men coming down the hill on the opposite side of the [Licking] river. There was a battery to our right and rear on a hill. He told one of his orderlies to go with a message to the battery, which was delivered to the orderly in these words: "Give them a shot anyway, they don't wear the same kind of clothes we do." The party proved to be citizens of Cincinnati, who had been at work on the line of fortifications... A shot was fired, but the gunners were careful not to shoot near enough to hurt anyone. Some man wearing our "kind of clothes" galloped into camp saying, "Don't shoot, those men have been over there at work on the fortifications."³³

Of course, the men in that detail were not as amused as Major Thoburn. The Black Brigade's regimental historian wrote, "...if the officers serving under Colonel J. R. Taylor, of the 50th Ohio, had not possessed more courage and prudence than their commander, serious consequences would have ensued." He added somewhat scathingly, "If Col. Taylor did not obtain one of Gov. Tod's squirrel-hunting medals, he should apply for one, and wear it, as a perpetual reminder that his prowess is terrible to squirrels only."³⁴

Though many Cincinnatians complained, "This is a white man's war, and you damned niggers must keep out of it," most were relieved that they did not have to wield picks and shovels in the September heat on the dusty Kentucky hills.³⁵

By September 6, elements of Heth's detachment had reached Walton, just 20 miles south of Cincinnati, and encamped at a place known locally as Snow's Pond. Confederate movements throughout the Commonwealth were stagnating. Smith seems to have lost his nerve as he made no serious moves toward Louisville and actually went on the defensive in Lexington and Frankfort. Though subordinate to Bragg, Smith ignored dispatches to withdraw from the central part of the state. Bragg envisioned a linking of their two forces, the defeat of Buell's army, and then a general move on Louisville and Cincinnati.³⁶ Nevertheless, Heth kept moving toward Cincinnati, thinking he was creating a suitable diversion for the remainder of Smith's force to take Louisville.

By September 10, tensions were mounting high in the Federal lines. Soldiers complained in their letters and diaries that the long roll was beat numerous times throughout the day and night, all ending as false alarms. One such event was humorously recalled in a speech after the war by a member of the 89th Ohio:

And who is here who has forgotten the gallant and daring manner in which our Colonel, in fullest uniform, seemed literally to court danger by recklessly exposing himself upon every dangerous occasion? And especially when, as we were expecting every moment to have Kirby

Smith, with his entire force, come down upon us "like a wolf on the fold," he rode proudly forth, even in front of the line, and finally, becoming over impatient by reason of the continued delay of the enemy's appearance, and being anxious to give them a warm reception when they did come, ordered us, in addition to the load already in our guns, to "Ram down another?"³⁷

The next day, though, many men would get their first brief glimpse of the elephant.

At conservative estimates, the morning of September 11 found approximately 22,000 enlisted men, 2,000 militia, and 50,000 Squirrel Hunters, some 74,000 defenders all totaled, manning the strengthened defensive works with 15 heavy guns and an unknown number of field pieces.³⁸ A private in the 50th Ohio wrote to his brother, "All the hills are covered with troops and rifle pits. I cannot look in any direction without seeing soldiers and there is some guns planted on the points of the hills. I expect there are 50,000 troops on this side of the river."³⁹ Heth sent out skirmishers from various units toward Fort Mitchel in back of Covington, which was the key Union position. The 101st Ohio was the advance Federal regiment on the picket line in front of the fort. "Our line was fired on by their skirmishers, who were three to our one," wrote Private Lewis Day, "We returned the fire and rapidly fell back. It was our first sensation of being fired at, also of firing at any human being. None of us were struck, and I doubt if any of them were."⁴⁰ A sergeant in the 101st wrote to his parents:

After we had been here about two hours yesterday, we saw troops coming in double quick. It was Capt. Parson's Company [Co. E]. They had been out on picket. They had been fired upon and chased by rebels but no one [was] hurt. Lt. Col. Franz tried to get them to go back with him but they were too fatigued and he went back alone to reconnoitre and he got between two scouting rebel parties and they fired upon him, hitting his horse, [balls] passing through his coat sleeve and several other narrow escapes but he came back unhurt and perfectly cool, I think.⁴¹

The 102nd and 104th Ohio were the nearest regiments to the 101st Ohio. The 104th continued skirmishing with the Rebels throughout the day and part of the morning of September 12. Incidentally, the "battle" never amounted to anything more than picket firing. Private Nathaniel Gorgas of the 104th Ohio wrote to his father after the skirmishes on the 11th and 12th:

Pickets were stationed and were firing at intervals all day. There was one of Company A shot in the breast and was killed. The next day we were taken out and placed in a very dangerous position, they were in the woods and we were about 3 or 4 hundred yards from them sitting behind the fence where they had a fair chance at us. Shots were exchanged pretty freely for a while. Taylor shot twice and was preparing to shoot the third time when a [shot] took him through the left lung. He was taken to the hospital and the Surgeon thinks there is some chance for him to recover.

There was also two men shot in Company G, one in the knee and the other in the arm. We were taken away about ten O'clock for the purposes of shelling the woods, but the order was countermanded and we were taken back again....there was a train of about 40 ambulances to bring the crippled from Richmond, Kentucky, where we were pretty badly whipped when all firing ceased. ...our men went into the woods and searched it and found 4 dead and 2 wounded rebels and took sixteen prisoners.⁴²

Heth began his withdrawal in the early morning hours of the 12th. The surgeon of the 4th Arkansas noted, "After menacing them for two days, we, in imitation of the Arabs of old, 'Folded our tents. And, silently, stole away.'"⁴³ Captain John W. Lavender, also of the 4th Arkansas, remembered the move on Cincinnati with more humor:

We marched from Place to Place over the middle Part of Ky. until we arrived near Covington opposite Cincinnati where we drove in their Pickets around Covington, gave them a good scare, stayed there two or three days, got the Cincinnati papers Every day, captured two or three large milk Daries. The owners give us all the milk to keep us from doing any Damage. So they Sustained no loss only what milk the cows gave while we were there. It was certainly a treat.⁴⁴

Smith had summoned Heth to return to Lexington to wait for Bragg, who finally began to march into Kentucky before Buell got between their two armies. Unbeknown to many in the South, it seemed that Cincinnati would be taken. Sarah Morgan wrote in her diary on September 10: "Cincinnati (at last accounts) lay at our mercy. From Covington, Smith had sent over a demand for its surrender in two hours. Would it not be glorious to avenge New Orleans by such a blow?"⁴⁵ For New Orleans to be avenged, however, it would have to be somewhere other than Cincinnati.

For several days after the threat, fears still ran high in and among the city's defenses. Regiments and irregulars continued to pour into the city, while work on the fortifications continued for weeks. Wallace sent a detachment of the 10th Kentucky cavalry cautiously toward Walton to follow the Rebels' withdrawal as he awaited a reply from Wright authorizing his request to actively pursue Heth. The Federal cavalry, numbering 53 men, skirmished with 101 enemy pickets near Florence on September 17. The Federals lost one man killed, one wounded; while the Confederates lost five killed and wounded, and, "a rebel citizen was killed."⁴⁶ Recognizing that Louisville would most likely be the next target, Wright began to send units there. Bragg entered Glasgow on the 14th and issued a proclamation to the citizens of Kentucky asking them to welcome his men as restorers of liberty. Buell followed Bragg on a parallel course and entered Bowling Green the same day. To Bragg's discredit he ultimately allowed Buell to reach Louisville. By September 22, Louisville was just as secure from Rebel forces as Cincinnati. Bragg's situation was very serious. Smith, still believing himself to be an independent commander, disregarded Bragg's order to evacuate Lexington and meet him with supplies in

Bardstown.

Likewise the Federals had their problems. In Washington, Lincoln became disenchanted with Buell and ordered Halleck to replace him with General George Thomas. On the other hand, Buell was mistakenly seen by many as the savior of Louisville and Cincinnati. Halleck sent an aide with Lincoln's order, but then changed his mind and attempted to intercept it. Buell received the order, but Thomas refused the command and prevented an embarrassing situation.

No one in Cincinnati considered Buell a hero. Lew Wallace was hailed by all as the city's savior. Unceremoniously, Wallace was relieved of command once again by Wright on September 18, and ordered to Columbus, Ohio, to organize paroled Federal soldiers at Camp Chase for putting down the Sioux uprising in Minnesota.⁴⁷ Eventually he received the official thanks of the city council and the Ohio Legislature. Before leaving he issued this proclamation:

For the present, at least, the enemy has fallen back, and your cities are safe. It is time for acknowledgments. I beg leave to make you mine. When I assumed command there was nothing to defend you with, except a few half-finished works and some dismounted guns; yet I was confident. The energies of a great city are boundless; they have only to be aroused, united, and directed. You were appealed to. The answer will never be forgotten. Paris may have seen something like it in her revolutionary days, but the cities of America never did. Be proud that you have given them an example so splendid. The most commercial of people, you submitted to a total suspension of business, and without a murmur adopted as my principle, "Citizens for labor, soldiers for battle." In coming times, strangers, viewing the works on the hills of Newport and Covington, will ask, "Who built these entrenchments?" You will answer, "We built them." If they ask, "Who guarded them?" you can reply, "We helped in thousands." If they inquire the result, your answer will be, "The enemy came and looked at them, and stole away in the night." You have won much honor; keep you organizations ready to win more. Hereafter be always prepared to defend yourselves.⁴⁶

After the overwhelmingly successful defense of Cincinnati, the entire Kentucky campaign was doomed to fail. Just under a month after Heth retreated, Buell and Bragg's forces clashed at Perryville on October 8. Although Bragg won the day, he was forced to leave the field and consequently the entire state. Kentuckians, if they did have Southern leanings, certainly did not rise up as he had expected. Buell was subsequently relieved of command, replaced by Thomas, summarily court-martialled for his conduct during the Kentucky campaign, and acquitted. Ironically, Wallace would serve on the military board hearing his case. For a few hours, Kentucky had a token Rebel governor, while the only thing that was firmly established for the glorious Southern cause was several hundred graves.

Endnotes

1. Author unknown. Quoted in, Alf Burnett, *Humorous, Pathetic, and Descriptive Incidents of the War* (Cincinnati, 1864), 185-186.
2. *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, August 30, 1862, 2.
3. *Ibid.*, 2.
4. Surprisingly, modern accounts of the battle differ only slightly in the actual casualties. These figures were taken from Henry Stone, "The Operations of General Buell in Kentucky and Tennessee in 1862," *Campaigns in Kentucky and Tennessee*, Vol. VII, Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts (Boston, 1908), 267; and James R. Street, Jr., *The Struggle for Tennessee: Tupelo to Stones River* (Alexandria, Virginia, 1985), 48. Interestingly, Henry Heth thought of the battle, "I have always considered the battle of Richmond, Ky., the most complete victory of the war.", James L. Robertson, editor, *The Memoirs of Henry Heth*, (Westport, Connecticut, n.d.), 165.
5. Elisha B. Treadway, Co. A, 3rd (later 7th) Kentucky Volunteers, U. S., unpublished letter dated, "Lexington, September 1st, 1862," in the Treadway family collection. Courtesy of the transcriber, James Currens, Lexington and the Kentucky Military History Museum, Frankfort, Kentucky.
6. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Vol. XVI, Part II (Washington, 1886), 470. Hereafter cited only as *O.R.*
7. *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, September 2, 1862, 2.
8. The whole situation is still rather sketchy and very confusing. See Robert E. and Katharine M. Morsberger, *Lew Wallace: Militant Romantic*, (New York, 1980), 115-117; Irving McKee, "Ben-Hur" Wallace: *The Life of General Lew Wallace*, (Berkeley, 1947), 58-59; Lew Wallace, *An Autobiography*, (New York, 1906), 603-606; T. Bush Read, "The Siege of Cincinnati," *Atlantic Monthly* 11:64(February 1863): 229-234. I cannot determine when Wallace left for Cincinnati, but Read claims that he was in Lexington as the battle of Richmond was being fought.
9. *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XVI, Part II, 473. For the condition of the defensive works see the reports of Colonel Charles Whittlesey and Major James Simpson in the same, 664-675. Located in the National Archives Cartographic and Architectural Branch are the complete engineer's drawings of each battery and fort, plus topographical maps showing the entire defensive line. See also Endnote 48.

10. Wallace's proclamation appears in many period accounts including the *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*, September 2, 1862, 2. However, the motto "Citizens for the labor; Soldiers for the Battle" is often seen in contemporary and secondary sources as "Citizens for labor; Soldiers for Battle." I am quoting Wallace's copy of his proclamation in the Lew Wallace Collection, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, as I believe the former is as he originally intended. See also, *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. LII, Part 1, 277-279.
11. *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XVI, Part II, 475-476.
12. Quoted in Frank Moore, *Women of the War; Their Heroism and Self-Sacrifice*, (Hartford, Connecticut, 1867), 80-81.
13. Thomas C. Honnell, Co. C, 99th O.V.I., unpublished letter dated, "Camp Butler Ky Sept. 4th 1862," in the collection of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus.
14. *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XVI, Part II, 476-477.
15. Morrison, 166.
16. Figures for Confederate strength in Heth's detachment vary. His own memoirs place the figure at 6,000 (*Ibid.*, 166). Most sources now agree that his total strength was somewhere between 7-8,000. See Geoffrey R. Walden, "Panic on the Ohio! Confederates March on Cincinnati, September 1862" *Blue & Gray Magazine* (May 1986), 9.
17. The sixteen steamers and their armaments included, *Gun-boat No. 1*, three 12-pounders; *New Era*, one 12-pounder; *Belfast*, one 12-pounder; *R. B. Hamilton*, one 12-pounder; *Allen Collyer*, one 12-pounder; *Emma Duncan*, one 12-pounder; *New York*, one 12-pounder; *Izetta*, one 32-pounder; *Argyle*, one 32-pounder; *J. A. Gurley*, two 12-pounders; *Cottage*, two 6-pounders; *W. A. Healey*, one 12-pounder; *Ida May*, one 12-pounder; *Florence*, one 6-pounder; *Glide*, one 12-pounder; and *Sunnyside*, flagship. The last four boats were Federal mail packets. See *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. 52, Part I, 281-282. On the *Indianola*, see *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, Series I, Volume 23 (Washington, 1910), 336-337, 345, 348 and Series II, Parts 1-4, 107; *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Vol. III (Washington, 1968), 436-437; and Paul H. Silverstone, *Warships of the Civil War Navies* (Annapolis, 1989), 155.
18. Copy of Special Orders No. 47 dated September 4, 1862. Not in the *O.R.*, but in the Lew Wallace Collection, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis. The pontoon bridge across the Ohio River

was amazingly completed in thirty hours. A smaller pontoon bridge was also constructed over the Licking River connecting the defensive line between Kenton and Campbell Counties. It is uncertain when and by whom this bridge was built.

19. Quoted in N. E. Jones, *The Squirrel Hunters of Ohio or Glimpses of Pioneer Life* (Cincinnati, 1898), 337.
20. It will never be known exactly how many Squirrel Hunters responded to Governor Tod's call. Many years after the war, the Ohio Legislature voted to pay each man that could be found \$13 (one month's pay for enlisted men) from the Squirrel Hunter's muster rolls. Additionally, those that were found received a lithographed discharge notice (of which nine are in the collection of the Cincinnati Historical Society and one in the collection of the author) and an official discharge with the proper Ohio state seal (one is in the Cincinnati Historical Society). Many men could not be found and it is almost certain that many never signed the official muster rolls. Most agree that their numbers were anywhere from 50-60,000. Some sources, however, place their number at 75,000. This figure, in my opinion, is grossly exaggerated. Their services were indeed appreciated by most when needed, but after the threat Brigadier General A. J. Smith wrote to Wallace on September 17, "Cannot I get rid of the Squirrel Hunters? They are under no control." *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XVI, Part II, 524.
21. Schmutz, George S., *History of the 102nd Regiment, O.V.I.* (Wooster, Ohio, 1907), 134. Although Schmutz never saw the men from Wayne County, his commentary is a valuable record of the animosities held by some volunteers against men who opted to remain civilians.
22. Benjamin Thomas Strong, *Three Years or During the War* (Olathe, Kansas, 1913), 9.
23. Joseph Benson Foraker, *Speech of Captain J. B. Foraker at the First Reunion of the Eighty-Ninth Regiment, O.V.I., Fair Grounds, Hillsboro, Ohio, September 20th, 1869* (Cincinnati, 1910), 3-4.
24. J. T. Woods, *Services of the Ninety-Sixth Ohio Volunteers* (Toledo, 1874), 17.
25. J. W. Gaskill, *Footprints Through Dixie: Everyday Life of the Man Under a Musket on the Firing Line and in the Trenches, 1862-1865* (Alliance, Ohio, 1919), 28. The inexperience of the men is readily apparent and one can only wonder what may have happened if Heth had made a concerted push on the defenses. William H. Ballentine, a private in Co. G, 96th Ohio, wrote in his diary well after the threat on October 6, 1862, "I have drawn 43 ball cartridges in all and have shot 3. 1 at random and 2 at target[,] also drew 10 blanks[,] shot

- 3 by co.[.] div.[.] bat. fired my gun not going I gave the rest away[.]”, unpublished diary in the collection of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus.
26. Schmutz, 132.
 27. Francis M. Field, Co. H, 45th Ohio O.V.I, unpublished letter dated, “September the 27 1862,” in the collection of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus.
 28. A. Piatt Andrew, III, *Some Civil War Letters of A. Piatt Andrew*, (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1925), 21.
 29. Civil War Diary of Garrett Larew, Co. K, 86th Indiana Regiment, August 24, 1862-July 3, 1865, 2. Copy of a typed ms loaned by Dr. Karl G. Larew of Towson State University, Towson, Maryland, October 1976, in the collection of the W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis. This quote is as it appears in the diary without correction.
 30. Randolph C. Downes, editor, “The Civil War Diary of Fernando E. Pomeroy,” *Northwest Ohio Quarterly* 19(1947): 133.
 31. Lyle Thoburn, editor, *My Experiences During the Civil War By Major Thomas C. Thoburn* (Cleveland, 1963), 3.
 32. Peter H. Clark, *The Black Brigade of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, 1864), 8. This particular volume was reprinted by the Arno Press (New York, 1969).
 33. Thoburn, 3-4..
 34. Clark, 10.
 35. Ibid., 5. It is true that General Benjamin Butler in orders dated August 24, 1862, called for the employment of black workers known as “Contrabands” to work at Fortress Monroe, but they were not organized into any military units. Some historians, though, consider this the first time that blacks were officially employed by the Federal government.
 36. See Grady McWhiney, “Controversy in Kentucky: Braxton Bragg’s Campaign of 1862” *Civil War History* (March 1960). This is still an excellent account of the tensions between Bragg and Smith.
 37. Foraker, 4.
 38. Again, it is very difficult to count the actual number of men present in the defenses. I am slightly more conservative than most. See Walden, 13, who

places the total strength at an incredible 85,000.

39. Joseph Orville Jackson, ed., *"Some of the Boys..." : The Civil War Letters of Isaac Jackson, 1862-1865* (Carbondale, Illinois, 1960), 8. Letter dated, "Camp, Sept. 10, 1862."
40. Lewis W. Day, *Story of the One Hundred and First Ohio Infantry* (Cleveland, 1894), 32.
41. Watson Butler, ed., *Letters Home [by] Jay Caldwell Butler, Captain, 101st. Ohio Volunteer Infantry* (privately printed, 1930), 3-4. Butler was later Captain of Co. B in the 101st Ohio and mentions in the same letter dated, "Camp Mitchell, September 10th, 1862," that he saw several Rebel casualties and prisoners, "They poisoned one and wounded two of ours. One of the wounded would not be carried off until he had loaded up and fired again. He will have to have his leg taken off. When he saw his Capt. he said 'Captain, I have done my duty.'"
42. Nathaniel Gorgas, Co. B., 104th O.V.I., unpublished letter dated, "Friday September the 12th 1862," in the collection of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus. Various other regimental histories from units which were at Fort Mitchel during the skirmishes acknowledge that the 104th lost one man killed, but the number of wounded varies from one to five. The local papers tell of Confederate casualties and go so far as to list the names of four men who were captured from the 15th Arkansas. This is unconfirmed as the 15th Arkansas has no known regimental history and the unit's records are sparse. One man from the 4th Arkansas died on September 13, and was buried somewhere south of Covington. Today, Linden Grove Cemetery, in Covington, has nine Confederate graves, eight of which were transferred after the war. Among them are W. A. Parker, 10th Texas Dismounted Cavalry [Churchill's Division, 1st Brigade], who died while on the march in Boone County, September 20, 1862; Timothy Booth, of New Orleans [no date]; Thomas W. Leaman of the 1st Arkansas Regiment [Churchill's Division, 2nd Brigade], died May 28, 1892; E. M. Mitchell, of the 1st Arkansas Regiment, died May 19, 1862. The gravestones are virtually illegible and the source for the dates and regiments was derived from "Confederate Graves in Kentucky, Contributed by Miss A. N. Hall, Covington, Ky." *Confederate Veteran*, XXXVII (1929), 349.
43. Washington Lafayette Gammage, *The Camp, the Bivouac, and the Battlefield: Being a History of the Fourth Arkansas Regiment...* (Selma, Alabama, 1864), 47.
44. James I. Robertson, editor, *A Confederate Girl's Diary* (Bloomington, 1960), 221.

45. Ted R. Worley, ed., *The War Memoirs of Captain John W. Lavender, C. S. A.* (Pine Bluff, Arkansas, 1956), 29. This volume is sometimes seen as *They Never Came Back: The Story of Co. F. Fourth Arks. Infantry, C. S. A., (Originally Known As The Montgomery Hunters), As Told By Their Commanding Officer, Capt. John W. Lavender, C. S. A.*
46. *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. LII, Part 1, 282-283.
47. *Ibid.*, 283.
48. Quoted in T. Bush Read, "The Siege of Cincinnati." Also, Robert E. Morsberger, "The Savior of Cincinnati" *Civil War Times Illustrated* (November 1972), 38. Wallace's farewell proclamation also appears in the Cincinnati and Covington newspapers.

A letter was found in Wallace's copy of Charles Whittlesey's *War Memoranda*, when it was deposited in the W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis. Wallace was thanking Whittlesey for the book and correcting him on a few points about the threat. He wrote:

The true history is as follows.

Bragg's invasion of Kentucky found me on the shelf, where I had been sent in punishment for the misunderstanding of my movements the morning after the battle of Shiloh. I had begged everybody, Grant, Stanton and others to be sent to duty, but without avail.

The problem was how to defend Cincinnati. Buell had all the troops with him. There was not a company left at Covington or Newport—not even a post guard. You had constructed fortifications covering the bend in which those two cities lay, but there was an insufficiency of guns, and the few there were were dismounted. Had they been mounted, there was no ammunition with which to serve them. I counselled with my staff. They advised me not to attempt to save the city; they argued there was nothing to save it with, and that I was not bound by Gen. Wright's request. The puzzle did not look so bad to me. Cincinnati was a great city—why not make it save itself? There were 40,000, possibly 50,000 able bodied men in it... Mr. Hatch was then Mayor. I requested him to call and see me at the Burnet House. He was reported as of southern proclivities. However that may have been, he complied with my request.

Two days after [the proclamation] 15,000 men crossed the river and reported to civil engineers appointed to man lines, repair the forts, and construct rifle pits and breastworks. This ensued for four days conservatively. Meantime Gov. Todd sheeted his proclamation through the State. With such arms as they had, shot-guns, squirrel rifles, and obsolete muskets, the people poured into the city, and were organized as rapidly as possible. It became a serious question what to do with them. The morning report of the sixth day showed 72,000 men at disposition. Some companies were sent to the different crossings of the river; some were put on the flotilla of sixteen steamboats which I took into service; the

great body, however, were under arms as regiments or at work with spades and picks. The city fed them; from her store houses the city furnished everything for labor; one great foundryman turned over to me a lot of brass twelve-pounders; amongst the citizens I found not many ready hands for everything, but brains equally ready.

This letter is dated April 6, 1884, and apparently was never sent. I have included it for several reasons. First, the opening paragraph shows just how bitter Wallace was for the criticism he received after Shiloh. This letter also dispels the myth that the Squirrel Hunters were all manning the defenses. Apparently Wallace recognized that because of their "irregular" status, they could not be relied on as efficient and effective soldiers had Heth pressed an attack. An undated, anonymous letter in the Wallace Collection in the Indiana Historical Society confirms my supposition that the majority of the Squirrel Hunters were above and below Cincinnati guarding various crossing points on the river. The letter was written as an appeal from the "commander" of a detachment of Squirrel Hunters to get his men paid for their service. Several of their camps are mentioned and a short muster roll that does not match the official Squirrel Hunter's muster role is included, thus supporting another supposition that not all of the Squirrel Hunters were officially enrolled.

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From North Africa to Germany: Personal Accounts of World War II

by
Daniel P. Decker

This article is a journey into my father's past. He died in 1980, and this project is a vehicle for me to get in touch with this eventful period in his life. My dad, Paul Decker, served with Robert L. Callahan and William A. Crosswait in the 78th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Armored Division in World War II. The transcript is edited from a three-hour interview with these two veterans. Callahan was drafted at the age of twenty-four. He served for nearly four years as a sergeant and eventually became a tank commander. Crosswait was drafted at the age of 20 and spent most of his time as a cook.

Both men, along with my father, reported to Fort Thomas, Kentucky, and moved on to Fort Knox before being stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia. They sailed from Norfolk, Virginia, on October 23, 1942, in the largest armada of ships ever assembled at that time.

Their unit invaded Safi, Africa, about 400 miles south of Gibraltar on November 8, 1942. Bob and Art left Africa, invading Sicily at Gela along the southern coast, on July 10, 1943, making their way to Palermo along the northern coast. From Sicily they sailed to England and prepared to invade Europe. They landed in Normandy on Omaha Beach on June 9, 1944, D-Day plus three, and fought in northern France, Holland, Belgium, and Germany.

Art: When we left North Africa, then we made the invasion of Sicily.

Bob: That's before we got to England.

Art: Yeah. We made the invasion of Sicily. Bob, you were on the same ship we were. We walked the plank. We were soaked!

Bob: I've got a story on that.

Art: We had a full field pack on our backs. We went down in water over our heads.

Bob: Paul was in front of me and Paul was shorter than me. Our tanks—what we needed were out on a lighter tank—We went up on the shore first. We were moving in and when we hit the beach we knew it because the whole ship rattled. It carried us men, landing the troops. That's a little one, just for men. They had two ramps on each side. They dropped them and they went to the bottom of the ocean wherever the floor was. Well, when they dropped and we had to come out of this hole—it was like coming out of a manhole. And Paul was right ahead of me and we started down that ramp and I said, "Paul,

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I can't swim." I can't to this day. I said, "Now when your hat floats, I'm going to get on your shoulders and you drag me in there somehow." He used to always kid me about that. He said, "I saved your life one time when we landed in Sicily." I said luckily the water came up to about here and all I could see of Paul was his chin and that top of a helmet. He looked like a turtle going there. He turned around and he said, "You okay?" I said, "Yeah. I think we're going uphill." And sure enough we were going up out of there. That was the only time I was ever scared, and I made three different landings. Never knew how to swim—they tried to teach me to swim but they couldn't do it at Ft. Benning. I was scared of water—I still am scared of it. After we got in there, we took a pasting for a while. And Germans came in with their tanks. We had nothing to fight 'em.

Dan: Were you being shot at as you went in?

Bob: Yeah.

Art: They dug foxholes.

Bob: Well, the navy set it up.

Art: Over from us, coming down the draw you could see those German tanks coming down through there. They were firing like hell.

Bob: I think our navy saved us because they had a bunch of destroyers out there and we had FO's out there and they would call the shot. They held them off until—well, we didn't get our tanks for two days and in foxholes—we just couldn't do anything. I had a tommy gun. You can't fight a tank with a tommy gun.

Art: The navy's the one that saved us.

Bob: Oh yeah. They held them back and finally our equipment got in there and it was just a rat race then.

Art: It was just one tank after another coming down to the draw. You could stand there and see them. Boy, they were firing like hell. We'd run into the foxholes and then the navy would start firing on them. Slowed them down.

Bob: We saw a lot of ships destroyed. Photographs in the unit history show the landing and all the transport munition ships, K-9. And this K ship got hit by a stuka bomber and it blew up and had ammunition on it. And I never saw such a jolt! Because we were on the beach then. It shook the whole beach and it was like one black blur of smoke. That burned about three days out there. We were hoping it wasn't our equipment, because we had all our tanks on another liner out there but they finally got on to it.

Dan: Everything was really on one ship?

Bob: Yeah.

Art: It was on Palermo—

Dan: You went up the coast, right?

Bob: Yeah. Up the edge of the coast. The British were going up one side and at that time we were under the command of dear old George S. Patton. And he was our division commander when we landed in Africa. And when Rommel kicked the crap out of first Armored he went up and took them over

and then they sent us another guy. Later on they moved Patton over the Third Army, armored commander.

Dan: Will you talk about Patton?

Bob: Oh I'll tell you about Patton. He was strictly a general. I mean what he had to say he said it. Boy, he did a lot of cussing too.

Dan: I know my dad told me, "I hated Patton."

Bob: A lot of the guys hated Patton.

Art: Personally, I think he was a good general per se. He had the right job. But boy, he'd make it tough on the guys doing the job. One thing about it, any time he was in charge of us or in our area, you never knew about him being 20 miles back in a tent. He was always in there with you. He was always in the brunt of it.

Bob: Always had those pearl handled—in fact, I've got a picture of him standing on the beach with us going like this—in other words, "You guys go up there." But he was tough. Personally, I think he was one of the better combat generals we had.

Dan: Did you feel more confident when you were under him?

Bob: I would. I didn't care much for him but he had a job to do and I had a job to do.

Dan: I remember Dad telling me this story. He said one time General Montgomery, the British commander, reviewed the troops. I don't know what that meant in terms of size, the whole battalion or division, but he said Montgomery told the group, "Just relax, boys. Take off your helmets. We do things a little differently." Do you remember that at all?

Bob: That was probably in England when we were training with the British army. I remember Eisenhower came out a couple of times—all the bigwigs. Actually they were planning an invasion at that time, but we didn't know it. I saw Montgomery; I saw Eisenhower.

Dan: Did you have any idea what was going to happen when you were in England?

Bob: Had no idea what was coming until it was about three days before.

Dan: Did you know you were headed for a landing in France?

Bob: Yeah. Once they come along, they made you waterproof the tanks—they put an air scoop on the back so they could go in six feet of water without drowning the motor out. That was all part of the procedure. Then when they took us down to Land's End in England, then we knew we were going because nothing there—as far as you could see was ships. I had never seen so many ships in my life.

Art: There were ships all over the place.

Bob: They loaded them all up with equipment and men. Just pouring them in. Then the night before the actual invasion is when all the glider troops in the Airborne went in. Get in behind the line. It reminded me of a ladder. Two gliders and they'd be maybe a quarter of a mile wide as far as you could look just passing over our barracks. We knew then this had to be it. We had never seen so many up at that time.

Art: You'd see maybe 20 or 30 of them practicing. Boy, they were on their way.

* * *

After what Callahan refers to as "The St. Lo. Breakthrough," as part of Operation "Cobra," they moved into the open French countryside. At this point, they were almost constantly on the move.

Bob: The hedge row was a big pile of dirt with a bunch of trees on top of it. The lead tanks had to have bulldozer blades put on them. They cut a path for you to get in there and then you'd run into four or five acres and then you'd go into another one until you got way away from the beach.

Dan: Bob, I remember you telling me a story on the phone about seeing dead cows, a lot of dead animals.

Bob: Oh yeah.

Art: They were all over the place.

Bob: I even had a count on them. I think I had over one hundred and five dead cows in this one area. Because they had air raids and artillery shots all at one time and sometimes there wasn't an area of twenty five feet that wasn't hit with something. Those poor old cows and horses.

Art: In France, Belgium, and places like Holland.

Bob: Beautiful horses. Big Persian horses. Lying there with their heads blown off. Wasted. Something hit them.

Dan: What did you mean by the breakout? Were you constantly on the move?

Bob: We called it the rat race. We went through St. Lo. The air force went in there and I forget how many yards wide. They pulverized it. We went through there. There was nothing alive. That's where we saw all the dead horses. We saw a few dead GIs. Infantry guys ahead of us got it. It was just like opening a flood gate once we got through that area. It was just a matter of chasing them. It's just another case of we had more than they had. They might have had three or four tanks fighting us. We had 30 or 40 of them. They'd get one; we'd get two.

Art: We were constantly on the move.

Bob: We stopped at rivers—they blew the bridges out. The engineers, wherever the Germans left, especially going across France—used that old scorched earth policy. Any kind of bridge—they blew it up. The engineers put a pontoon bridge in so we could get across the river. But once we got in Germany, you could tell it was their home country. They didn't destroy too many things. As a last resort, like along the Rhine River they did, but there was no stopping then because the Rhine River was their last hope and that's bigger than the Ohio River. They blew out about every bridge along there.

Dan: I remember Dad telling me a story that when he was going into Germany, that he saw young kids shoot at tanks with pistols.

Bob: Yeah.

Dan: What were the German people like at the time? Were they just fanatic?

Bob: Some of them were diehards especially if we moved into a town and took their homes over which we did all the time, especially in the rainy, muddy

weather. Because why should we sleep out in the mud among these houses—some of them partially destroyed. We were stuck on the third floor of one of these places and that's when we had a real bad German counter artillery barrage. We thought, "This would be a hell of a place to have a shell land up here. We'd all be killed." The room was no bigger—

Dan: About 10 by 20?

Bob: Yeah. The whole crew was up on the third floor, so during the night we could sit up there by a window and watch the ak-ak going up after the Germans. Bombing. They were coming real low. We always said, "If those guys had long legs, they'd walk on us." They'd fly in a plane real close trying to attract fire and we were always told, "Don't fire on those guys." But some of them would fire and they'd drop a flare. The bombers were laying out and as soon as they saw that flare, they'd come in and bomb that flare. We learned that real quick. I forget what we called him. We had a name for him. Every night he'd fly over real low. Something like a small Cessna plane. He wasn't armed or anything. All he had on was a parachute. He'd fly real low and real slow. Hoping that someone would shoot at him. If someone shot at him, he'd just drop a flare and take off. The German bombers and fighters, were waiting up above, waiting to see some of it. They tricked us maybe once, but we learned our lesson. We didn't do that any more.

Dan: You say that all the towns you liberated had two sets of flags. Was this throughout Belgium, France, and Holland also?

Bob: Oh yeah. I could see their point. If the Germans were in there, they had the German flag out, and once the Germans were out, they'd pull it down and you'd see these homemade American flags. It was amazing how they could make the stars and stripes out of rags, but you could tell they were American flags.

Dan: Did you have much contact with civilians?

Bob: Not too much, not during combat you didn't. You weren't allowed to because we were too busy, but if you went into a rest area that was near a town and they would permit you to go in or else you would sneak in and I snuck in a few of them. Not with Paul—Paul was always chicken because he always told me, "I got married to Mary and I'm going back alive." I said, "Hell, you got to break out and go up there to see what's going on." It would be off limits because you had to sneak around. There wouldn't be any MPs, but if an officer came and caught you in there, they'd take you back and then, in combat they wouldn't do anything to you because they needed you if you were a gunner—because like at that time that's what I was. They couldn't put me on KP because I had to be in that tank when it moved so I could shoot the gun. Because the other guys couldn't do it.

Dan: What about the civilians in Germany? Were they hostile?

Bob: I found some hostile. Some were glad it was over. I never did find a Nazi. We never heard one of them say he was a Nazi. They were German, but not Nazi. But then you'd go in these houses in a town and you'd find all these

swastika flags hidden under a bed or something. We'd take them as souvenirs. The one I brought home we nailed down in the middle of Sixth Street in Newport when we had a parade after the war and we'd walk over it. A whole bunch of them asked for people who had any kind of swastika flags and that's when Sixth Street had a wood block street. I don't know if you remember those or not. They used to have wooden block streets and they'd nail these flags down and I took mine down. They had that welcome home parade and it was after the war. We walked right over the top of that.

Dan: When you came home, were you proud?

Bob: Oh yeah. Proud and glad. We had done a good job. I felt no remorse because really I never did actually go to a guy and kill him. You know, like go up to you and shoot. I almost did. Because I got scared and he got scared. It was the middle of the night. We were looking for straw to put under the tank to lay in the mud so we could sleep. We had no place to sleep. We were running through these haystacks picking it up. And we'd go out two or three guys at a time, pull this haystack apart, and I just happened to have my gun in my hand and I pulled mine, and here this German was standing there. I brought my gun right up to his face and I thought, "Geez, I can't kill this guy. He's too close to me." I said, "Get the hell out of here." I let him go I was so scared. He surrendered to me and then I said, "Just get out of the way. Get out of the way." I could have killed—it was right in his face. I had my gun right in his face. He scared me more than I scared him, I think, because he probably knew I was coming. I didn't know he was in the haystack but we were getting hay to stuff down under those tanks to get the mud down and then crawl down under—and that's where you slept at night so you wouldn't get hit by any air strikes or something.

Dan: So you didn't kill him?

Bob: No. But someone else picked him up. But I did see some of our work and it was impressive. When we were doing it, we were maybe a quarter of a mile away. You couldn't see what you were doing. And sometimes we were twelve miles away and they'd come back and say, "Boy you're doing good. You wiped out 30 people." I guess I did. They said I did up there, but you couldn't see.

Dan: You didn't feel like you were close to it in a sense?

Bob: No. I never had hand-to-hand. We were trained for it. Infantry were the ones that did most of the dirty work.

Dan: Did you see any of your friends die at all?

Bob: No. I saw one man die, real close. He was sitting there—just jawing, when a projectile came in among us and exploded. I was lucky. I didn't get any of that. I got it in that one area up in St. Denis. I got hit in the head with shrapnel and hit in the stomach, but I was standing up in the tank trying to look to see where to go and I think it was some mortar shell really. It wasn't bad.

Dan: You were hit in the head?

- Bob: Hit in the front of the tank—I think it was mortar. A big shell would have knocked our tank out and all the shrapnel came up. It went into my belt. That belt buckle saved most that.
- Dan: It sort of grazed your scalp?
- Bob: Yeah it grazed it, went under like. After that little bit of fighting was over, I went to the medics and they took it out of there. This piece was just lying against my stomach.
- Dan: Were you in the hospital?
- Bob: I didn't go to the hospital. I went right back, because our tank commander somehow in the confusion got lost and they called me in to command. And they called for me to get up to this one area. Just as I was looking for where to go, that mortar hit—it had to be a mortar because it wasn't a real big—it was like a big pop. Went up right past my helmet and hit me in the stomach. I got down. I said, "Let's get the hell out of here." So we went on up.
- Dan: So you didn't have to have an operation?
- Bob: No. I didn't take any operation on that. I was lucky. Medics took care of me. That's where I got the Silver Star. I don't know where our tank commander went. But we got march orders. To disburse and take a different position.
- Dan: You simply moved from position A to position B?
- Bob: Yeah. In an area, out in an open area really. That's where we were. Set up the fire and then the Germans were closing in on the side of us; moved the flank over. Where this guy went, I don't know. When they called in at mid-section, I was section 3 at the time. Section 3, they pointed to an area they wanted us at. I said, "Get in. Let's go." And when I got in to see where I was going to take them, that's when I got hit. I said, "Go over that way. We've got to get up by that road. That's where they want us." And we just got into position and got situated. There was a giant German tank. I let him have it. He never knew what hit him. I got him right in front and he just ran off the road and caught on fire. Somehow, someone saw it and three or four days later they said, "You have to go back to headquarters." I thought, "Well, what the hell's back there?" I thought maybe on account of my head. I'm feeling fine. "The general wants to see you." That's when they awarded the Silver Star. I felt really proud.
- Dan: When you were fighting, did you have a lot of hate for the Germans?
- Bob: Sometimes. It all depended on who you ran up against. The SS troops were the ones we wanted to get at because the German warlord—that was the major army. There were sort of two factions. They fought the war different than the SS. The SS were like butchers. As a matter of fact, they nicknamed the outfit "Roosevelt's Butchers" because whenever we knew we were going up against the SS unit, it was seek and destroy. If one got away, it was all right. They did the same thing.
- Dan: What was it like at the Siegfried Line, right at the border of Germany?
- Bob: There were bunkers. They might be 40-50 feet in diameter and only stick

up out of the ground five feet, but they'd be six feet thick of concrete. They only had a couple of slots in there where they could stick their 88s out. That was the Siegfried Line all the way across. But in mobile war, they were no good, because once you reached that line, they couldn't turn those concrete buildings around to fight you. I've seen them where in mobilizing, they'd go in and I forget how many pounds of TNT they'd put in there. They'd blow it up and some of these tops would lift up about three feet and drop back down.

Dan: Was the fighting pretty fierce right there?

Bob: Oh yeah. At the Siegfried Line that was rough. That was the same as the beginning of the war when the Germans fought at the Maginot Line down in France. They should have learned then that a stationary line never holds up. Not in modern-day war. Because in mechanized war that's why Hitler got so far that he did. He ran past with the blitzkrieg.

Dan: You saw a lot of destruction?

Bob: Oh!

Art: In France it was terrible—just nothing but rubble. I don't see how people ever—you'd find people half-hanging out of windows, killed in an air raid or by an artillery shell. They don't ever get them out of there.

Dan: So a lot of destruction was due to air raids?

Art: Yeah, yeah. Cause they would saturate. I mean they would go lay out an area and lay everything in it.

Dan: What was the fiercest fighting you were involved in?

Bob: That had to be up around St. Denis in France.

Dan: Just after the invasion?

Bob: No. It was right after the St. Lo breakthrough. That's when we were in an area and they said a German tank battalion was going to try to break through our area at night at about 2:00 in the morning. They came down. We had moved over right alongside of the road, right over in the woods, pointblank. We couldn't miss these guys if we threw a handful of rice at them. When they reached a certain area, we opened fire on them. We wiped out everything that they had. The very next day they took us over and showed us the effect of direct fire, mass direct fire. There was nothing. And that to me was the bloodiest mess I ever saw.

Dan: Did you see many bodies?

Bob: Body parts and guys hanging out of tanks and burned out tanks. A pair of boots—that was all that was there. Flesh hanging in there. Smelled. To me that was my worst look at—that's when I actually got to see it first-hand. Reports we got said we did a pretty good job other places, but like I say, sometimes they're six miles away. It was a direct hit on that one. You didn't know what you did to them—you couldn't see it. But that was my worst experience.

In an excerpt from Callahan's journal, he elaborates on the battle:

July 30, 1944 - This morning about two a.m. the Jerries tried to escape on the road by St. Denis de Gast. We moved right up to the hedge rows and fired point blank. We were within twenty yards of their tanks. We may have made it but some Jerry officer gave a comand in German. We weren't sure as to their identity until this officer gave them away. That Hiene comand was all we needed. We blasted the hell out of them. In our cross fire some of our own men were killed. The fires and screams of the dieing lasted till dawn. In the daylight we found out that we had knocked out all of the enemy vehicles, killed one hundred and fifty and took twenty-seven prisoners. Looking at this mess on the road one can understand what they mean by the saying "War is Hell" Col. Roberts was well pleased with us.

The interview continued and on a lighter note, Bob told how the food improved as the war progressed.

Bob: Coffee, a little powdered coffee, hamburgers, some had spaghetti. A lot of time you'd open it up and there'd be a note in there from some gal in America. Give you her address and tell you to write to her. Somebody packed it and stuck her name in there. We spied it in ammunition too.

Art: Our ammunition came in cases of three. We called them butterflies. One on each end and a steel rod—there was a note on the end with three shells in these cans. Lot of times you'd open them up and see some woman's name on there.

Dan: What did they generally say? Just addresses?

Bob: Just, "How about corresponding?"

* * *

Bob then related a story about Hitler Youth units firing at tanks.

Bob: You talk about kids shooting. That one town we went through they would shoot what they called the *panzerfaust*. That was a tank fight in German. It was just a little short rocket, but it would knock a tank out. They found incidents where these kids would be in a cellar and when a tank would go by they would shoot that sucker out. If they knocked that tank out, there were other ones coming up behind seeing what happened. They'd just knock the house out.

Dan: How old were these kids?

Bob: Hitler Youths—they ranged from six to 14 years old.

* * *

At this point, I asked Bob about the German prisoners, and he related a story of an SS prisoner.

Bob: Some of those captured ones were arrogant. They wouldn't talk to you or anything.

Dan: Did they hate themselves?

- Bob: They'd just sit there alongside the road in gloom. Most of them were wounded. This one guy couldn't remember—he looked up at me. His chin—a piece of shrapnel just ripped it off and they had him all bandaged up. He just glared at me. He had the old SS bars on and I thought, "You got what you had coming to you." He probably would have liked to have done that to me I guess. Shoot a gun at my feet.
- Dan: How much of the time were you engaged in battle?
- Bob: I think if you check the book, I think they count our combat time by mileage. I think we had something like three-some-odd thousand miles in combat.
- Dan: Did you fight one day and not fight for two days?
- Bob: You might fight for a week and then still you wouldn't have anything to do. It would be a holding position waiting for something else—maybe somebody on your flanks. But then you'd just sit there. But you always had to be on a radio. Most of the time we were always on alert. Cause they still had their air support yet. If you'd sit back there and think they weren't going to come back and get you, you were crazy because they'd come back and look you up.
- Dan: Did you get a feeling for how the war was going on around you in terms of who was winning or losing?
- Bob: No. I told my wife more than once, the only thing I was concerned—to me my concern was the eight men in that tank. That was my life.
- Dan: How did the people feel in the towns you liberated?
- Bob: Well, put it this way. Whoever was in there were their friends. Cause I know a couple of times we went in we were the heroes. Sometimes the Germans would come back and counter-attack and chase us out and the German flags would go up. They had two sets of flags and whoever went in, they put that flag up.
- Dan: That's certainly understandable.
- Bob: Yeah. Especially during the Bulge. Because the Germans just rushed through there and they were German. If they went through a town the Americans had held, they'd beat up on those people cause if your dad were living yet, he could tell you some of what he saw.
- Dan: Can you describe the Battle of the Bulge itself?
- Bob: We would take back what they took from us. We'd counter-attack and then we'd find the civilians all massacred. It was a pity but like I say—
- Dan: In Belgium, right?
- Bob: Yeah. It was in Belgium because Belgians were good people. In fact, Paul and I stayed with a Belgian couple—I can't think of the name of the town—it was up by Maides, Belgium. Snow was on the ground. This was after the Bulge. We pulled back there for maintenance and rest. And he and I ended up with two old farmer people and they gave us everything which wasn't much. They let us sleep in their beds. They slept on the floor. When we left—we stayed there about a week—they cried. They said they didn't want us to go any more—you know, go to war any more. But you know, we had to go.
- Dan: They were upset because they were afraid you might be killed?

Bob: Yeah, that was it. They said we were like their sons. Chances are, if they'd had sons they'd have been old men because these people were in their 70s, 80s. And as far as I was concerned, the Belgians were very good people. So were the Hollanders.

* * *

I asked the two men if fighting overseas for three and one-half years wore them down. They both said that homesickness bothered them the most.

Dan: Were you homesick as the war went on?

Bob: No. I don't think I was. I think once I got in, I had to go to the end. Once the war was over, then I wanted to come home.

Dan: Were you ever really seriously afraid you were going to lose the war?

Bob: I never thought I'd get killed because I went in with the idea, "If I've got to go I'm going to come back." Never crossed my mind. Only time I ever had second thoughts was when I was on board ship when these U-boats—they claimed that they'd sighted them. We'd be on red alert. Then I thought, "Oh boy. If we're on ocean and they take this ship, I'm gone." But once we hit that beach, I didn't care.

Art: I'm more like Bob when I was there. I went there with the idea of getting the war over and getting back home. I didn't have any idea of getting killed or anything.

Bob: Never thought about it.

Art: Never thought about it. You were so occupied with what you were doing, what you were supposed to be doing during the war that you never thought about getting killed or anything. All I thought about was getting the darned thing over and getting home!

For further reading, see Lt. Col. E. A. Trahan, G.S.C., editor, *A History of the Second United States Armored Division, 1940 to 1946*, (Atlanta: Albert Love Enterprises), n.d.

United States Gunboat Diplomacy and the Six-Day War

by

Richard Timothy Herrmann

Gunboat diplomacy is the use or threat of limited naval force, otherwise than as an act of war, in order to secure advantage, or to avert loss, either in the furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own state.

—James Gable.¹

On May 14, 1967, after weeks of increasingly fierce border clashes between Israel and Syria, President Gamal Abdel Nasser, an ally of Syria, mobilized his armed forces and began marching 100,000 soldiers into Sinai, positioning them along Israel's southern border. On May 22, he closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping and to all ships going to and from Israel. This not only violated several international freedom of the seas agreements, but was a severe blow to Israel's economy. Troops mobilized from Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, Algeria, and Iraq, and Israel found itself surrounded by over 250,000 Arab soldiers bent on Israel's destruction.

Diplomatic efforts to defuse the situation proved less than effective as Nasser would not lift the blockade, nor could Israel's allies—notably the United States and Great Britain—muster the international support required to force the blockade. Israel appeared to be on her own in this crisis. On June 5, Israel launched a devastating surprise attack upon Egypt and Jordan. By June 8, Israel had conquered the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula and the Jordanian West Bank, including Jerusalem. On June 9, Israel launched an assault on the Syrian Golan Heights. By June 10, the Golan Heights were firmly in Israeli hands and the Israelis accepted a United Nations ceasefire.²

From the outset of the difficulties, President Lyndon B. Johnson called for a peaceful and diplomatic, rather than military, solution as the United States was heavily engaged in the Vietnam War. Despite his call for peace, Johnson dispatched two Sixth Fleet task forces on May 22, built around the attack carriers USS *Saratoga* and USS *America*, to the eastern Mediterranean. The two task forces, which included the cruisers USS *Galveston* and USS *Little Rock*, plus ten destroyers, rendezvoused on May 29 in the Sea of Crete, north of the island. The task forces had been performing air exercises in the Balearic Islands off the west coast of Spain. From the Sea of Crete, the Egyptian city of Alexandria was only 370 miles away, a mere twenty minute flight for the F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers aboard the carriers. On May 29, however, senior officers on board *America* reported that they

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were awaiting orders and were to continue operations as normal.³ Shortly before on May 25, a Marine battalion landing team departed from Naples bound for Malta for previously scheduled training exercises. The Marines were 600 miles west of the aircraft carriers.⁴

Meanwhile, Johnson's diplomatic efforts to reopen the Strait of Tiran through the United Nations, were meeting with no success. From the United States and Great Britain movements were made for the organization of an international maritime expedition to force open the blockade. In the United States this was crucial as many people were not in favor of unilateral action.⁵ Ultimately, only the United States, Great Britain, Holland, and Australia agreed to participate, although several other countries considered the proposal.⁶

In the Mediterranean, the Sixth Fleet vessels were maintaining their position near Crete, aloof from the Arab and Israeli military buildups, demonstrating United States neutrality and desire for peace. They were also demonstrating American interest in the region. Admiral William Martin, commander of the Sixth Fleet, stated that he had "'open-ended military options' to achieve his mission of keeping open international sea lanes." He did not clarify this ambiguous statement. Admiral Geis, commander of Task Force 60, centered on USS *America*, stated, "We will do whatever we are directed to do by the President and that includes a whole range of options." The immediate plan was to remain near Crete and "wait and see."⁷ At the same time, the *New York Times* reported that the attack carrier USS *Intrepid* had been detained from its voyage to Vietnam due to the crisis. *Intrepid* was reported to be temporarily under Admiral William Martin's command.⁸ However, it later became clear that *Intrepid* was awaiting permission to transit the Suez Canal. Both the *New York Times* and the *London Times* reported her passage on June 1, bound for Vietnam.⁹ This departure of a heavily armed attack carrier from the turbulent area seemed to indicate Washington's desire to maintain a neutral posture and not to further exacerbate the situation. Added to this was the report from *America* on May 31 that the carrier's aircraft were down for routine maintenance, putting most flights on hold, and the crew was enjoying the weather and a day off by sunbathing, emphasizing the lack of combat preparedness in the United States vessels.¹⁰

The increasing Middle Eastern tension did cause some further precautions in the following days. On the morning of June 1, it was reported that during the night the two Sixth Fleet carrier battlegroups had moved from their positions north of Crete to positions approximately fifty miles south of Crete. One officer was quoted as saying that this allowed "more room in which to maneuver." It also placed the attack carriers and their aircraft about 350 miles west of the Suez Canal.¹¹ The destroyer USS *Dyess* was sent through the canal on June 2 to augment the small United States Red Sea patrol. Anti-submarine Warfare units on training maneuvers in the North Atlantic were also dispatched to the Mediterranean.¹² These latter two deployments seemed to be primarily defensive gestures, rather than aggressive acts.

At the same time, the Soviet Union was adding to its Mediterranean naval strength. Approximately thirty vessels, almost half of which were auxiliaries, comprised the Soviet squadron. Other than a few shadowing "tattle-tales" lurking

near the United States ships, most of the Soviet vessels stayed clear of the American battlegroups. In fact, the Israeli blitzkrieg on June 5 found the majority of the Soviet surface combatants at anchor 100 miles northwest of Crete, where they remained throughout the war.¹³

When the Israeli assault began on June 5, the United States Department of State declared "neutrality" in the conflict, a statement which was later amended to mean "non-belligerent" but "deeply concerned."¹⁴ The ships of the Sixth Fleet echoed this stance, as they were expecting to "continue just what we've been doing for the last several days." Presumably, this meant to carry on normal operations. Similarly, the fleet's amphibious assets were in Malta, with their 2000 Marines on shore leave. Officers there reported that it would take three days to reach either Egypt or Israel, if such a move became necessary.¹⁵

Early on June 6, the two carrier battlegroups were proceeding to the southeast at 20 battlegroups knots, presumably on the initiative of the local commander, "in order to vary their position while still maintaining a neutral posture with respect to the Arab-Israeli war." The commanders were under orders not to approach within 200 miles of the conflict. They obeyed these orders. The United States government used this repositioning to show that, although it sought a peaceful end to the war, it would not be intimidated.¹⁶

Conditions aboard *America* were reported to be in an advanced state of readiness. Reporters were told that "Readiness Condition 3" was in effect. This stage was two levels below "Battle Stations." Most of the carriers' flights were suspended, with only a few resupply and reconnaissance flights being performed. The number of F-4 Phantom fighter aircraft on standby alert was doubled as a safety precaution and alert response time was reduced from 30 to 15 minutes. The carriers ended their maneuvers approximately 100 miles east of Crete, less than a day's sail from the area of conflict. For all the precautions, however, no orders to intervene had been received and reporters were instructed to report the vessels conducting business as usual.¹⁷

The next day, the Sixth Fleet vessels were reported sailing westward. This was possibly in reaction to Arab claims of United States air support for Israeli operations.¹⁸ In response to these allegations, Secretary of State Dean Rusk asserted: "We know that they [Arabs] and some of their friends [Soviets] know where our carriers are." This statement is apparently in reference to the Soviet "tattle-tales" that accompanied each American battlegroup and would have known if the carriers had launched an attack.¹⁹

By noon on the 7th, the Sixth Fleet attack carriers were approximately sixty miles south of Crete. Officers on board *America* were no longer giving precise positions to journalists and the position of *Saratoga* and her escorts was presumed to be near *America*'s battlegroup. Below decks on *America*, A-4 Skyhawk attack planes were being armed with bombs and Bullpup stand-off, guided bombs, as a precautionary measure. The 200 mile limitation was again emphasized.²⁰

For the next two days the Sixth Fleet vessels remained relatively inactive. Throughout the crisis, President Johnson had been attempting to resolve the

situation peacefully, both in the United Nations and in conjunction with the Soviet Union. Neither nation wanted its clients to be obliterated by the other side; thus, for the most part the two superpowers worked side-by-side to bring about a ceasefire.²¹ Israel's desire to have defensible borders before agreeing to a ceasefire caused the most serious confrontation between the two superpowers during the crisis.

On June 10, Israeli forces held the Golan Heights and appeared ready to push on to Damascus. Johnson received a message from Soviet Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin essentially asserting that if Israel would not stop its aggressive actions, steps would be taken to stop her, up to, and including military action.²² This threat of Soviet intervention was the Israeli's major fear. It had been outlined in a letter from Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Prime Minister Levi Eshkol to Johnson on June 5. The letter described the dangers posed to Israel by the Arab buildup and the necessity of eliminating those dangers militarily. It also emphasized the disastrous consequences that Soviet intervention would have.²³ Indeed, it is possible that the Israelis expected the United States to prevent Soviet intervention by utilizing the Sixth Fleet. Eshkol once claimed that the United States Mediterranean naval forces constituted Israel's strategic reserve.²⁴

Perhaps this letter was on Johnson's mind, or perhaps it was the promises made to Israel by the previous three Presidents to safeguard her survival that caused Johnson to act in Israel's favor. Possibly it was merely a case of not letting the Soviets get away with aggression in the Middle East. Whatever the reasoning, Johnson acted decisively. He inquired as to the position of the Sixth Fleet carriers, which were then about 300 miles west of Syria, well outside the 200 mile limit he had imposed. Johnson then ordered the ships to alter course and proceed, at full speed, for the Syrian coast. He also changed the distance restriction, lessening it to 50 miles. He knew that these actions would be easily noted by the Soviets, stating: "We knew that Soviet intelligence ships were electronically monitoring the fleet's every movement. Any change in course or speed would be signaled instantly to Moscow.... We all knew the Russians would get the message as soon as their monitors observed the change in the fleet's pattern.... That message...was that the United States was prepared to resist Soviet intrusion in the Middle East."²⁵

The Soviet warning of action came at 9:05 A.M. Johnson's redirection of the Sixth Fleet was made at 9:30. By 12:30 P.M. the United States had pressured Israel into accepting a ceasefire and had so informed the Soviets.²⁶ Johnson noted: "Kosygin's messages later in the morning became more temperate."²⁷

The Israeli acceptance of the ceasefire marked the end of the Six-Day War and the end of the crisis facing the United States and the Soviet Union. Throughout the crisis, the Sixth Fleet had stood by, neutrally, while diplomatic processes attempted a peaceful end. It was a sign of the United States' non-involvement and a counterbalance for a threatened Soviet intervention. In this respect, the actions of the Sixth Fleet, from May 22 to June 10, 1967, adhere to the definition given for gunboat diplomacy. The threat of force was ever present, even if none was actually employed.

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Atrocities in Vietnam

by

Brian Scott Rogers

When one hears “Vietnam” many images and ideas enter the mind. The Vietnam War was America’s longest military engagement, and one of the most trying experiences in American history. The goal was to contain communism and preserve democracy in South Vietnam. However, casualties mounted; victory seemed far away; and it was dismaying to hear reports of the killing of Vietnamese civilians.

By its very nature, war is aggressive, hostile, and, of course, violent. In a combat zone, people become victims of war in two ways—either physically, through the direct destruction of life, limb, and property, or mentally, as people suffer simply by witnessing this destruction. When enemies come together in battle, people are naturally going to be killed, maimed, or seriously handicapped as a result of the fighting. However, the question we have to ask ourselves is, “Where is the line drawn between necessary killing in a combat situation and the needless murder of an unarmed opponent or civilian?” On March 16, 1968, a combat unit identified as Charlie Company, First Battalion of the Twentieth Infantry, landed on the outskirts of the hamlet My Lai 4, a suspected Viet Cong encampment. American troops had suffered a number of casualties from booby traps and sniper fire in the vicinity. As they landed, they were not fired upon, and if any Viet Cong were in the village, they quickly and quietly left. The soldiers of Charlie Company went into the hamlet of non-hostile Vietnamese civilians. Nearly all of the villagers were rounded up and killed. The mass killings took place in large ditches that the villagers were herded into and killed like cattle. The death toll reached over 200 civilians (conflicting numbers are reported in various sources). Lieutenant William Calley was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering 22 individuals. The sentence was reduced to 10 years, and after serving three months he was paroled.¹ Though My Lai is quite shocking, it was not an isolated event.

The “horror stories” of My Lai and other atrocities contributed to disenchantment within the ranks and resulted in some Americans labeling soldiers as “murders” and “baby-killers.” While we are fairly familiar with this, the point of view which is often ignored is that of the soldier himself. What did he think about his situation? What was his reaction to the war and the atrocities that he caused, participated in, or simply witnessed?

Simplistically, we can say that the reason for America’s involvement in Vietnam was supposed to be to help South Vietnam resist a communist government from taking over and to try to assist South Vietnam develop its own democratic governmental system. However, when soldiers were out in the field frequently dealing with Vietnamese villagers on a day to day basis, rarely could evidence be seen that the Vietnamese wanted a democratic government. Perhaps this “lack of

evidence" is due to the differences in our culture and that of the Vietnamese and the problems of the language barrier. Regardless, many soldiers felt that the Vietnamese were indifferent when it came to the form of government they would live under. In his highly controversial book, *Conversations with Americans*, Mark Lane reports a response from a former soldier: "I never saw any indication by the people at large that they were willing to be ruled by Saigon. I saw no indication that Saigon could or ever had effectively ruled the people."² Though many scholars and historians attack Lane's book as being extremely biased, this soldier's response seems to be fairly characteristic of the attitudes that many veterans had about the Vietnamese.

When some soldiers came to the realization that their sacrifices and work were all going for naught and they saw such things as the corruption in the Saigon government and the South Vietnamese Army's lack of help or support, they abandoned the idea that they were in Vietnam to liberate its people from communism. At this point, Robert Jay Lifton asserts, the soldiers began to view their time in Vietnam simply as an "exercise in survival rather than a defense of national values."³ Soldiers then focused their attention to the day they would finally leave Vietnam and began to ignore the reasons why they were sent there in the first place. Another interview by Lane illustrated this attitude when a soldier said, "My main ambition is just to get out of the Army and live a sane life."⁴

Many soldiers came to believe that the United States simply had no business in Southeast Asia and many felt that we were committing atrocities in Vietnam that we had fought to prevent in World War II. This may account for several veterans returning home, joining the anti-war movement, and demanding withdrawal from Vietnam. Joseph Arthur Doucette, Jr., a soldier who deserted and fled to Europe, summarizes his feelings about the war:

When I left there [Vietnam] I knew that we didn't belong there. I saw our brutality and lack of concern for the people. Some unthinking callous people might say that there are excesses in all wars. That may be true, but our presence there is for the purpose of defeating, not defending, democracy.⁵

In these aspects the public sector who opposed the war and the dissenting soldiers held similar views that the war was unjustified.

Soldiers who were outraged by what was going on soon found that the military would try to cover up atrocities, and they realized that they could do little until they were sent home. Other soldiers simply were unconcerned about what they had done in the field, and were not affected by guilt or remorse until long after they had returned home. Many expressed their feelings through anti-war groups, and it was veterans themselves who were some of the most active members of the anti-war movement. When the reality of what they had done hit them, many had trouble coping with their emotions. Lifton recorded one such soldier who said that if he had the ability to end the world, he would do it. When considering atrocities, this soldier says, "evil of that magnitude (committing atrocities) can only be killed by destroying everything."⁶ Thus, he lays the responsibility for atrocities on the whole of

American society, believes that all Americans should be punished whether they fought in Vietnam or not, and literally feels that this punishment should take the form of everyone in America simply being killed for the atrocities that occurred in Southeast Asia.

One of the most important questions is how do these atrocities occur, and what is it that causes a 19- or 20-year-old man to needlessly and maliciously take the life of a civilian or any other non-combatant in a war zone? Before looking at these reasons, though, one must realize that scholars disagree on the causes of atrocities. Some emphasize socioeconomic reasons at home and de-emphasize combat environment; while others argue that combat environment itself is the sole stimulus for causing soldiers to interact with civilians in a violent way.

In examining the social reasons for the occurrence of atrocities, several scholars discuss a soldier's upbringing, emphasizing his family's social status and his educational background. Peter Karsten, in *Laws, Soldiers, and Combat*, argues that the lower a soldier's family is on the social ladder and the lower his education, the more prone he is to participate in atrocities. While Karsten integrates both the social and the combat environment reasons in discussing the causes of atrocities, he states that some scholars support the idea that "the lower on the social scale one goes, the more likely one is to find authoritarianism, aggressiveness, and other 'anti-social' traits."⁷ The main "anti-social" trait is the use of violence to resolve problems, disputes, or insecurities that a person may have. Other "anti-social" traits can easily be seen in such matters as voter participation among the lower class. The lower class members who do not get involved in the political arena simply feel as if they have no power. When in a combat situation they find that they have a surplus of power at their disposal and therefore cannot deal with it responsibly. James Henry, a Vietnam veteran, explains: "In Vietnam GIs all of a sudden find themselves with the power of life and death in their hands, and they have never had this power before. I mean, they just get out of high school and all of a sudden they have all this power and it does something to them."⁸ When these soldiers are given this power, many do not understand exactly how it should be used. Many interpret it as though they have been given permission to do as they please, as if they were living in a state of anarchy. Another veteran stated, "When I first started using a gun over there, it was like someone saying to me, 'We're here. This is your right to...do whatever you want, whatever you think is right.'"⁹ However, when it came to doing what they thought was right, they sometimes crossed the line of acceptable behavior.

Again, a soldier with a low educational background could also be a candidate for committing an act of overt aggression. In high school, while young people are learning the fundamentals of math, science, reading, and other things which will help them later in life, they are also being taught to respect authority and follow a certain "code of conduct." A substantial percentage of GIs in Vietnam were high school dropouts and it could be argued that they lacked the discipline which schools normally instill. As a result, they could not handle the power given to them in a responsible fashion. In his book *My Lai 4*, Seymour Hersh discusses recruitment and enlistment, mentioning several instances where men volunteering for the armed

forces failed the aptitude tests required for entrance into the service. Under normal peacetime circumstances, these men would have been rejected and not permitted to serve in the military. However, the Armed Forces, needing recruits, allowed these men to enlist under the pretense that they would receive additional education they needed just after basic training. No such additional education was ever given.¹⁰ It could be argued that these low aptitude men and those who dropped out of school lacked the ability to distinguish a rational act or order from one that was illegal in nature. In the trials of those soldiers who were accused of committing war crimes, one claim that these soldiers made in trying to defend themselves was, "I was only following orders." After the trials at Nuremberg and the proceedings at the Geneva Accords, it was established that when charged to carry out an illegal order, a soldier has the right and responsibility to challenge that order. However, in the field of battle, a soldier may not be aware of this. Aware of it or not, Karsten argues: "The typical resistor to illegal orders tends to be an educated, more culturally enriched officer, and the typical performer of such commands is an enlisted man from a more authoritarian, less comfortable, less 'open' background."¹¹

Another reason that atrocities were frequent in Vietnam may simply be the difference in the two cultures involved in the conflict. In his book *One Morning in the War*, Richard Hammer discusses the events of My Lai, and at great length describes the culture of the Vietnamese. Most societies are naturally ethnocentric and as a result, the members of one culture often do not understand the customs, attitudes, ideas, or beliefs of another culture and generally look down upon that "strange" culture with disfavor. Thus, a cultural misunderstanding can lead to something more serious, the dehumanization of the people in that society. Because most Americans did not understand the Vietnamese culture, they tended to view them as something less than human. Hammer wrote: "They [the soldiers] have now come to look at Vietnamese as some sub-human species who live only by the grace of the Americans; to kill them is no more a crime than to spray DDT on an annoying insect.... To the Americans, it is meaningless, rarely done with malice, for there is no thought that what is being done is being done to human beings...."¹² This dehumanization can also be seen in other periods of history. Charles E. Martin, in an article titled "A Good One is a Dead One," provides an excellent comparison of the atrocities committed upon the Vietnamese to those committed against the American Indians during the Indian Wars of the nineteenth century. In his diary, Hervey Johnson, a veteran of those wars wrote: "I have often thought before I became a soldier that I would never try to kill or take the life of anyone, but I have got over that notion now. I could shoot an Indian with as much coolness as I would a dog, and I will do it if I can."¹³ Those who argue that history repeats itself, may have a strong point in dealing with wars involving two completely different cultures.

In describing the experiences of Charlie Company before the incident at My Lai, Hammer and Hersh reveal another reason why atrocities may occur—being unable to find the enemy and actually engage him in combat. Task Force Barker, the unit to which Charlie Company belonged, arrived in Vietnam early in December of

1967, and up until the time of the My Lai massacre (March 16, 1968) Charlie Company saw virtually no combat. The only casualties taken by Charlie Company during this time were inflicted by mines and booby traps. Scholars argue that when soldiers are constantly placed in situations where they are in danger and taking casualties from an "unseen" enemy, when they do engage the enemy or what they think is the enemy, the violence that is directed toward him could "spill over" into part of the civilian populace. Martin, in his article, declares: "Because of the enemy's elusiveness, the American soldier could not make war on those who made war on him. He was often left to make war on those non-combatants he could find."¹⁴ Karsten claims that units involved in counterinsurgency operations are more likely to commit overly aggressive acts than those "engaged in more conventional warfare."¹⁵

An unseen enemy does not always take the form of mines and booby traps. Combat units like the Viet Cong simply by their dress and organization usually could not be distinguished from the civilians and non-combatants. When a distinction between soldier and citizen cannot be made, the reaction of the soldier is to simply view them both with hatred and scorn. Occasionally in Vietnam, parents would wire their children with explosives and send them to American soldiers where they would then detonate their children, killing soldiers and their children as well. At other times, an elderly man or woman would throw a grenade at soldiers, and virtually anyone could design and build a booby trap. In an environment such as this, Hammer explains, soldiers "have to hate six-year-olds and 70-year-olds, you have to hate children and old people, you have to hate and fear all Vietnamese."¹⁶

Finally, another factor which should be considered in discussing why atrocities occurred is something which sets Vietnam apart from the other wars in which America has been engaged—the body count. When a nation goes to war, the military or government must formulate a clear-cut set of goals or objectives. In World War II, for example, goals were well defined and possible to pursue. World War II can be referred to as a "land acquisition" war because an easily distinguished front line existed, and the objective of taking over and keeping strategic areas was the main goal. For instance, the D-Day invasion began at the beaches of Normandy and the Allies proceeded to push the Germans back to the Rhine. While inflicting a high casualty rate was fairly important, it was not the governing factor in determining success or failure. When objectives and goals were as ill-defined as they were in Vietnam, perhaps the methods pursued by the military in trying to win the war became counter-productive. Lane summarized this "new" type of war: "The American forces in Vietnam and their allies hunt the enemy in a war that has no front lines. Conventional military objectives, confronting and overpowering the enemy army, capturing strategic areas are barely realizable."¹⁷ In Vietnam, the body count was essentially the only way of measuring success. According to Lifton, this can end with counter-productive results: "Recording the enemy's losses is a convention of war, but in the absence of any other goals or criteria for success, counting the enemy dead can become both malignant obsession and compulsive falsification."¹⁸ The falsification comes about in three ways. First, anyone who was

dead was considered Viet Cong and quickly became a number which was added to the count. Lifton illustrates this by quoting someone he calls the "my Lai Survivor," (an American GI who witnessed but did not participate in the events at My Lai): "If it's dead it's VC. Because it's dead. If it's dead it has to be VC. And of course a corpse couldn't defend itself anyhow."¹⁹ The second way the body count was inaccurate was that often livestock were counted; and often when a dismembered limb was found, it was counted as a body. And the count was inaccurate in that it could easily be altered or inflated when no bodies (or not enough bodies) had been found. In this case, someone somewhere in the chain of command would deliberately falsify the count to reflect "success."

Interestingly, the soldiers themselves did not place much emphasis on body count; rather it was the officers who wanted to see high kill ratios. For in Vietnam, careers could be advanced merely by the body count that an officer's men had produced. Karsten explains: "...the controversial body count has been a means for officers to advance their careers and this is also a symptom of what ails the military in Vietnam. How a man is rated generally as a commander from company up is by how many enemy he killed. Great pressure was placed on this, one of the key things for advancement."²⁰ After reading different accounts of what took place in My Lai this becomes clear for it appears that Captain Medina, company commander in charge of Charlie Company, was eager for his men to establish a high body count in order for him to impress his senior officers. Philip Caputo wrote in *A Rumor of War*: "Bodies. Bodies. Bodies. Battalion wanted bodies. Neal wanted bodies."²¹ He is referring to Captain Neal, his commanding officer, who—Caputo charges—was so intent on maintaining a high body count that he promised every man who got a confirmed kill extra beer rations. It appears that when a smaller unit such as a platoon or company was out in the field, the officers placed a great deal of emphasis on achieving a high body count so that unit, or rather that officer, could further his career.

Who then, is responsible for the illegal acts of aggression committed against an enemy? While we have considered the influences which cause atrocities, the military views these influences as irrelevant. Before his court-martial, in which he was charged with the murder of two civilians, Caputo wrote an essay to use in his defense:

In guerrilla war...the line between legitimate and illegitimate killing is blurred. The policies of free-fire zones, in which a soldier is permitted to shoot at any human target, armed or unarmed, and body counts further confuse the fighting man's moral senses. My patrol had gone out thinking they were going after enemy soldiers. As for me, I had indeed been in an agitated state of mind and my ability to make clear judgments had been faulty, but I had been in Vietnam for 11 months....²²

Caputo's defense lawyer simply crumpled up the essay claiming that this excuse would do him no good in a court-martial. So, from the point of view of the military, the soldier is an individual, and as an individual, he alone is responsible for his

actions. While it may be easy to accept this, we have to keep in mind that the army is a product of the American public, and thus, the soldier is also a product of society. While in high school, young men grew up hearing names like "gook" and "dink," and the military itself also used these terms. "Gook" and "dink" became part of the English language in America, but when atrocities occurred, people used the words "human being." In doing this, the public was throwing their responsibility onto the shoulders of the soldiers who committed atrocities. While soldiers should be held accountable for what they do, the societies that place these soldiers on foreign soil should also be held responsible for what goes on in the field.

We had a problem in Vietnam. What we need to concern ourselves with is how to prevent such acts from happening in the future. While we can only hope that we are never involved in another war, we cannot see into the future. If we do find ourselves in another war, a few things can be done in an attempt to avoid atrocities from ever occurring again. One of the more obvious solutions is to screen recruits with more selectivity and to attempt to identify those individuals with a destructive or sadistic personality and simply not allow them to serve in the military unless it is in a non-combat role. While the military already screens those trying to enter, Vietnam shows us that something was lacking in the screening.

Another thing which could be done is "provide more elaborate and sophisticated training in the laws of warfare."²³ To do this we could initiate a program in which recruits would be taught how to treat civilians and prisoners of war in a combat environment. Granted that a simple and clear set of "black and white" rules concerning the treatment of civilians and prisoners is unrealistic, recruits could be taught how to use discretion and rationale in dealing with these situations. Basic training is generally composed of 10-12 weeks of physical training and learning how to use different equipment (the amount of time varies from service to service). If this period were to be extended so that this extra training could be given, soldiers would learn to exercise the power entrusted in them more intelligently and responsibly.

One of the most important things that we can do is educate everyone in society in an attempt to try to remove the ethnocentric attitudes that people hold. If we are more aware and understanding of the other cultures in the world, perhaps we could find ourselves treating these different cultures better when a state of war does exist. Possibly, if we understand them better, armed conflict could be prevented in the first place. While cultural education could idealistically be taught in school, it should most definitely be taught to soldiers who find themselves going to a foreign society. The insight that this education would provide would not only be useful in a practical sense but it could reduce the number of aggressions committed in time of war.

The whole experience of Vietnam has raised a voluminous number of questions, and we are still trying to deal with the issues that this experience has given us. The problem of atrocities in war is a grave one. When we consider the number of atrocities that took place in Vietnam and look at how little has been done to rectify the situation, we can see how in the future America may find itself committing these same acts once again.

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by
Bryan McGovern

On June 4, 1833, Garnet Wolseley was born to Garnet and Frances Ann Wolseley in Ireland. He was the eldest of seven children in a family which had a long history of soldiering. He, too, was to become a soldier, earning ranks which had never before been held by someone so young. At the age of 21 he was made a captain during the Crimean War. Believing that to die for Great Britain was the greatest honor a man could achieve, he began to accumulate a number of medals and was promoted to general after commanding troops to victory in India, China, Canada, South Africa, Cyprus, and Egypt.

Aside from being a great soldier and leader, he was also a staunch advocate of army reform. Lehmann considers him the father of the modern British army. Having come from humble origins and having earned his commissions, he was against the practice of the wealthy buying their commissions and despised the practice of promotions due to seniority. He spoke out harshly against these practices and was responsible for better treatment of the soldier, shorter service terms for the soldiers, up-to-date arms, expansion of the intelligence department, and quicker mobilization schemes. He even published a handbook for soldiers in the field. He retired soon after becoming Commander-in-Chief of the British army. Famous during the Victorian era, Wolseley has basically become an unknown. Lehmann wants people to know that Wolseley was a great soldier, a military reformer, a well-read man, and a person who was badly treated by the government and Queen Victoria, due perhaps to his huge ego and aloofness.

Wolseley was a capable and competent soldier, made obvious by the fact that he never knew failure until his final expedition against Khartoum when he failed to rescue the besieged General "Chinese" Charlie Gordon. But this failure was due more to Gladstone's indecisiveness, rather than Wolseley's ability as a general. Further, no man had ever risen through the ranks of the British army faster or at a younger age than Wolseley. Despite the fact that he was disliked by Queen Victoria, Prince George, and most members of the House of Lords, he was made Sir Garnet Wolseley, Knight Commander of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, and then named Lord Wolseley of Cairo and Stafford. These honors were, of course, solely for his abilities as an officer—not for his political views.

Wolseley helped turn the public perception of the soldier as a second-class citizen into a respected person who protected Britain and her honor. His view of

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sweeping reforms helped phase out the practice of promotion due to seniority and replaced it with promotion due to ability. He also tried to avoid the abuse of liquor by the soldiers by not requesting it for his own troops. His soldiers undoubtedly fought better without hangovers.

Privately, reading was Wolseley's passion. While other officers were out socializing, he was in his quarters reading. He was quite intelligent, but it was his belief that he was superior to others that hurt him. Queen Victoria said that he was arrogant. And because of his ego, he did not get along with most people in the government. They were against reform and were appalled by his public outcry for army reform. And because of this he was not given command in India, which he desired.

His ego was huge, evidenced by a letter he wrote to his wife saying that the Household Cavalry of the Queen owed their further existence not to their courageous fight in Egypt, but instead to his brilliant placement of them. But personality should not have come into play when placing proper rewards and recognition where it was deserved.

I definitely agree with the author on his thesis and believe that he supported his beliefs with facts. I do not think that anyone would argue against the fact that Wolseley was a great soldier. His record speaks for itself. But I do not think that he criticized the personality of Wolseley enough. Wolseley often stated that he did not like the Irish, the Scots, nor the Americans. He felt the British were superior to them. But Lehmann does not explain or even note Wolseley's hypocrisy when he was friendly toward these groups. Despite being born in Ireland (he was a Saxon), Wolseley disliked the Irish and opposed Home Rule. On the other hand, when an Irish battalion performed well, he claimed them as his "countrymen."

Lehmann's research is excellent. His sources consist of mostly primary documents, especially letters from Wolseley to his brothers, daughter, and wife. He studied letters from Wolseley's acquaintances, as well as books written by Wolseley. Secondary sources consist of former biographies of Wolseley and military histories related to his career. I recommend the book to readers interested in biographies of military leaders.

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