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Claggett Wilson, *First Attack on the Bois de Belleau, June 6, 1918, at Five O'Clock–3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment of Marines Advancing*, ca. 1919, watercolor and pencil on paperboard, image: 19 x 23 in. (48.2 x 58.4 cm), Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Alice H. Rossin

MARINE CORPS HISTORY

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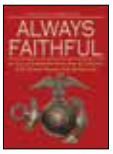
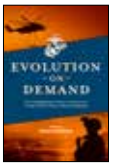
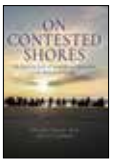


Always Faithful: 250 Years of Remarkable Stories from the Collection of the National Museum of the Marine Corps

A New Conception of War: John Boyd, the U.S. Marines, and Maneuver Warfare



Evolution on Demand: The Changing Roles of the U.S. Marine Corps in Twenty-first Century Conflicts and Beyond



On Contested Shores: The Evolving Role of Amphibious Operations in the History of Warfare Vols. 1 & 2

Journal of Advanced Military Studies (JAMS)

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BOOK REVIEWS

FROM THE EDITORS

For two and a half centuries, the U.S. Marine Corps has embodied the motto "Always Faithful," maintaining a constant state of readiness to address threats and crises worldwide. In honor of the Corps' 250th birthday, *Marine Corps History* has dedicated this year's volume to examining that legacy. This winter issue furthers our commitment to rigorous scholarship by highlighting two distinct themes: the nuanced tension between history and heritage, and the institution's proven resilience in environments characterized by chaos and friction.

Theme one, the interplay of history and heritage, is anchored by two thought-provoking articles. Dr. Mark Folse interrogates the historiography of the Corps' origins, arguing that the accepted birthdate—whether the Continental Marines of 1775 or the reestablished U.S. Marines of 1798—has shifted during the past 150 years, often dependent on the background of the historians writing the narrative. Complementing this analysis of institutional memory, Dr. Heather A. Warfield examines the "Devil Dog" fountain at Belleau Wood. She reveals how a site with no original historical connection to the Marines has been transformed by mythmaking into a modern site of pilgrimage. Together, these works illustrate how Marine identity is shaped not only by the rigid facts of the historical record but also by the evolving traditions of heritage.

The issue's second theme focuses on operational realities. Whether facing logistical challenges in the Pacific or near-overwhelming enemy numbers in the frozen mountains of Korea, Marines have consistently operated where certainty is a luxury and chaos is the norm. These articles reveal that success in such conditions is rarely linear; rather, it is often the result of muddling through with grit and prevailing through preparation. Major Samuel T. Wetselaar explores this dynamic in his analysis of the Guadalcanal campaign, where "hastily planned and executed" logistics forced Marines to endure incredible hardships. Wetselaar argues that despite the chaos, the 1st Marine Division overcame strategic limitations through exhaustive effort at crucial logistical nodes, enabling them to survive and eventually thrive. Additionally, the theme of survival amid chaos is brought into stark visual relief by deceased Marine staff sergeant Frank Kerr's photographic essay on the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. Marking the 75th anniversary of that "epic breakout," Kerr chronicles the experience of the 1st Marine Division as they were surrounded by 120,000 Chinese troops and endured hostile winter conditions.

Ultimately, the antidote to such chaos is institutional preparation. Dr. Bradford Wineman explores this by detailing the revitalization of the Marine Corps Reserve between 1960 and 1964. During this period, reform-minded officers transformed a neglected organization into a "reliable and competent fighting unit." Wineman's research underscores that by prioritizing training and professional discourse, the Reserve moved from an era of ambivalence to become a force "poised to fulfill their mission," proving that robust readiness is the essential prerequisite for thriving in future crises.

Finally, historians mark the loss of two notable Marines. Major Fred H. Allison commemorates the life and service of Lieutenant General Jefferson D. Howell, who spent 37 years in the Marine Corps, most of them as a fighter pilot. He flew 334 combat missions during two tours in Southeast Asia in the 1970s; served as an instructor at the Naval Academy and at Quantico; and commanded Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 212, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, and finally Marine Forces Pacific, after which he retired in 1998. His leadership of VMFA-212 earned him the John Paul Jones Award for Inspirational Leadership from the Navy League, a tribute to the strong sense of family and unity the Lancers developed during his command. Timothy Heck remembers Major John "Jack" McClelland Elliott, who was "a towering figure in Marine Corps aviation history" and was the face of the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC) to thousands of visitors through his service as a docent. Elliott began volunteering at the NMMC in 2006, after 47 years of federal service in Marine Corps Aviation, with the Smithsonian Institution, and the Naval Historical Center. He published dozens of articles and books, mostly focused on Marine Aviation, completing his final book after his 100th birthday. The NMMC staff remembered him "as a passionate steward of Marine Corps history" who brought "history to life with a depth and authenticity that only a Marine of his era could provide."

Since the late nineteenth century, the Marine Corps has employed the study of history and the promotion of heritage to bolster Service pride and battlefield success. In that spirit, *Marine Corps History* remains committed to advancing historical scholarship as the Service charts its path toward the next 250 years.

The issue closes with several book reviews focusing on a variety of military history subjects to guide readers toward new and valuable resources. As always, the editors are eager to receive article submissions from those whose passion and expertise make the history of the Marine Corps available and accessible to readers, including submissions of historiographical essays examining the extant sources on the Marine Corps' history and the shape of scholarly debate on specific events or actions or on broader general history topics. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on these topics and to your future participation as an author, reviewer, or reader. Junior faculty and advanced graduate students are encouraged to submit articles and book reviews, as well. Join the conversation and find us online on our LinkedIn page (https://tinyurl.com/y380xnp5), at MC UPress on Facebook, MC_UPress on Twitter, and MCUPress on Instagram, or contact us via email at MCU_Press@usmcu.edu for article submission requirements and issue deadlines.

Semper fidelis!

•1775•

Chaos, Confusion, and Cornflakes

THE MUDDLED LOGISTICS OF GUADALCANAL

By Major Samuel T. Wetselaar

Abstract: In August 1942, the United States seized key terrain in the Solomon Islands to halt Japanese expansion in the South Pacific. During this hastily planned and executed operation, thousands of Marines endured incredible hardships operating at the end of a long and nearly depleted line of logistics. While it is tempting to join the historical chorus assigning blame, it is imperative to note that something prevented this thin line of logistics from failing. To fully appreciate this achievement, we must examine the limitations of this operation from the strategic to the tactical levels. The 1st Marine Division, placed in an incredibly difficult situation, also committed mistakes that further exacerbated the circumstances. However, they overcame these limitations and errors and their logistical efforts ultimately proved successful. As they muddled through this operation, exhaustive efforts at crucial throughput nodes ensured victory. Combat loading, beach operations, and port operations enabled the Marines to live, survive, and eventually thrive despite the mass of chaos, confusion, and cornflakes.
Keywords: Guadalcanal, 1st Marine Division, 1st Pioneer Battalion, logistics, Operation Watchtower, combat loading

> My most vivid memory of this hectic period entails the D-4, Ran[dolph M.] Pate, sitting hunched over a desk in a small, leaky shack working 18–20-hour days on cargo manifests while troops a few yards away forcibly and in unmistakable terms defied the science of logistics.[1]
>
> ~ MajGen Alexander A. Vandegrift

> I think all hands felt that they had done the best they could with what they had and the outcome was in the hands of God.[2]
>
> ~ LtCol Merrill B. Twining

Introduction

Like most other functions in warfare, logistics requires a blend of art and science. In its scientific form, logistics is absolutely precise, conducted using specific calculations that today are aided by spreadsheets and computer software. Its flawless data is not hindered by friction or failure. As an art, logistics is messy and requires behind-the-scenes effort that is constantly mired by the realities of a world

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https://doi.org/10.35318/mch.2026110201

[1] Alexander A. Vandegrift, *Once a Marine: The Memoirs of General A. A. Vandegrift, United States Marine Corps* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964), 113–14.

[2] Merrill B. Twining, *No Bended Knee: The Battle for Guadalcanal—The Memoir of Gen. Merrill B. Twining USMC (Ret.)*, ed. Neil G. Carey (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1996), 47.

full of friction. Its implementation is dependent on fallible people. Those who practice this craft are all too familiar with their work being strongly criticized when it fails. They prefer instead to quietly enjoy the resounding silence that comes with a job well-done. The logisticians during the battle for Guadalcanal were all too familiar with the burden of always being the culprit. During their battle, the logistical science predicted failure. Forced to carry on, they were marked as scapegoats. Despite this, their exhaustive efforts paint a masterpiece of logistics that can only be fully appreciated by those who have felt their afflictions.

Beginning in August 1942, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, with support from the U.S. Army, executed Operation Watchtower in the Solomon Islands as the first major Allied offensive in World War II. Primarily waged on Guadalcanal, a malaria-infested, jungle-covered island in the South Pacific, victory was far from certain. While the Imperial Japanese Navy was at the peak of its power, the United States fought this battle using outdated equipment, long before the unstoppable force of American industrial might tipped the scales. Triggered by an aggressive response to Japanese expansion in the South Pacific, the Navy and Marine Corps had little time to plan and prepare, operating at the end of a long and nearly depleted line of logistics. As a result, the Marines endured horrible conditions on the island while the Navy suffered astonishing losses at sea. As this attritional struggle consumed more personnel, equipment, and supplies, both sides came to understand that whoever brought in more stuff would win. Disadvantaged by overextended supply lines and hastily improvised logistical procedures, the United States' lack of superiority in this battle caused many to doubt. From its inception and throughout its execution, Operation Watchtower became known for its shoestring logistics.[3] However, instead of catastrophe, something prevented this thin line of logistics from failing.

What prevented logistical failure that ultimately led to success at Guadalcanal? Unlike many of the subsequent amphibious operations fought throughout the Pacific island-hopping campaign of World War II, Guadalcanal was fought against a superior enemy using outdated equipment and limited supplies. Therefore, the answer cannot be American industrial might, as its full impact came much later. Furthermore, although relevant to the larger historiography of the battle, the logistical failures of the Japanese are not the focal point of this question. Instead, the answer explores how the Marine Corps artistically muddled through this battle, focused on their actions and support they received that prevented logistical failure and capitalized on the narrow margins that enabled victory.

Just-enough-throughput operations at critical times and in crucial locations prevented logistical failure during Operation Watchtower. First, the herculean effort of combat loading operations conducted in deplorable conditions in Wellington, New Zealand, provided 1st Marine Division with just enough to ensure success during the darkest and most trying days at the outset of the operation. Second, 1st Pioneer Battalion's improved beach operations throughout the latter phases of the conflict ensured efficient throughput of equipment and supplies. Third, and finally, the Joint port operations in November and December in Noumea, New Caledonia, unclogged the South Pacific Area's massive logistics bottleneck necessary to achieving victory. While none of these throughput operations went perfectly, they withstood the trials of combat and did just enough to prevent failure and eventually lead to success.

To make this argument, it is necessary to conduct a historiographical review, examining the rich history and numerous perspectives of this battle. Then, it is important to establish a baseline to provide context for the Marine Corps' manning, training, and equipping, or lack thereof, prior to World War II. We then must examine the limitations placed on those executing the operation, using an ever-narrowing

[3] Maj John L. Zimmerman, *The Guadalcanal Campaign* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1949); Richard B. Frank, *Guadalcanal: The Definitive Account of the Landmark Battle* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 277; and James D. Hornfischer, *Neptune's Inferno: The U.S. Navy at Guadalcanal* (New York: Bantam Books, 2012), 23, 26. Zimmerman's is a monograph focused on "factual narratives of the major operations" that carefully avoids sharp criticism and instead highlights this battle as the turning point of the war.

lens beginning at the strategic level and focusing down to the tactical level, from where the Marines emerge with just enough to live, survive, and eventually thrive. Conclusions and lessons learned at each of these crucial throughput nodes strengthened logistical throughput planning for future amphibious operations during World War II and provide long-term practical applications that still have value today.

Historiography

Contrary to its successful outcome, the rich historiography of Guadalcanal paints a gloomy picture full of suffering, failure, and shame. The inter-Service rivalries and finger-pointing that were common during and after the war are apparent in the historical record. Due to the circumstances and sense of despair that prevailed throughout much of the prolonged battle, the historiography of Guadalcanal as a whole tends to focus on leadership and strategic failures while promoting individual acts of heroism and valor. Differing accounts in the historical narrative tend to sensationalize facts for the purpose of outward blame and self-preservation. This approach extends the shoestring narrative that amplifies logistical failures instead of searching for the explanation of their contributions to victory. While authors do not necessarily take a specific stance, the typical perspectives woven through the historical record over time tend to focus on the Marine Corps, Navy, and Army indictments against one another.

Always first to fight, the Marine Corps' written accusations began in 1951 with Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl's *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare.*[4] This account blames the Navy for rapidly departing the area and abandoning the Marines to fight on their own after successfully disembarking only half of their essential supplies. Sponsored by the Marine Corps with approval from the Secretary of the Navy, this volume provides extensive and sharp criticisms of the Navy's lack of preparedness and understanding of amphibious operations prior to Guadalcanal and simultaneously praises the Corps for its initiative in the development of this important doctrine.[5] Amplified by the publication of Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift's memoirs 13 years later, Marine accusations aim directly at Vice Admiral Frank J. Fletcher for his autonomous decision to withdraw the carriers earlier than planned and well short of the time needed to offload all of the Marines' supplies. Caught in the blast radius, Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner is charged for his reluctance to forego the tactical employment of 1st Marine Division during the amphibious assault, which contributed to the lack of manpower available on shore.[6] Half a century after the war, Vandegrift's operations officer, Lieutenant Colonel Merrill B. Twining, felt compelled to offer his side of the story, feeling that Marine actions in the battle had not "received the detailed evaluative treatment they deserve."[7] His memoirs offer exceptional detail aided by an obviously vivid memory. Although written with a tone of humility, he offers even sharper criticisms, likely bolstered by the confidence gained through the attainment of much higher rank and by the deaths of the accused.[8] Twining is especially critical of the Navy's logistics and its complete lack of understanding of a landing force's needs during ship-to-shore operations. More contemporary accounts appear less critical; however, they continue to play on the shoestring narrative that attributes Marine suffering on Guadalcanal to Navy incompetence and neglect.[9] The Corps also eagerly points blame at the Army for not properly relieving Marines when planned once the amphibious assault phase was complete. Both Vandegrift and Twining single out Army generals for defiant opposition to supporting the Navy or Marine Corps

[4] Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare: Its Theory, and Its Practice in the Pacific* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015). In 1949, the Marine Corps published its fifth volume of operational histories of World War II.

[5] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, vi, 5–71. The official agreement between Princeton University and the CMC happened on 28 April 1947, while Gen Vandegrift was Commandant.

[6] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 106–9; and Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 120, 129–30.

[7] Twining, *No Bended Knee*, ix.

[8] Twining was a lieutenant colonel during the battle, but later retired with three stars. His book was published in 1996, 35 years after Turner's death and 23 years after Fletcher's.

[9] David J. Ulbrich, *Preparing for Victory: Thomas Holcomb and the Making of the Modern Marine Corps, 1936–1943* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 130–43; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 13.

in an operation they clearly felt was doomed.[10] Other than sparse praise from Vandegrift and Twining, the historical record from the Marine perspective offers little to highlight the logistical successes, instead demonstrating an obvious preference to remain critical.

Seemingly in response to these accusations, the Navy perspective begins on the defensive. In 1950, one year before Isley and Crowl published their work, Turner complained to the director of naval history about their "one-sided" approach and the potential for their work to "start serious controversies."[11] The Navy published Vice Admiral George C. Dyer's biography of Turner, in which he aggressively defends Turner and his actions during the Battle of Guadalcanal. Published 11 years after Turner's death, Dyer used declassified reports and numerous ship's logs to relentlessly chastise the Marines for logistical chaos on the beach while simultaneously praising Turner and his naval amphibians for going above and beyond to support the Marines. Dyer's fiercest defense is directed against Turner's culpability in the disaster of the Battle of Savo Island. As such, Dyer strikes the first note that steadily turns into a chorus of blame pointing up the chain of command toward Fletcher, Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, and even Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, until landing on Admiral Ernest J. King's shoulders. Fletcher is routinely criticized by various historians and naval officers for his eager departure from the area focused on his paranoia to protect his carriers.[12] In 2006, John B. Lundstrom offered an objective defense of Fletcher that acknowledges his failures, attempts to excuse some of them circumstantially, and aims direct accusations at Fletcher's superiors.[13] Admiral Ghormley receives the sharpest criticism for his absence of leadership, lack of aggression, and inability to solve the logistical bottleneck, for which he only recently received some defense.[14] More recent accounts add exceptional detail and perspective while continuing the tradition of blaming the logistical issues on aggressive decisions made thousands of kilometers away from Guadalcanal. Most accounts deplore the Corps for its improper combat loading and absolute failure of beach operations during the initial offload. The Navy echoes Marine reproaches of the Army and accuses General Douglas H. MacArthur for his recalcitrant behavior throughout Operation Watchtower. Collectively, the Navy's historical approach begins with a staunch defense willing to trade insults and steadily zooms out to provide strategic understanding to the tactical logistical issues.

Similar to its stance during the battle, the Army takes a somewhat hands-off approach to the historical narrative and more of an analytical tone. Instead of condemning the logistics issues on shore on Guadalcanal, the Army instead focuses on the network of logistics throughout the Pacific theater. Some accounts adopt an accusatory tone that blames the Navy for its rushed plan, the lack of unity of command in the Pacific, and its lack of bravery in the employment of its carriers. These authors also blame the Navy and Corps alike for their failure to properly plan for airfield construction on Guadalcanal. Focusing on the science of logistics, using calculations and conclusions aided by hindsight, the Army's "Green Books," published decades after the war, give the Army the ability to address the strategic and logistical failures others made while crediting itself for the eventual success.[15] The Army defends its accused inaction and delayed relief of the Marines on Guadalcanal on the Navy for being

[10] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 164; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 40.
[11] George C. Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer: The Story of Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 1973), 202–3.
[12] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 94.
[13] John B. Lundstrom, *Black Shoe Carrier Admiral: Frank Jack Fletcher at Coral Sea, Midway, and Guadalcanal* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2006).
[14] Maxwell L. Oliver, "Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley: In the Shadow of the Fleet" (graduate thesis, Naval War College, 2020).
[15] John Miller, *United States Army in World War II—The War in the Pacific*, vol. 2, *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Department of the Army, 1949), hereafter *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive*; Richard Leighton and Robert Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–1943* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1955); Louis Morton, *United States Army in World War II—The War in the Pacific*, vol. 10, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1962), hereafter *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*; Richard Leighton and Robert Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1943–1945* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 1989).

unable to provide adequate shipping to deliver them to the island. The Army accounts offer some criticism of MacArthur for his inconsistent approach to aggressive action in the Solomon Islands that wavered based on who was in command.[16] Not known to remain in the shadows, MacArthur reflects on the war from his self-imposed immortal perspective that conveniently places the blame on Washington and, more specifically, the Navy, for failing to provide unity of command necessary for the thrust across the Pacific.[17] In an attempt to save his reputation following the humiliating end to his career, he argued that "although [he] was the senior ranking officer by many years, [he was] willing to accept a subordinate position, to accomplish the general good."[18] Discounting MacArthur, the Army's perspective appears to offer the most objective approach to this topic, nearly devoid of the emotions that are so prevalent in the Marine and Navy accounts.

In light of these fierce arguments, it is important to summarize the host of issues that collectively rolled downhill, gained momentum, and nearly resulted in failure. Beginning with manning, training, and equipping during the interwar period to the strategic, operational, and tactical circumstances of 1942, the ever-narrowing lens of problems helps scope the logistical predicament the Marines found themselves in on Guadalcanal. Many of these problems went seemingly unaddressed or sufficiently ignored.

Interwar Manning, Training, and Equipping

Following World War I, the majority of U.S. war preparations were based around the strategies outlined in the color-coded war plans. War Plan Orange was the series of plans that governed U.S. preparations for war in the Pacific against Japan. Although it was primarily focused on major fleet actions against the Japanese, War Plan Orange also emphasized conquering and occupying advanced naval outposts throughout the Western Pacific. To do so, the United States needed an amphibious force capable of "immediate amphibious offensive against the Japanese Central Pacific Islands, as soon as war with Japan was declared."[19] The Marine Corps' role in supporting the fleet with such an expeditionary force governed a large part of their manning, training, and equipping needs throughout the 1930s, with mixed results.

At no time during the 1930s was the Marine Corps properly manned to be the amphibious force needed to support a war against Japan. Recruiting efforts—focused on travel and adventure or as a means of escaping the challenges of the Great Depression—continued to fall short and did not provide enough accessions to man the Marine Corps to its meagerly authorized strength of 17,000. Furthermore, many Marines were deployed to Nicaragua or China to support various missions that did not enable them to participate in training exercises focused on this critical amphibious mission. While steady progress was made in recruiting and retention efforts under Commandant Major General Thomas Holcomb, it was the attack on Pearl Harbor that enabled the Corps to expand nearly threefold, from 55,500 to 143,000 Marines. Because this authorized expansion was brought about by the demands of war, basic training was expedited, experienced Marines were pulled from their units and shot-gunned throughout the Corps to newly activated units, and the vast quantity of the new "Pearl Harbor" Marines further diluted the experience throughout the Corps.[20] This meant that many of its practitioners would first learn the challenges of amphibious warfare on hostile shores.

Although it was the first time for many of its Marines, 1st Marine Division was well exposed to the fundamentals of amphibious operations, thanks in large part to the series of Fleet Exercises (FLEX) it participated in from 1935 to 1941. Using its own *Tentative Manual for Landing Operations*, Marines practiced amphibious assaults, simulating the seizure of advanced naval bases, off the shores of California, North Carolina, and in the Caribbean. Through trial and error,

[16] Miller, *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive*, 8–24.
[17] Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 172–73.
[18] MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 172.
[19] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 230.
[20] Ulbrich, *Preparing for Victory*, 48, 123.

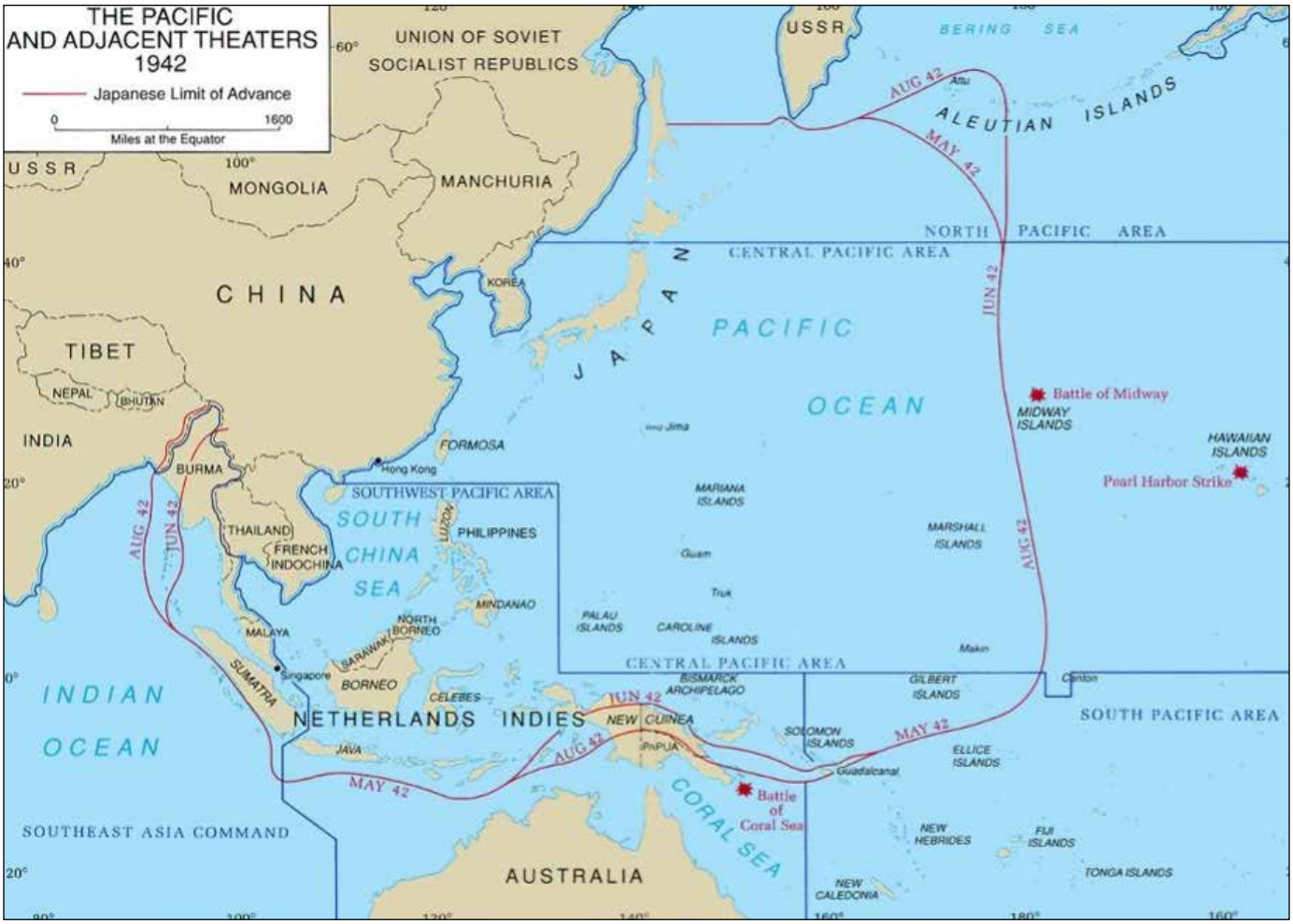
the Marine Corps and Navy together identified important components unique to these complicated operations. Together, they addressed issues in the areas of naval gunfire, night landings, air support, and command and control. Through these exercises, they also identified one of the main issues facing an amphibious assault force: congestion of logistics on the beach. To resolve this problem, two lines of effort were implemented. First, they established beach and shore parties responsible for the efficient marking, unloading, staging, and follow-on movement of personnel, material, and supplies to and from the beach. Of the many new units activated by the Corps in the early 1940s, the Pioneer Battalion was created to handle these burdens, albeit not in nearly enough time to develop streamlined tactics, techniques, and procedures at a large enough scale. Unintentionally, Guadalcanal was their first real opportunity to perform this task. Second, they invented the idea of combat loading. This new concept required detailed planning to ensure all individual and unit supplies and equipment were properly loaded onto the correct vessels in reverse-priority order to ensure the most essential supplies would be the first to land on the beach and for the Marines most in need of them. Training in Quantico and Norfolk, Virginia, ensued, followed by inadequate practical application that, like most peacetime logistics training, failed to "duplicate the urgency and stringency of logistic conditions in war."[21] Although lacking, the intentional practical application of combat loading and ship-to-shore movement enabled the Corps to identify critical equipment shortfalls.[22]

During the decade preceding another global war, U.S. military equipment shortfalls were regrettably common. In pursuit of equipment needed to perfect its new amphibious doctrine, the Marine Corps found allies in private industry willing to experiment. The Corps desperately needed landing craft capable of carrying Marines and equipment through shallow waters, beaching without broaching, and retracting in order to quickly repeat the process. Through trial and error and with miniscule funding, the Corps steadily developed, tested, and produced various models to suit its needs, ultimately resulting in the creation of the medium landing craft (LCM) and the landing vehicle tracked (LVT). Unfortunately, it was not until 1939 that the Corps was finally authorized to test these craft as part of the annual FLEXs in order to prove their worth and acquire funding. Fortunately, some LCMs and LVTs were produced in time and eventually proved crucial during Guadalcanal. Unfortunately, the opposition they faced throughout development prevented the earlier production of the armored amphibian (LVTA) that was used on a grand scale beginning in 1943 and throughout the rest of the war.[23] Due to the Navy's constrained budget, the Bureau of Ships had little interest in helping the Marine Corps in these developments. Not enticed by amphibious operations, the Navy remained focused on combatant surface ships, even neglecting its own logistical needs. As is still typical, logistics were assumed and the capabilities of the merchant fleet were conveniently inflated, to the eventual detriment of logistical capacity and the Navy's "Fleet Train."[24] Although the decrease in available shipping was eventually curtailed by acts of Congress at the end of the decade, the pump of American industrial power was not primed in time to adequately respond to infamous events then unforeseen.

Ever Narrowing Lens

Following their success at Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Japanese forces expanded their perimeter and quickly captured the Philippines, Thailand, Malaya, Singapore, Burma, the Dutch East Indies, Wake Island, the Gilbert Islands, New Britain, and Guam (figure 1). As the Japanese advanced, the United States, acting as the principal Allied authority in the Pacific theater, adopted a defensive strategy and organized the Pacific into two main areas of responsi-

[21] Duncan S. Ballantine, *U.S. Naval Logistics in the Second World War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), 7.
[22] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 43–44, 66–67; and Ulbrich, *Preparing for Victory*, 44–94.
[23] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 67–69.
[24] George C. Dyer, *On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor: The Memoirs of Admiral James O. Richardson* (Washington, DC: Naval History Division, 1973), 262; and Peter C. Luebke, Timothy L. Francis, and Heather M. Haley, *Contested Logistics: Sustaining the Pacific War* (Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, 2023), 15–21.



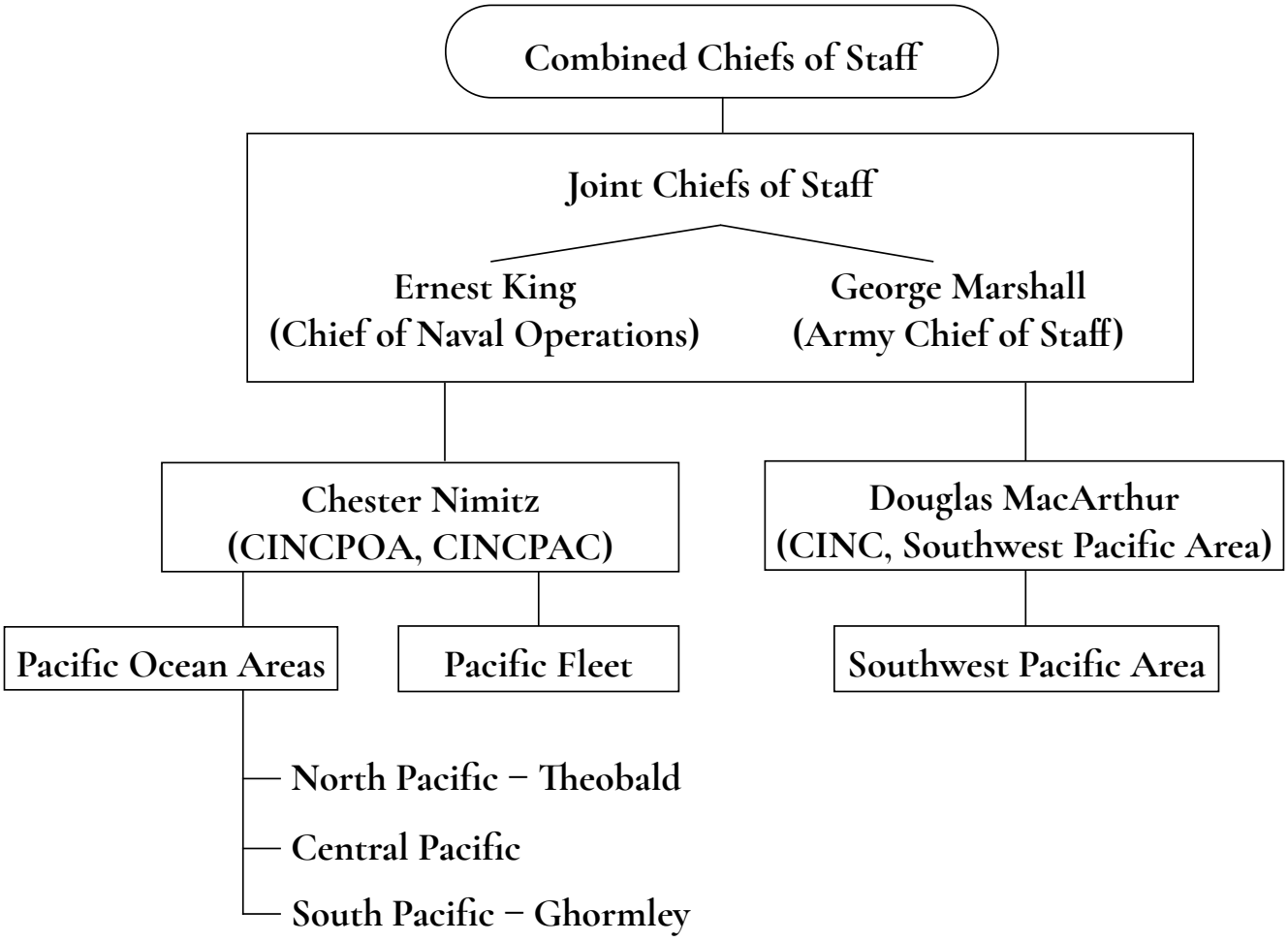
U.S. Army Center of Military History

Figure 1. Map of Pacific theater and Japanese conquests, 1942.

bility. In part due to its size, but perhaps more due to personality conflicts, General George C. Marshall and Admiral Ernest J. King of the Joint Chiefs of Staff divided the Pacific theater between the Army and the Navy into MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area and Nimitz's Pacific Ocean Areas. These adjacent and supporting commands fell directly under the authority of the Joint Chiefs in Washington. The Southwest Pacific Area primarily included the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, New Guinea, and Australia while the Pacific Ocean Areas spanned the remainder of the Pacific Ocean to include its network of islands and archipelagos (figure 1).[25]

As part of this construct, the Pacific Ocean Area required further subdivision, resulting in the creation of the North, Central, and South Pacific Areas, and required the establishment of entirely new commands. Nimitz retained command of the Central Pacific and appointed Rear Admiral Robert A. Theobald to command the North Pacific Area and Ghormley to command the South Pacific (figure 2). Under this complex command structure, a request from Ghormley in New Zealand to MacArthur in Australia traveled to Nimitz's staff in Hawaii, then to the Joint Chiefs in Washington, and then finally back across the international date line to MacArthur in Australia, traveling more than 28,000 kilometers and crossing nine time zones. While serving in Washington, DC, as the deputy chief for the Pacific and the Far East in the War

[25] Miller, *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive*, 7.



Adapted by MCUP

Figure 2. Allied command structure in the Pacific theater.

Plans Division, Major General Dwight D. Eisenhower summarized that MacArthur's unwillingness to serve under a naval officer and the Navy's defiance that its ships would not be controlled by MacArthur led to the creation of the distinct theaters.[26] Whatever the reasons, this decision had tremendous consequences on the conduct of the war and, in MacArthur's words, "resulted in divided effort, waste, diffusion, and duplication of force."[27] The Marines who fought on Guadalcanal echoed that sentiment.

Although it was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that finally brought the United States into the war, the Allied strategy prioritized Germany and therefore subjugated the Pacific theater to enormous difficulties throughout the war. Despite continued Japanese successes throughout the Pacific, American shipping as of February 1942 prioritized essential support to the United Kingdom, maintenance of already existing garrisons, and Lend-Lease aid to Russia and China above any shipments to the Pacific theater. Even then, these shipments were focused on approved reinforcements for MacArthur in the Southwest Pacific and continued shipments to Hawaii.[28] While fighting for their lives in the Philippines in early 1942,

[26] David Jablonsky, *War by Land, Sea, and Air: Dwight Eisenhower and the Concept of Unified Command* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 36; and Alfred D. Chandler Jr. et al, eds., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 1, *The War Years* (Boston: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), xxi, hereafter Eisenhower Papers.
[27] MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 172–73.

[28] Eisenhower Papers, 119.

MacArthur's staff saw the majority of their logistical requirements go unfulfilled. Forced to request support from Australia, they were reminded of their low place in the logistical pecking order.[29] Allied victory during the Battle of the Coral Sea halted the Japanese advance and canceled their planned invasions of New Caledonia, the Fiji archipelago, and Samoa. Following their defeat at Midway in June 1942, the Japanese turned toward the Solomon Islands in order to threaten Allied control of the sea from Hawaii to Australia. While the Joint Chiefs recognized the importance on the preservation of open lines of communication to Australia, they prioritized the build-up of offensive forces in and across the Atlantic over a strategic defensive in the Pacific.[30] This strategic defensive provided just enough ambiguity for the offensive-minded King to propose aggressive action against the Japanese in the Solomon Islands in order to halt any further Japanese advances and to prevent interference with the critical sea line of communication between Hawaii and Australia.[31]

With acute knowledge of the limited logistical means to pursue offensive action, King successfully convinced the other members of the Joint Chiefs to approve Operation Watchtower and take advantage of the initiative gained through victory at the Battle of Midway. Confident in his persuasive abilities, he issued a warning order to Nimitz on 24 June before confirming command of the operation and its key objectives with Marshall.[32] These essential details were not confirmed until Operation Watchtower's originally planned D-day of 1 August was less than one month away.

While they both agreed on the importance of the operation, the back-and-forth between King and Marshall reflected the sort of inter-Service squabbling that took place throughout the war and significantly plagued this operation to its logistical detriment. King insisted the Navy command this amphibious operation because he did not trust MacArthur with the Navy's carriers or the Marines.[33] Marshall argued for Army command because it fell within his theater within which he and his existing staff already had considerable experience operating together and because this operation was just part of the larger strategic objective to capture New Britain and New Ireland and required the same command structure throughout. Marshall felt that "it would be most unfortunate to bring in another commander at this time to carry out the operation."[34] After multiple memos, missed phone calls, and finally an in-person meeting, King and Marshall came to an agreement that was "reached with great difficulty" on 2 July 1942.[35] Their agreement, issued as part of a Joint Chiefs directive that same day, outlined the operation as three sequential tasks focused on the seizure and occupation of New Britain and New Ireland. Task one, the assault on Tulagi (Guadalcanal was not identified as a key objective until 6 July), was assigned to Nimitz which required a shift in the theater boundaries.[36] Tasks two and three, the seizure of the remaining Solomon Islands followed by Rabaul, were assigned to MacArthur.[37] Although they ultimately reached an agreement, King and Marshall again failed to provide the Pacific theater with a unified command. Wounded by the compromise that further weakened his influence, MacArthur turned indignant and wanted little to do with the operation or supporting the Navy. Unless ordered to, MacArthur did not intend to participate in Watchtower. This compromise and MacArthur's stubbornness meant resources, supplies, and logistics were split throughout the area and required coordination and distribution of resources beyond the capabilities of either command, which further weakened the logistical shoestring.

[29] Eisenhower Papers, 17–18.
[30] Eisenhower Papers, 162.
[31] Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 219, 289–90.
[32] *Command Summary of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN: Nimitz "Graybook,"* vol. 1, *7 December 1941–31 August 1942* (Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, 1972), 601, hereafter Nimitz Graybook.
[33] Eisenhower Papers, xxi.
[34] Larry H. Addington, ed., *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, *"The Right Man for the Right Job" December 7, 1941–May 31, 1943* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 253–55, hereafter Marshall Papers.
[35] Marshall Papers, 265.
[36] Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 306; and Marshall Papers, 265.
[37] Nimitz Graybook, 606; and Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 302.

Since the Japanese seized it during the Battle of the Coral Sea, Nimitz had recommended the recapture of the island of Tulagi. With this in mind, it is likely his staff already had something to work off of when, at their daily staff meeting on 25 June, Nimitz informed them of the warning order from King and they were able to begin "active preparations" for an offensive in the Solomon Islands.[38] With Watchtower's D-day only five weeks away, the sense of urgency was high. Cargo ships, limited in availability, took three weeks just to travel from the West Coast to the South Pacific Area.[39] Aware of their logistical constraints and lack of time, Nimitz and his staff set out right away to confront these challenges.

On 2 July, Nimitz flew to San Francisco for a meeting with King about plans for Watchtower. Inconveniently, King did not arrive until 4 July because the Joint Chiefs delayed publishing their official directive for Watchtower. During their meeting, they were interrupted by intelligence of Japanese efforts to establish an airfield on Guadalcanal. They quickly agreed to add this much larger island as a primary objective. While discussing details of the operation with Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner, also present at this conference, Nimitz supposed that three days would be sufficient to put all the men and materiel on shore. Turner, set to command the amphibious task group responsible for such landings during Watchtower, agreed with his assessment.[40] On his return to Hawaii, Nimitz focused on equipping Ghormley with what he needed to execute this operation, mainly men, ships, and fuel.[41] Indicative of his command style, Nimitz allowed Ghormley the freedom of action to command this operation without much interference.[42] Nimitz offered guidance and did his best to equip Ghormley with the tools he needed, but otherwise Ghormley was now the one holding the hot potato.

Almost immediately, Ghormley began to degrade the confidence bestowed on him. Armed with official orders and little else, he was clearly, and understandably, overwhelmed. Before he could begin planning, Ghormley had to find and build his staff. One of Marshall's chief arguments for Army command of the operation, that of an existing and experienced staff under MacArthur, seemed all the more compelling considering the extensive effort Ghormley went through to establish his new command in such a short amount of time. This endeavor officially began on 18 April, only one day after he returned to Washington, at the conclusion of his time as special naval observer in England. King informed him of his command appointment, instructed him to establish his headquarters in Auckland, New Zealand, and told him to prepare for offensive operations to begin later that year.[43] On 1 May, he and the first few members of his new staff departed San Francisco and stopped in Pearl Harbor to meet with Nimitz. On 17 May, they visited Noumea, New Caledonia, long enough to observe the tensions between the Free French and the U.S. Army forces on the island. After his arrival in Auckland on 24 May, Ghormley discovered few preparations had been made for him and his staff. He declined the inadequate facilities offered to them and transitioned his command headquarters to the USS *Argonne* (AP 4). From then until the end of June, he continued to receive new staff members and focused his efforts on establishing critical components of his new command in preparation for future operations.[44]

One critical component he established shortly after his arrival in New Zealand was the South Pacific Service Squadron, the primary logistics agency throughout his command. This headquarters issued a logistical plan that formalized coordination of all surface transportation, to include shipping lanes and ports of call, as well as distribution of supplies throughout the vast theater.[45] The plan also called for the use of the naval construction battalions to build

[38] Nimitz Graybook, 607.
[39] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 390.
[40] Nimitz Graybook, 709–43; Craig L. Symonds, *Nimitz at War: Command Leadership from Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 140–43; and Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 273–75.
[41] Nimitz Graybook, 609–10, 614, 670, 681.
[42] Symonds, *Nimitz at War*, 144–46.
[43] Nimitz Graybook, 331. Ghormley was Nimitz's second choice for this assignment, behind Adm William S. Pye.
[44] Oliver, "Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley," 18–29.
[45] Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 257.

up the infrastructure at the numerous advanced bases established throughout the South Pacific. This plan, issued on 15 July, within weeks from the operation's start date, had little impact on Operation Watchtower. Those preparing for departure to Guadalcanal had no choice but to improvise and make hasty preparations without the benefit of a formalized logistics plan.[46] The fact that this crucial command was not established until after Ghormley's arrival and only three weeks before the commencement of Watchtower highlights the Navy's logistical unpreparedness in this vast and undeveloped theater.

The challenges Ghormley faced in establishing his new command are but one small example of the struggles common to all operating in the immature South Pacific Area in 1942. The distances alone explain a majority of the struggles, compounded by the fact that any resupply required movement across vast expanses of water using scarcely available shipping. Supplies transported in began their oceanic voyage in San Francisco, bypassed Hawaii, and traveled more than 10,000 kilometers to Auckland, 11,600 kilometers to Brisbane, or 10,300 kilometers to Noumea at approximately 10–12 knots (three weeks transit, one way).[47] This meant that once committed to the task, vessels assigned to these missions did not return home for months, causing continued frustrations back in Washington as the Services and theater commanders fought over precious resources.[48]

The next major hurdle in this immature theater was the severe lack of adequate port facilities. Because of the tremendous lack of shipping, all cargo loaded in the United States was administratively or commercially loaded so as to maximize every square inch. To make these materials useful for the Marines waiting for them, all cargo needed to be combat loaded based on desired offload sequence at its final destination. This meant that all cargo had to be offloaded, sorted, temporarily stored, and then reloaded onto different vessels. The only ports in the South Pacific with any useful facilities and necessary infrastructure were in Auckland, Wellington, Suva, and Noumea, but none of these were fully equipped with adequate capabilities for a massive military buildup.[49] Of these, Auckland was the only location in theater with a deep-water harbor equipped with enough facilities and space to unload, sort, store, and reload all the cargo administratively loaded in the United States.[50] Auckland was also considered to be safer from Japanese attacks compared to the alternatives.[51] From Auckland, combat loaded transports loaded with their own landing craft and accompanied with requisite escorts (once available) traveled the 2,937 kilometers to Guadalcanal to be offloaded on the beach using predominantly manual labor.[52] Absent the necessary escorts or not effectively combat loaded, vessels otherwise made the 1,931-kilometer journey north to Noumea, where an entirely new set of problems awaited.

Noumea, beneficial for its strategic location, possessed very few qualities needed to be a useful supply base. Despite this, it became a central link in the logistics chain for unloading, storage, and transshipment of supplies throughout the South Pacific Area. Follow-on destinations included Guadalcanal, Espiritu Santo, and Efate.[53] Competition for berths and dock space was a central component of the struggle between all interested parties in Noumea. This competition was not limited to inter-Service rivalries, but also included challenging diplomacy with the Free French government of New Caledonia and businessmen in Noumea. The French nickel company, Le Nickel, owned and operated one of the main docks and played an essential role in the economy of the island for its commercial exports. Because warehouses on shore were almost nonexistent, floating warehouses became the norm where the Services offloaded cargo from their vessels as needed, left the remaining supplies on board, and sent the partially loaded vessels

[46] Trent Hone, *Mastering the Art of Command: Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and Victory in the Pacific War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2022), 114–15.
[47] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 390.
[48] Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 346.
[49] Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 262.
[50] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 136.
[51] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 406.
[52] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 138.
[53] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 399.

back into the harbor.[54] Unbeknownst to Ghormley's service squadron in New Zealand, their best efforts and intentions to ensure ships were loaded to their fullest capacity before departure often compounded their issues due to the inadequate discharge facilities.[55] This backlog of shipping, with vessels defenselessly floating at anchor in the harbor, dangerously waiting to discharge their essential cargo in order to resume their critical duties transporting additional supplies throughout the theater caused severe criticism from Washington directed at Ghormley.[56] This specific crisis remained unsolved until April 1943.[57]

Another issue common throughout the theater was the severe lack of skilled manpower. Even in the United States, where skilled laborers were plenty, the Navy was behind on training sailors and contractors on the art of combat loading.[58] As a result, cargo was loaded haphazardly, often missing manifests, without any consideration for offload sequencing in the Pacific or the limited offload capabilities at the various ports of debarkation.[59] In the more developed countries of Australia and New Zealand, skilled labor was available but in significantly short supply. Throughout the various underdeveloped economies of the South Pacific, local labor was entirely unskilled. Therefore, port facilities throughout the theater employed unskilled and often defiant labor in insufficient quantities supported with poor facilities that could not keep up with the workload.[60] In Australia, where all dock labor had been unionized, longshoremen were typically well into their forties and generally unenthusiastic about their work or their role in supporting the war.[61] In Wellington, the port director was known to be hostile to Americans and afforded his stevedore union numerous breaks, never permitted them to work after quitting time, and allowed them to walk off the wharf whenever it rained (a frequent occurrence that time of year).[62] In Noumea, the labor shortage and unrest among the French colonialists significantly delayed offloading and nearly resulted in martial law.[63] The Army and Navy did their best to provide their own longshoremen, but these were in short supply as well. Ghormley requested more, but the only ones that made it to the South Pacific before Operation Watchtower began went to New Zealand.[64]

In concert with the lack of shipping, inadequate facilities, and limited workforce, the climate of the South Pacific Area also caused significant issues that hampered logistics. While the heat and humidity claimed many victims and naturally slowed individual effort, it was the rain that caused greater issues. Because ships were desperately needed to offload as quickly as possible, much of the cargo was stored outdoors in yards and fields. Because most supplies were packaged hastily without consideration for their end destination, much of the cardboard cartons quickly disintegrated in the constant and heavy rains and resulted in the loss "of much food, clothing, stores, and other material."[65]

Under conditions imposed on him by strategic-level decisions made in Washington, Ghormley set about the task of planning this offensive with insufficient time, a brand-new staff, an indignant (and senior) adjacent commander, and an immature theater. A student of the South Pacific who understood the logistical challenges associated with his new theater, Ghormley knew he needed more personnel and materiel to be able to establish advanced naval bases. Unfortunately, Ghormley failed to impress on Nimitz the urgency of his needs, and resources continued to flow to the Mediterranean to support Operation

[54] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 399–400.
[55] Hone, *Mastering the Art of Command*, 114.
[56] Naval Transportation Service Operating Plan, Issued from the Office of the CNO on 21 August 1942, NND 984144, Record Group (RG) 127, box 14, 7-5 S&C No. [WPS] 16000, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, MD.
[57] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 402–3.
[58] Hornfisher, *Neptune's Inferno*, 51.
[59] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 137.
[60] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 390–91; and Winston Groom, *1942: The Year that Tried Men's Souls* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005), 262–63.
[61] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 412.
[62] Ian W. Toll, *Pacific War Trilogy*, vol. 2, *The Conquering Tide: War in the Pacific Islands, 1942–1944* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015), 19–20; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 24.
[63] Nimitz Graybook, 450, 473; Hornfisher, *Neptune's Inferno*, 37; and Oliver, "In the Shadow of the Fleet," 26.
[64] Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 399.
[65] Annex L "Logistics," 1st Marine Division, Final Report Guadalcanal Operation, Phase I, 24 May 1943, NAID 134242115, RG 38, NARA II, 51–54; and Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 113–14.

Torch. Ghormley succeeded in coordinating with the Army to source as many local goods and materiel in New Zealand as possible; however, they were unable to source enough equipment required to support the upcoming amphibious operations.[66]

The two-week period that began with receipt of the Watchtower warning order indicated the first signs of Ghormley's defeatist attitude.[67] On 2 July, the official order from the Joint Chiefs came in, which formally tasked Ghormley with command of task one and the seizure of Tulagi.[68] Despite this new order, he considered his responsibility to defend the area around Australia and New Zealand, outlined in his original orders, to be more important and remained steadfast in his defensive efforts instead of focusing on the necessary preparations for this upcoming operation.[69] On 6 July, the coastwatchers identified the construction of the airfield on Guadalcanal, which replaced Ndeni in the Santa Cruz Islands with Guadalcanal as an official objective and intensified the urgency of this operation. On 8 July, Ghormley and MacArthur commiserated at MacArthur's headquarters in Melbourne about the futility of this operation.[70] Ironically, just two months before, MacArthur had proposed even more aggressive action in this area, but with him in command.[71] Now, relegated to the supporting element for task one, he changed his tune and eagerly pointed out its deficiencies and expected it to fail. Together, they composed a letter to the Joint Chiefs that expressed their "gravest doubts" of success and requested a deferment of the operation due to insufficient resources.[72] On 10 July, they received a response from King and Marshall that included an appreciation for "the disadvantage of undertaking Task One before adequate forces and equipment can be made available" but directed them to proceed as planned.[73] Having just squandered two weeks of planning time, Ghormley finally began planning for the tasks as outlined in the directive, albeit focused more on the defense of the sea lanes than on the offensive in the Solomon Islands.

As the operation's D-day drew near, unsolved strategic and operational issues caused multiple headaches at the tactical level of command and resulted in numerous controversies. Despite specific direction to command the operation in person, Ghormley delegated tactical command to Fletcher, commander of the carrier strike force, and devoted his attention to the defense of his theater in Noumea.[74] King, who disliked and distrusted Fletcher as a fleet commander for what he believed to be a pattern of hesitancy, only begrudgingly approved Fletcher's command of the carrier task force after Nimitz vouched for him. Bestowed with even greater responsibilities from Ghormley, and unbeknownst to King or Nimitz, Fletcher now had tactical command of the entire operation. Therefore, Phase I of Operation Watchtower, the fate of which determined King's legacy, was commanded by someone for whom he had little respect.[75] Furthermore, in preparation for this operation, Ghormley provided limited guidance and never met with Fletcher in person. Even as forces assembled at sea, Fletcher remained uncertain about who would directly command the operation.[76] While underway from Fiji to the rendezvous point, Fletcher finally issued his operations order. Significantly vague, his order simply listed their mission to "seize, occupy, and defend Tulagi and adjacent positions."[77] Throughout the operation, his focus remained on the protection of the carriers and not on the success of the Marines on Guadalcanal.

Although committed to the success of the operation and directly responsible for the landings on

[66] Oliver, "In the Shadow of the Fleet," 20–22.
[67] Nimitz Graybook, 602–4. As an example of Ghormley's challenges with his new staff, this message reached him one day later due to his "inexperienced radio and coding personnel."
[68] Nimitz Graybook, 606, 709–43.
[69] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 292; and Hone, *Mastering the Art of Command*, 118–20. Months later, his outlook remained the same and he continued to concern himself with the "potentially disastrous consequences of a Japanese thrust to the sea lanes from the United States to Australia."
[70] Groom, *1942*, 260; and Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 306–7. The date was 6 July in Guadalcanal, but was still 5 July in San Francisco when Nimitz and King received the information.
[71] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 92; and Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 307.
[72] Nimitz Graybook, 611–13.
[73] Nimitz Graybook, 616; and Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, 307.
[74] Nimitz Graybook, 606, 613; and Symonds, *Nimitz at War*, 150.
[75] Symonds, *Nimitz at War*, 152, 160.
[76] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 107.
[77] Lundstrom, *Black Shoe Carrier Admiral*, 333.

Guadalcanal and Tulagi, Turner hardly contributed to the planning and preparation of Watchtower. On receiving word of his assignment as the commander, Amphibious Force, South Pacific Force, on 3 June, he traveled a similar route as Ghormley from Washington to New Zealand, stopping in San Francisco for his conference with Nimitz and King on the way. He arrived in New Zealand on 16 July, the same day Ghormley published his operations order, which assigned Turner as commander of the amphibious task force for Operation Watchtower, responsible for the 13 transports, 5 cargo ships, and 1st Marine Division. Turner organized his command on 18 July, only four days before they set sail to meet Fletcher in Fiji. Absent adequate time to inject himself into the planning process and without anyone on his staff with amphibious experience, Turner published his operations order with heavy reliance on the planning conducted by the Marines.[78]

Lying at the bottom of the hill where these strategic, theater, and operational problems collectively rolled were Vandegrift and 1st Marine Division. Before embarking Turner's transports in New Zealand for their voyage to Guadalcanal, these Marines endured and contributed to many of the adverse effects of the events that preceded their historic operation. On 23 March 1942, Vandegrift assumed command of 1st Marine Division in New River, North Carolina. Established less than a year earlier based on recommendations following after actions from the FLEXs, New River boasted a fine training area to conduct amphibious operations and little else. As the Marine Corps rapidly expanded at the beginning of the war, thanks in large part to Lieutenant General Thomas Holcomb, Commandant of the Marine Corps, experience needed to be shared across the force. This resulted in the transfer of trained personnel away from Vandegrift's command and the influx of new Marines, recently graduated from a truncated version of boot camp. Furthermore, thousands of his Marines were sent to Iceland to support the defense of the island, which relieved the British of that responsibility and enabled them to focus on defense of their own islands.[79] Numerous requests for Marine Raider Battalions and garrison defense forces further gutted his forces. As the conflict intensified, Vandegrift feared he would spend the war in North Carolina, training subordinate units for piecemeal deployments.[80]

Fortunately for Vandegrift, readiness across the Marine Corps was a challenge common to all. As early as February 1942, Headquarters Marine Corps identified 1st Marine Division as the most ready and available unit to deploy for amphibious operations in the Pacific.[81] The order to do so did not come until 29 April, when Vandegrift's operations officer, Lieutenant Colonel Merrill B. Twining, discovered news of Operation Lone Wolf, which directed the transfer of Vandegrift's division to New Zealand to establish Turner's South Pacific Amphibious Force.[82] Despite an aggressive timeline for departure, Vandegrift comforted himself with reassurances given to him that they would have six months of training in New Zealand before undertaking any offensive operations.

Shipping shortages split 1st Marine Division into two deployments from North Carolina to New Zealand. Vandegrift and the first group embarked the transport USS *Wakefield* (AP 21) in Norfolk, Virginia, on 20 May for their 26-day, 16,000-kilometer voyage through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific Ocean. They finally arrived on 14 June, after suffering grueling conditions on board, during which the average Marine lost 15 pounds. Vandegrift stated, "We in no way sailed as a combat-ready force." The second group traveled via rail to San Francisco and set sail on their transports on 22 June. They did not arrive until 11 July, mere weeks away from departure for Guadalcanal. Despite assumptions made by the Joint Chiefs,

[78] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 262, 280, 288.

[79] Ulbrich, *Preparing for Victory*, 85, 93, 123–24.

[80] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 99–100; and Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 262–70.

[81] Memorandum for Colonel Peck, 18 February 1942, NWMDM-D 994011, RG 127, box 47, NARA II.

[82] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 101; Ulbrich, *Preparing for Victory*, 127; and Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 218. Dyer goes on to say that copies of this were given to Vandegrift and Holcomb for review before publication.

their vessels were not combat loaded.[83] Regardless of who to blame for this oversight, the decision to depart with administratively loaded vessels contributed mightily to the Marines' struggles in the South Pacific.

On the docks in Wellington, the Marines got their first taste of the immature theater while conducting frantic preparations for their departure. Immediately on arrival, Vandegrift was informed of the "catastrophic news that the unloading of cargo which proceeded us, stood days behind schedule."[84] A member of the advance party, Twining already had valuable experience in dealing with the frustrating Kiwis. Specifically, he learned of their tendency to take breaks for every meal and anytime it rained. Vandegrift immediately ordered his Marines to be organized into working parties with shifts around the clock to offload the vessels themselves. In addition to the devastating effect on the Marines' morale, the working parties caused enough of an uproar from the dockyard union in Wellington that Pete Fraser, the prime minister of New Zealand, became involved and summoned Vandegrift to his office.[85] Absent adequate shelter, Marines worked in continuous, cold rain while their cargo, unprotected and drenched, disintegrated in front of them on the quay. From Vandegrift's final report on Operation Watchtower, he remembered, "Weather conditions demonstrated the terrible unsuitability of paper or cardboard containers for expeditionary supplies, and the loss of these supplies on the Wellington docks was later to be felt by all hands."[86]

Although Vandegrift and the 1st Marine Division arrived in New Zealand on 14 June, Ghormley did not feel the need to call Vandegrift to Auckland to meet him in person until two weeks later when he received the warning order for Watchtower.[87] Expecting this to be the normal social call to meet with his immediate senior, and still not expecting offensive operations for months, Vandegrift was dumbfounded when informed they were to execute an amphibious operation in the Solomon Islands in less than five weeks.[88] Dutifully, Vandegrift and his staff immediately set about preparing for the operation. Absent an operations order from higher headquarters for weeks, the Marines began planning on their own. In what must have been discouraging news for the Marines, Ghormley (and apparently his entire staff) possessed such limited knowledge on amphibious operations that on 12 June, Ghormley requested a copy of the Marine Corps manual on amphibious operations from Vandegrift, specifically requesting information on Navy landing craft.[89] Clearly, the tactical planning for this operation was up to the Marines. This feeling of isolation in the planning process serves as a good precursor to the isolation they soon felt on Guadalcanal. Working around the clock on the rain-soaked docks in Wellington, the Marines of 1st Marine Division experienced the full weight of problems brought to bear on them from strategic decisions in Washington, an immature theater, and insufficient operational planning. To Vandegrift and his Marines, the term *shoestring* inadequately described the logistical hand they were dealt.

Enough Throughput to Live, Survive, and Thrive

As Vandegrift and his Marines set about planning for Watchtower, they were immediately confronted with the challenge of amphibious shipping. As is common in most operations, the unfortunate realities of logistics immediately imposed constraints on Watchtower. Shortly after notification from Ghormley in Wellington, Vandegrift's primary logistician and assistant chief of staff for supply, Lieutenant Colonel Randolph McCall Pate (a.k.a. Ran Pate), informed Vandegrift that their already conservative estimates were still too high and the division's shipping requirements greatly exceeded their shipping allocations. Vandegrift responded with a timely and critical deci-

[83] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 101; Ulbrich, *Preparing for Victory*, 127; and Marshall Papers, 265.
[84] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 102; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 27.
[85] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 103.
[86] Annex L "Logistics," 1st Marine Division, Final Report Guadalcanal Operation, Phase I, 24 May 1943, NAID 134242115, RG 38, 51, NARA II.
[87] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 104–5; and Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 99.
[88] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 104–5.
[89] Ghormley to Vandegrift, NWMDM-D 994011, RG 127, box 47, NARA II.

sion. He ordered his division to load only "items actually required to live and fight."[90] The division then set about dividing and sorting their equipment to remove all "luxuries" beyond the basic necessities of "bullets, beans, and blankets."[91] Items designed to kill the Japanese occupants on Guadalcanal such as combat gear, weapons, and ammunition were given top priority. Coffee pots, tents, and spare clothing were all left behind. Typically allocated two sea bags, individual Marines were reduced to only one and forced to prioritize their individual equipment along these same lines.[92] Equipment left behind was marked for temporary storage under the optimistic assumption for an eventual reunion with its owners in Guadalcanal. Shedding all amenities, Vandegrift's Marines cared only for what they needed to fight and live.

To ensure they brought enough supplies and equipment, the division's logisticians and the ships' quartermasters had to work together to combat load their vessels. At this point in the war, combat loading ships—loading the most essential equipment last, so it is the first to come off—was still a relatively new concept. It was initially incorporated into the FLEXs of the 1930s, which proved critical to the preparation and understanding of this logistical blend of science and art, although at a limited scale. During the FLEXs, the logistical footprint required was greatly diminished, as Marines were only prepared to go on shore for a few days, not months on end. These exercises also provided the Marines with dedicated shipping based on their needs on board empty ships. They did not incorporate the unforeseen challenge of unloading administratively loaded vessels at the same time as combat loading.[93] Some ignorant criticism has been directed toward Vandegrift for his decision to depart the United States on board administratively loaded vessels, blaming him for relying on the assumption that the division would not see combat for months until after their arrival.[94] In his final report, he adequately defends his actions by highlighting the embarkation challenges they faced in North Carolina that required the separation of his Marines from their equipment due to shipping limitations. Additionally, the advantage of administratively loading vessels is that it maximized their load capacity, which was essential for any vessel transiting the Pacific to avoid wasting any space. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the majority of the ships they embarked for Watchtower were not the same ships that carried them across the Pacific, making this criticism a moot point. Years later, Vandegrift praised King's difficult decision to take decisive action to "stop without delay the enemy's southward advance."[95]

No foreigner to difficult decisions and also not a fan of delays, Vandegrift decided to abandon the hostile Kiwi workforce in Auckland and charged his Marines to combat load their own vessels instead. His decision to employ his Marines in backbreaking labor in cold winter conditions further degraded their combat readiness following their long and harrowing journey into the theater. So close to battle, their combat readiness was already a source of concern, as most of the division was made up of brand-new Marines who had graduated from a truncated boot camp. Vandegrift had comforted himself with the knowledge that they would have months to train in New Zealand to correct this deficiency. Instead, he found it necessary to prioritize his Marines to fulfill logistical requirements over the ingrained desire to train and hone their infantry skills for upcoming combat. Reacting to the hostile Kiwis, Vandegrift's decision in Auckland set the precedent that logistics was the top priority to ensure his division could live and fight on Guadalcanal.[96]

Following Vandegrift's crucial decisions, thousands of subsequent and equally challenging decisions had to be made in order to load their vessels. While these decisions were often difficult to make, they were even harder to execute. Equipment that did not make the list for embarkation still had to be offloaded,

[90] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 114.
[91] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 114.
[92] Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 32; and LtCol Kerry Lane, *Marine Pioneers: The Unsung Heroes of World War II* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1997), 45.
[93] Isley and Crowl, *U.S. Marines and Amphibious Warfare*, 46–67.
[94] Groom, *1942*, 262–63.
[95] Nimitz Graybook, 616; Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 106–10; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 23.
[96] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 118.

staged, inventoried, and transported to storage facilities to be handled by the division's rear party. Equipment that did make the list also had to be offloaded, inventoried, and staged until it could eventually be loaded. Debates on the demarcation line between essential and nonessential nearly resulted in the divestment of critical landing force equipment from the ships, highlighting the tensions between the need for combat equipment and combat support equipment.[97] Once assigned, essential equipment spent more time in the way at the port, being moved countless times while waiting to be loaded last, while all the lesser and nonessential equipment was either placed into storage or loaded deep into the transports. This excerpt from the division's final report highlights the enormity of the logistics struggles in New Zealand.

> Loading and unloading operations in Wellington were centralized at one large wharf (Aotea Quay) capable of berthing five vessels at once. Combat loading necessarily took place simultaneously with the discharge of incoming cargo and the operation was exceedingly complex and most difficult to control. A working team of three hundred men was assigned to each vessel and maintained around the clock by a system of eight-hour reliefs. Divisional transportation was augmented by vehicles of the First Base Depot and by a daily detail of thirty flat-topped New Zealand Army lorries which proved particularly useful in this type of work. Ammunition, organizational equipment, and gasoline dumps were established in open areas on the wharf. Rations and perishables were classified in a large warehouse which occupied one end of the wharf. The operation was directed by D-4 through a field officer in charge of each loading team, and the transport quartermasters of the various ships. Dock labor was restricted to skilled operators of special loading machinery, cranes, hoists, carriers, and stacking machines. Use of general civilian labor was rejected in favor of employment of troops as it had been found both inadequate and unreliable during earlier operations.[98]

The chaos that ensued on board Aotea Quay is unimaginable, and this most complex version of Tetris was further compounded by King's repressive timeline for Watchtower's D-day.

Originally scheduled for 1 August 1942, D-day for Operation Watchtower became a controversial issue. Already beseeched by MacArthur and Ghormley, King finally relented and granted a delay of no more than one week—7 August—after Vandegrift's concurrence with Ghormley that made it clear his division needed more time.[99] Despite their best efforts, which the division operations officer commended as a smooth reembarkation process, it was impossible for them to load all of their ships to depart on time.[100] Fortunately, and unintentionally, this delay provided the Japanese with another week to nearly complete the airstrip on Guadalcanal for the Marines. Willing to risk surprise and initiative, Vandegrift again prioritized logistics for his division.

Here, the limited accomplishments of 1st Marine Division were essential to ensuring logistical success of Watchtower. The period between notification and departure was only 26 days.[101] What these Marines accomplished in that short amount of time truly "defied

[97] Memo, Landing Force Equipment Furnished Marine Detachment Afloat, 7 July 1942, RG 127, USMC Quartermaster General Correspondence 1942, box 224, NARA II.

[98] 1st Marine Division, Final Report Guadalcanal Operation, Phase I, 24 May 1943, NAID 134242115, RG 38, NARA II, 6.

[99] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 119.

[100] Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 31–33.

[101] For the sake of comparison, it took the Army 20 days to embark in preparation for Operation Goalpost in October 1942; however, all of their embarkation took place in the United States with an American workforce and dedicated shipping assets for a relatively smaller landing force. LtGen Lucian K. Truscott, *Command Mission: A Personal Story* (n.p.: Pickle Partners Publishing, 2013), 83–85.

the science of logistics."[102] In that short time frame, 1st Marine Division successfully unloaded 3 administratively loaded transports, reconfigured their equipment, and combat loaded the 18 amphibious ships of Turner's amphibious force.[103] Embarked and underway, they were ready with just enough to fight and live on Guadalcanal.

Before tackling their next major throughput hurdle on the shores of Guadalcanal, two key events, both of which are well documented and have been written about ad nauseum, took place in Fiji while underway to the Solomon Islands. Here, the entire task force of 76 ships assembled for their only rehearsals before launching the invasion. For various reasons, the amphibious assault rehearsals went poorly, and Turner eventually cancelled them. In their place, he had his entire force conduct basic ship-to-shore drills, which proved extremely beneficial during the landings. While they were assembled, Fletcher hosted his commanders on board his flagship for a conference that became a tumultuous affair. In Ghormley's absence, Fletcher assumed command of the task force and used this authority to make decisions previously left incomplete. This included the controversial decision to provide air coverage from his carriers for only three days. Consequentially, Turner and his amphibious force would be forced to withdraw his transports at the same time so as not to expose them to Japanese air attacks. Despite pleas from Turner and Vandegrift for a minimum of five days to offload their equipment, Fletcher remained firm. Laden with doubt and pessimistic towards the success of this operation, he prioritized protection of the carriers over the survival of the Marines.[104]

As 1st Marine Division assaulted the beach on 7 August 1942, the rubber finally met the road on all their logistical woes. Although the amphibious assault achieved an incredible tactical success, the logistical beach operations that followed went horrendously. The numerous issues are well documented, and the combat photographs of the cluttered beach provide visual proof for those who focus on the failed logistics of Guadalcanal.[105] Numerous after-action reports and historical accounts deplore the Marines for their laziness, incompetence, and seeming nonchalance toward the mounting logistical chaos.[106] After reaching shore, Vandegrift observed his division's supplies piling up on Red Beach, but decided this problem would be dealt with once the tactical situation was no longer in doubt. Unlike in Wellington, where he focused on logistics, he now prioritized his tactical objectives: the establishment of a defensive perimeter and the seizure of Guadalcanal's airfield.[107] Instead of applying more manpower to assist the shore parties, he used everyone available to pursue the enemy and seize the objective, including the Pioneers. This left 1st Pioneer Battalion's shore parties undermanned and overwhelmed.[108] As the beach congestion increased, Turner's transports were forced to pause unloading operations due to lack of space on shore and limited maneuverability in the water for their landing craft. Furthermore, multiple Japanese aerial attacks forced numerous halts to unloading operations. In the chaos, Turner ordered his transports closer to the beach to reduce transit times and increase the pace of the offload. This exacerbated beach congestion and gridlocked the landing craft lanes. Idling dangerously in the shallow waters waiting their turn, many boat captains offloaded their cargo haphazardly near the shore and returned to their transports. In their haste, many of them offloaded below the high-water mark. The situation rapidly deteriorated and many containers were destroyed and their contents were prematurely discharged and subsequently ruined.[109]

[102] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 114.
[103] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 280.
[104] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 120–22; Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 45; Lundstrom, *Black Shoe Carrier Admiral*, 325–37; and Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 295–311.
[105] For a picture of beach congestion on D+1, see Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 102.
[106] Report of Action Guadalcanal—Tulagi Area, Solomon Islands, 7, 8, and 9 August 1942, 23 September 1942, RG 127 USMC Geographic Files, box 39, folder A4-1, NARA II; and Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 348–53. Dyer takes a considerably long break from praising Turner to hammer this point home.
[107] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 133.
[108] Lane, *Marine Pioneers*, 54–58.
[109] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 63–64.

Turner augmented the workforce on shore with dozens of sailors per boat crew to help offload. Although appreciated, this further tangled the web of logistics that was clearly focused on quantity and not quality. Ignoring the doctrinal concept that specified the shore party commander is in control of logistics on shore, Turner's commanders continued to saturate the beach with supplies.[110] Lieutenant Colonel George Rowan, 1st Pioneer Battalion's commanding officer, appealed to Vandegrift for more help on the beach. Despite Vandegrift's refusals to fulfill the request, he successfully persuaded Turner to temporarily halt the rapid discharge of cargo from his transports so they could better organize their efforts on the beach. Unfortunately, Fletcher decided to depart 12 hours earlier than planned, and shortly thereafter, on 9 August, Turner and his amphibious force departed as well.[111] During this three-day period, only 26 hours and 20 minutes were devoted to actual unloading.[112] Standing in heaps of soggy cornflakes and other ruined rations, the shore party Marines watched Turner's amphibious task force depart with half of the division's embarked supplies, leaving behind a panorama of utter confusion that greatly surpassed the untidy scene in Wellington.

Reciprocal recriminations abound for this seeming disaster. Turner faulted the Marines for the "vast amount of unnecessary impediments taken," embarking so many unessential items such as "cheeses and fancy groceries."[113] Conversely, Vandegrift and Twining blamed Navy logistics planners for insisting on typical commercially packaged Navy rations that required refrigeration, intentionally ignoring the basic supply needs of a landing force destined for an inhospitable location. Turner also disparaged 1st Marine Division for not providing "adequate and well-organized unloading details at the beach." In their defense, the Marines accused Turner for withholding 2d Marines, the division reserve, for potential secondary objectives, limiting Vandegrift's available manpower to seize the primary objective and conduct beach logistics. The Marines also complain that Turner's transports withheld 1st Pioneer Battalion to serve as working parties instead of releasing them to shore to support the shore parties. Some of these Marines were still on board when Turner departed and returned with the task force to New Caledonia.[114] Vandegrift's initial indifference to the logistical bottleneck due to a lack of manpower on Red Beach may have held a selfish touch of "I told you so" after weeks of fierce debate with Turner.

Despite the bleak situation in the first days on Guadalcanal, there was still cause for optimism. Exact reports of offloaded tonnage do not exist; however, it is estimated that from the morning of 7 August until the early afternoon on 9 August, the combined Navy and Marine Corps team successfully offloaded nearly 50 percent of their cargo, which equated to more than 30 days of supply.[115] Had Fletcher been willing to remain on station for the five days Vandegrift requested, it is almost certain the Marines would have been blessed with their full allotment of equipment and supplies. Instead, they were fortunate to survive with what they had.

Fortunately, the Japanese unintentionally contributed greatly to their survival. Not only did Japanese bombers fail to capitalize on the opportunity to target Marines' exposed logistics during the initial offload, but in their haste to retreat into the jungle, they left a significant quantity of supplies and equipment for the Marines. The vast quantities of rice and canned rations were essential to their survival and were used to supplement their rationing of two meals a day per Marine. The equipment consisted of "innumerable pieces of machinery" necessary to finish the construction of the airfield and "over 100 trucks" that proved indispensable in the follow-on throughput of cargo and equipment from the beach.[116] Although the

[110] Zimmerman, *The Guadalcanal Campaign*, 46.
[111] Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 124–32; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 62.
[112] Report of Action of Guadalcanal Island, Solomon Islands on 7, 8, and 9 August 1942, RG 127, USMC Geographic Files, box 38, folder A2-1, NARA II; and Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 62.
[113] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 352.
[114] Twining, *No Bended Knee*, 67–68; and Lane, *Marine Pioneers*, 58–64.
[115] Report of Action of Guadalcanal Island, Solomon Islands on 7, 8, and 9 August 1942.
[116] Division Commander's Final Report on Guadalcanal Operation, Annex C Logistics, Engineers—Phase III, RG 313, A1 211, box 18, folder COMAIRSOPAC/Blue242, NARA II; and Vandegrift, *Once a Marine*, 128.

Marines were successful in bringing enough on shore to survive, the enhancements they received from captured Japanese materiel were providential and became critical to their survival on Guadalcanal.

After the Marines successfully established a defensive perimeter from the beach and around the airfield, logistics once again became the division's priority. Duly resourced, the 1st Pioneer Battalion was finally able to organize the beach and transport equipment inland. Using all available vehicles, including the captured Japanese vehicles, amphibian tractors, and lighters left behind by the Navy, and reinforced with sufficient manpower, they successfully cleared the beach in four days. During those four days, working parties reported promptly at 0600 and vehicles were used incessantly to maximize daylight hours. At night, Marines stood watch and fortified their defensive positions in preparation for Japanese counterattacks.[117] Once these attacks came, this monumental effort to clear the beach proved essential to their survival.

During their fight to survive in August and September, 1st Pioneer Battalion learned from the mistakes of 7 August and developed an efficient throughput system in anticipation for future deliveries by sea. First, they organized Red Beach into five unloading points based on classification of supply and established secondary and tertiary beaches for offloading operations. These additional beaches enabled the Navy to unload each vessel in separate locations and relieve congestion in the boat lanes from ship to shore.[118] Second, they improved the terrain between the beaches and their inland supply depots (figure 3).[119] This included the construction of a bridge across the Lunga River using captured pier materials, palm trees, and their own amphibian tractors.[120] Third, they established segregated and dispersed supply dumps in vicinity of the airfield, well within their defensive perimeter.

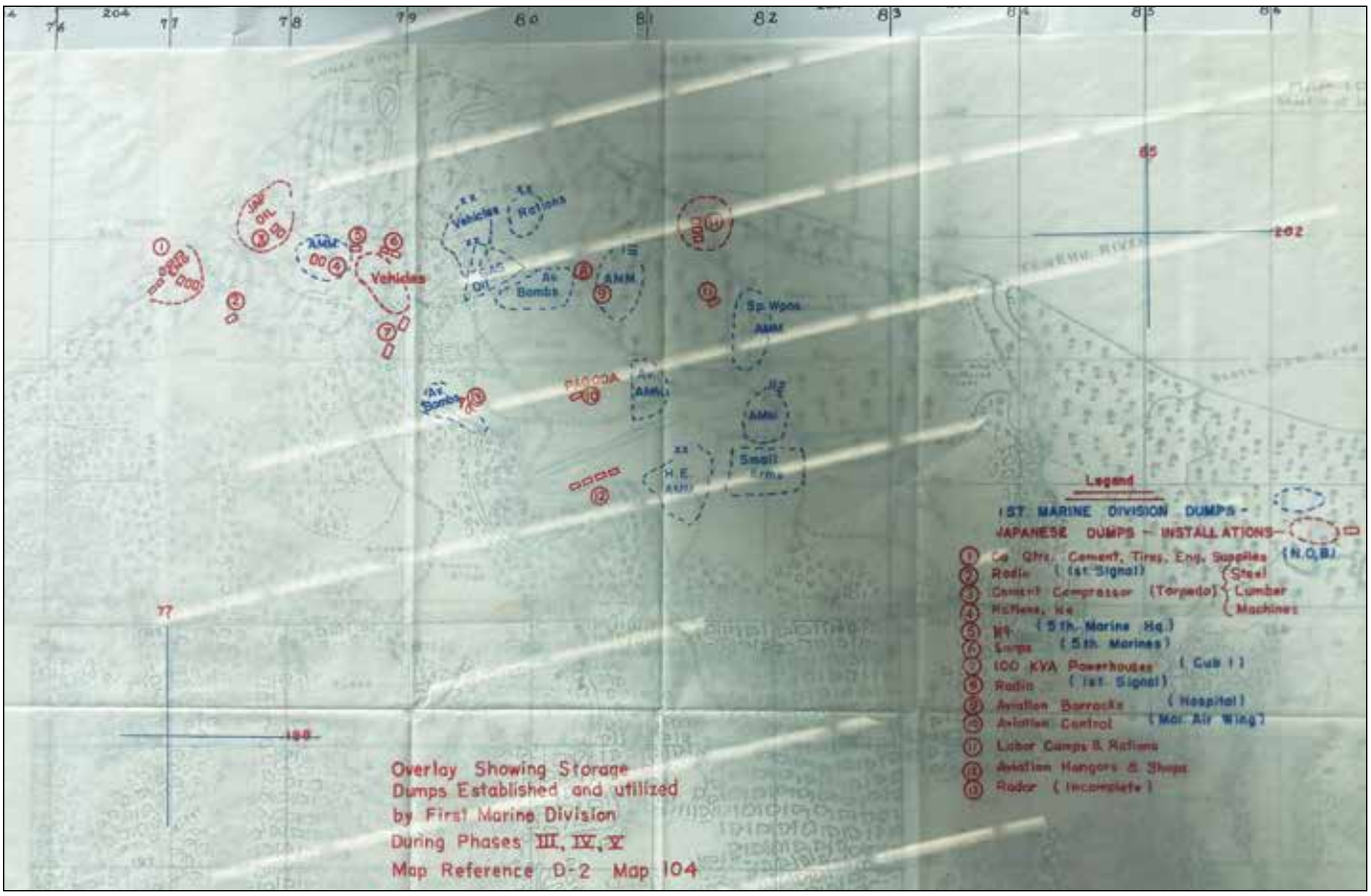
This intricate system was essential for the accountability and protection of the supplies and remained carefully organized throughout their time on Guadalcanal. In addition to these steps, the battalion dedicated working parties of hundreds of Marines to assist for any offload operation in order to expedite the throughput from ship to shore to supply dump.[121] When the reinforcements came on shore from 7th Marines in September, Turner changed his tune and praised the Marines for their incredible efforts. In his report, Turner exclaimed:

> The Task Force Commander had estimated that the Seventh Marines could be landed with all its weapons, its essential equipment, most of its motor vehicles, three units of fire, and forty days' rations in the twelve hours which were expected to be available for debarkation. No more time was available because of the practical certainty of night attack. This estimate had contemplated an interruption of about two hours due to enemy air attacks. These did not develop. Furthermore, so well had the loading of the transports been done, and so well was the unloading of the transports and at the beach organized and prosecuted, that the material unloaded with the Seventh Marines far exceeded expectations.[122]

This was exceedingly high praise from a very tough man to please.

Taken in contrast with the Japanese, these throughput efforts were all the more impressive. The

[117] Division Commander's Final Report on Guadalcanal Operation, Phase III, Organization of the Lunga Point Defenses, 10 August–21 August, RG 313, A1 211, box 18, folder COMAIRSOPAC/Blue242, NARA II.
[118] Turner, "Report of Operation for Reinforcement of GUADALCANAL ISLAND Forces by the Seventh Marines (Reinforced) (CACTUS TWO Operation)," RG 127, USMC Geographic Files, box 38, folder A2-3, NARA II.
[119] Map of Lunga Point, Annex L (Overlay of Storage Dumps), RG 313, A1 211, box 18, folder COMAIRSOPAC/Blue 242, NARA II.
[120] Division Commander's Final Report on Guadalcanal Operation, Annex C Logistics, Pioneers—Phase III.
[121] "At least two hundred men per ship discharging." Annex B to Task Force 62 Operation Plan A2-43, RG 127, USMC Geographic Files, box 44, folder B2-1, NARA II.
[122] Turner, "Report of Operation for Reinforcement of GUADALCANAL ISLAND Forces by the Seventh Marines (Reinforced) (CACTUS TWO Operation)."



Map of Lunga Point, Annex L (Overlay of Storage Dumps), RG 313, A1 211, box 18, folder COMAIRSOPAC/Blue 242, NARA II

Figure 3. Map of Lunga Point with overlay of storage dumps.

Japanese failed to prioritize logistics until it was too late. Each time the Imperial Navy's "Tokyo Express" delivered more soldiers and combat equipment, they did not even unload enough supplies for those newly arriving, further exacerbating a tragic condition for troops already there. Despite numerous attempts, which included floating daisy-chained oil barrels filled with rice and nightly submarine deliveries, their half-hearted efforts failed. Reduced to a fraction of their normal daily food ration, Japanese troops suffered greatly and many were unable to survive the harsh conditions. In order to survive, many resorted to digging for grass roots, scraping moss, picking tree buds, and drinking seawater.[123] As the Japanese forces deteriorated due to starvation, 1st Marine Division's logistical conditions steadily improved. By October, Marines were back to full rations. The intricate throughput system they implemented continued successfully throughout the remainder of their time on Guadalcanal and proved essential to their survival on the island.

The final hurdle U.S. forces successfully overcame to prevent failure and ensure logistical success took place at the port in Noumea. In terms of tonnage, this strategic location eventually became the second largest throughput node in the Pacific. Unfortunately for the Marines who depended on throughput at Noumea, this port remained gridlocked for the first three months of Watchtower and cast doubts on their hopes for survival. In November 1942, the logistical logjam finally began to clear. The joint efforts of the Army and the Navy coupled with a change in leadership, priorities, and management of logistics enabled Noumea to fulfill its strategic responsibility as a massive throughput node in support of the Marines

[123] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 526–27; and Groom, *1942*, 321–35.

so that they could eventually thrive on Guadalcanal, especially in comparison to the Japanese.

The original reasons for the logjam in Noumea can be attributed to the immaturity of the theater, discussed previously. However, after a few months without progress, leaders in Hawaii and Washington became increasingly suspicious and frustrated with Ghormley and his staff. Nimitz and King both steadily became discouraged by Ghormley's frantic pessimism. Congruently, Marshall began to receive scathing reports from Major General Alexander M. Patch on the ground in Noumea about the complete lack of logistical planning.[124] All of this eventually came to a head and on 18 October 1942, Nimitz replaced Ghormley with Admiral William F. Halsey Jr. as the commander of the South Pacific because he felt the "critical situation there require[d] a more aggressive Commander."[125] Known for his aggressive nature, Halsey's appointment immediately provided intangible impacts on his forces throughout the South Pacific. It injected the Marines with vigor, and many jubilantly celebrated the news from their foxholes on Guadalcanal. More importantly, this change in leadership steadily provided tangible results, as well, that dramatically improved the logistical situation throughout the theater.

With his first act as commander, Halsey established his headquarters on shore in New Caledonia. The USS *Argonne*, previously used by Ghormley and his staff, was unacceptable to him. Instead of placating the French government of New Caledonia, known for its indifference to the war effort, Halsey immediately established his authority and demanded better accommodations "as a military necessity."[126] Famously, he even went so far as to acquire for himself the previous Japanese consul's house at the port overlooking the harbor.[127] More importantly, he directed the establishment of more facilities on shore for his staff and at the port and successfully negotiated "despite the customary dilatoriness of the French" for dedicated use of the Le Nickel's piers.[128] Never satisfied, he demanded more support from the French, appealing directly to the governor-general of New Caledonia, to meet his requirements.[129] Nicknamed "Bull" by the American press, Halsey's forceful style of leadership was necessary to break the French logistics dam at Noumea.

Halsey quickly demonstrated his commitment to the new logistical priorities of his command. On his third day of command, Halsey made the major decision to shift the buildup of the South Pacific's main fleet base from Auckland to Noumea, specifying "New Zealand as a main base is as much use as last year's bird's nest."[130] While this may seem inconsequential, since Auckland and Noumea are approximately the same distance from major ports in the United States, the change's benefit lay in the removal of an additional stop along the way and saved significant time in transporting supplies forward. This decision came with risks, since it placed supply lines closer to the Japanese, but it was still quickly approved by Nimitz and the Free French. This decision also redirected vast quantities of personnel and equipment to New Caledonia instead of New Zealand, and the build-up in Noumea became a major priority so that it could fulfill the logistical functions of a main fleet base.[131] While this decision caused challenges and complaints in other subordinate locations, it ultimately proved essential to streamline logistical throughput and was a decision Halsey was prepared to make repeatedly as they advanced closer to Japan throughout the war.[132]

Intent on achieving victory in the Solomon Islands and dedicated to supporting Vandegrift and his Marines, Halsey directed his newly appointed logistician, Vice Admiral William L. Calhoun, to fly to Guadalcanal to provide a better appraisal of the logistics situation on the island. On 5 November 1942, Calhoun strap-hanged on a flight transporting supplies

[124] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 412–14.
[125] Nimitz Graybook, 1096.
[126] Nimitz Graybook, 1099.
[127] Halsey to Nimitz, 29 November 1942, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 15, Special Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[128] Halsey to Nimitz, 20 December 1942, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 15, Special Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[129] Halsey to Governor-General of New Caledonia, 3 January 1943, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 3, General Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[130] Halsey to Nimitz, 20 December 1942; and Nimitz Graybook, 1099.
[131] Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, 421.
[132] Halsey to Nimitz, 20 December 1942; and Memo to Halsey from the commander at Espiritu Santos, RG 313, P90-A2, box 1, folder A1, NARA II.

to Henderson Field.[133] During his three-day visit, he observed the direct needs and challenges of the Marines, specifically in regard to transportation issues and the impacts of combat. Until then, the Marines were surviving on the island with help from Turner's amphibious forces, who sent what they could when they could. Summarized by Halsey: "The whole logistic problem in the South Pacific in these early days was accomplished by guess and by God."[134] After his return to Noumea, Calhoun immediately set out to solve these issues and implemented a new throughput system throughout the South Pacific. By the end of November, Calhoun delivered a tank farm to Guadalcanal and established a fuel delivery schedule to the island. He even delivered Thanksgiving turkeys to the Marines.[135] Immensely grateful, Halsey submitted Calhoun for the Legion of Merit and credited him for the reorganization of the Service force and the fulfillment of logistical support to the Marines on Guadalcanal.[136] Calhoun's organized throughput system, designed to be less reactive, enabled the Marines to move beyond merely surviving to thriving.

Following the change in leadership and priorities, the final change in Noumea that proved consequential was the change in management of shore logistics. Due to their increasing presence, on 16 November, Halsey turned over control of this critical throughput node to the Army. Prior to this, each Service competed for space, facilities, equipment, and labor—the epitome of inefficiency. Under unified control, Army brigadier general Raymond E. S. Williamson focused his command each day on the efficient loading and unloading of cargo for the entire port. When he took over, 37 ships floated at anchor with 88,000 tons of cargo waiting to be unloaded. During his first month, another 52 ships were added to that number. Effectively resourced with trained personnel and reinforced with enough manpower that included the fully manned port company, combat troops awaiting orders, Navy longshoremen, host-nation workers, and experienced port personnel from New Zealand, Williamson successfully unloaded two ships per day during his first month. Their pace steadily increased as more space became available in and around Noumea, and they more than quadrupled their throughput efficiency in three months.[137] Halsey summarized his satisfaction with this effort in a letter to Nimitz highlighting the significant change in six weeks: from unloading 1,500 tons per day to nearly 10,000.[138]

After 124 days on Guadalcanal, this sleek new throughput system also enabled Vandegrift and 1st Marine Division to finally be relieved by General Patch and the Americal Division. On 8 December 1942, 1st Marine Division bid a final farewell to 1,152 Marines buried in the Guadalcanal cemetery and left Guadalcanal victorious after nearly suffering defeat.[139] Although most of them were so ravaged by malaria they had to be assisted onto the transports, these Marines lived, survived, and eventually thrived in comparison to the Japanese at the end of a logistical throughput system that refused to fail.

Conclusion

Operation Watchtower's success vindicated King and his strategic gamble to conquer the Solomon Islands. It proved that a timely response is better than a perfect response, and Vandegrift reinforced that stance in a lecture at the Pentagon two months after he departed Guadalcanal.[140] Once achieved, victory at Guadalcanal halted the Japanese and knocked them back to defense, a position they maintained for the remainder of the war. Strategically, it secured the sea lines of communication between the United States and Australia. Operationally, it provided an advanced naval base and forward airfield that enabled U.S. forces to

[133] Calhoun to Secretary of the Navy, 10 September 1953, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 15, Special Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[134] Halsey to the Secretary of the Navy, 29 September 1953, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 13, Special Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[135] Halsey to Nimitz, 29 November 1942.
[136] Legion of Merit presented to VAdm William L. Calhoun, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 13, Special Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[137] "47,808 short tons in November to 138,085 in December and 213,982 in January." Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940–43*, 402–3.
[138] Halsey to Nimitz, 11 January 1943, Papers of William F. Halsey, box 15, Special Correspondence, Library of Congress.
[139] Frank, *Guadalcanal*, 521.
[140] Vandegrift, "Lecture on the Guadalcanal Campaign," 4 February 1943, RG 38, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, World War II Oral Histories, Interviews, and Statements, NARA.

begin an island-hopping campaign into the Gilbert, Marshall, and Mariana Islands. Tactically, it proved the United States was able to stand toe-to-toe with the Japanese and defeat them in fierce jungle warfare. Perhaps more importantly, Watchtower provided an expensive set of lessons to be applied for all future operations in the Pacific. Because the response was rushed and far from perfect, many of the lessons applied to the art and science of logistics. Most of these logistical lessons ring true today.

While Marines and sailors were still fighting and dying on and around Guadalcanal, the Army executed its own amphibious operation in North Africa in November 1942. Even with the benefit of lessons learned from the Marines on Guadalcanal, the Army proved the challenges of combat loading and ship-to-shore logistics would be hard to learn, and they too dealt with "defective plans, delays, and confusion," as well as inexperienced personnel.[141] Perhaps more acutely aware of their recent struggles, the Navy and Marine Corps implemented many changes while planning for their next major amphibious operation to seize Tarawa. Still far from perfect, the emphasis on combat loading, better prioritization of landing craft, and efficient use of manpower proved learning had occurred and paid dividends. As the island-hopping campaign followed its course across the Pacific toward the Japanese home islands, Marines, sailors, and soldiers steadily embraced the challenges of logistics and honed their skills. By the time MacArthur returned to the Philippines, combat loading, ship-to-shore logistics, and throughput became second nature. Aided by a reinvigorated throughput system stretching all the way back to the U.S. mainland, backed by a weaponized industrial base that provided a seemingly infinite shipping capacity, and executed by massive shore parties, the Army throughput 11,000 tons of cargo per day when they seized Leyte Gulf in October 1944.[142] Those numbers, when compared to the meager amount the Marines brought on shore in August 1942, prove the Pacific supply chain was no longer held together by a meager shoestring.

Today, when studying logistics in support of operations against a peer competitor across the world's largest ocean, it is impossible to ignore the lessons learned from Guadalcanal. While technology has improved during the last 80 years, many of the logistical challenges related to space, time, and force remain the same or have increased. The Pacific Ocean and its distributed islands make it difficult to provide and sustain ready forces spread across incredible distances. New capabilities extend range and decrease time available to respond. Units today will not be afforded the same amount of time 1st Marine Division had to deploy into theater. Similarly, units cannot expect time to train on arrival and commanders will likely be forced, like Vandegrift, to prioritize ship loading and sustainment over basic infantry training. Furthermore, units must be prepared to live and survive with less than perfect logistics and will likely find themselves with surplus days on shore while deficit days of supply.

To thrive, the United States. must maintain an interconnected throughput system that stretches all the way back to and through the mainland that is strengthened by redundancy and relationships. During World War II, the capacity of railroads to connect the East Coast to the West Coast had a direct impact on logistics in the Pacific. Ports of origin along the nation's coasts needed strong and well-trained logisticians just as much, if not more so, than ports of destination, a harsh fact not realized until late in 1944.[143] The scarce supply of capable throughput nodes increased the criticality of each node and threatened the safety of the convoys reliant on extremely predictable resupply routes. Poor relationships with the Free French in Noumea had severe consequences on the half-starved, malaria-ridden Marines on Guadalcanal. Additionally, training for large-scale exercises must ensure all personnel understand their role in logistics and can participate in its fulfillment instead of simulating or assuming logistics during large-scale fleet ex-

[141] Truscott, *Command Missions*, 83–84.
[142] Ian W. Toll, *Pacific War Trilogy*, vol. 3, *Twilight of the Gods: War in the Western Pacific, 1944–1945* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020), 364.
[143] Thomas B. Buell and Walter M. Whitehill, Collection on Ernest J. King, Naval Historical Collection, box 19, MSC 037.2, Research Materials: Logistics and General Policy, U.S. Naval War College.

ercises. This problem existed during the FLEXs of the 1930s and continues today. To ensure logisticians are prepared to enjoy the resounding silence of a job well-done, they must be challenged in training environments that stress the complicated balance between the art and science of logistics so they can do more than just enough when it truly matters. During the contest for Guadalcanal, just-enough throughput operations prevented failure and ensured success. Combat loading, beach operations, and port operations enabled the Marines to live, survive, and eventually thrive despite the mass of chaos, confusion, and cornflakes.

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"Ready"

THE U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE, 1960–1964

By Bradford Wineman, PhD

Abstract: In the years following the Korean War, the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve devolved into an era of neglect and ambivalence after its chaotic mobilization in 1950 and subsequent uncertain role in President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "New Look" military. However, in 1960, two Marine Reserve directors and a cohort of reform-minded mid-grade officers began a movement to revitalize the Reserve into a combat-ready organization able to assist the nation in any upcoming crisis. Primarily using articles in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, these officers initiated a campaign within the Reserves to prioritize combat readiness by focusing on better training, improving recruiting and retention, working with the active component and fostering better relations with civilian communities. By 1964, this effort of professional discourse and reform had revitalized the Marine Reserves into a reliable and competent fighting unit finally poised to fulfill their mission of operational readiness for the Corps and the Department of Defense.
Keywords: Marine Corps Reserve, ready Reserve, readiness, reform

During the first half of the twentieth century, the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve earned a reputation for combat effectiveness equal to their counterparts in the active duty forces. During the two world wars and the Korean War, Marine Reserve forces answered the call for mobilization and served with distinction in each of the conflicts. But by the 1960s, shifts in America's defense strategy forced the Reserves to reevaluate both their organization and place in the national security structure. President John F. Kennedy's policy of "flexible response" against communism called for a substantial peacetime military force capable of speedy mobilization and deployment. The United States could not assume it would have the extended time to build up to a full mobilization as it had during the world wars. The Marine Reserve articulated its response to this new initiative by engaging in intellectual discourse in professional journals, most specifically the *Marine Corps Gazette*, about the need to prepare the Reserve forces during the early years of the 1960s. From 1953 to 1959, the *Gazette* had only published five articles pertaining to Reserve issues. However, between 1960 and 1964, Marine officers authored 85 articles and opinion pieces in the journal focusing exclusively on the training and preparation of the Marine Reserve for the next major conflict. Although the *Gazette* had historically given most of its time to the active duty component, it had now become a forum for reservists to make their case for becoming a viable part of the Corps and Department of Defense's plan for national readiness.

The inspiration for this reform to the Marine Reserve was prompted by the experience of the Korean War mobilization a decade prior. The invasion of North Korean forces across the 38th parallel on 25 June 1950 caught both the active and Reserve components of the Marine Corps both undermanned and unprepared to mobilize in response. Active duty numbers had dropped to below 75,000, with only a fraction of

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those Marines ready for a combat deployment. Since General Douglas MacArthur had demanded a full Marine division as part of his planned amphibious landing at Inchon, Marine leadership had to hastily draw from the Reserves to meet the manpower needs of the operation. However, the Organized Reserve (drilling units) were also woefully under strength at less than 40,000, which forced the activation of members from the Volunteer Reserve to meet the manning requirement (more than 20,000 by October).[1] These Marines were not in drilling status and were part of the civilian workforce (equivalent to the Inactive Ready Reserve today), only having their names on a roster for national emergencies. By early August, thousands of reservists poured into Camp Pendleton, California, creating an administrative and logistical nightmare for commanders who had to both organize and ready for combat this ad hoc group, some of whom had little or no formal training.[2]

In spite of the chaos of the mobilization, the 1st Marine Division, which took part in Operation Chromite, consisted of 20 percent reservists.[3] The Marine Corps, however, would continue to rely heavily on its Reserve forces for the remainder of the Korean conflict to supplement the undersized active force. From 1951 to 1953, the total numbers of both the ground and aviation components were comprised of between one-third and one-half mobilized reservists.[4] Once the conflict ended, the Marine Reserve found itself lodged in an institutional and organizational quagmire. While reservists had distinguished themselves in combat during the Korean conflict, their experience exposed the fragility of the broader Reserve structure. The overwhelming numbers of World War II veterans that filled the ranks of these Reserve units and individual replacements helped to disguise the overall unpreparedness of the organization. The director of the Marine Reserve, Brigadier General William W. Stickney, lamented in 1957 that "it was never considered until the Korean emergency vividly illustrated the cost to the nation of the lack of a military training system, in terms of human unfairness and military unpreparedness."[5] Realizing that reliance on inactive veterans would not solve the military's manpower needs for the next conflict, the directors of the Marine Reserve of the late 1950s, Major Generals Stickney, Alan Shapley, and Thomas Ennis, took the lessons learned from Korea and focused on a new training initiative for Reserve forces to ensure the same mistake would not happen again.

The path to reform post-Korea Marine Reserves was daunting. While both the Department of Defense and the Marine Corps made vociferous mandates to maintain a viable and ready Reserve force, the budget restrictions of the mid-1950s drastically inhibited this effort. Historian William P. McCahill notes that during this era the demands "to reduce operating costs" for Reserve units caused numerous "problems with maintaining readiness."[6] The cutbacks in funding and recuperation from wartime deployments demanded a mass reorganization of units and notable downsizing of infrastructure. The high turnover of personnel prompted by a sizable postwar exodus of combat veterans left many rosters undermanned. Units also struggled with growing numbers of nonparticipating members in the Organized Reserve as attendance for monthly drills and annual training became increasingly inconsistent.

However, Congress did pass the Reserve Forces Act of 1955, which doubled the size of the National Ready Reserve from 1.5 million to 2.9 million and gave the president authority to mobilize 1 million Ready Reserves in times of national emergency. The legislation also revamped various manpower policies for better accession and training of Reserve Forces. The act allowed draftees the option of serving six years in

[1] William P. McCahill, ed., *The Marine Corps Reserve: A History* (Washington, DC: Division of Reserve, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1966), 168.
[2] Bradford Wineman, "Force in Not So Readiness: The Mobilization of the Marine Reserve during the Korean War," *Leatherneck* 99 (September 2016), 16–20.
[3] Forrest L. Marion and Jon T. Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force: The Evolution of the Guard and Reserve* (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2018), 39.
[4] Ernest H. Giusti, *Mobilization of the Marine Corps Reserve in the Korean Conflict, 1950–1951* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1967), 18–26.
[5] BGen W. W. Stickney, "The Marine Corps Reserve, Part 3," *Marine Corps Gazette* 41, no. 12 (December 1957): 36.
[6] McCahill, *The Marine Corps Reserve*, 183–84.

the Reserve instead of two years active duty and required reservists to receive active-duty basic training and attend 48 drills annually, as well as standardized requirements for Reserve officers.[7] The directors of the Marine Reserve spent the remainder of the decade using these changes as the framework for their overall reform efforts, hoping their implementation would resolve their distressing manpower issues.

This implementation, left to the individual Services to execute, remained slow and uneven during the remainder of the decade, extending the malaise and discontent in the Marine Reserve. This insouciance toward the Reserve's mission and training was most notably reflected in the minimal attention given to Reserve issues in the Marines' professional journal, the *Marine Corps Gazette*. Major General Stickney provided the only input on Reserve topics in the *Gazette* between 1955 and 1960 in a four-part series examining the Marine Reserve's history in 1957–58. In his final article, Stickney summarized his historical narrative with an impassioned call for greater investment in Reserve forces, particularly in the face of active-duty downsizing of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "New Look" reforms. He insisted that for every reduction in Marine active forces, "we must have really well-trained and combat ready reserves to fill the breach."[8] There had to be collective action from within the Reserve force to make this happen.

Although the Reserve directors acknowledged the need for reforms in the late 1950s, it was not until 1960 that this need captured the attention of a wider audience within the Corps. In fact, 1 January of that year marked not only a new decade but also new initiative for the Reserve with the appointment of a new director, Brigadier General William T. Fairbourn. He wasted little time in expressing his intentions. Under his direction, the January issue of the *Gazette* included the first in a monthly column called The Marine Reserve in which Fairbourn gave a one-page summary of the Reserve's progress in achieving operational readiness.[9] Not coincidently, the corollary article series "Report from the Ready Forces" featured the Volunteer Reserve as the first Marine unit examined before all active-duty divisions and air wings, demonstrating the importance of the Reserve's place in the grand mobilization plan.[10] Fairbourn used the *Gazette* to make his training directive clear and explicit to all Marine readers. In his first Marine Reserve column, he quoted Commandant David M. Shoup—"Never before has our dependence upon the reserves been so great"—as a mandate not only to compel these organizational changes but to make the entire military community aware of the Reserve's progress.[11]

Eager to commence his readiness campaign, Fairbourn set out to revamp his force's training methods to best fit this emphasis on combat preparedness. Through the *Gazette*, both the Volunteer and Organized Reserve became the topics of numerous suggestions and innovations from enthusiastic officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) wanting to remedy the post–Korean War stagnation in the Reserve system.[12] These articles reflected the transition from simply planning and legislation to definitive action in improving the Reserve's operational readiness. Fairbourn examined all of the "trouble areas" in need of attention and narrowed his focus to three key reforms to enhance the Organized Reserve: the Six-Month

[7] Reserve Forces Act of 1955, Pub. L. No. 84-305 (1955).

[8] BGen W. W. Stickney, "The Marine Corps Reserve, Part 4," *Marine Corps Gazette* 42, no. 1 (January 1958): 47.

[9] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 3 (March 1960): 49. The column's title changed to Marine Corps Reserve in 1961.

[10] Maj M. D. Cooke, "Report from the Ready Forces: The Volunteer Reserve—Part One, Training for M-Day," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 1 (January 1960): 36–38, hereafter "Training for M-Day."

[11] Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, March 1960, 49.

[12] *Semiannual Report of the Secretary of the Navy and the Semiannual Reports of the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, July 1 to December 31* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 1956), 180–81. The Marine Corps Reserve during this time was composed of two training categories: Volunteer and Organized. The Volunteer Reserve (a.k.a. Class III) was largely made up of former active duty personnel available for mobilization who served without pay. Their units, Volunteer Training Units (VTUs) provided training at a minimum expense for those unable to join the Organized unit. The Organized Reserve (Class II) attended paid monthly drills and were supposed to function as normal combat units. Mobilization organization designations overlapped these two categories. The Ready Reserve included reservists to be called in the first six months of a general mobilization. All those left over constituted the Standby Reserve, which was unlimited in size. Confusingly, the Volunteer Reserve consisted of a portion of the Ready Reserve and the entire Standby Reserve.

Training Program, creation of smaller units, and the implementation of the "multiple drill" schedule.[13]

Even though the Marine Reserve had existed for nearly half a century, it still had no organized system for bringing new, nonveteran recruits into Reserve units. A remedy to this problem, inspired by the post-Korea downsizing, came in the form of the Six-Month Training Program created by the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1955. As stipulated in the legislation, the program required all newly enlisted reservists to perform the first six months of their contract on active duty to complete basic, combat, and occupational training. After this, these Marines were contracted for five and a half years of obligatory service on Reserve status. Trainees would participate in the same recruit programs as their active counterparts to create a uniform standard of training and professionalism. The program also allowed Reserve units to dedicate more time to training at higher operational levels and to spend less time on bringing trainees up to the minimum level. Fairbourn reassured skeptics that "our Reserve units are constantly growing in stature and purpose—and our Six-Month trainees are growing right along with their units."[14] Once these trainees proved their competence and ability in their Reserve units, commanders could focus on broader training goals.

Again, learning from the lessons of Korea, Fairbourn reinforced the need for a large number of small units rather than a handful of large ones. Small unit structure allowed for less complicated mobilization procedures and made it possible to give more personal attention to the fundamental details of military training. To make this happen, several units had to be either trimmed down or refitted. Between 1960 and 1962, Fairbourn reorganized or redesignated more than one-half of the Reserve's 218 ground units to better prepare them for entering combat alongside the active units in the next conflict. Unit location proved just as key to the reorganization process, as reformers suggested the need to consider home armory locations in the readiness equation. Captain Leon Dure III's May 1960 article "Reserve Regiments" proposed a geographic reorganization of Ready Reserve divisions to better utilize command, communications, and training assets in each region. This would allow for a reduction in surplus staffs and eliminate the need for larger, self-supporting units through the sharing of resources.[15] Once these units enacted these reconfigurations, Commandant Shoup praised the reorganization process of the Reserve in his 1962 annual message and lauded the movement's contribution toward mobilization readiness by pledging, "We will continue to reorient and to streamline our organizational structure and to update our equipment for Reserve units."[16]

The Volunteer Reserve also instituted several other structural changes that better incorporated its forces into the larger mission to combat readiness. In April 1959, director of Marine Reserve Major General Alan Shapley convened a board to improve the Volunteer Reserve, specifically the Volunteer Training Units (VTUs). The board initiated the first major effort to improve the readiness of VTUs since their creation. Their recommendations included a requirement for attending 24 drills per year, placing all members of the VTUs into the Ready Reserve, and ensuring that each individual unit selected a specialty in which to train. *Gazette* articles examining the readiness of the Volunteer Reserve also suggested a more thorough screening of personnel to elicit maximum mobilization potential for all members and enforcing mandatory participation for all Marines enlisted in volunteer units.[17] The board's analysis of the Volunteer Reserve's combat readiness confidently predicted that their force would soon "take its place shoulder-to-shoulder with

[13] Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, March 1960, 49.

[14] Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, March 1960, 49; and Maj T. Owens and Capt J. A. Everett, "Report from the Ready Forces: The Organized Reserve—Part One, Combat Readiness," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 10 (October 1960): 40–42. Owens and Everett claimed there were skeptics of the Six-Month Program, but who those skeptics were and over what remains unclear.

[15] Capt L. Dure III, "Reserve Regiments," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 5 (May 1960): 48.

[16] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 1 (January 1962): 58.

[17] Cooke, "Training for M-Day," 38; BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 7 (July 1962): 51; and BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 10 (October 1961): 14.

the Organized Reserve in the mobilization readiness picture."[18]

Fairbourn's reorganization plan took its next step in 1962 with the creation of an entire ground unit and air wing made solely of Reserve forces: the 4th Marine Division and 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. Functioning as its own consolidated division and air wing, Reserve forces could now train in conjunction with active duty units and also be deployed in similar fashion.[19] With major organizational changes completed by the summer of 1962, Marine Reserve commanders focused their efforts on the more complex challenges of training, personnel, morale, and the formation of a mobilization standard operating procedure (SOP).

The completion of Reserve unit restructuring and reorganization allowed commanders to turn their attention toward creating a more solidified training agenda. Senior officers remained in agreement that the "first priority in Reserve training goes to M-Day—nationwide mobilization for all-out war."[20] The catchphrase "M-Day" routinely emerged in the journal articles during this period and succeeded in giving commanders a definitive goal to target their training. Their preparation also centered on studying the Reserve activation in the Korean War as the definitive case study. Determined not to repeat the same errors made in 1950–51, Commandant Shoup's 1962 annual message highlighted "readiness as a keynote" and outlined his intention to ensure that the Reserve's "new streamlined organization (was) capable of immediate mount-out in event of mobilization."[21] Contributors to the *Gazette* took on this challenge and addressed a wide range of topics that had to be considered by all Marine reservists in anticipation of being recalled for another war and often went beyond simply ensuring readiness for combat.

To resolve the administrative complications inherent to the short notice of a national emergency mobilization, Fairbourn initiated a program to issue advance mobilization orders for Reserve officers in the fall of 1960. Advanced orders eliminated the potential backlog due to postal services if orders had been mailed out during a general mobilization and also avoided delays in releasing orders in the event of an attack on the United States. Officers who received these advance orders now knew ahead of time if they would be called during the first month of the general mobilization and could prepare for an immediate departure. Fairbourn's October 1960 column published a facsimile of the new Mobilization Orders Card, perforated in the middle so half could be signed and returned to the commander of Marine Training Reserve by the Reserve officer and the other half would be retained at all times as his checklist of where to report and his new billet.[22] By February 1962, Fairbourn issued these advanced "hip pocket" orders to enlisted personnel as well. Again, he touted the advantages of how the advance notice would allow Marines "time for wrapping up loose ends" and would minimize the overall administrative "confusion and cacophony."[23]

The training emphasis of mobilization placed a greater responsibility on the individual Marine. Captain Carl R. Venditto challenged his reservist readers to think seriously about their plan of action in case of mobilization. Using the same tactics as the Commandant and Reserve directors, Venditto composed an article focusing on "recall horror stories" from Korea involving reservists shipping off immediately after their honeymoons or in the middle of college semesters. He hoped cautionary tales such as these would motivate reservists to think about such preparatory

[18] Capt F. M. Nelson and Capt J. A. Everett, "Report from the Ready Forces—Part Two: Programs to Improve Readiness," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 1 (January 1960): 42.
[19] *U.S. Marine Corps Reserve: The First 50 Years* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 1966), 30–31.
[20] "Reserve Officers–The New Picture," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 3 (March 1961): 3.
[21] Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, January 1962, 58. While the Marine Reserve served with distinction in Korea, a growing number of officers in Marine Corps Headquarters considered the mobilization process far from successful. The most blatant shortcoming was the individual reservists' unpreparedness for deployment. The Marine Corps Reserve's official history noted that "the call-up had created a measure of resentment" among organized and retired reservists who were caught off-guard by the mobilization. The enormity and quickness of the call-up also found the administrative and logistics of Reserve units unprepared as well. See *U.S. Marine Corps Reserve*, 181.
[22] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 10 (October 1960): 36.
[23] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 2 (February 1962): 58.

necessities as will writing, life insurance, bill payment and the like. His suggestions also included such practical measures as carrying a wallet-size checklist covering all of the necessary items to consider in the event of a mobilization.[24] This demand for individual readiness in the event of a major conflict transcended the differences between active duty and Reserve Marines. Letters from regular unit commanders, such as Major Robert E. Barde of the 1st Marine Division, praised Venditto's advice stating, "Every troop leader should become familiar with the contents of this article."[25]

Columns in the *Marine Corps Association Newsletter* also examined Reserve mobilization but within a broader context and used more recent examples to urge flexibility. Several newsletter articles in 1962 translated the new Reserve mobilization SOP in plain terms for its readers, explaining the specifics of which Class II and III units would go where and when. They frequently referenced President John F. Kennedy's call for the Reserve during the 1961 Berlin Crisis and repeatedly warned of the possibilities of "a limited war like Korea," or a "Korean type call up" to keep reserves prepared for a "partial mobilization."[26] Reserve battalions, particularly in the Class III Reserve, continued to update their rosters to screen out those not attending drill and those who were physically unqualified (another reaction to problems with the Korean War recall). The Department of Defense then took advantage of those Marines dropped from rosters by giving them assignments to local, state, and national civil defense programs. This plan allowed standby and retired reservists to still contribute to national defense in time of war without being mobilized. This preparation was also reflected logically as Brigadier General Ronald R. Van Stockum noted that the Marine Reserve modernized its procurement system to ensure Reserve units would be issued the exact equipment as their active counterparts. By 1964, the Reserve director argued to high-level Marine leaders that the Reserve's logistical system was so sound that it could prevent equipment combat losses in whatever situation for which they were deployed.[27]

With the improvement of unit organization and Reserve recruit training, reformers turned their attention to the methodology of home armory training and its execution. Prior to 1959, many Reserve units treated drills apathetically, more often meeting one evening a month for rudimentary classroom instruction and multiple coffee breaks. Headquarters had encouraged the practice of multiple drills (i.e., single drills back to back for longer training) but Lieutenant Colonel Cecil E. Moore noted that such "pressure was oral and unofficial."[28] Moore emphasized the need for mandatory multiple drills to create more opportunities for field training instead of armory instruction. "Multiple drills," he added, "also give troops the feeling of being full-time members of the team—not bench sitters."[29] Once-a-month drills also took advantage of better-trained junior Marines (Six-Month Training Program) and better-organized ground units to create more realistic combat training exercises.

Many Reserve officers embraced the new emphasis on back-to-back drills as the key to developing the combat readiness of their units. The *Gazette* published a number of articles targeted at mid-grade officers to encourage more productive drill weekend operations. Similar articles written by operation officers Lieutenant Colonel Moore and Major Paul E. Godfrey provided unit commanders and training staffs with step-by-step directions on planning a highly effective field training exercise. Moore acknowledged the overwhelming challenges in planning due to the newness of the weekend drill concept and lack of experience of all of those involved. However, he viewed these is-

[24] Capt Carl R. Venditto, "Recall and You," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 9 (September 1962): 43–47. This article was subtitled, "Nuts and Bolts Advice on What to Do before You're Called to Go to War. Though Written for the Reserves, It's What All Marines (and Their Wives) Need to Know."

[25] Maj R. E. Barde, letter to the editor, "In the Money," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 12 (December 1962): 8.

[26] "Recall and You," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 10 (October 1962): 1; "Mobilization Plan," *Marine Corps Association Newsletter* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 7; and "Reserve Strength," *Marine Corps Association Newsletter* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 7.

[27] BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "Reserve Report," *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 3 (March 1964): 51.

[28] LtCol C. E. Moore, "Better Reserve Training," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 4 (Apri11960): 51.

[29] Moore, "Better Reserve Training," 51.

sues with organizing personnel, logistics, and equipment as "objectives, not problems."[30] Godfrey's article described the more ambitious side of Reserve training by explaining how to plan a combined Reserve exercise comprising multiple air and ground units during one weekend drill, using his own experiences as examples. Both Marines stressed identical key issues in their how-to approach toward commanders: detailed early planning, increased information flow between units and within units, sound logistics and communication coordination, and a system of valuation and critique. While their articles focused on the minuscule details of arranging a short field exercise, they also kept their higher mission in mind, agreeing that "mobilization readiness has been achieved through greater emphasis on unit and individual training."[31]

Fairbourn hoped to leave as one of his many legacies to change the paradigm of "home armory" drills into a more productive concept. He aspired to have every unit participate in the most realistic training possible during their drill weekends. His columns explained how units worked in a diverse array of climates and traveled great distances to "get to the geography in which they were likely to fight" on their field exercise. He applauded commanders for creating training operations where the troops could get dirty in combat-like situations.[32] Similar articles describing Reserve units training in snow, bayous, deserts, and the black of night appeared more frequently in the pages of the *Gazette* after 1960. Fairbourn also commended commanders' efforts to train with units from other Services, particularly the Air Force and Naval Reserve forces, as a way to initiate Joint Service amphibious landing operations with close air support. Fairbourn's staff also kept a close eye on the training of Class III (Volunteer) units and their mobilization preparation. While not physically going on field operations, VTUs supported both active duty and Organized Reserve units by performing administrative tasks, conducting classes and workshops, organizing the larger combat exercises, and participating in the Secretary of the Navy's Reserve Policy Board. In fall 1961, after President Kennedy addressed the nation on the current situation with the Berlin Crisis, thousands of active and retired reservists contacted Marine Reserve Headquarters to volunteer their services. Regardless of their active or inactive status, Fairbourn celebrated their enthusiastic commitment by boasting, "Our reservists know what is expected of them and will act accordingly."[33]

Suggestions on improving the Reserve's two-week annual training (AT) naturally complemented the efforts to create better home armory training in the journals. Both Reserve directors Fairbourn and Van Stockum emphasized the need for Reserve units to participate in the most realistic combat training exercises available for their summer ATs. Van Stockum pressed particularly hard for this goal by dedicating the majority of his Marine Corps Reserve column summaries to the upcoming AT operations in late 1962 and in early 1963. He emphasized the necessity of getting the maximum amount of training out of AT within the restrictions of the limited amount of time available. He also expressed that AT provided an opportunity for individual Marines to apply the benefits from the hard work they had put into their weekend drills. "If reservists are to pass the test of annual field training this summer, they must learn something new and apply what they already know," he stated, "they must utilize every moment of training time available, but mobilization readiness constantly in mind."[34] More importantly, he sought to build on the objectives set by his predecessor Fairbourn by encouraging more combined arms exercises as well as training involving both air and ground units. This emphasis on more combat-like training increased the number of reservists training with active-duty units at active duty installations.[35]

[30] Moore, "Better Reserve Training," 50–53; and Maj P. E. Godfrey, "Planning a Combined Reserve Exercise," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 8 (August 1961): 46–50.
[31] Moore, "Better Reserve Training," 52.
[32] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 3 (March 1962): 55.
[33] Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, October 1961, 14.
[34] BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "Stand by for Summer Training," Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 6 (June 1963): 19.
[35] Van Stockum, "Stand by for Summer Training," 19.

The trend of Joint active-reserve training began in the summer of 1960 when the Reserve Air Wing as Marine Helicopter Transport Squadron 767 (HMR-767), a reserve squadron from New Orleans, Louisiana, merged with regular squadron HMR-361 of Santa Ana, California, for a combined operation at Marie Corps Air Station El Toro, California. Captain Maurice Dantin's article in the *Gazette* detailed the exercise. He concluded that if this experience was any indication, the Marine Corps should consider merging training for the entire Reserve program.[36] Cooperative training spread rapidly through the air wing as Reserve units increased their visits to active-duty air stations to take advantage of more realistic operations and to share the equipment, facilities, and gear they would need for mobilization. Fairbourn proposed similar opportunities for ground units by pushing the "host unit system," where an active-duty unit would invite a collection of Reserve units to its base to train side by side for their summer AT. Captain C. A. Boyd Jr.'s January 1960 article, "Mobilize and Mix," proposed a merger training program that had a Reserve unit perform a mock mobilization and active-duty facility for the first two days of their AT to accustom them to working with "unfamiliar" active-duty faces as they would during an actual mobilization.[37] Fairbourn celebrated these operations, stating that "someday, regulars and reservists may again fight it from the same foxhole. They need to be trained as a team."[38]

Fairbourn's foxhole metaphor represented a parallel effort that accompanied the endorsements for more merger training. As this increased functional interaction between active and Reserve units reinforced one of the Reserve's institutional goals of mobilization readiness, Marines from both sides attempted to foster a better social relationship between the two organizations. While merger operations specifically targeted the practical need to provide more intense combat training for reservists, they also sought to increase active-duty confidence in the Reserve program and erase the stereotype of the reservists as substandard, part-time combatants. Fairbourn repeatedly called for a "bond of mutual respect" and an "attitude of oneness" necessary for combat effectiveness of regulars and reservists. Reserve officers also appealed for a mutual understanding and encouraged their fellow active-duty Marines to familiarize themselves with all the Reserve training programs.[39] Even retired Reserve director Major General Stickney chided the active forces, and even civilians, for scorning reservists as "weekend warriors," "Thursday night soldiers," and "citizen Marines." The Reserve component of the Marine Corps, he argued, deserved only one moniker: "professional."[40] The increased number of Reserve articles in professional journals and the commonality of merger training fostered a new respect for the Reserve program as a viable fighting organization.

To promote professionalism and efficiency in Reserve units, the role of inspector-instructor (I-I) became paramount.[41] Articles written by active-duty officers who recently left I-I duty imparted advice to those who would eventually begin their tour. Although most of the advice came in the form of "how to prepare and survive" manuals, these officers emphasized several themes relevant to enhancing Reserve unit performance, such as staff communication, recruiting, community service, and a cooperative relationship with a Reserve commanding officer.[42] This last issue drew more attention to the issue when the *Gazette* published a letter from an outgoing officer to his incoming Reserve commanding officer that imparted a great deal of practical advice on how to get the most productivity from his troops, maintain

[36] Capt Maurice Dantin, "Merger Training for Air Reservists," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 5 (May 1961): 42–43.
[37] Capt C. A. Boyd Jr., "Mobilize and Mix," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 1 (January 1960): 65.
[38] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 6 (June 1961): 49.
[39] LtCol E. B. Dane Jr., "Regulars Owe It to Themselves," Know Your Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 7 (July 1963): 52.
[40] MajGen W. W. Stickney, "USMC . . . Amateur or Professional?," *Marine Corps Gazette* 42, no. 11 (November 1959): 12.
[41] The I-I staff of a Marine Reserve unit consisted of active duty personnel who oversaw the day-to-day operation of the unit during the week and served as advisors to reservists during their weekend drill periods. The I-I staff usually comprised only 10 percent of a unit's T/O (total personnel).
[42] Capt T. G. Davis, "Prepare for I-I," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 44–47; Maj Stanley G. Tribe Jr., "I-I: Another Look," *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 9 (September 1964): 36–40; and Sgt W. S. Gilbert, "I & I Duty: A Challenge," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 4 (April 1961): 62.

solid communication with the Reserve and chain of command, and pursue the best methods to instruct reservists. The emphasis especially on the relationship between the Reserve and I-I commander was prompted by a professional debate that took place in the editorial pages of the *Gazette* in 1961, debating whether it was best for units to be commanded by an I-I or a Reserve commanding officer.[43] By the end of the discussion, contributors agreed that the Reserve commanders should command the unit and the I-I staff should provide support and cooperation. Director Fairbourn, however, called for a collective appreciation of the I-Is' tireless work by underlining the "20 different kinds of jobs" they needed to execute during a "55 hour work week."[44] The attention drawn to I-I staffs in the journals demonstrates the concerns with the guidance given to reservists and their preparation for the next war instead of using separate chains of command as an obstacle. Inspector-instructor and Reserve leadership would now work together toward providing the most effective training environment for their units.

Although the I-I provided guidance from active-duty experience, Reserve commanders worried about the need for the Reserve to develop its own core leadership—in particular competent NCOs and officers who could improve the execution of the readiness mission and handle the increased operations tempo. Fairbourn expressed his hopes in 1960 that the Six-Month Training Program, now past its infancy, could supply the Reserve with its own pool of NCOs. Yet, his successors Van Stockum and Brigadier General James L. Stewart still complained of a serious shortage of young company grade officers and experienced junior NCOs in nearly every Reserve unit. Van Stockum fumed, "We need young officers to take over the future leadership of the reserves as well as experienced NCOs."[45] He dedicated three successive columns in the *Gazette* to stressing the junior leadership problem in the spring of 1963. His final installment recognized the "overpopulation" of qualified officers at higher levels of command because of the large input of lieutenants from World War II and Korea who had progressively been promoted.[46] Since the Six-Month Training Program could not produce leadership in large enough numbers, both Van Stockum and Stewart lobbied commanders in the active Fleet Marine Force to take responsibility for remedying the Reserve leadership vacuum. Officers and NCOs who had contemporaries leaving active duty, according to Stewart, "must not fail to make the necessary effort to ensure that we may continue to have fine, young junior officers and NCOs in the Reserve programs."[47]

To bolster this campaign, Stewart focused his entire subsequent Reserve Report column in the *Gazette* on teaching how to convince "reluctant" Regulars to join the Organized Reserve.[48] His suggested selling points also appeared in previous journal issues in an attempt to accomplish the same task of making the Reserve a viable option for experienced Marines from the fleet. Several of the early Reserve Report columns explained the expanded retirement benefits now afforded to reservists with passage of the Reserve Officer Personnel Act (ROPA) of 1954, which allowed the time in Reserve service to accrue toward the standard retirement after 20 years. ROPA also expanded the grade distribution for officers and NCOs, offering a greater opportunity for Reserve promotions in various command billets. Much like in the fleet, the Reserve based its officer development on a career pattern, with opportunities for staff and command positions, higher education, and various duty assign-

[43] Col W. W. Barron, "CO I & I Setup: Anomaly or Good Sense?," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 8 (August 1961): 58–59; and Maj E. F. Penico, "One CO, One Staff–A Better Reserve," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 8 (August 1961): 59. In this debate, Marines argued whether Reserve units should have an active duty commanding officer from the I-I staff instead of a Reserve officer. I-I commander advocates argued their system allowed for a greater continuity of command and offered more experience in key positions. Dual command supporters asserted that a Reserve commanding officer could relate better to his Reserve troops and still maintain the high standards of active duty professionalism.

[44] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 4 (April 1961): 57.

[45] BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "There's No Such Thing as an Ex-Marine," Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 3 (March 1963): 14.

[46] BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "No Room at the Top for Everyone," Reserve Report, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 5 (May 1963): 49.

[47] BGen J. L. Stewart, Reserve Report, *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 7 (July 1964): 55.

[48] BGen J. L. Stewart, Reserve Report, *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 8 (August 1964): 26.

ments. Articles on mobilization stressed the growing cooperation of civilian employers toward supporting Reserve programs and even encouraging their workers to join. The broader goals of better training and raising the level of professionalism (examined monthly in the *Gazette*) also contributed to the recruiting effort. When all else failed, Van Stockum targeted their Service pride by referencing the institutional adage that "there is no such thing as an ex-Marine" in a Marine Corps Reserve column headline and if they did not want to "go regular," they still could be part of the Marine "team" in the Reserve.[49]

While commanders recruited heavily from those departing the active-duty ranks in search of experience and leadership, they also devoted attention to the development of their population of junior Marines from the Six-Month Training Program. Motivated by Van Stockum's continual call for "more young blue blood" in the Organized Reserve, *Gazette* contributors endeavored to raise the quality of the individual Marine reservist, particularly the young enlisted personnel. They lobbied vocally for junior enlisted reservists to become more military occupational specialty-proficient and pursue more technical training. They encouraged administrative and command staffs to purge their rosters of "noncommitted" Marines with poor drill attendance and focus their energies on those motivated and dedicated to service in the Reserve. Unit leadership could now prioritize training to make their inexperienced junior reservists more capable, competent, and prepared. It did not take long before the high command began to take notice of the upgrade in personnel standards. Brigadier General Fairbourn marveled at the number of college graduates serving in the junior enlisted ranks of many urban units employing nontechnical military occupational specialties.[50] The Reserve Policy Board noted in the *DOD Annual Report* that thanks to the creation of the 4th Marine Division/Wing and commitment to better training, the Marine Reserves was for the first time ready to have units, rather than just individual augmentees, and to be mobilized for active service to supplement active forces."[51]

Public perception proved to be as vital an element of the Marine Reserve's function as combat training and leadership skills. The articles advised that I-I staffers all place primary importance on establishing solid community relations. A high level of visibility within the local area bolstered the image of the Marine Corps overall but also raised civilian awareness of Reserve presence and purpose. A positive perception of the unit improved support from employers who employed reservists and served as an instrument of local recruitment for the Six-Month Training Program. Inspector-instructor members recruited potential Reserve officers leaving active duty by explaining how the unit "community connections" could aid them in finding a good job once they ended their active commissions.[52] Reservists also committed themselves to productive public relations in their hometowns during their drill weekends. Various columns in the *Gazette* reported instances of units assisting with natural disaster relief, providing city security, or, in one case, helping a local law enforcement torch an illegal marijuana field.[53] The journal highlighted how reservists sought to gain as much understanding and support from the civilian population as from their active-duty counterparts. One I-I officer warned his future successors that "how you conduct yourself will have a definitive bearing on what the community thinks about the Marine Corps."[54]

By the fall of 1964, the attention given to the Reserve forces in the *Marine Corps Gazette* began to decline. The Reserve director's column remained as a permanent feature of the journal, but nearly all discourse within the Marine Corps focused on the rapidly escalating conflict in Vietnam. Yet, the decrease in Reserve articles cannot be attributed solely to the

[49] Van Stockum, "There's No Such Thing as an Ex-Marine," 14.
[50] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 11 (November 1961): 18.
[51] *Annual Report of the Secretary of Defense and the Annual Reports of the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Air Force: Fiscal Year 1962* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1962), 60–61.
[52] BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "Active Inactive Reservists Benefit Corps and Selves," Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 4 (April 1963): 13.
[53] BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 43.
[54] Davis, "Prepare for I-I," 46.

widening of this war. Marine writers who dedicated four years of articles, columns, letters, and editorials had contributed to the successful mission of reforming the Reserve and bringing it to a higher state of combat readiness. The caliber of the 1964 Marine Reserve far exceeded the standards and efficiency of the previous decade and erased the stigma left after the Korean War. More importantly, the Reserve remained poised for mobilization during the short but crucial period that included the Berlin Crisis, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Dominican Republic uprising, and growing unrest in Southeast Asia. Historians such as Allan R. Millett have confirmed the impact of these four years on revitalizing the Reserve, noting that "the reorganization improved the training and equipment's status of Reserve units and have encouraged a sense of mission and *esprit* based on both professional and local pride."[55] The movement to reorganize, reform, and reinvigorate the Marine Corps Reserve in the early 1960s, steered by Marines' contributions to the professional journals, succeeded in bringing the Reserve to a level of combat effectiveness equal to the regular forces and proved itself as a key element of the Marine Corps' force in readiness.

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[55] Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 552.

"Come on, You Sons-o'-Bitches, Do You Want to Live Forever?"[1]

THE DEVIL DOG FOUNTAIN: MYTH, ART, ARCHETYPE, AND INTEGRATION

By Heather A. Warfield, PhD

Abstract: The First World War's Belleau Wood battlefield is an epicenter of pilgrimages for the U.S. Marine Corps. These pilgrimages now include visits to the "Devil Dog" fountain, a small shrine inside the village of Belleau, France, that, until the 1980s, had no historical connection to Marines. As collective memory of the war has evolved, the fountain has risen in significance, and current practices mirror the pilgrimage practices of other water shrines or holy wells. This article provides a historical overview of the fountain, links the fountain to other sacred wells, and provides evidence of the dog's artistic connection to the *Chienne et ses petits* sculpture by the French sculptor Pierre Louis Rouillard. In addition, the author discusses the psychological significance of the dog head within its artistic context, explores the deeper psychological reasons for the fountain's magnetism, and asserts that the fountain is a site for psychological integration.

Keywords: World War I, Belleau Wood, French sculpture, sacred well, pilgrimage, identity, archetypes, myth, Pierre Louis Rouillard, hellhound, Devil Dog fountain

Introduction

The Marine Corps released a photograph in June 2016 that was part of a series of images from Memorial Day events in Belleau Wood, France. The photograph captured a profoundly human moment: Commandant of the Marine Corps Robert B. Neller gazing contemplatively at a stream of water pouring from the mouth of a dog. His right hand was encircled by a memorial bracelet, an indication that he was carrying with him the memory of someone significant. From the view of an outside observer, it is evident that Neller was engaging in some type of ritual at this fountain, presumably tied to his status as a Marine. However, from the perspective of a pilgrimage researcher, not only was the nation's top Marine receiving water from the mouth of a dog at a fountain in Northern France, he was also the embodiment of a pilgrim at a holy well. The image was so evocative that it launched a years-long quest to understand the significance of the Commandant's visit and the parallel with pilgrims at other sacred wells.

This article is the result of long-term research focused on pilgrimages to Belleau Wood and the Devil Dog fountain. The author argues that the Devil Dog

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https://doi.org/10.35318/mch.2026110203

[1] Floyd Gibbons, *And They Thought We Wouldn't Fight* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1918), 304; and "The 'Do You Want to Live Forever' Legend," information sheet, National Museum of the Marine Corps, accessed 5 February 2026.

Photo by SSgt Gabriela Garcia, U.S. Marine Corps

Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen Robert B. Neller at the fountain, 29 May 2016, after the American Memorial Day ceremony at the Aisne-Marne American Memorial Cemetery, Belleau Wood, France. Each Memorial Day weekend, U.S. Marines, French servicemembers, family members, and locals gather to honor the memory of the Marines killed during the battle of Belleau Wood.

fountain's power as a pilgrimage site derives from four converging forces: a) the significance of the Devil Dog moniker within the Marine Corps; b) the fountain's resonance with ancient myths linking dogs to sacred wells and liminal spaces; c) the fountain's material connection to a nineteenth-century sculpture; and d) its capacity to serve as a site of psychological integration. By tracing the fountain's artistic provenance to Pierre Louis Rouillard's sculpture *Chienne et ses petits* (Dog and her pups) and situating it within Indo-European hellhound mythology, Gestalt psychology, and Jungian archetypal psychology, this analysis reveals how material object, myth, and ritual practice converge to create sacred space. The discovery that the fountain's dog head is, in fact, taken from a complete sculpture of a nursing canine mother rather than a ferocious male warrior adds profound complexity to its symbolic resonance and opens possibilities for understanding Marine pilgrimage practices as sites of integration and inclusion, rather than mere commemoration. The article concludes with a discussion of how the fountain functions as a site where Marines can confront questions of lethality and vulnerability, institutional masculinity, and moral injury, ultimately suggesting that the newly revealed maternal identity of the fountainhead may deepen its capacity to serve as a space of healing and transformation.

Methodological Note

This article employs Jungian archetypal psychology alongside material history, comparative mythology, ethnographic observation, and applied psychological

insights. While archetypal approaches have fallen from favor in some academic disciplines (particularly within literary studies), they remain valuable for analyzing pilgrimage sites precisely because pilgrimages operate in the realm of symbol, ritual, and collective meaning-making rather than purely rational discourse. Jung's framework for understanding how humans project psychological content onto sacred objects and spaces offers analytical tools particularly suited to explaining why certain sites exert powerful attraction across generations despite, or perhaps because of, their symbolic ambiguity. This article employs Jungian concepts not as empirical truth claims but as hermeneutic tools for interpreting how Marines engage with the fountain as a meaningful object. The analysis treats archetypes as recurring patterns in human meaning-making rather than as metaphysical realities, recognizing that such frameworks complement rather than replace historical and material analysis.

The Devil Dog in Marine Corps Culture and Iconography

To understand why Marines in the late 1980s would transform an obscure fountain in rural France into a central pilgrimage site requires an understanding of the profound importance of the Devil Dog identity within Marine Corps culture. The Devil Dog is not merely a nickname or mascot; it is central to how Marines understand themselves as warriors, brothers and sisters, and members of a military institution that values ferocity, loyalty, and an almost supernatural tenacity.

The visual culture of the Marine Corps is saturated with bulldog imagery. The official mascot lineage, from Jiggs to the current Chesty, features English bulldogs that embody the qualities Marines aspire to: stocky power, fierce determination, an imposing presence despite compact size, and an unwillingness to surrender. Individual Marine bases have historically maintained their own bulldog mascots, creating a distributed network of living symbols. A walk through any Marine Corps installation reflects bulldog imagery on unit insignia, building murals, challenge coins, and memorial stones. Most tellingly, a survey of tattooed Marines across generations reveals countless bulldogs wearing World War I doughboy helmets, often accompanied by the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor. These tattoos represent permanent bodily inscriptions of Devil Dog identity, worn as both a badge of honor and as psychological armor.

The linguistic culture of the Corps reinforces this identity daily. Marines routinely address each other as *Devil* or *Devil Dog* in casual conversation, turning what was allegedly a World War I German epithet of fear—reputedly originating at the Battle of Belleau Wood—into a term of affection and solidarity. This everyday usage transforms the Devil Dog from historical reference into lived identity. To be called Devil Dog by another Marine is to be recognized as belonging, as sharing in a collective identity that transcends individual service records.

Popular culture has also shaped how Marines envision the Devil Dog, creating a bridge between ancient warrior archetypes and contemporary American imagination. Mid-twentieth century animation, particularly Warner Brothers cartoons and the persistent bulldog characters in *Tom and Jerry*, presented bulldogs as simultaneously comical and fierce, loyal yet stubborn, domestic yet dangerous.[2] These cartoon bulldogs often appeared as guards, protectors of territory, and defenders of the weak, roles that resonate deeply with Marine Corps values. For Marines who grew up watching these cartoons, the bulldog was already a familiar symbol of a particular kind of masculine virtue before they ever encountered official Corps iconography. This cultural preparation made the Devil Dog identity feel natural rather than imposed.[3]

Moreover, the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) introduced additional canine metaphors that reinforced Devil Dog symbolism. The "sheepdog" concept, which was popularized by U.S. Army lieutenant col-

[2] Spike and his son Tyke first appeared in episodes of *Tom and Jerry* in 1942. "Dog Trouble," *Tom and Jerry*, aired on 18 April 1942 as a theater short by MGM Studios.

[3] For more on Marine Corps culture, see Mark Ryland Folse, *The Globe and Anchor Men: U.S. Marines, Manhood, and American Culture* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2024); and Heather Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874–1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019).

onel Dave Grossman and others, presented warriors as protectors standing between innocent "sheep" and predatory "wolves." While distinct from the Devil Dog imagery, the sheepdog metaphor primed GWOT-era Marines to see themselves in canine terms: vigilant, protective, capable of controlled violence, and operating at the threshold between civilization and chaos.[4]

The Marine Corps as an institution has deliberately cultivated this Devil Dog identity, while maintaining its characteristic flexibility about historical accuracy. Entry-level training openly acknowledges that some cherished Marine traditions, such as the origin of blood stripes on dress blue trousers or the quatrefoil on officers' barracks covers, are rooted in stories that are not factually correct but are nonetheless embraced for what might be called their *truth value*. The Corps understands that myths and rituals need not be historically accurate to be functionally important. This institutional comfort with symbolic truth over literal fact creates an environment where a fountain discovered decades after World War I can be seamlessly integrated into the origin narrative of the modern Marine Corps.

Given this saturation of Devil Dog imagery in Marine culture—visual, linguistic, material, and psychological—the discovery of a fountain featuring a dog's head in Belleau, the village adjacent to the woods where Marines believe their modern identity was forged, represented not a random coincidence but a kind of inevitable recognition. The fountain simply externalized what was already internal, providing a physical site where the symbolic and material could converge.

The Devil Dog Fountain: Site and Practices

Holy wells, fountains, or shrines are fusion points where the material world meets the otherworld. They are communal gathering places that form the backdrop for rites of passage (formalized rituals marking transitions in social status or identity) and rituals, and locations where collective identity is reinforced and reinvigorated. They are also focal points onto which humans project their deepest questions and hopes for healing, transformation, or divine intervention. The sacred, those spaces set apart from ordinary life, where encounters with transcendent meaning become possible, manifests at such sites not through official designation but through accumulated practice and shared recognition. Ultimately, shrines are sacred places where meaning is made and grand narratives are constructed, and narratives that evolve and deepen as pilgrims share their stories with others.

For Marines, the shrine known as the Devil Dog fountain has become central to pilgrimages to Belleau Wood. The Marine Corps has long understood the power of place and the importance of inculcating connection to hallowed ground. Servicemembers of all branches maintain ties to particular locations, but Marines are collectively bound to the same sacred places: Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, Chosin Reservoir, Khe Sahn, Fallujah. The Devil Dog fountain now occupies a prominent position within this constellation of Marine sacred geography, having become virtually synonymous with Belleau Wood. Yet remarkably, because Marines never occupied this precise location during the 1918 battle, the site's sacralization cannot be attributed to historical military action. Instead, its emergence as a pilgrimage destination resulted from the confluence of geographic proximity to the battlefield, the potency of the Devil Dog identity, the establishment of ritual practices, and the operations of collective memory. The fountain exemplifies how seemingly insignificant places can evolve into pilgrimage sites through the symbiotic relationship between pilgrims and sacred space.

Location and Historical Context

The fountain sits within the village of Belleau on private property, formerly the site of a sixteenth-century château constructed for the Graimberg family. The current owners descend from Alphonse Paillet, who purchased the château and most of the hunting preserve known as Belleau Wood in 1842. Paillet's heirs sold the woodland to the Belleau Wood Memorial As-

[4] LtCol Dave Grossman and Loren W. Christensen, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace* (Belleville, IL: PPCT Research Publications, 2004).

sociation in 1923, when it was dedicated as a shrine to the American Expeditionary Forces, but the family retained the château ruins. These landowners have played an integral role in facilitating the growth of Marine pilgrimages to the fountain, maintaining access to the site and participating in commemorative activities. The fountain draws from a spring-fed aquifer that supplies water throughout the area. What distinguishes this particular water source is its passage through the mouth of a dog's head. While often identified as a bulldog, the sculpture more accurately represents a Dogue de Bordeaux, a hunting breed that gained popularity in France during the mid to late nineteenth century. Originally serving utilitarian purposes within the château's agricultural courtyard, this unremarkable fountain seemed an unlikely candidate for sacred status. Yet, its proximity to the hallowed battlefield and the symbolic resonance of the canine figure coalesced to birth a Marine Corps shrine.

The Historical Silence: 1918–1980s

Until the 1980s, the fountain was relatively obscure and so unremarkable that it was rarely, if ever, photographed or written about by those who visited the area. This historical silence regarding the Devil Dog fountain is conspicuous given its current prominence within Marine pilgrimage practices. The absence of documentation becomes particularly striking when considered against the backdrop of numerous fountains and memorials established by Americans throughout the region following World War I. On Belleau's main thoroughfare, for instance, stands a fountain dedicated to Pennsylvania soldiers who perished in Belleau Wood. Had the current Devil Dog fountain possessed significance during the interwar period, it would likely have received similar commemoration or at least photographic documentation.

The silence extends through several major commemorative events. The 1923 dedication ceremony for Belleau Wood as a memorial shrine similarly omits any reference to it.[5] When the village church was reconstructed in 1929 as the U.S. Army 26th "Yankee" Division Memorial, Army major general James Harbord, who had commanded the Marines at Belleau Wood, vociferously objected to this Army memorial in what he considered Marine territory. His public statements asserting Marine primacy in Belleau Wood would have provided an ideal opportunity to reference any Marine connection to the village fountain, yet no such mention appears. The Gold Star Mothers' pilgrimages of 1930–33, funded by the U.S. government to bring grieving mothers to their sons' graves in France, included visits to Belleau Wood. Yet, neither written accounts nor photographs from these emotional journeys document any engagement with the fountain.[6]

Post–World War II commemorative activities likewise ignored the fountain. When the village church required repairs in 1953, Yankee Division veterans again funded its restoration and rededication. Commandant Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr. visited during this period, concerned that the Marine Corps' contributions at Belleau Wood were fading from public consciousness. He initiated plans for a Marine memorial, dedicated in 1955. Given Shepherd's interest in preserving Marine heritage at Belleau Wood, his apparent lack of engagement with the fountain suggests no established Marine connection to the site existed at that time.[7] Throughout the following decades, the fountain remained absent from Marine Corps narratives about Belleau Wood.

The 1980s Emergence

But in the late 1980s, this changed, and the fountain emerged out of obscurity.[8] Within the gates of an agricultural courtyard, Marines discovered a fountain with water passing through the mouth of a dog. And, in it, they saw themselves. According to villagers, the

[5] "MG James Harbord Speech—Belleau Wood," 1923, Postcard Album, Portraits, and Other World War I Miscellany, box 1, folder 1915–1923, MSS 10875-g, University of Virginia Library.

[6] John W. Graham, *The Gold Star Mother Pilgrimages of the 1930s* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005).

[7] "Belleau Wood Marine Monument, Departmental Road 82 (D82), Belleau, Département de l'Aisne (France)," Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, HABS no. US-13, Library of Congress.

[8] Heather A. Warfield, "Return with the Elixir: The Psychology of Pilgrimages to the 'Devil Dog' Fountain," *Leatherneck* 107, no. 6 (June 2024): 36–49.

first instance of Marines visiting the fountain was in November 1988 when the remains of a World War I-era American servicemember were reinterred at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in Belleau. The remains were attributed to a Marine, and a number of Marines attended the reinternment ceremony.[9] During this period, Marines began incorporating the village of Belleau and its fountain into Belleau Wood itineraries, extending their pilgrimages beyond the woodland battlefield.

The timing of this "discovery" in the late 1980s is significant and worthy of speculation. Why did Marines not claim this fountain in the 1920s, 1950s, or 1960s? Several factors may have contributed to its emergence as a pilgrimage site specifically in this era. First, the late 1980s marked a period of renewed institutional pride for the Marine Corps following the difficult years of Vietnam and its aftermath. The Ronald W. Reagan-era military buildup had restored funding, prestige, and public respect for the military generally and the Marines particularly. This cultural moment may have created space for renewed engagement with World War I heritage as the Corps sought to reconnect with its triumphant past. Second, enough generational distance had passed since 1918 to allow full mythologization of Belleau Wood without the complicating presence of actual veterans who might resist romantic interpretations. By the late 1980s, most of the last World War I Marines were gone, freeing the battlefield to become infused with symbol. Third, the growth of battlefield tourism generally in this period, which was facilitated by cheaper transatlantic travel and increased American interest in heritage tourism, meant more Marines were visiting France. Finally, the reinternment ceremony of November 1988 brought a critical mass of Marines to the village at once, creating the social conditions for discovery and the immediate establishment of practice through group witness.

Contemporary accounts from this period reveal how Marines began constructing historical narratives to justify their connection to the fountain and village. In the November 1988 issue of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, Agostino von Hassell described Marines visiting the Devil Dog fountain and offered an intriguing origin story: Germans occupying Belleau in 1914 had allegedly encountered "Hounds of Belleau" (the aristocratic owner's fierce hunting hounds) within the château, and when Marines attacked the area in June 1918, the Germans recalled this earlier encounter, thus originating the Devil Dog moniker.[10] In July 1990, *Boston Globe* sportswriter Bud Collins claimed that Marines had bivouacked in the château's farmyard during the war, a claim published, notably, on dates corresponding to when the Yankee Division (not Marines) had actually liberated the village in 1918.[11] Despite their historical inaccuracies, these accounts illustrate how fragmentary information was being integrated into a coherent narrative framework. From this point forward, the village of Belleau became subsumed into the Belleau Wood narrative, the two locations fusing in collective memory into a single sacred landscape. This conflation became so complete that even Marines who had visited both locations sometimes forgot they were geographically separate, their individual memories merging with the collective mythology of an undifferentiated Belleau Wood battlescape.

Institutional Sacralization: The Krulak Visits

While Belleau Wood had been hallowed ground since 1918, the incorporation of the village fountain into Marine Corps sacred geography was cemented during Commandant Charles C. Krulak's visits in 1997 and 1998. His visits sacralized the unity of the Belleau landscape in four significant ways. First, he filmed the 222d Marine Corps Birthday message from the battlefield, standing in a wheat field with one arm reaching metaphorically back to World War I Marines and the other extended toward future generations. In this prophetic performance, Krulak spoke passionately of continuity, identity, and shared vision across Marine

[9] Associated Press, "Marine Burial," *Anderson (SC) Independent-Mail*, 6 November 1988, 13.

[10] Agostino van Hassell, "Belleau Wood Seventy Years Later," *Marine Corps Gazette* 72, no. 11 (November 1988): 67.

[11] Bud Collins, "Where Devil Dogs Are Always Welcome," *Boston (MA) Sunday Globe*, 15 July 1990, 185.

Courtesy of Archives, Marine Corps Historical Division

Gen Charles C. Krulak drinking from the fountain during American Memorial Day ceremonies in 1998.

generations. He deployed water as a connective metaphor, asserting that Belleau Wood was "like a river that runs through all Marines and all Frenchmen . . . rippling through our souls, renewing us, sustaining us and fortifying us for the trials to come."[12] This aquatic imagery explicitly linked the battlefield with the fountain, merging them into a unified sacred waterscape.

Second, Krulak was photographed at the Devil Dog fountain drinking directly from the dog's mouth, providing a powerful visual template for how future generations of Marines would engage with the site. This image of the Commandant, the highest-ranking Marine, performing this act legitimized and institutionalized the practice. Third, Krulak explicitly framed his time at Belleau Wood as a "pilgrimage of great personal meaning," using religious terminology that elevated the visit from military tourism to sacred journey.[13] He emphasized the importance of reenacting the journey of 1918 Marines, positioning contemporary visits as participation *in* sacred history rather than mere commemoration *of* it. Finally, Krulak presented the fountain's landowners with a certificate of appreciation, a gesture that formally acknowledged the site's importance to the Marine Corps and established institutional relationship with those who controlled access to the sacred space.

[12] Andron Garrigus, "Marine Corps Birthday Hawaii Aloha Detachment General Krulak," 30 October 2015, video on YouTube, 07:40.

[13] CMC Charles C. Krulak, personal correspondence to Maj Muller, Assistant Naval Attaché, U.S. Embassy France, 28 May 1997, Archives, Marine Corps History Division, Quantico, VA.

From a pilgrimage standpoint, the fountain's rise in prominence is noteworthy and tracks with the global rise in pilgrimages over the past several decades. The evolution of Marines' practices at the fountain is also notable as these practices mirror those at other sacred sites, particularly those at holy wells. As part of a larger research agenda focused on battlefield pilgrimages, this article is based on fieldwork in Belleau Wood and the Devil Dog fountain between the years 2021 and 2024. During this era, the author was an invited researcher at the University of Lille, and a France Fulbright Scholar, with research focused on post–World War I pilgrimages to Belleau and Belleau Wood. The research methods for the current study included archival research in French and American archives, field observations, and interviews with visitors and pilgrims, which spanned approximately 30 visits to the fountain. This fieldwork occurred across the entirety of the Belleau Wood battlescape, which not only includes the geographic terrain of the woods, but also the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery, several villages including Belleau and Bouresches, and a number of farms and fields where military actions occurred during World War I.[14]

Contemporary Accessibility and Ritual Practice

Understanding the fountain's importance requires examining not only its symbolic resonance but also its practical accessibility to contemporary Marines. While Belleau Wood is geographically distant from most Marine Corps installations, several pathways enable regular engagement with the site. Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) training in Europe and the Mediterranean region occasionally incorporate visits to Belleau Wood into their training schedules, particularly when operating in Northern France or preparing for commemorative events. Individual Marines and veterans visit during leave, on post-deployment vacations, or during organized heritage tours. The museum across the street from the fountain now sells glass bottles designed for water collection that deliberately resemble medieval ampullae used by Christian pilgrims, suggesting both commercial recognition of the practice and institutional support for it.

The fountain's significance is particularly remarkable given the absence of prior water-based rituals within Marine Corps tradition. Unlike religious pilgrimage traditions with established practices of holy well veneration, or even other military services with historic connections to specific water sources, the Marine Corps had no precedent for fountain devotion before the Devil Dog fountain's emergence in the late 1980s. While training areas like Case Springs at Camp Pendleton exist, they function primarily as geographic features rather than ritual sites. The Devil Dog fountain thus represents not only the extension of peripherally related traditions but the spontaneous generation of an entirely new form of Marine Corps ritual practice. This rapid adoption and institutionalization suggest the fountain filled a latent need within Marine culture—a need for a physical, tangible site where the abstract concepts of rebirth, renewal, and connection to institutional origins could be enacted through ritual engagement with water.

More significantly, the fountain's influence extends far beyond those who physically visit. Water collected from the fountain is transported to ceremonies conducted elsewhere, at Marine Corps bases, veteran gatherings, and memorial services, where it is used in reenlistment ceremonies, poured on memorial stones, or distributed to Marines who cannot travel to France. Social media has amplified the fountain's significance exponentially. Marines post photographs and videos of their fountain visits, creating a digital archive of pilgrimages that instructs future visitors on proper ritual practice while simultaneously allowing distant Marines to participate vicariously. Hashtags like #DevilDogFountain and #BelleauWood circulate these images through Marine social networks, creating a sense of shared experience even among those who have never traveled to France. The fountain appears increasingly important to

[14] Heather A. Warfield, "The Belleau Wood Battlescape: A Natural Environment that Offers Affordances for Pilgrims," in *Pilgrimages to the Western Front of World War I: Historical Exemplars and Contemporary Practices*, eds. Heather A. Warfield, Stephane Michonneau, and Franck Viltart (Oxford, UK: Peter Lang, 2025), 381, https://doi.org/10.3726/b23032.

younger Marines, particularly those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. For GWOT veterans, the fountain offers connection to a clear victory and unambiguous heroism in an era when such clarity feels elusive. The generational transmission of fountain practices occurs both formally (senior Marines bringing junior Marines to the site) and informally (through social media and storytelling). However, the fountain's significance is not limited to any single generation; Marines across age cohorts express similar reverence for the site, suggesting that its power transcends specific historical experiences and taps into something more enduring about Marine identity.

Material Description and Observations

Relevant to the layered meaning(s) of the fountain is that beneath the surface of the battlescape is an aquifer, likely the impetus for human settlement in the area. The village's name of Belleau may also be connected to this spring water as *belleau* means beautiful water. Moreover, the medieval-era church in Belleau was near the fountain, located here presumably due to the presence of a natural spring. The fountain is inside a gated courtyard on private property. It is slightly obscured when viewed from the road, but is clearly seen when one enters the metal gate. The fountain sits on the left side of the courtyard and has an arched stone frame with a similarly shaped metal door above the dog's head. The head, approximately three feet from the ground, seems suspended on the wall, almost as a liminal portal between 1918 and the present. The head of the dog is nearly black in color and appears to be bronze, but is cast iron. At the base of the neck is a thick collar that fuses the head to the stone and one can sense that the dog's head is missing its body. The stream of water that flows through a pipe in the mouth is like saliva spouting from somewhere beyond the head. The water exits into a moss-covered basin, an important feature that affords a structure on which to step to lean into the dog's head. Below the head is a cavernous space that disappears into the stone wall and prompts curiosity about where it might lead, perhaps a gateway into the past or an otherworldly place. The dog head seamlessly merges into the Belleau Wood narrative and battlefield, which was a place of brutal violence, but also the scene of a grand origin story: Belleau Wood gave birth to the Devil Dogs. This birth narrative is triple: the battle birthed the modern institution of the Marine Corps; individual Marines, who fought or died in the battle, birthed "the exemplar Marine"; and the woods, as an earthen womb, birthed immortality.

The Devil Dog Fountain and the Coole Holy Well

One of the first observations noted by the author was the visual similarities between the Devil Dog fountain and other holy wells, particularly those in England, Ireland, and Wales. The Coole Holy Well in North Cork, Ireland, for example, is one such similarity. Both the Devil Dog fountain and the Coole Holy Well are fed by a natural spring and the structures are surrounded by stones arranged in an arch. The wells sit among other natural elements, such as trees, and are adorned with evergreen and moss. Both sites are near medieval churches and cemeteries, likely established there because of the water source.

In addition, the current practices at the Devil Dog fountain resemble the pilgrimage practices at the Coole Holy Well. Both sites attract pilgrims and travelers who visit the site to drink the water and to engage in particular rituals. The water is treated with reverence. At both fountains, visitors and pilgrims drink directly from the water source or fill a vessel to take the water away from the site. This water is viewed as life-giving, metaphorically and literally. For Marines, the fountain water is believed to extend one's career in the Marine Corps or even extend one's biological life. Both fountains are also the backdrop for rites of passage. In the Marine Corps' case, these lifecycle events include reenlistment, promotion, and retirement ceremonies.

Another shared characteristic between these sites is the focus on healing or transformation. In the historical context of World War I, the Devil Dog fountain was an actual place of healing (albeit not viewed as a sacred healing site). Behind the fountain wall, in

Courtesy of the Speckled Bird, Wikimedia Commons

Holy Well, Coole Upper Churches, North Cork, England, photographed in 2014.

the caves under the château, was a German first aid station, well positioned in this location due to the presence of clean water. For contemporary pilgrims to the fountain, the healing that is sought often pertains to the invisible wounds of war. Both the Coole well and the Devil Dog fountain have prescribed ways of interacting with the water depending on group affiliation, and such knowledge is passed from pilgrim to pilgrim. For example, Marines visiting the fountain take cues from others who have previously visited (e.g., those who post on social media) or even ask Marines in their group how to engage the fountain (i.e., "How do I lean in?" or "Did you actually drink the water?"). As seen in the images, the wells are places of devotion where pilgrims leave votives and other objects behind, such as candles, pieces of cloth (above) or uniform insignia (see photo p. 65). The object of devotion for the Coole Holy Well is a statue of the Virgin Mary, who stands guard over the opening of the well. Likewise, the object of devotion at the Devil Dog fountain is the dog itself. Interestingly, the Virgin Mary is fully embodied, but the Devil Dog is only the head, at least on the surface.

Beyond the similarities between the Devil Dog fountain and the Coole Holy Well, the magnetism of these sites can be understood through the interplay of historical fact, myth, and archetype. The historical facts pertaining to the Battle of Belleau Wood are outside the scope of this article, and have been substantively addressed by military historians. However,

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield

The Devil Dog fountain in the village of Belleau, France.

it is important to note the synthesis of historical facts and myth within the grand narrative of the Marine Corps' (Devil Dogs') birth in Belleau Wood, a point that will be revisited later. Moreover, the significance of the Devil Dog fountain echoes adjacent historical connections between dogs and sacred wells, as well as the *hellhound* myth reflected across Indo-European linguistic and cultural traditions. Both topics scaffold the understanding of the wider historical, mythological, and psychological milieu of the Devil Dog fountain and are explored below.

The Connection between Dogs and Sacred Wells

Concurrent to the deep connections between the Devil Dog and the Marine Corps is the strong historical precedent for the existence of dogs at sacred sites, particularly those sites focused on water. For millennia, dogs have held symbolic and spiritual significance across cultures and the connection between dogs and sacred wells can be found in folklore, religious symbolism, healing traditions, and cult practices, particularly in Celtic, Greco-Roman, and early Christian contexts. These associations illuminate the deep-rooted human fascination with dogs not only as companions but as spiritual intermediaries, protectors, and guides.

In Celtic mythology, sacred wells were often associated with healing, prophecy, and the divine feminine.[15] Dogs, particularly in Irish and Welsh traditions, were linked to the otherworld and to healing deities such as Dian Cécht, the Celtic god of medicine, and Nodens, a Romano-British healing god frequently depicted with dogs.[16] Dogs were believed to have keen senses that could perceive spirits and subtle energies, making them natural guardians of sacred spaces like wells, which were seen as portals between the physical and spiritual realms. At some sites, dogs were believed to lap at the waters of the well, imbuing them with healing power, or served as omens or guides for those seeking cures or visions.[17]

The Greco-Roman world also held dogs in high regard in healing contexts, most notably in the cult of Asklepios, the god of medicine and healing. Penny Hill addresses this in depth in her article, "The Healing Power of Dogs."[18] Hill asserts that Asklepian sanctuaries, such as those at Epidaurus and Pergamon, were renowned healing centers where dogs played a sacred role. Moreover, dogs roamed the sanctuaries and were often believed to assist in cures by licking the wounds of the afflicted, which was an act believed to be both symbolic and medicinal. The presence of dogs in Asklepian sanctuaries mirrors their symbolic function in Celtic traditions, thus reinforcing their association with healing and sacred liminality (the state of existing at thresholds or boundaries between categories). Inscriptions and votive offerings from these sites often depict dogs alongside serpents, another key symbol of Asklepios, which emphasizes their importance within the sacred therapeutic environment.[19]

In early Christian hagiographies, dogs also appear in the lives of saints associated with healing. One notable example is Saint Roch, a fourteenth-century saint often depicted with a dog that is believed to have brought him bread and licked his plague-inflicted wounds.[20] Further, at sites such as Lydney Park in Gloucestershire, dedicated to the healing god Nodens, archaeological excavations have uncovered canine remains, possibly indicating ritual sacrifice or spiritual companionship.[21] Lastly, in many cultural traditions, dogs have been understood as *psychopomps*, or guides of souls, which is a role that aligns with their presence at sacred wells.

The Indo-European Hellhound Myth

In addition to the historical precedent pertaining to the connection between dogs and sacred wells, or between dogs and healing, the Devil Dog fountain's allure can be positioned within the Indo-European myth of the hellhound. Without the dog head adornment, it is unlikely that Marines would visit this particular fountain, and certainly not as part of pilgrimages to Belleau Wood. The connection of the Devil Dog moniker to the Battle of Belleau Wood has been amply documented and, despite newspaper articles indicating the term was used prior to June 1918, the accepted fact by Marines is that it was ascribed to them by the Germans because of their ferocity during the battle.[22] The notion of warriors as devil dogs predates World War I and is derived from Indo-European traditions of what is collectively known as the myth of the hellhound. Bruce Lincoln, in *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice*, explores how Indo-European mythologies include a recurring motif of a monstrous dog which is found in "Greek, Indic, Celtic, Germanic, Latin, Armenian, and Iranian sources."[23] He cites Bernfried Schlerath's work in which Schlerath concluded that within these traditions existed the presence of two dogs: one being a dog of death and the other be-

[15] Miranda Green, *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth* (London: Routledge, 1992), 87.
[16] Anne Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain: Studies in Iconography and Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1967), 230–31.
[17] Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, *The Lore of Ireland: An Encyclopaedia of Myth, Legend and Romance* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2006), 312.
[18] Penny Hill, "The Healing Power of Dogs," Articles, Museum of Wales, 5 March 2014.
[19] Emma J. Edelstein and Ludwig Edelstein, *Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1945), vol. 2, 226–28.
[20] Jacobus de Voragine, comp., "The Life of Saint Roch," in *Medieval Sourcebook: The Golden Legend*, vol. 5, trans. William Caxton (London: J. M. Dent, 1900).
[21] Hill, "The Healing Power of Dogs."
[22] "Two Kinds of 'Devils'," *Journal* (Meriden, CT), 31 May 1918, 1; and Folse, *The Globe and Anchor Men*, 144.
[23] Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 96–106.

ing a dog of life, or a black dog and a white dog.[24] In the Germanic tradition, the hellhound or dog of death is described as a monstrous, ravenous dog characterized by its bark and its appetite.[25]

Bruce Lincoln also notes that the hellhound is a sleepless guardian, watcher of the path or entrance, and exists in an intermediary position between life and death and good and evil.[26] As such, the hellhound enforces the boundaries between realms and ensures that only those properly prepared may pass. In this capacity, dogs have been artistically depicted at portals in places such as cemeteries, wells, and gates that symbolically exist in liminal spaces. Lincoln further asserts:

> The growl of the hellhound is yet another expression of this liminal position, for the growl is a halfway station between articulate speech and silence. It is a speech filled with emotion and power, but utterly lacking in reason. Like death itself, the hellhound speaks, but does not listen; acts, but never reflects or reconsiders. Driven by hunger and greed, he is insatiable and his growl is eternal in duration. In the last analysis, the hellhound is the moment of death, the great crossing over, the ultimate turning point.[27]

Even without an overt connection to this Indo-European hellhound myth, the Marine Corps has adopted the identity of the hellhound, the Devil Dog, and deeply integrated it into the institutional ethos. Therefore, the Devil Dog fountain becomes the object of projection. It also becomes the nexus point of the primal myth of the hellhound and the historical presence of dogs at sacred wells. It reflects life-giving myths and visionary narratives in which the fountain is not simply a serene or hidden place of transformation but the spot where the life-giving force pours from the mouth of a monstrous dog. This imagery profoundly intensifies the symbolic terrain.

The water, which is traditionally associated with cleansing, fertility, and grace, now emerges from the mouth of a guardian of death. The fusion of sacred flow and monstrous source echoes the paradox at the heart of transformation: to be healed, one must confront what is most feared. The hellhound-as-fountainhead may symbolize the truth that healing and rebirth do not come from avoidance of death, shadow, or pain, but through them. As Carl Jung wrote, "People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own souls. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious."[28] The monstrous dog, the black dog, is the emphasis of this commentary. However, as Lincoln notes, the hellhound myth is the fusion of the dog of death and the dog of life. Perhaps the Devil Dog fountain is positioned to reflect not only the dog of death but also the dog of life, and this paradox is part of the fountain's allure.

Moreover, the layering of canine identities, ranging from ancient hellhound, World War I Devil Dog, cartoon bulldog, and contemporary sheepdog, has created a rich symbolic environment in which a fountain featuring a dog's head could operate on multiple registers simultaneously. The fountain is not merely a historical artifact; it is a node where these various cultural and mythological strands converge, allowing Marines to see in the dog's head whatever version of canine warrior identity most speaks to their own experience.

The Devil Dog Fountain in Its Artistic Context

The Devil Dog fountain is significant because it is the *Devil Dog* fountain. Without the head, the fountain would have remained in obscurity and disconnected from contemporary pilgrimages to Belleau Wood. However, as is the case with all pilgrimage sites,

[24] Bernfried Schlerath, "Der Hund bei den Indoger-manen," *Paideuma* 6 (1954): 39; and Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice*, 96.
[25] Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice*, 97.
[26] Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice*, 98, 101.
[27] Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice*, 101.
[28] Carl G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 99.

there is always more to the story than what is seen on the surface, and the head's origins seem pertinent to a fuller understanding of the fountain as a place of pilgrimage. A 2022 interview with Belleau Wood battlefield guide Gilles Lagin provided the launch point into discovering a possible artistic connection between the Devil Dog fountainhead and Pierre Louis Rouillard's *Chienne et ses petits* sculpture. To investigate and establish the connection, the author utilized public domain sources, art databases, French archives, American archives, and in-person examinations during the year 2024.

Pierre Louis Rouillard was born in Paris on 16 January 1820.[29] As a promising young artist, he attended the School of Fine Arts where he studied under Jean-Pierre Cortot. His first piece was a lioness that was entered into the 1837 Paris exhibition, and a number of animal sculptures followed.[30] After a successful career spanning years and across many countries, he was awarded the Legion of Honor in 1866, and died on 2 June 1881 in Paris.[31] Rouillard partnered with Antoine Durenne to cast his sculptural designs. Durenne was the owner of a foundry in Sommevoire beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, which was one of two major foundries of art castings during this era. His foundry produced a variety of religious sculptures, cast iron animals, fountains, and garden ornaments throughout the nineteenth-century and up to the present.[32] In late 1850, Durenne purchased the rights to Rouillard's *Chienne et ses petits* design, which he created using cast iron, and which is the sculpture from which the Devil Dog fountainhead derives.

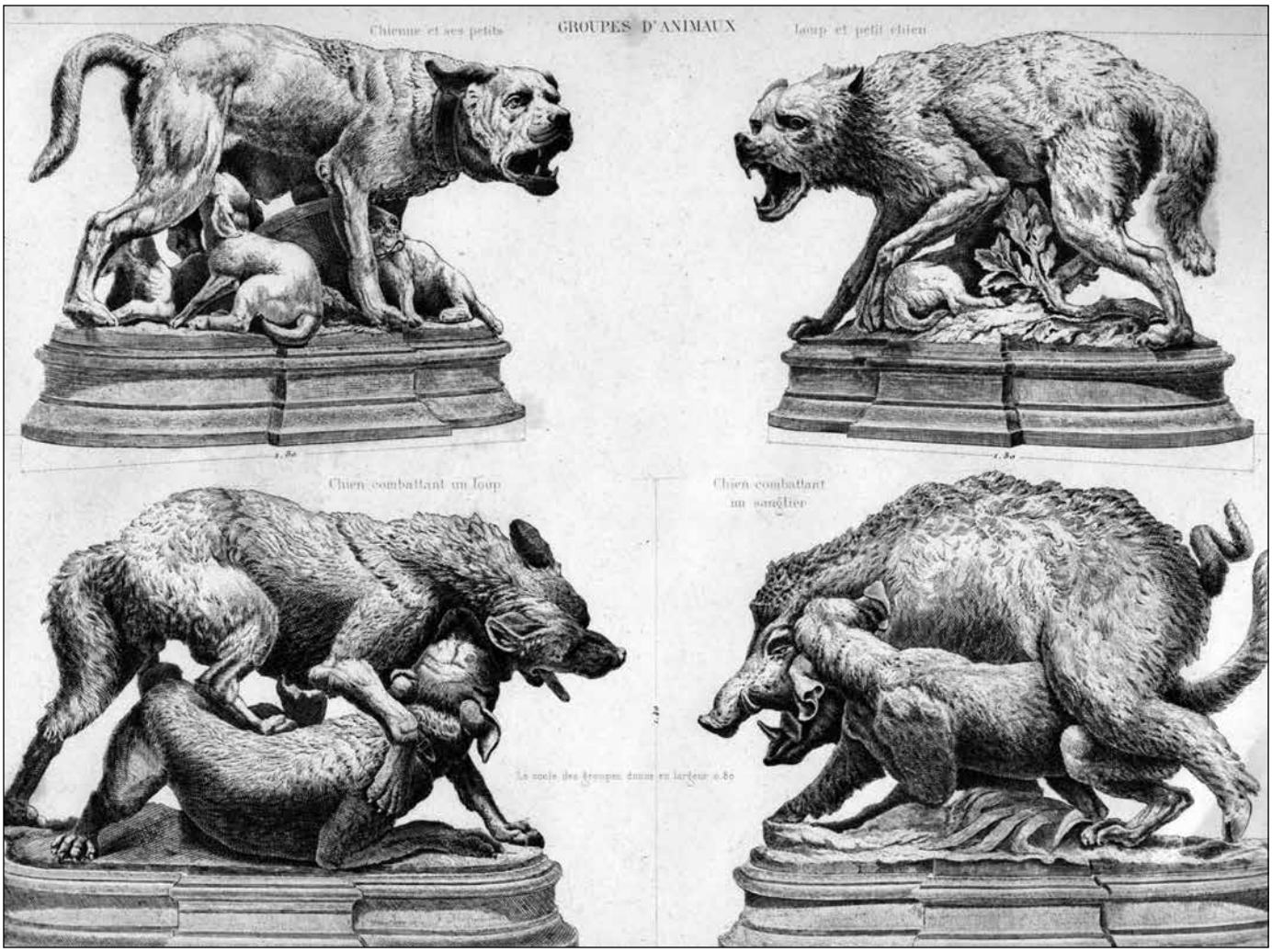
Courtesy of Durenne Foundry Archives
Antoine Durenne's exhibition stand in London, 1862, displaying sculptures, including Pierre Louis Rouillard's *Chienne et ses petits* (left).

Sculpture Images Located in Archives

One aim of this research was to locate images or other documentation related to the sculpture or fountain. The author found a number of images, which were housed in the Durenne Foundry Archives. The first image (see photo above) is from Durenne's exhibition stand in London in 1862, followed by an image in the Durenne catalogue from 1867 (see next page). In addition, the two postcard images (see photos p. 56) are from the 1907 International Maritime Exposition in Bordeaux.

The photograph on p. 57 is the only known image of the dog head detached from the body, and it is cast as a fountain adornment. This image, from the 1878 Durenne foundry catalog, clearly indicates that the piece was available for purchase specifically as a

[29] B. Cochain, "Pierre Louis Rouillard (1820–1881): sculpteur animalier, professeur de sculpture et d'anatomie," Promouvoir et Diffuser, Arisitum: Histoire et Archeologie en France (website), accessed 8 October 2024.
[30] Gustave Vapereau, "Dictionnaire universel des contemporains contenant toutes les personnes de la France et des pays étrangers," Gallica, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, 1861, 551, accessed 28 September 2024.
[31] Théophile de Lamathière, "Panthéon de la Légion d'Honneur 1875," Gallica, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, 1875, accessed 28 September 2024.
[32] After World War I, the Durenne foundry merged with another and became Fonderie GHM (FGHM), a subsidiary of SLF Group, and this is the current name.



Courtesy of Durenne Foundry Archives

Groupes d'Animaux, 1867, showing an illustration of the sculpture *Chienne et ses petits* (top left), along with others.

fountainhead (the entire exhibition stand is for fountain adornments).

Chienne et ses petits Sculptures

Locating existing sculptures was another objective of the author's research. Four known sculptures were located. The first is at the Louvre, the second is in the main courtyard of Dorfold Hall in England, the third is in Toulouse, and the fourth is in a public garden in Champigny-sur-Marne.

Louvre

After Durenne purchased the rights to Rouillard's *Chienne et ses petits*, the sculpture, commissioned by Napoléon III, was installed at the base of the staircase of the former imperial stables at the Louvre in 1859.[33] On 29 September 2024, the author photographed the original sculpture that was placed in 1859. It is not in the main Louvre collection, but rather a courtyard in which visitors are prohibited. Photographs of the sculpture were taken from the windows of the Denon Wing on two separate levels. The images depict the sculpture from different angles, with water spraying out of the mouth into a basin. This is the only sculpture in the series that acts as a fountain, and confirms that the design was such that a pipe could be inserted through the head.

[33] Vapereau, "Dictionnaire universel des contemporains contenant toutes les personnes de la France et des pays étrangers," 1551.

Courtesy of e-Monumen.net

An exhibition postcard of Durenne's *Chienne et ses petits*, reading: Bordeaux — Exposition Maritime Internationale, 1907.

Courtesy of Durenne Foundry Archives

A promotional postcard displaying two Antoine Durenne sculptures, including *Chienne et ses petits*, 1907.

Courtesy of Durenne Foundry Archives

Antoine Durenne's exhibition stand at the Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1878, displaying cast-iron fountainheads, including the head of *Chienne et ses petits* (top row).

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield
Chienne et ses petits (at right), opposite the sculpture *Loup et petit chien* (wolf and pup), at the Louvre, photographed in 2024.

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield
Another view of *Chienne et ses petits* at the Louvre.

Dorfold Hall Estate

The Instagram site for the Dorfold Hall Estate in Cheshire, United Kingdom, refers to the sculpture as "The Dog Statue" (see next page) and indicates that the sculpture was placed in the courtyard in 1862.[34] Given the fact that a similar dog sculpture was exhibited as part of Durenne's work in London in 1862, it is likely that the sculpture in the Dorfold Hall courtyard is the same as the one pictured here.

Toulouse

The statue was placed in the Toulouse park for an 1865 exposition of fine arts and industry (see p. 60.[35]) The sculpture description in the online database *A Nos Grand Hommes* attributes the sculpture to Rouillard and the Durenne foundry in Sommevoire and states that the sculpture is made from cast iron.[36]

Champigny-sur-Marne

This sculpture was most useful for linking the Devil Dog fountain head to Rouillard and Durenne. The park is easily accessible from Paris and the sculpture could be examined up close. On 24 May 2024, the author traveled to the park, which is in the middle of a roundabout. There is an interpretive sign that confirms the sculpture was done by Rouillard and is a copy of the one at the Louvre. The sculpture was installed at this location by the City of Paris when Champigny belonged to the Seine Department. The author took detailed measurements of every aspect of the dog's head so they could be compared with the fountain head in Belleau. In addition to the head, the sides and back of the sculpture were photographed and reveal three nursing puppies and a bowl into which the mother's milk is dripping onto stalks of wheat.

Comparisons with the Devil Dog Fountain

The final step of the material analysis was to compare the detailed measurements from the Champigny-sur-Marne sculpture with the fountainhead in Belleau. The measurements are exact, which validates the hypothesis that this head was designed by Pierre Louis

[34] "The Dog Statue, Napoleon III & Le Louvre," Dorfold Hall Estate, accessed 12 September 2024.
[35] *Exposition des beaux-arts et de l'industrie a Toulouse: dans les batiments de l'ancien monastère des Jacobins: année 1865* (Toulouse, FR: Imprimerie I. Viguier, 1866), 143–45.
[36] "Chienne dogue de forte race avec ses petits," Musée d'Orsay, accessed 3 September 2024.

Courtesy of Dorfold Hall Estate

The Dog Statue at Dorfold Hall Estate, as published by the estate's Instagram account on 3 May 2023.

Courtesy of Dorfold Hall Estate

A view of *Chienne et ses petits* in Dorfold Hall Estate's courtyard.

Courtesy of e-Monumen.net

A postcard of the Toulouse Grand Rond park entrance shows *Chienne et ses petits* opposite the sculpture *Loup et petit chien*, 1893.

Courtesy of e-Monumen.net

Chienne et ses petits in the Grand Rond park at Toulouse, France.

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield
City park signage explaining the *Chienne* sculpture at Place de la Dogue, a small park in a traffic circle in Champigny, France.

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield
The *Chienne* sculpture at Place de la Dogue, Champigny.

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield
Another closeup view of *Chienne*'s head at Place de la Dogue, Champigny.

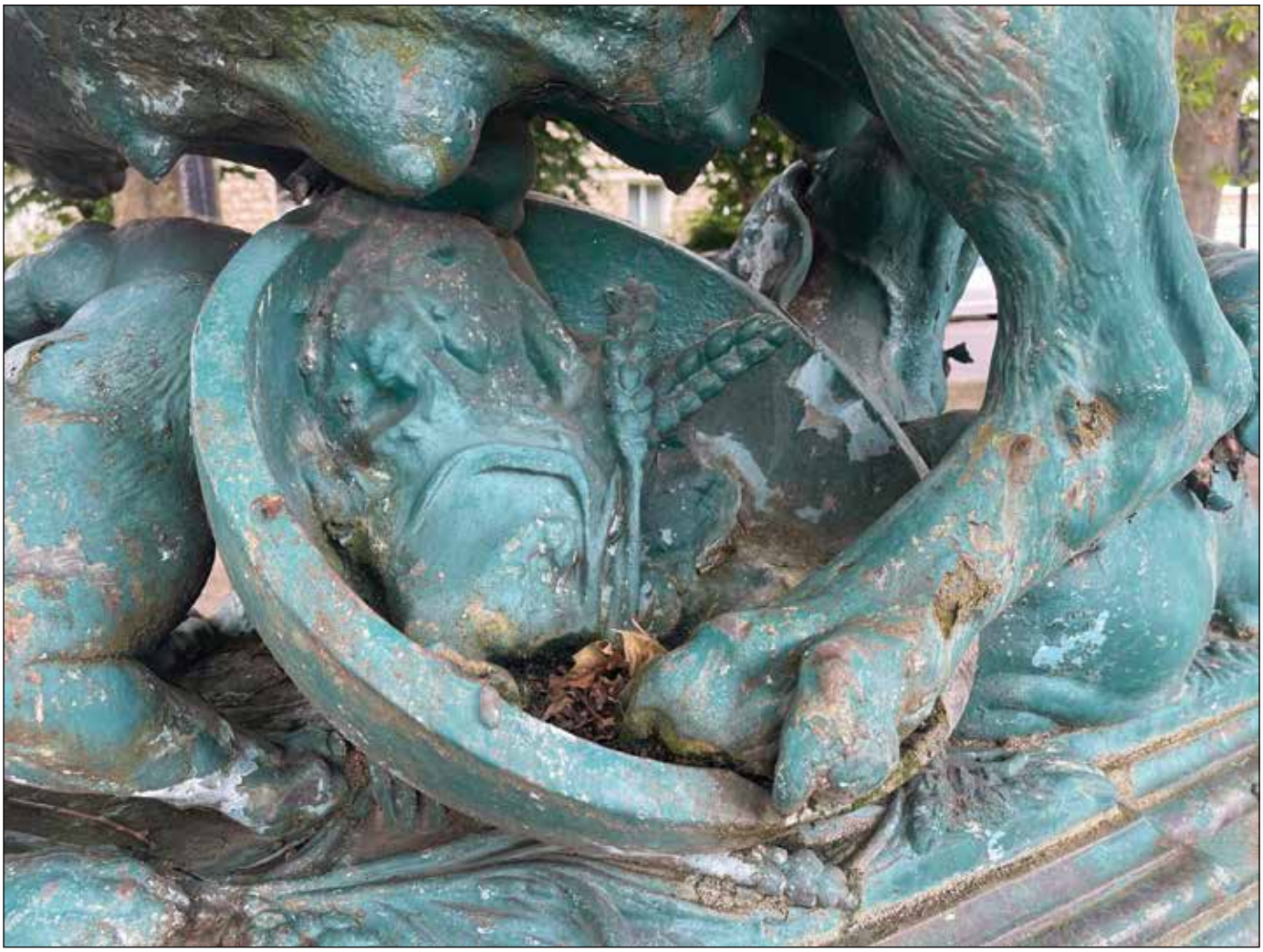
Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield
It is easy to see that *Chienne*'s head at Place de la Dogue, Champigny, is the same as that of the Devil Dog fountain.

Rouillard and cast at the Durenne foundry. It is possible to approximate the date that it was installed in Belleau based on two images. The Durenne exhibition stand 1878 (p. 57), which is the only known display of fountainheads, is the first anchor point.[37] The second anchor point, an image from 1895 (p. 63), depicts that fountainhead at its present location. Given these reference points, it is likely that the Devil Dog fountainhead was installed between 1878 and 1895.

Positioned within Artistic Context

Positioned within the artistic context, the Devil Dog fountainhead is, in fact, the head of a female dog that is nursing her three puppies. The tense jaw, vicious

[37] Joel Hauer, FGHM archivist, stated that this image is the only known image of the sculpture head as a fountainhead and was unknown up to the point of the author's inquiry. Joel Hauer, email correspondence with author, dated 20 October 2024.



Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield

Mother's milk dripping onto wheat in the bowl at *Chienne*'s feet at Place de la Dogue, Champigny.

face, and snarl indicate she is protecting her offspring during a moment of threat. Her milk, a literal and symbolic sign of sustenance, combines with the wheat sheaves (symbols of the life cycle and immortality), suggesting that she is the life source for the next generation and, ultimately, the guardian of immortality.

Theoretical Frameworks for Understanding the Fountain's Magnetism

On the surface, the fountain's magnetism for Marines is the connection to the Devil Dog moniker and the fountain's proximity to the Belleau Wood battlefield. However, the fountain seems to possess an energetic pull that exists beyond the battlefield connection. Many Marines interviewed for this research speak of the fountain in more endearing terms than the battlefield itself. Furthermore, despite the absence of the head's artistic referent, many pilgrims and visitors engage with the fountain as if they intuitively know there is more to the fountain than what is seen. There are a number of psychological explanations for why this intuitive sense exists and why Marines could be projecting wholeness onto a dog head, fragmented from its body, fastened to a stone wall (beyond the head representing the Devil Dog). The first explanation is grounded in the concept of *Gestalt* and the second pertains to the *Great Mother* archetype, as described by Carl Jung.

Courtesy of Mr. Eric Verhulst

The Devil Dog fountain at Chateau de Belleau in 1895, seen in the lower left quadrant of the photograph.

Gestalt: Perceiving Wholeness in Fragments

The concept of Gestalt, rooted in early twentieth-century psychology, emphasizes the human tendency to perceive patterns and wholes rather than disparate parts. This principle, developed by German psychologists such as Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Köhler, and Kurt Koffka, suggests that the whole is greater, or other, than the sum of its parts.[38] Gestalt theory fundamentally contends that perception is an active, constructive process, wherein the mind organizes sensory input into meaningful forms. This framework becomes especially salient in the realm of visual arts, particularly sculpture, when an object is partially absent or intentionally incomplete. For example, when viewing a sculpture that is missing a piece, such as a fragment of the body or a limb, the viewer does not typically register the absence as mere lack. Instead, the perceptual system fills in the missing components, drawing from past experiences, cultural archetypes, and visual expectations to form a cohesive whole. This phenomenon aligns with Gestalt principles such as closure, continuity, and figure-ground organization. Closure, in particular, refers to the mind's inclination to perceive a complete, unified shape even when parts are missing. For example, a headless or limbless statue may still be perceived as a "complete" human

[38] Kurt Koffka, *Principles of Gestalt Psychology* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1935), 176.

figure because the mind projects the absent elements to maintain continuity and narrative coherence. The Venus de Milo is a prime illustration of this Gestalt response. Although the sculpture is famously armless, it continues to be interpreted as a complete representation of idealized female beauty. The missing limbs have invited speculation, artistic reimagination, and scholarly interpretation, all of which underscore how absence fosters imaginative projection rather than perceptual rupture. In this example, the Gestalt perception does not merely "repair" the image; it enriches it with narrative and emotional depth.

From a psychological standpoint, this process of perceptual completion engages the viewer's cognitive and emotional faculties. According to Rudolf Arnheim, a prominent figure in applying Gestalt theory to art, visual perception is not passive reception but an active grasping of structural features.[39] When faced with an incomplete sculpture, the observer participates in its aesthetic and symbolic construction, thus becoming a cocreator of meaning. Moreover, the phenomenon of projection onto incomplete forms taps into broader existential and philosophical themes. The incompleteness of the sculpture mirrors the fragmentary nature of memory, identity, and history. In this way, Gestalt principles do more than explain perceptual mechanics; they articulate how humans find coherence amid disjunction and beauty amid absence. The missing piece becomes a site of invitation, asking the viewer to engage with what is not there as much as with what is.

In the specific context of martial conflict, war has long been a force of both literal and symbolic fragmentation. Sculptures defaced or destroyed in conflict zones become powerful testimonies to collective trauma. The fractured object serves as a visual metaphor for the psychological and societal disintegration wrought by violence. In this sense, Gestalt not only explains how viewers perceive broken forms but also provides a framework for understanding how we psychologically cope with rupture. As external victims of war, such sculptures represent deep psychological lacerations. In such contexts, the Gestalt tendency to integrate fragments into a whole is not just perceptual, it is reparative. Viewers may unconsciously attempt to complete a damaged or fragmented sculpture as a way to assert order over chaos, beauty over destruction. The very act of perceiving wholeness in brokenness becomes an aesthetic and psychological response to trauma. While the Devil Dog fountainhead was not fractured during war, this Gestalt approach does inform current interactions with the site as individual Marines, and the institution, have been impacted by war and other conflicts. Many Marines interviewed for this research describe an inner fragmentation as a result of war. As the shrine is a point of projection, the inner fragmentation is projected onto the fountainhead. Moreover, for Marines encountering the fountain, the missing body is not an absence but an invitation. The psychological tendency to complete the fragment allows each viewer to project their own understanding of what the whole Devil Dog represents, whether the ferocious warrior, the protective guardian, or, as the sculpture's actual origins reveal, the nurturing mother. This perceptual flexibility may paradoxically enhance rather than diminish the fountain's power. The head operates as what might be called a symbolic fragment that is perpetually open to reinterpretation, capable of holding multiple meanings simultaneously. In this sense, the incompleteness is not a deficiency but a feature that allows the fountain to serve different psychological needs for different Marines at different moments in their lives.

Great Mother Archetype

In addition to highlighting the concept of Gestalt as a way to frame the magnetism of the Devil Dog fountain, Carl Jung's work on the topic of archetypes is relevant to a psychological understanding of the fountain. Of particular note is Jung's conceptualization of the Great Mother. Jung situates the Great Mother archetype as one of the most primordial figures of the collective unconscious. She is both nurturing and de-

[39] Rudolf Arnheim, *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 27.

Courtesy of Heather A. Warfield

Uniform insignia left at the Devil Dog fountain by Marines.

vouring, the source of life and the abyss of death.[40] Moreover, Jung suggests that the mother is found in sites that arouse increased devotion or awe and include the woods, a spring, or a deep well (all of which exist in the Belleau Wood battlescape).[41] The water symbolizes the unconscious and its depths reflect the mysteries of origin, fertility, and the maternal womb.[42] Belleau Wood pilgrims and visitors also encounter the cemetery as part of the battlescape, a site which represents a descent back to the mother, and the cycle of life. As such, the entire setting is "a place of magical transformation and rebirth, together with the underworld and its inhabitants . . . [a place] presided over by the mother."[43] The practices that occur at Belleau Wood further underscore the subconscious encounter with the Great Mother. They are thematically linked to a return to the birthplace, initiation and lifecycle rites of passage, and symbolic healing and transformation.

[40] Carl G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 82.
[41] Carl G. Jung, *Four Archetypes: Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), 15.
[42] Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 21.
[43] Jung, *Four Archetypes*, 15.

Visiting the Birth Place

Marines visiting Belleau Wood frame the experience as visiting, or returning to, the birthplace of the Marine Corps. From a psychological perspective, visiting the place of one's birth holds profound significance. Such visits can evoke a deep sense of identity, belonging, and continuity, and can reconnect individuals with foundational aspects of the self. According to Erik H. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, such visits may reinforce a sense of ego integrity, particularly in later life, when individuals seek to reconcile their past with their present.[44] From an emotional standpoint, the visits may stir nostalgia, trigger buried memories, or initiate healing. In addition, a birthplace visit can symbolically complete a psychological circle, fostering coherence in the personal narrative.

Initiation and Life Cycle Rites of Passage

Historically, sacred wells have been sites where initiation and rites of passage occur, so it is unsurprising that the Devil Dog fountain has become such a prominent place within the Marine Corps. The rituals and rites of passage that occur here are those symbolically focused on rebirth, renewal, and repair. Marines visit the site to reaffirm their commitment to the Corps and to immerse in the evolving rituals that occur. The rituals are related to the life cycle of a Marine and include reenlistment, promotion, or retirement ceremonies. In addition, the water itself is significant and Marines either drink directly from the head or fill a vessel with the water, which is also often taken to other Marines. The more recent practice of placing uniform insignia into the stone around the dog head, perhaps for devotional purposes, further highlights the ritual attraction to the site as well as its role as a nexus point for identity congruence between the Marine and the Devil Dog.

Healing and Transformation

Jung's archetype of the Great Mother is both generative and destructive, representing the totality of nature's rhythms, birth, death, decay, and rebirth.[45] In the context of battlefield pilgrimages, a holy well becomes a vessel through which the pilgrim reconnects with this deep archetypal force. To drink from or bathe in the water is to symbolically reenter the womb of transformation, a return to origins where psychological integration can begin. The liminal space of the well, guarded by symbolic dangers and imbued with maternal power, demands that pilgrims undergo a rite of passage in which they confront mortality, seek healing, and emerge transformed. Conversely, the Great Mother is not merely a figure of comfort but also of judgment and transformation. Pilgrims are not only healed but also initiated through contact with her symbolic domain. The well's depths echo the maternal womb and the grave, making it a symbol of both origin and return. The pilgrim, in approaching the holy well, symbolically reenters the domain of the Great Mother, seeking rebirth or renewal.

During pilgrimages to Belleau Wood, questions about one's military service are often pondered and, for some, the answers are found through the act of redevoting oneself to the Marine Corps through reenlisting or promoting to the next rank. For others, the answers are found in recalling the memory of Marines from 1918 who, through the act of commemoration, are brought back to life. And, for many, the answers are found in framing their lives through an apparatus of meaning tied to identity, rituals, stories, and a grand narrative of perceiving the world through the eyes of being a Marine. All are examples of the types of inner transformation that can, and do, result from engagement with the fountain.

The Devil Dog Fountain as Site of Psychological Integration

The fountain's hellhound-as-fountainhead is not a deterrent, but a beacon for those ready to face the deep.

[44] Erik H. Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle* (New York: International Universities Press, 1959).

[45] Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955), 62–65.

Pilgrimages to this site are dances with paradox: the healing waters flow not from purity, but from the jaws of the shadow. It is this rich mythic contradiction that gives the fountain its power, drawing the seeker inward and downward, toward healing that is also an initiation into the fullness of being. The journey to the fountain involves not just physical movement but psychological and spiritual descent. Yet, the presence of the threshold guardian, the Devil Dog, signals that this transformation is not without risk. It becomes the scene for an encounter with paradox and a setting where many truths can coexist at the same time.

Pilgrims can take cues from the setting itself. Despite its violent history, the entire Belleau Wood battlescape is now a serene landscape, and the paradox is that the tranquility now experienced within the site is precisely because of the historical violence.[46] An encounter with this paradox fuses with Belleau Wood's facts, myths, and archetypes and can be viewed as an invitation to engage in psychological integration, an important component of pilgrimages.[47] In the case of this particular site, it seems that the new information about the fountainhead's artistic context could provoke integration opportunities focused around such themes as lethality and vulnerability, institutional masculinity and manhood, and moral injury. It is important to note that Marines are already fusing many of these elements during pilgrimages to Belleau Wood and the purpose of this discussion is to highlight a number of paradoxical themes that coalesce at this battlescape, in general, and the fountain, in particular.

Lethality and Vulnerability

When Marines visit Belleau Wood, the site of their collective birth, they are visiting the geographic landscape that has formed the backdrop for such elements as physical training, identity formation, and character development, to include the characteristics that lead to the "ideal Marine." It is also interesting to note the comments Marines leave in the pages of the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery visitor registry during these visits, particularly because they are strikingly different than those left by other visitors, who write remarks about the serenity and beauty of the cemetery. However, en masse, Marines write comments such as "Kill!" or "Get some!" Not only are these comments seemingly incongruent with the setting, which is a site of death and destruction, the words are incongruent with the remarks written in the registry in the 1920s by Marines who actually fought at Belleau Wood. These World War I Marines' comments focused on the place being "hell" and on their desire for peace.[48]

The contemporary cemetery registry comments are reflections of how Marines are trained and who they see themselves to be. However, there is clearly a level of cognitive dissonance occurring during the visits to Belleau Wood, which leads to writing, "Kill!" in the middle of a battlefield cemetery. In this context, Marines are not there to kill and yet the words are evidence of group affiliation and also provide documentation to future visitors that Marines were in this precise location, a metaphorical devil dog marking its territory, and the embodiment of the aforementioned dog of death. However, as Lincoln noted, the hellhound myth is not merely the dog of death, the black dog, but also a dog of life. The life-giving nature of the white dog does not diminish the lethality of the black dog; both can coexist in the same body. Evidence of the embodiment of the white dog are the practices around vulnerability, self-reflection, tolerance, peacemaking, alliance-building, and repair, all of which can coexist with discipline, honor, and bravery, and all of which are observed at Belleau Wood. This is a place where peace is valued, alliances are renewed, and there is an institutional sanctioning of public displays of vulnerability (see photo of General Neller, p. 42).

The revelation that the fountainhead depicts a nursing mother intensifies this potential for integration. The fierce expression that Marines have inter-

[46] Warfield, "The Belleau Wood Battlescape," 388.

[47] Heather A. Warfield and Kate Hetherington, "Introduction," in *Pilgrimage as Transformative Process: The Movement from Fractured to Integrated*, eds. Heather A. Warfield and Kate Hetherington (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 1–8, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004381223_002.

[48] The author reviewed all cemetery visitor registries from 1925 to present.

preted as warrior ferocity is, in its original context, maternal protection. The mother dog is not snarling in bloodlust but in defense of her vulnerable young. This reframing does not negate the ferocity; maternal protection can be as fierce as any warrior's rage, but it situates that ferocity within a framework of care rather than pure aggression. For Marines grappling with the tension between their capacity for violence and their desire to protect, the nursing mother offers a powerful symbol: one can be simultaneously lethal and nurturing, fierce and tender, dangerous and life-giving.

Manhood and Masculinity

In addition to the plethora of lessons extrapolated from World War I, the Marine Corps traces much of its institutional culture back to this era. A pervasive factor in this institutional culture pertains to manhood and what constitutes an ideal Marine. Mark Folse asserts, "A gendered analysis of the Marine Corps during the Great War era reveals that white manhood and manliness formed the basis of its identity and institutional culture, the veterans of which valued honor, bravery, self-restraint, and discipline . . . and promoted their own form of martial manliness that placed even greater emphasis on the above characteristics and added efficiency, combat prowess, and readiness into the mix."[49] Moreover, Heather Venable suggests that the Marine Corps has historically reinforced one type of masculinity and manhood.[50] This not only speaks to the challenges around the inclusion of women in the Marine Corps, but how the institutional culture impacts all Marines, and, within the context of the Devil Dog fountain, the extent to which Marines are projecting this culture onto the fountain.

Given that the dog head in its sculptural configuration is that of a female hound, there are opportunities to ponder what could exist in an integrated Devil Dog motif, one that overtly merges the dog of death with the dog of life. There is profound symbolism reflected in the elements of the *Chienne et ses petits* sculpture, especially around sustenance, the lifecycle, immortality, and, ultimately, the archetype of the Great Mother. How might the institutional culture of the Marine Corps adapt to the reality that the Devil Dog fountainhead is that of a nursing mother?

This question becomes particularly salient given the Marine Corps' ongoing struggles with integrating women into combat roles and the persistent challenges of gender-related trauma within the institution. The fountain, if understood in its full artistic context, offers a symbolic resource for reimagining what strength looks like. The nursing mother is not weak; she is ferocious in protection of her young, capable of extraordinary endurance, and literally life-sustaining. Her strength is not diminished by her nurturing capacity but enhanced by it. She embodies a form of power that includes rather than excludes care.

For male Marines, the maternal fountainhead need not threaten their sense of warrior identity. Instead, it can expand the definition of what a Devil Dog is: not merely a killer, but a protector; not merely destructive, but life-sustaining; not merely autonomous, but connected to something larger than oneself. The milk dripping onto wheat sheaves suggests that the warrior's sacrifice feeds future generations, that violence in defense of life has meaning precisely because it is oriented toward preservation rather than destruction for its own sake.

For female Marines, the fountain in its full context offers powerful symbolic validation. The fiercest figure at the Marine Corps' most sacred site is a mother. This is not the sanitized, passive motherhood of sentimental culture but the raw, fierce, protective motherhood that will destroy threats to her young. Female Marines need not choose between being warriors and being women; the fountain suggests these identities can coexist, that maternal and martial are not opposites but complementary aspects of a complete person.

Moral Injury and the Path to Healing

The vast majority of Marines visiting the Devil Dog fountain are veterans of the Global War on Terrorism or know other Marines who are. Of that number,

[49] Folse, *The Globe and Anchor Men*, 305.
[50] Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*, 176–77.

many are dealing with the invisible wounds of war stemming from the existential questions related to the meaning of one's military service, sacrifices, and losses incurred as a result of this service. Moral injury, the psychological and spiritual damage that results from perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs, has become increasingly recognized as a central challenge for post–9/11 veterans. Unlike post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which stems from fear and threat, moral injury stems from shame, guilt, and profound questions about one's own goodness.

The Belleau Wood battlescape, including the Devil Dog fountain, may serve unexpected therapeutic functions for individuals processing personal trauma, particularly military veterans who may use historical battlefields as proxy sites for confronting their own combat experiences. This phenomenon reveals important psychological mechanisms related to trauma processing and post-traumatic growth that warrant examination through established clinical frameworks.

PTSD research indicates that avoidance of trauma reminders is a common symptom that can impede psychological recovery.[51] However, graduated exposure to trauma-related stimuli in controlled environments forms the basis of effective exposure therapy treatments.[52] Historical battlefields may provide psychologically safe contexts for trauma processing because they offer sufficient similarity to trigger therapeutic engagement while maintaining enough distance to prevent overwhelming retraumatization.

The psychological mechanism operating here involves what clinicians call *therapeutic distance*, which is optimal levels of similarity to traumatic experiences that promote processing without triggering debilitating symptoms. For veterans of Iraq or Afghanistan conflicts, World War I battlefields provide thematic similarity (e.g., combat, loss, sacrifice) while differing sufficiently in temporal, technological, and cultural contexts to prevent direct retraumatization. The fountain becomes a focal point within this therapeutic landscape, a specific site where the abstract process of trauma engagement becomes concrete through ritual action.

This process may facilitate what Richard G. Tedeschi and Lawrence G. Calhoun termed *post-traumatic growth*, which is the positive psychological changes that can emerge following trauma processing.[53] These changes include enhanced appreciation for life, deeper relationships, increased personal strength awareness, spiritual development, and expanded possibilities for life direction. The Devil Dog fountain and the broader Belleau Wood battlescape may promote post-traumatic growth by providing structured opportunities for meaning-making, perspective-taking, and connection with others who have faced similar challenges.

Narrative Construction and Meaning-Making

The human need to construct coherent life stories represents a fundamental psychological drive that pilgrimage sites both satisfy and complicate. Narrative psychology, developed by Dan P. McAdams, emphasizes how individuals create identity and meaning through story construction, integrating past experiences, present circumstances, and future aspirations into coherent personal narratives.[54] For veterans struggling with moral injury, the challenge often involves integrating traumatic experiences into life stories in ways that preserve a sense of self as fundamentally good despite having participated in morally ambiguous or clearly transgressive actions.

The Devil Dog fountain facilitates this narrative work in several ways. First, it connects individual experience to a grand historical narrative, which is the birth of the modern Marine Corps at Belleau Wood.

[51] Richard J. McNally, Richard A. Bryant, and Anke Ehlers, "Does Early Psychological Intervention Promote Recovery from Posttraumatic Stress?," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 4, no. 2 (2003): 45–79, https://doi.org/10.1111/1529-1006.01421.

[52] Sara Markowitz and Michael Fanselow, "Exposure Therapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Factors of Limited Success and Possible Alternative Treatment," *Brain Sciences* 10, no. 3 (2020): 167, https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci10030167.

[53] Richard G. Tedeschi and Lawrence G. Calhoun, "A Clinical Approach to Posttraumatic Growth," *Positive Psychology in Practice* (2004): 405–19, https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470939338.ch25.

[54] Dan P. McAdams, "The Psychology of Life Stories," *Review of General Psychology* 5, no. 2 (2001): 100–22, https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.5.2.100.

By drinking from the fountain at this sacred site, contemporary Marines symbolically link their own service, including its morally complex dimensions, to a clear victory against unambiguous evil in World War I. This connection does not erase moral complexity, but it situates individual experience within a larger story that includes both heroism and horror, suggesting that one's story might similarly contain contradictions without losing fundamental coherence or worth.

Moreover, the communal aspect of battlefield pilgrimages appears particularly important for trauma processing. Veterans visiting these sites often encounter others with shared military experiences, creating opportunities for social connection and mutual support that complement individual psychological processing. This aligns with research demonstrating that social support significantly influences trauma recovery outcomes.[55] The Devil Dog fountain fosters cohesion and group membership by the sheer fact that Marines visit the site with others or they share about their experiences with other Marines either on social media or in person. The sense of community that is fostered at the fountain sets the stage for a communal approach to moral injury, a recognition that these wounds are not borne alone but are shared across the institution.

Visits to the fountain may also lead to symbolic healing. An awareness that the dog head is that of a maternal figure may offer a more vibrant context for transformation. The hellhound here is not merely a threshold guardian but a generative force wherein the guardian becomes the womb; the monster becomes the midwife. For Marines grappling with moral injury specifically related to violence, such as killing enemy combatants, causing civilian casualties, or witnessing atrocities, the nursing mother offers a powerful symbol of restoration. She represents the possibility that those who have taken life can still be life-giving, that capacity for destruction does not preclude capacity for nurture. Her milk, flowing as water from the fountain, suggests cleansing and renewal. To drink from her mouth is to be symbolically nursed, to return to a state of innocence or at least to a state where care is possible.

The mother dog's fierce expression, originally created to depict protection of vulnerable young, resonates deeply with the protective motivations that drive many to military service. Many Marines joined precisely to protect others, to stand between danger and the innocent. When their actions in war produce outcomes that contradict this protective intention; when civilians die, when allies are abandoned, when the mission seems morally compromised, the resulting moral injury is profound. The nursing mother at the fountain validates the protective intention while acknowledging the fierce methods sometimes required. She does not judge but instead offers sustenance.

The practice of reenlistment ceremonies at the fountain takes on deeper meaning when understood in this therapeutic context. Reenlistment after deployment, particularly after deployments involving moral injury, represents a profound act of recommitment. It says: despite what I have seen and done, despite my doubts and my guilt, I choose to remain part of this institution and identity. Conducting such ceremonies at the fountain, drinking from the nursing mother's mouth, symbolically washes away the past and provides nourishment for moving forward. It is a ritual of rebirth, of choosing life and continuity over despair and fragmentation.

The fountain's therapeutic function is enhanced by its liminal position. It is neither fully within nor fully outside the military institutional structure. It is unofficial enough to feel authentic rather than mandated, yet recognized enough to feel legitimate. Marines can engage with it according to their own needs without fear of judgment or requirement to articulate experiences for which they may not have words. The fountain accepts all who approach it, asking only that they lean in and drink.

Finally, the practice of taking fountain water away from the site in bottles purchased from the museum or in improvised containers extends the healing potential beyond the physical location. Water

[55] Casey D. Calhoun et al., "The Role of Social Support in Coping with Psychological Trauma: An Integrated Biopsychosocial Model for Posttraumatic Stress Recovery," *Psychiatric Quarterly* 93, no. 4 (2022): 949–70, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-022-10003-w.

from the fountain appears at ceremonies conducted on bases thousands of miles from France, at memorial services for fallen Marines, at gatherings of veterans struggling with their return to civilian life. This distributed water creates a network of connection, linking Marines across time and space to this maternal source. The water becomes a kind of medicine, a tangible reminder that healing is possible, that one is not alone, that the institution, for all its failures, contains within it resources for repair.

The nursing mother pours forth endlessly, never exhausted, always available. For Marines carrying the weight of moral injury, this inexhaustible availability matters profoundly. She will not turn away the guilty or condemn the broken. She offers what she has: water, sustenance, life, without demanding explanation or confession. To approach her is to accept the possibility of healing without the requirement of immediate forgiveness, to acknowledge one's need without having to articulate precisely what that need is.

Conclusion

Pilgrimages to the Devil Dog fountain serve as an archetypal journey toward integration. They draw on the nurturing presence of the Great Mother, challenge rigid norms, confront the mythic dimensions of trauma through the figure of the hellhound, and invite symbolic transformation through ritual and reflection. The integration achieved in this sacred space is not only personal but cultural, a reinfusion of meaning into lives fractured by war and memory. When viewed together, these mythic structures reveal the fountain as a powerful symbol of birth, death, and transformation, rooted in the collective unconscious and manifest through the ritual acts of pilgrimage.

People are drawn to such places because they encapsulate, with mythic clarity, the deepest psychological and spiritual truth: we seek transformation not in the absence of our fears but precisely where they dwell. The sacred water that flows from the beast's jaws is nothing less than an elixir born of terror, intimacy, and surrender. It is a mythic dramatization of initiation, echoing ancient rites where the initiate is symbolically devoured and reborn. It is a place of sacred convergence wherein the fountain offers more than physical water; it serves as a metaphoric and psychological reservoir for integration. The site becomes a liminal space for reconciling fragmented identities, particularly those shaped by the dissonance between war and peace, lethality and vulnerability, and memory and mythology. The fountain can be a place where many truths can coexist: one can be monstrous, vicious, and lethal, while also reflective, vulnerable, and empathic. Not only can they exist in the symbolism of the shrine, but within the psyche of the Marine.

The discovery that the Devil Dog fountain depicts not a male warrior but a nursing mother protecting her young fundamentally deepens rather than diminishes its power. This revelation suggests that the fountain's magnetism has never been solely about ferocity or martial prowess, but about something more complex: the integration of fierce protection with tender care, of life-taking capacity with life-giving purpose, of the warrior's strength with the mother's endurance. The fountain holds space for a more complete vision of what it means to be a Devil Dog, one that is not merely a killer but a guardian; not merely strong through isolation but powerful through connection; not merely surviving through hardness but thriving through the capacity to both give and receive care.

Given this new information about the fountainhead's artistic context, perhaps Marines encountering this "mirror" will see a more integrated version of themselves. The fierce snarl they have long recognized as their own warrior face is also the face of maternal protection. The water they drink as warriors seeking to extend their careers is also milk from a mother sustaining the next generation. The monument they approach as a shrine to ferocity is also a testament to the fierce love that makes violence meaningful: violence not for its own sake, but violence in defense of life.

Maybe Sergeant Major Daniel "Dan" Joseph Daly's legendary words will find new resonance within the context of the Devil Dog fountain. Not only are the words a summons to lethality, but an invitation to encounter the hidden parts of oneself and lean into integration: "Come on, you sons-o'-bitches, do you want to live forever?"

Perhaps the fountain answers: Yes. Yes, we do want to live forever, not through violence alone, but through the stories we tell, the water we share, the next generation we sustain. We live forever not by denying our capacity for destruction, but by integrating it with our capacity for creation. We live forever by drinking from the mouth of the nursing mother, accepting both her ferocity and her tenderness, and becoming whole.

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HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

What Marine History Is For

HISTORY, HERITAGE, AND THE ORIGINS OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS

By Mark R. Folse, PhD

> There is wisdom and depth in philosophy which always considers the origin and the germ, and glories in history as one consistent epic.[1]

Heritage and history are both useful for military/naval institutions like the Marine Corps. Heritage uses the past to celebrate or preserve culture and traditions. Marine heritage targets as broad a general audience as possible and passes down legacies of combat prowess, bravery, and *esprit de corps*, all of which are important to forming a corporate identity and projecting a bright and positive public image. This curated past, however, approaches what historian Sir Michael Howard called *myth-making*, or "the creation of an image of the past, through careful selection and interpretation, in order to create or sustain emotions or beliefs."[2] The Marine Corps uses history, however, not just to inspire, but to educate and enhance readiness. Scholarly military history targets a narrower and more academically inclined audience to promote understanding of past events by placing them in context, tracing both change and continuity, identifying and explaining causation, and illuminating complexity.[3] Rather than focus solely on the dazzling moments of the Corps' past, however, historical scholarship must also illuminate the Corps' murky episodes that, as Lord Acton once noted, "strengthens, and straightens, and extends the mind."[4]

Perhaps no period of U.S. Marine Corps history has undergone the mixing of history and heritage more than the years between the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The Marines today have a century-old tradition of celebrating the Corps' birthday on 10 November every year. Three dates, however, are important to understanding how historians have interpreted the U.S. Marine Corps' origins. The first, of course, is 10 November 1775, which marks the beginning of the Continental Marines that fought during the Ameri-

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https://doi.org/10.35318/mch.2026110204

[1] Lord Acton, *A Lecture on the Study of History Delivered at Cambridge, June 11, 1895* (London: Macmillan, 1911), 6.

[2] Michael Howard, "The Use and Abuse of Military History," *Parameters* 11, no. 1 (1981): 9.

[3] Michael S. Neiberg, "Reflections of Change: Achieving Intellectual Overmatch Through Historical Mindedness" (unpublished paper, U.S. Army War College, undated), 23, accessed 14 August 2025; and Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What Does It Mean to Think Historically," *Perspectives on History*, 1 January 2007.

[4] Acton, *A Lecture on the Study of History Delivered at Cambridge, June 11, 1895*, 40.

can Revolution. The second is 11 July 1798, when Congress created a permanent U.S. Marine Corps to serve with the Navy during the Quasi-War with France. The third date is 1 November 1921, when the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Major General John A. Lejeune, designated 10 November 1775 as the official birthday of the Service. Based on this reckoning, the Marines turned 250 in 2025. There is certainly precedent in beginning the Marine Corps' history in 1775.[5] It is important to note, however, that celebrating the Corps' birthday on 10 November is a function of heritage, while history requires acknowledging that the Corps did not exist as an official and permanent institution until 11 July 1798. The fact that this is far from a settled fact among authors of Marine history, however, reveals how a blurring of the lines between history and heritage defines much of the historiography surrounding the U.S. Marine Corps' beginnings.

This essay examines single-volume comprehensive histories of the Marine Corps published since 1875. It argues that how historians present and interpret the institution's beginnings has evolved gradually and unevenly during the past 150 years. This evolution has been driven by the authors' backgrounds, their purpose for writing, and their historical contexts. This essay is organized into three partially overlapping periods. The earliest publications from the late nineteenth century to the Great War era were popular histories for general audiences written mostly by journalists who mixed heritage and history by treating 10 November 1775 as the birth of the U.S. Marine Corps. Beginning in the interwar period and lasting into the 1980s, the first Marine historians with professional academic training divorced heritage from history by producing more scholarly books that recognized 10 November 1775 and 11 July 1798 as distinct birthdates for the Continental Marines and U.S. Marines, respectively. Then, starting in the 1970s and going into the early 2000s, a mix of Marines with backgrounds in academic historical research and professional journalism treated 1798 as the actual birth date of the Marine Corps, if not the official one.

This essay addresses single-volume narrative histories because those books have been the most widely read and impactful. Additionally, this selection narrows the analysis to a singular, more manageable historiographical thread. Included as exceptions, however, are several studies about Marines during the American Revolution and the early national period because of their direct relevance to the historiography. The plethora of stand-alone articles, book chapters, and chronologies are excluded because of the inevitable limits of time and space. Despite the evolution in how authors interpreted the Corps' origins, this essay asserts that the history/heritage dichotomy is engrained in these works because of what they were written for. The Marine historians discussed here rarely put pen to paper for the sake of historical accuracy alone. Their motivations were both professional and sentimental, which always allows room for heritage.

Early Histories to 1921: To Rescue from Obscurity

By 1920, Marine Corps history, to the extent that the field existed, was a collaborative effort between a handful of journalists and Marine officers who targeted the public for their primary audience, not historians or academics. These books reflect the Marine Corps' attempts to use its history for public relations and publicity and their practice of working with journalists to expand their reach. The Marine Corps survived numerous attempts between the Andrew Jackson and William Howard Taft administrations to, as Marines saw it, abolish or severely weaken the Service. For the Marine Corps of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, therefore, public relations was an important front in a larger campaign of

[5] *Marine Corps Lore*, Marine Corps Historical Reference Series no. 22 (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1960), 1–2; *Semper Fidelis: 250 Years of U.S. Marine Corps Honor, Courage, and Commitment* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps History Division, 2025), 14; MajGen Ben H. Fuller, "The United States Marine Corps," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* 56, no. 332 (October 1939): 913–16; and Janis Jorgensen, "246th Birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps: November 10th, 1775 Congress Establishes U.S. Marine Corps," *Naval History*, December 2021.

institutional survival.[6] To this end, Marines began cultivating professional relationships with journalists in the late nineteenth century. By the First World War, the Marine Publicity Bureau in New York City had developed a useful, mutually beneficial relationship with the press. They provided journalists with human interest stories that created favorable press for the Marines in return. The first few Marine Corps histories—M. Almy Aldrich and Captain Richard Strader Collum's *History of the United States Marine Corps*, published in 1875 and 1890, Willis J. Abbot's *Soldiers of the Sea*, published in 1918, and John W. Leonard's *The Story of the United States Marines*—are the products of that relationship.

Captain Collum was the first Marine officer to write a full narrative history of the Marine Corps. While stationed in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1874, he submitted a draft to Henry L. Shepard and Company, publishers. A Boston journalist named M. Almy Aldrich partnered with Collum around this time to help publish the draft. It appears that Collum provided official reports and documentation while Aldrich brought in newspaper accounts of battles. Collum transferred to Washington, DC, in 1875 and then served afloat with the Asiatic Squadron, therefore it is likely that Aldrich finished the draft for publication.[7]

Aldrich and Collum claimed as fact that "the United States Marine Corps came into existences before the organization of the regular Navy." They were not the first to make this assertion in print, however. James Fenimore Cooper had claimed in 1839 that Congress created the Marine Corps before a single naval vessel put to sea.[8] Aldrich and Collum therefore probably based their claim, in part, on Cooper's writings. They, of course, also reference the 10 November 1775 resolution passed by Congress to raise two battalions of Marines in preparation for a naval operation against Halifax, Nova Scotia. The fact that the two battalions were never raised, that the Marine companies that Congress did raise eventually were "Continental Marines" rather than members of a formally established Corps, and that Congress had already made moves to establish a navy four weeks prior, did not seem to matter. The authors only admit that few records of the Marines exist from that period and that the organization disbanded after the war.[9]

It is important to note that the 1875 version appeared during a period of crisis for the Marine Corps. Congress shrunk the Navy's budget from $122 million in 1865 down to $13.5 million by 1880. In 1874, fearing the House of Representatives would either abolish the Marine Corps or place it under the Army, an association of officers met at the Marine barracks in Washington, DC, and decided to publish material to garner public support. Along with the *History of the United States Marine Corps* (when it published), they reprinted the 1864 pamphlet *Information in Regard to the United States Marine Corps*, which was full of praise for Marines from naval officers. These publications became a part of the Corps' lobbying effort to remain a separate Service under the Navy. (Nevertheless, the Corps took deep cuts in 1876. Although Congress promoted Commandant Jacob Zeilin to brigadier general for his service during the Civil War, they reduced the Commandant's office to a colonel's billet once he retired in 1876. The officer corps dwindled by one-third [75–50 officers], promotions stagnated, and the enlisted force

[6] Robert D. Heinl Jr., "The Cat with More than Nine Lives," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (June 1954); a copy of this article is in Charles P. Neimeyer, ed., *On the Corps: USMC Wisdom from the pages of Leatherneck, Marine Corps Gazette, and Proceedings* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 45; Mark R. Folse, *The Globe and Anchor Men: U.S. Marines and American Manhood in the Great War Era* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2024), 43–48; Colin Colbourn, "Esprit de Marine Corps: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps through Public Relations, 1898–1945" (PhD diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2018), 41–43; and Heather Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874–1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019), 101.

[7] Capt Richard Strader Collum, USMC, Historian Biography, Marine Corps History Division (MCHD), Quantico, VA, hereafter Collum biography.

[8] James Fenimore Cooper, *The History of the Navy of the United States of America*, vol. 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), 144. Cooper places the date incorrectly on 9 November 1775.

[9] M. Almy Aldrich and Capt Richard S. Collum, *History of the United States Marine Corps* (Boston, MA: Henry L. Shepard, 1875), 33, 44.

shrunk from 3,000 to 2,000 men.)[10] This effort also reveals the beginnings of a behavioral pattern whereby Marines employ and promote a curated version of their past to get through troubling times.[11]

Settling on 10 November 1775, therefore, allowed the authors to show how the Continental Congress recognized the necessity of a body Marines as soon as naval planning began. Additionally, this date not only implied that the Marine Corps was the oldest branch of Service, but it also put the Corps' centennial in the very year the book published: 1875. Collum and Aldrich place little significance on the 1798 bill that formally established the U.S. Marine Corps, calling it only "the re-formation of the organization."[12] For the 1890 edition, Collum moved some chapters around and wrote a new preface, more detailed accounts of the American Revolution, and post-1875 events such as the 1878 and 1889 Paris Expositions, and the 1885 expedition to Panama. Collum's content regarding Marines of the Revolution and the Marine Corps of early national period is the same. His book was published before history professionalized as a field of study in the United States, which may help explain its uncritical nature and how it is meant to portray the Marines in best light possible. As such, much of Collum's work should be regarded as propaganda.[13]

The next narrative histories of the Marine Corps came from journalist Willis J. Abbot (1863–1934) and John W. Leonard in the last year of the First World War.[14] Abbot's *Soldiers of the Sea* aims to tell an exciting story. Similar to Collum, he treats the revolution and early national period as one of great tales of Marine gallantry and valor. Based on the book's organization and content, at least for the years leading up to 1890, it is likely that Willis read Collum's book. For example, like Aldrich and Collum's 1875 edition, Abbot recounts the "tell it to the Marines" anecdote that dates to King Charles II. Willis also follows Collum's assertion that it was on 10 November 1775 that "the true United States Marine Corps was created," without making much distinction between Continental Marines, state marines, or "marines" who served on privateers.[15] He mentions the disbandment of the Continental Navy and Marines after 1783 and their permanent establishment by Congress in 1798, briefly. Leonard's *The Story of the United States Marines* is of the same genus as Abbot's work. It claims the Service came to be on 10 November 1775 and aims to make the Marines a household name by celebrating their valor and courage.[16] *Soldiers of the Sea* and *The Story of the U.S. Marines* would have been of interest to anyone wanting to know more about the Marines who had just won fame on the western front in the summer of 1918.

Like Aldrich and Collum's book, however, these works are meant to glorify the Marines and their role in American history. Neither Abbot nor Leonard provided source notes or a bibliography. The authors clearly worked with Marines in drafting the book, however. The Marine Publicity Bureau published Leonard's book. The last chapter of Abbot's book references Marine Publicity Bureau material directly, and one of the Corps' notable recruiters and publicity

[10] Collum biography; Jack Shulimson, *The Marine Corps Search for a Mission* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 15–16; Jack Shulimson, "Charles G. McCawley, 1876–1891," in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 97–99; and Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*, 2d ed. (New York: Free Press, 1991), 101.
[11] Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*, 51.
[12] Aldrich and Collum, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, 44.
[13] This can be summed up with Cooper's unqualified claim that "at no period of naval history of the world is it probable that marines were more important than during the war of the Revolution"—a statement that perhaps Aldrich and Collum took too much to heart. Cooper, *The History of the Navy of the United States of America*, vol. 1, 145; and Aldrich and Collum, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, 41.
[14] Abbot was a prolific journalist, editor, and author who wrote at least 19 books on American military and naval history. These included several institutional histories of the Navy such as *Naval History of the United States*, vols. 1 and 2 (1890), and *American Merchant Ships and Sailors* (1902). He was a University of Michigan graduate (1887), the managing editor of the *Chicago Times* (1892–93), editor of the *New York Journal* (1896–98), and he joined the *New York American* in 1905. *Soldiers of the Sea: The Story of the United States Marine Corps* (1918) was his 11th book.
[15] Abbot J. Willis, *Soldiers of the Sea: The Story of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1918), 6.
[16] John W. Leonard and Fred F. Chitty, *The Story of the United States Marines: Compiled from Authentic Records, 1740–1919* (New York: Marine Corps Publicity Bureau, 1919), 15–20.

officers, Major Thomas G. Sterrett, provided the foreword. "Mr. Abbot has rendered a notable service in bringing out a work which will, in thrilling narrative and excitement, resemble the imaginings of a Dumas or a Jules Verne, but which deviates not one jot from historical truth," he wrote.[17] Sterrett, a former journalist who had been working for the Marine Publicity Bureau for a long time by 1918, had clearly seen the book's public relations value.

History and Heritage: The Interwar Period to the Cold War

The establishment of the Marine Corps' Historical Section on 8 September 1919 under the command of Major Edwin N. McClellan marked a shift in the production of Marine Corps history and heritage. Major General Commandant George Barnett sent McClellan to France earlier that year to collect documents on Marine activities and engagements during the Great War. This effort resulted in the establishment of the Historical Section on his return and the completion of its first major work, *The United States Marine Corps in the World War*. McClellan served as chief of the Historical Section during the first four years of Major General John A. Lejeune's commandancy, when the Marine Corps faced steep personnel shortages. Similar to Collum, McClellan sought to use the Marine Corps' past to drum up public support.

McClellan's most notable contribution to the study and interpretation of the Corps' past was the role he played in making 10 November the institution's official birthday. On 21 October 1921, Major McClellan submitted a memorandum to Lejeune suggesting that he declare 10 November an official holiday for Marines for two reasons: one having to do with heritage and the other with public relations. First, to impress on each Marine "that he is an important integral part of an Ancient and Honorable Organization," and, second, because public celebrations of the Corps' birthday would "be given wide publicity and create an interest in the Marine Corps among certain classes that would prove of agreeable assistance."[18] Lejeune then issued *Marine Corps Order No. 47* on 1 November 1921 which declared 10 November 1775 as the official birthday of the Marines.[19] This order permanently planted 10 November into not only the Marines' memory, but the public's as well, forever changing how audiences interpret the Corps' origins.

McClellan left the section in 1925 but returned in 1931, which was when he and his staff codified the Historical Section's missions. They were to maintain the Corps' archive, provide correspondence on historical matters, and "cooperate in every practicable way with the officer preparing Marine Corps history." That officer was McClellan, who began work on a comprehensive multivolume history of the Marine Corps.[20] McClellan's book, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, was a massive undertaking of which he only completed one of seven planned volumes. Printed in 1932, volume 1 covers colonial marine activities before 1776; state, privateer, and Continental Marines during the American Revolution; the establishment of the Marine Corps in 1798; the Barbary Wars; and the War of 1812. It has 26 chapters across 1,711 manuscript pages. McClellan's endnotes take up a sizable portion of the total length, which is an incredible boon to researchers. The manuscript's length precluded commercial publication, but the Historical Section sent 200 copies to various repositories to be used as a reference. Chapter three details how and why the Continental Congress and Major General George Washington established naval forces, including large block quotations from the corresponding parties.[21]

McClellan asserts that every resolution for acquiring and outfitting naval vessels during this period

[17] Maj Thomas G. Sterrett as quoted in Abbot, *Soldiers of the Sea*, v.

[18] Maj Edwin N. McClellan, officer-in-charge, Historical Section, to the MajGen Commandant (MajGen John Archer Lejeune), 21 October 1921, copy found in "History of the Marine Corps Birthday Celebration," Archives, MCHD, Quantico, VA.

[19] *Semper Fidelis: 250 Years of U.S. Marine Corps Honor, Courage, and Commitment*, 14

[20] Annette Amerman, "2014 Foreword," in Maj Edwin N. McClellan, *The United States Marine Corps in the World War*, rev. 3d ed., U.S. Marines in World War I Centennial Commemorative Series (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps History Division, 2014), xv–xvii; and Maj Edwin N. McClellan biographical file, MCHD, Quantico, VA.

[21] Maj Edwin N. McClellan, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Marine Corps Historical Section, 1931), chap. 3, 18–23.

implied the authorization of enlisting sailors and Marines to serve aboard. He explains how several dates between October and December 1775 could serve as the founding of the Marine Corps and Navy. First, 5 October could be considered the founding date because on that day Congress authorized Washington to arm and equip two vessels "and to give orders for the 'proper encouragement to the marines and seamen' serving on them."[22] Then there is 13 October, which was the date of the official resolution that called for the fitting out of those vessels as well as enlisting sailors and Marines to operate them. In addition, 22 December could very well have been the shared birthday of the Navy and Marine Corps, because it was then that Congress made provisions for commissioning and paying officers to serve in the Continental Navy. McClellan, however, argues that 10 November is the birthday "because that was the day in 1775 Congress authorized an organization, or Corps, of them," meaning a distinct body of Marines as opposed to marines being enlisted in an ad hoc basis for sea duty on board individual vessels.[23]

McClellan interprets the establishment of the Marine Corps in 1798 similarly. Congress created a Navy Department on 30 April 1798 in response to a national emergency. Naturally, the Navy required ships and sailors and Marines to sail them. Instead of the Navy raising Marines for ship duty as needed, Congress created a permanent and distinct Corps with its own commandant and administrative hierarchy, from which detachments of Marines would serve on war vessels. And like his discussion of the Continental Marines, McClellan delves into the congressional records to show the back-and-forth debates on the house floor behind the Marine Corps' establishment and force structure.[24] Although most of this history was never published, McClelland did publish parts of it in the *Marine Corps Gazette* in 1922.[25]

McClellan's research and attention to political and military context set this work apart from any history of the Marine Corps that came before it. His efforts at uncovering how and why the Marines came to be both in the American Revolution and in 1798 are of tremendous value to researchers, especially given his prodigious use of endnotes. To this day, it remains the largest study of the Marines in the colonial and early national periods, which makes his contributions to Marine history *and* heritage second to none.

It was Lieutenant Colonel Clyde H. Metcalf who published the very first scholarly, comprehensive, one-volume study of the Marines. Metcalf commissioned into the Marine Corps in 1912 at age 26. By then, he had a noteworthy academic background.[26] Metcalf took over the Marine Corps Historical Section in 1935 having spent more than two decades in typical Marine officer fashion with service in Guam, France, Nicaragua, and on board various naval vessels. Once there, he took to completing the work begun by McClellan. In preparation for the book project, he enrolled at George Washington University and received a graduate degree in foreign policy and historical research.[27] Therefore, he is the first Marine officer/historian with professional academic training.

Metcalf wanted to write a new kind of Marine Corps history. He did not like Collum's *History of the United States Marine Corps* because it was outdated and painted too rosy a picture of the Corps' past. In a letter to recently retired Commandant John A. Lejeune, he wrote,

> I believe that the Marine Corps and its officers have made mistakes when they were obvious, or the acts were universally condemned by contemporaries the only thing to do in my opinion is to admit the mistake and attempt to place the blame for them. . . . I have acted under the assumption

[22] *Journals of Congress*, vol. 3, as quoted in McClellan, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, 10.
[23] McClellan, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, 10.
[24] McClellan, *History of the United States Marine Corps*, chap. 10, 2, 10–16.
[25] Maj Edwin N. McClellan, "From 1783 to 1798," *Marine Corps Gazette* 7, no. 3 (September 1922): 273–86.
[26] He held a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas and completed some graduate studies at the University of Chicago. He had been an instructor at his alma mater, and a high school principal. Clyde Metcalf biographical file, MCHD, Quantico, VA.
[27] Clyde Metcalf biographical file.

> that if future generations are to profit by our experiences they must know about our shortcomings and failures as well as our fine qualities and successes.[28]

This letter illuminated a guiding principle that neither Aldrich, Collum, nor Willis had in writing Marine Corps history. Metcalf's book would be no "polly-anna affair."

Metcalf's *A History of the United States Marine Corps* accomplished several historiographical functions. First, it gave the first serious and deeply researched account of Marine history in a single comprehensive narrative. Second, like McClellan's work, it placed the Marines in historical context by describing the national policies and local conditions necessary to understand land and seaborne operations. Finally, he is the first historian to align the growth and development of the Marine Corps with "forces which brought about the growth of the nation."[29] "It is hoped," he wrote, "that this work will prove to be a contribution to the knowledge of our foreign policy as well as to that pertaining to our naval history."[30] Although writing about a small military/naval Service, he makes a case for Marine Corps history being important to understanding larger themes in American history. His profound linkages of Marine operations to national policies and military strategy makes this book stand far out from those that preceded it.

Metcalf's book has three chapters, about 80 pages, devoted to the Marines' early history. In the opening chapter he makes important distinctions between state navies and marines, marines on board privateers, and the Continental variety. He identifies 13 October 1775 as the date of the first official step the Continental Congress took toward establishing a navy. Regarding the 10 November resolution, he describes it as the first document authorizing the raising of a body of marines.[31] He also points out that this force was never raised but that "the authority contained in the resolution appears to have been issued to form more or less isolated detachments of marines who served throughout the remainder of the American Revolution."[32] Metcalf then narrates Marine activities with Commodore Esek Hopkins's expedition to New Providence, with Washington's Army in New Jersey, in European waters with John Paul Jones, the disastrous Penobscot expedition, and one of the first accounts of Marines under James Willing who raided settlements along the Mississippi river down to New Orleans. The American Revolution, however, did not constitute the "early days of the Marine Corps" as far as Metcalf was concerned.

Those days did not begin until 1798 with the official establishment of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps in response to French hostilities toward American merchant ships. Like McClellan, Metcalf tied the two Services together very closely since Congress created both for an immediate maritime emergency. Metcalf and McClellan were the first Marine historians to explain what the Navy and Marine Corps were for in the first place: forward presence, convoying merchant ships, and "protecting channels of maritime commerce."[33] National honor was at stake, and it was within that context that the Navy and Marines developed a fighting tradition and martial spirit that they displayed against Barbary Corsairs in 1805 and the British in the War of 1812. Linking the Marine Corps to this larger national imperative is missing from earlier published works.

Going into the Second World War, the Marine Corps now had several books written about its history. Metcalf's was the most in-depth, professional, balanced, and up-to-date. But that did not stop John H. Craige from publishing the last pre–World War II book about Marines in 1941, entitled *What The Citizen Should Know About the Marines*. Born in Pennsylvania in 1886, Craige worked as a reporter and newspaper editor for several years before joining the Marine

[28] Clyde Metcalf to John A. Lejeune, 19 October 1938, as quoted in "Clyde Hill Metcalf—Historian of the Corps," Clyde Metcalf biographical file.
[29] Clyde H. Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), vii–viii.
[30] Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, vii.
[31] Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, 11.
[32] Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, 11.
[33] Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, 35.

Corps in 1917. He served in France and Haiti, was one of Commandant Lejeune's aides, and was the chief editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette* before an automobile accident forced him into early retirement in 1935. He had written numerous columns for newspapers, *Marine Corps Gazette* articles, and several books including *Cannibal Cousins* (1934) and *Black Bagdad: The Arabian Nights Adventures of a Marine Captain in Haiti* (1933).[34]

Part history and part journalism, Craige wrote *What the Citizen Should Know About the Marines* to explain to the latest generation of general readers why the Marine Corps exists and define its peace and wartime missions. He devotes chapters to the Corps' contemporary force structure, the kinds of weapons Marines use, and their expeditionary and amphibious capabilities. Craige also uses history to highlight some of the Marine Corps' traditional activities and show how the Service has evolved since the eighteenth century. To do so, he relied on three works: Metcalf's *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, a manuscript copy of McClellan's *Marine Corps History*, and Captain Harry A. Ellsworth's *One Hundred and Eighty Landings of the United States Marines, 1800–1934*.[35]

Craige organized the book thematically with chapters devoted to Marines serving afloat with the Navy, detached with the Army, and conducting counterguerrilla and contingency operations. Each chapter uses historical vignettes to flesh out each theme. "Organization and Beginnings" is the chapter in which Craige discusses how and why the United States created a body of Marines. Unlike McClellan and Metcalf, Craige places no real significance on either 10 November 1775 or 11 July 1798, even though he acknowledges how the former is "generally accepted as the birthday of the United States Marine Corps."[36]

Where McClellan and Metcalf focused on the political and strategic context surrounding the Corps' beginnings, Craige emphasizes geography. Isolated from the west by a vast trackless continent, and from the east by a great ocean, the colonies communicated, traded, and traveled mostly by sea, which imbued them all with a maritime character. There existed no theoretical nor doctrinal debates about the necessity or organization of naval forces, including Marines, in the colonies. Craige argues that those discussions did not become relevant until Alfred T. Mahan's late nineteenth-century writings. Rather, the colonists knew "instinctively the part that a powerful navy and a body of well-trained marines could play in the scheme of their defense in view of the facts of the American geographical position."[37] Therefore, the Continental Marines of 1775 and the Marine Corps of 1798 owe their existence as much toward geography as anything else.

History, however, is not the book's primary purpose, and Craige was not a Marine Corps historian per se. His discipline was journalism, and that comes across in the absence of any critical analysis of Marine actions in the American Revolution, the undeclared war with the French, and the War of 1812. He chose his vignettes to highlight certain Marine attributes. Craige uses the ad hoc and polyglot body of Marines on the frigate *Bonhomme Richard* (1779), for example, to highlight a tradition of fighting prowess. His writing also reflects contemporary developments in the Marine Corps since Marine Schools recently produced the *Tentative Manual for Landing Operations* and the *Small Wars Manual*. Commodore David Porter and Marine lieutenant John M. Gamble's seizure of an advanced naval base on the Marquesas Islands during the War of 1812, for Craige, illustrates the Corps' nascent but developing amphibious warfare tradition.[38]

Post–World War II to Vietnam

Twenty years and two major wars passed before more single-volume comprehensive Marine Corps histories appeared. World War II, the defense unification fights, and a major ground war in Korea had profound impacts on the Corps' organization, history, and popularity. By fighting in major Pacific campaigns and through slick public relations efforts, the Marine Corps had become a household name in America, the

[34] John H. Craige biographical file, MCHD, Quantico, VA.
[35] Capt John H. Craige, *What the Citizen Should Know About the Marines* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1941), 9.
[36] Craige, *What the Citizen Should Know About the Marines*, 66.
[37] Craige, *What the Citizen Should Know About the Marines*, 63.
[38] Craige, *What the Citizen Should Know About the Marines*, 92–93.

subject of movies and pulp fiction alike. Gone, therefore, were the days of writing Marine Corps history to raise Marines from obscurity. The new generation of Marine historians faced different challenges, particularly related to the scope and depth of their projects. The inclusion of two world wars, multiple small wars, Korea, and major twentieth-century organizational changes made fitting it all into a comprehensive narrative a challenge. Thus appeared the first purposefully concise or "compact" histories.

Marine historians produced five such books in the early 1960s, two of which published commercially. The first of these was Philip N. Pierce and Frank O. Hough's *The Compact History of the United States Marine Corps* published by Hawthorn Books in 1960. Pierce and Hough were both Marine World War II veterans with backgrounds in journalism. Pierce majored in journalism at the University of Maine before serving in nine campaigns in World War II and Korea as a Marine officer, receiving over a dozen combat decorations. Hough, the older of the two, enlisted in the Corps in 1917 and fought at Blanc Mont before graduating from Brown University in 1924. He served as public relations officer with the 1st Marine Division in World War II and participated in three major campaigns, including Peleliu.[39]

In their attempt to fit two centuries of Marine history into a 300-page book, the authors devote three chapters to the Corps' early history, roughly 39 pages, which is one-half what Metcalf wrote. Their bibliography and narrative reveal the influence of Collum, Metcalf, and Craige, as they cover much of the same vignettes in similar chronological fashion. Pierce and Hough give 10 November 1775 as the "Present day the Marine Corps celebrates its birthday" but it "sounded a lot more impressive than it proved to be," since "there is nothing to indicate that the two battalions were ever raised."[40] Like previous Marine scholars, Pierce and Hough favor events that highlight Marine contributions to the war effort. For example, they provide an account of Major Samuel Nicholas's secret mission to transport King Louis XVI's loan of silver specie from Boston to Philadelphia by oxcart in 1781 for the "financial salvation of the destitute country."[41] Even on campaigns that failed, however, like the 1779 Penobscot Expedition or the 1780 defense of Charleston, South Carolina, the authors maintain that Marine competence stood out. They also highlight their naval history and heritage throughout, often explicitly calling the Corps' history in the American Revolution and the Quasi-War with France "essentially that of the Navy."[42] Narrative drives this compact history more than anything else, which makes the book easily accessible for commercial audiences. The authors often omit historical context and provide no notes outside of their bibliography.

In 1962, the U.S. Naval Institute published Lieutenant Colonel Robert Debs Heinl's *Soldiers of the Sea: The United States Marine Corps 1775–1962*. Heinl holds a distinguished place among the pantheon of the Marine Corps' twentieth-century authors. Born in Washington, DC, in 1916, he earned a bachelor of arts from Yale University in 1937, where he majored in English and minored in history. He spent 26 years as a Marine officer with active service in the Corps' defense and antiaircraft battalions and as a naval gunfire officer during World War II and Korea. Heinl published dozens of articles in the *Marine Corps Gazette* and the Naval Institute's *Proceedings*. Beginning in 1946, he headed the Corps' Historical Section, where he began the research and writing of what became the Corps' official histories of operations during World War II. While there, he became a part of the infamous Chowder Society that promoted the Marine Corps' interests during the post–World War II defense unification fights.[43]

Heinl's history moves through the American Revolution and the War of 1812 quickly, which is un-

[39] Frank O. Hough biographical file, MCHD, Quantico, VA; and Philip Nason Pierce biographical file, MCHD, Quantico, VA.
[40] Philip N. Pierce and Frank O. Hough, *The Compact History of the United States Marine Corps*, 2d ed. (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1964), 18.
[41] Pierce and Hough, *The Compact History of the United States Marine Corps*, 25.
[42] Pierce and Hough, *The Compact History of the United States Marine Corps*, 31, 36.
[43] Robert Debs Heinl biographical file, MCHD, Quantico VA; and Aaron O'Connell, *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 116.

derstandable given the book's coverage of two centuries of institutional development. In 28 pages, Heinl walks readers through the founding of the Continental Marines, their services on shore and afloat, their disbandment after independence, and their reestablishment in 1798. He makes no effort to establish the official birth date of the Marine Corps, stating only that the Continental Congress created the Continental Marines on 10 November 1775 and that the U.S. Congress established the Marine Corps in 1798. He credits the House Naval Committee chairman, Samuel Sewall, for getting the Act for Establishing and Organizing the Marine Corps passed on 11 July 1798 and suggests that Sewall "might well be called its father."[44]

Like Pierce and Hough, the standout feature of Heinl's history is his narrative skill. He moves from 1775 to 1815 efficiently and concisely while leaving room for bits of historical context. His setting of the scenes surrounding the Barbary Wars and the War of 1812 is by no means in-depth, but they allow him to link the use and development of the Marine Corps to larger historical forces. He also includes the services of the Navy's loblolly boys (or surgeon's assistants, the antecedents of today's corpsmen), who tended to Marines' medical needs on shore and afloat.[45] Unlike Pierce and Hough, however, Heinl employs endnotes and an extensive bibliography. His discussions of the colonial and early national period is brief compared to Metcalf and McClelland. But his scholarly apparatus coupled with his writing abilities made *Soldiers of the Sea* the best and most accessible comprehensive history of the Marine Corps at the time.

By the time Heinl's history published, there existed no "official" one-volume comprehensive history of the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps' Historical Section in the 1950s and 1960s was hard at work producing dual five-volume official histories: *History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II* which it completed in 1971, and *U.S. Marine Operations in Korea*, completed in 1972. McClelland's work comes the closest in this regard, but his work on the colonial and early national period was never published. Most of the books discussed in this essay, therefore, reflect the respective authors' personal interpretations, not the official stance of the Marine Corps.[46] In the 1960s, however, the Marine Corps' Historical Branch published several officially approved narratives, both written by Marine officers.[47] The first was Major Norman W. Hicks's *A Brief History of the United States Marine Corps* in 1962, followed by Captain William D. Parker's *A Concise History of the United States Marine Corps* in 1969. The purpose of these "official histories" was to provide approved (by either the chief of the Historical Section or the Commandant of the Marine Corps) brief histories that highlight the development and accomplishments of the Marine Corps. As official Marine Corps histories, their goals were not just to inform, but to use a highly curated version of history that leaned heavily on heritage to inspire and motivate.[48]

Hicks's and Parker's treatment of the Marines of the revolution and early national era, therefore, serve that purpose. Hicks's nine pages on this period are about how the Marines gained laurels in battle and grew their reputation for fighting on land and sea. Parker treats it much the same. The 10 November 1775 resolution to raise two battalions of Marines constitutes the Marine Corps' birthday, as far as he is concerned, and all the engagements from then up to the 1815 Battle of New Orleans serve as plot points demonstrating growing flexibility and fighting prow-

[44] Robert D. Heinl, *Soldiers of the Sea: The United States Marine Corps, 1775–1962* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1962), 10.
[45] Heinl, *Soldiers of the Sea*, 28.

[46] Heinl, *Soldiers of the Sea*, xvii; and Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, vii.
[47] The Marine Corps' history office changed names several times since its founding. The Marine Corps Historical Section, founded on 8 September 1919, became the History Division, Personnel Department, on 1 May 1943. It became the Historical Section, Division of Public Information, on 1 November 1946, followed by the Historical Division in June 1948, and the Historical Branch, G-3, on 15 February 1952. Frank O. Hough biographical file.
[48] What Sir Michael Howard defines as *regimental histories*, in "The Use and Abuse of Military History," *Parameters* 11, no. 1 (1981): 10. Omitted here are the Historical Division's especially useful chronologies that it produced during the 1960s and 1970s. The most relevant here is Col William M. Miller and Maj John H. Johnstone, *A Chronology of the United States Marine Corps, 1775–1934* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1965). It is notable that the authors make no claims regarding the Marine Corps' official birthday.

ess on land and sea.[49] Of the two, Parker's work is longer (114 pages with two chapters devoted to the Corps' early history) and more useful for providing historical context and a more extensive list of references. The Vietnam War's influence is evident in Parker's, as well, considering his reference to the conflict in the introduction and his section on small wars between 1798 and 1835 being much more in-depth than Hicks's 1962 work.

The third official history from this period is Colonel Thomas G. Roe, Major Ernest H. Giusti, Major John H. Johnstone, and Benis M. Frank's *A History of Marine Corps Roles and Missions, 1775–1962*. Published by the Marine Corps' Historical Branch in 1962, *Roles and Missions* is about the evolution of how and for what purposes the Navy and U.S. government tasked Marines. Therefore, the authors make no claims regarding the official birthday of the Marine Corps. Their intent is to highlight how Continental Marines came into existence in 1775 with a shipboard mission while their service ashore with the Army developed as a natural consequence of waging a war with significant maritime and land dimensions. The establishment of the Marine Corps in 1798, however, officially set Marines down the path of serving on board war vessels and duty ashore "as the President, at his discretion, shall direct."[50] Therefore, those dates are important to understand the history of the Marine Corps' mission development not just heritage.

Marine Corps History in the Post-Vietnam and Bicentennial Era

By the mid-1970s the United States had withdrawn from South Vietnam and ended the draft. The U.S. military became an all-volunteer force once again, albeit one reeling from the strategic failure of Vietnam and wracked with personnel problems. The Marine Corps fared no better than the other Services. Within this context, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons produced the next one-volume history of the Marine Corps, the first edition of which published in 1974. Like Heinl, Simmons had a background in journalism, having obtained a bachelor's and a master's degree in the discipline from Lehigh University and Ohio State University, respectively. Born in New Jersey in 1921, Simmons served as an active-duty Marine officer from 1942 until 1971, seeing action in World War II, Korea (including the landings at Inchon and the fight at Chosin Reservoir), and Vietnam. While in charge of the Marine Corps Historical Section, he merged it with the Marine Corps Museums to create the Marine Corps History and Museums Division, over which he served as the director, first as a brigadier general from 1971 until 1978, then as a civil servant until retirement in 1996.[51]

Simmons wrote *The United States Marines* originally a part of a London, England, publisher's regimental history series made up of short works about disparate units and regiments throughout history.[52] He added more material in subsequent editions with different publishers, all while keeping a balance between depth and breadth. His second edition takes just under 300 pages to get to 1976 while the third edition takes the narrative to 1998 in only 330 pages. Simmons devotes only 35 pages to the Marine Corps' early years, beginning his narrative in fall 1775 and only giving passing reference to the background histories of Great Britain's Royal Marines.

Simmons omits important context to move the narrative along as efficiently as possible. For example, he mentions the recruiting of Continental Marines in Philadelphia in December 1775 but not how or why they never formed into the two battalions called for in the 10 November resolution. The book's strong suit,

[49] Maj Norman W. Hicks, *A Brief History of the United States Marine Corps*, 3d ed. (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1962), 1–7; and Capt William D. Parker, *A Concise History of the United States Marine Corps, 1775–1969* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1970), 8–11.

[50] Col Thomas G. Roe, Maj Ernest H. Giusti, Maj John H. Johnstone, and Benis M. Frank, *A History of Marine Corps Roles, and Missions, 1775–1962* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1962), 5–7.

[51] He authored hundreds of articles during that time for *Leatherneck*, *Marine Corps Gazette*, and U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*. He also authored several Marine history books and a novel, *Dog Company Six*, about the Korean War. His *The United States Marines: A History*, published by Naval Institute Press, went through several editions between 1974 and 2003. Edwin H. Simmons biographical file, MCHD, Quantico VA.

[52] Edwin H. Simmons, "A History of Marine Corps Histories," *Naval History* 17, no. 1 (February 2003).

therefore, is not scholarly analysis. Rather, the book works as well as any in existence as a useful introduction to Marine Corps history. The same goes for its portions on the American Revolution and early national period. He asserts that 11 July 1798 was the "true birthday of the Marine Corps," which was at variance with the Marine Corps History Division's official stance, made by both McClellan in 1921 and Parker in 1969.[53] This groups Simmons with Metcalf and Heinl in that all three differed from the official interpretation of the history office they led.

While Simmons was the director of Marine Corps History and Museums Division, one of the division's historians, Charles R. Smith, wrote the most substantial and scholarly book on the Corps' early history. *Marines in the Revolution: A History of the Continental Marines in the American Revolution, 1775–1783*, was published during the Marine Corps' bicentennial year, 1975. Smith's official history aimed "to present an objective analysis of individual and collective contributions, the successes and failures of the group as a whole, and the fundamental aspects of modern Marine amphibious doctrine."[54] As a former artilleryman and field historian for the U.S. Army, Smith had a degree of personal separation from the Corps that most Marine historians discussed in this essay lacked. His treatment of the Continental Marines comes across as fair, dispassionate, and thoroughly guided by source material alone.

The book is 14 chapters of narrative and analysis that illuminates much of the finer details glossed over by other Marine historians (except McClellan) that covered the period. He places the creation of the Continental Marines firmly within the context of the planning for a naval expedition against Nova Scotia, which Washington outside of Boston could not support at the time. He refrains from labeling 10 November 1775 the birthday of the Marine Corps, however. Because of the book's scope and research, the author can devote seven and a half pages to Arnold's Lake Champlain expedition, entire chapters to Esek Hopkins's voyage to New Providence, George Washington's Trenton and Princeton campaigns, and the most detailed account of James Willings's marauding down the Mississippi in print. The book really shines with its accounts of the many ships' duels on the high seas. Smith writes a vivid account of the Battle of Flamborough Head between the *Bonhomme Richard* and the HMS *Serapis* (1779), one that shows readers how the ships carefully maneuvered and shattered each other.[55]

Most of the histories discussed above include colorful accounts of how Marines participated in the American Revolution. With Smith's narrative, however, readers gain a sense that Marines indeed played a significant role and were woven into the sinews of the American war effort. Smith's *Marines in the Revolution* is a remarkable piece of scholarship. With his use of various archives, including those in Great Britain, Spain, and France, as well as private and public special collections, Smith's source base is second to none. As of this writing, Smith's work remains the strongest treatment of the subject.[56]

As Smith's book was published in time for the bicentennial, two other authors worked diligently on comprehensive one-volume narrative histories of the Marine Corps. They are J. Robert Moskin's *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, published originally in 1977, and Allan R. Millett's *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*, the first edition of which hit the presses in 1980. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the major works that covered the early history of the Marines were a mix of historical and journalistic disciplines. Metcalf and Smith had academic backgrounds in history, while Heinl and Simmons were Marine historians by trade but journalists in training and education. Moskin, an award-winning journalist, and

[53] Simmons, *The United States Marines: A History*, 21.

[54] Charles R. Smith, *Marines in the Revolution: A History of the Continental Marines in the American Revolution, 1775–1783* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1975), v.

[55] Smith, *Marines in the Revolution*, 231–41.

[56] His appendices alone are amazing. They include notes, bibliography, four printed journals/diaries of Continental Marines, a printed letter from Samuel Nicholas, advertisements for Marine deserters replete with physical descriptions of each, muster rolls, and biographies of officers. This book, therefore, is not only useful for readers but also for researchers and educators. *Marines in the Revolution* is a major step in the evolution of how authors have approached and written about Marines in the American Revolution and early national period. See also "USMC in the Early Years," *Marine Corps Gazette* 59, no. 5 (May 1975): 4.

Millett, a Marine lieutenant colonel and professor of military history at Ohio State University at the time, continued this trend. While both authors set out to write one large narrative, the major distinctions between the two stemmed in part from the authors' different professional backgrounds and approaches.

Moskin was a 1944 Harvard graduate who studied journalism and was the managing editor of the *Harvard Crimson*. He then served three years in the U.S. Army before earning a master's degree in history from the University of Columbia. As a journalist for *Look* magazine, he covered military operations in Korea and Vietnam, where he developed an affinity for Marines. Impressed by their esprit de corps and combat prowess, he set about writing a history that is "first of all, the story of men in battle—the story of individual courage—of men who risked everything to do what had to be done." It was also in Vietnam where Moskin developed his view on U.S. imperialism, the ugly side of American history, which he believed needed to be told truthfully and "unvarnished."[57]

The U.S. Marine Corps Story is a "fighting story" that links Marines' history with the United States' imperialism. As the country expanded, Marines "evolved into an elite, professional, amphibious corps, defending Americans' interests and projecting power," Moskin writes.[58] Although he asserts that the Marine Corps as we know it did not exist until 11 July 1798, he begins his story in 1775. Moskin's writing focuses on the Continental Navy and Marines while saying little of state and privateer navies. Moskin rates the Continental Marines' performance as "a mixture of heroism and amateurishness."[59] Similarly to the 1962 *Roles and Missions*, Moskin asserts that the Marine Corps that Congress created in 1798 began the gradual evolution into an elite force. Like Metcalf, Moskin argues that Congress did not fund or fill the Corps' ranks appropriately throughout the Quasi-War with France, the Barbary War, or the War of 1812. He uses this point, however, to highlight how small bands of Marines fought with valor anyway, which "showed the new nation that it could fight."[60]

Moskin's narrative is efficient, but his account lacks scholarly rigor. He covers the Marine Corps' early years in 25 pages with only 10 reference notes. The only Marine Corps history he references for this period is M. Almy Aldrich and Collum's 1875 edition of *History of the United States Marine Corps*. He does not reference McClellan, Metcalf, or Heinl until much later in his book. The entirety of part one of the book, which is almost 100 pages, provides only 20 notes. But scholarship was not his goal. Rather, it was to write an exciting and readable story about the Marine Corps. He appears to have succeeded. Former Commandant of the Marine Corps General Wallace M. Greene called it, "The best-written story of the Corps that I have read." Moskin's book impressed General Lewis William Walt with his "thoroughness and accuracy," while even Edwin Simmons wrote that "this book can be begun anywhere, read and enjoyed."[61]

Allan R. Millett's *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* is, to this day, the most effective academic treatment of the Marine Corps' history in a single volume. While researching and writing *Semper Fidelis* in the 1970s, Millett had a foot in both academia and the Marine Corps. He earned a bachelor's degree from DePauw University in 1959 and a doctorate in history from Ohio State in 1966.[62] He joined Ohio State's history department in 1969 and directed 60 doctoral dissertations before retiring in 2005. He also served as an officer in the Marine Corps Reserve until retiring as a colonel in the late 1980s.[63] His education and dual professional career as a scholar/history professor and Marine officer influenced his approach to the subject. *Semper Fidelis* is an organizational history of the Marine Corps that combines what was then the traditional focus on campaigns

[57] J. Moskin Obituary, *New York Times*, 26 March 2019; and J. Robert Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 3d ed. (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1992), 7.
[58] Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 24.
[59] Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 33.
[60] Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 51.
[61] Advertisement for *The Story of the U.S. Marine Corps* by J. Robert Moskin, *Marine Corps Gazette* 63, no. 12 (December 1979): 66.
[62] His doctoral advisor was Professor Harry L. Coles. After graduate school, Millett was an assistant professor at the University of Missouri, Columbia, before returning to Ohio State in 1969.
[63] "Allan Millett," *Ohio State University Monthly*, June 1983, 9.

and combat operations with the burgeoning "new" military history, also called War and Society, which explored the intersections of war and military institutions with politics and society. Millett frames the Corps' history as one of adaptation and survival. The Marine Corps, he contends, evolved from a simple to a complex institution across four distinct, yet overlapping phases that corresponded to their primary function at the time.[64] Phase one was the "soldiers at sea" or ship's guards era that Millett places between 1775 and 1909.

The two chapters Millett devotes to the American Revolution and the early national period, therefore, are about institutional growth, not Marine myth, valor, or heroics. Regarding the 10 November 1775 resolution that called for the enlistment of men accustomed to life and labor at sea, not only were the two battalions never raised, but those that eventually did enlist were all semiskilled urban laborers and shop keepers who had never sailed.[65] His accounts of Marine actions on land and at sea illustrates how the nature of Marine service during the war precluded the development of any cohesion, esprit de corps, and uniform standards of discipline and training. Millett acknowledges that the Corps' fate was tied with the Continental Navy but that was part of the reason the organization achieved so little during the war. The Continental Navy and Marines were never the main effort, he argues—decentralized state and privateer forces were. The dual 1779 disasters at Penobscot Bay, Nova Scotia, and Charleston, South Carolina, effectively knocked the Continental Navy and Marines out of the war.[66]

When the U.S. Marine Corps came to life officially on 11 July 1798, its fate again was linked with the Navy in terms of deployment and development. This early Marine Corps served well on board the nation's new frigates during the Quasi-War and Barbary Wars but also suffered from disciplinary and recruiting problems and clashes with naval officers over jurisdiction and treatment. Millett uses Captain Thomas Truxton's 1801 spat with Commandant William Ward Burrows over the authority to assign Marine officers to ships as an example of this. Throughout this period, Millett argues that shipboard duty remained Marines' primary function. This linking Marine history and heritage to the Navy was timely considering the years Marines had just spent on the ground in Vietnam working closely with the U.S. Army.

The main difference between *Semper Fidelis* and the books that came before is Millett. Uninterested in heritage, propaganda, or celebrating the Corps' achievements, Millett's research is deeper, and his analysis is more critical. Russell F. Weigley, a well-known military historian at the time and author of *The American Way of War*, called Millett "a well-established, capable military historian, [who] has achieved a final blend of the professional historian's objectivity with a Marine insider's perceptive understanding of the values and problems of the Corps."[67] Millett published the second edition of *Semper Fidelis* in 1991, Moskin's third edition of the *U.S. Marine Corps Story* came out the following year, but a new single-volume narrative history of the Marine Corps would not appear until 2008.

Post–Cold War Marine Corps Histories

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and the subsequent two decades of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations in the Middle East coincided with a lull in the production of narrative comprehensive histories of the Marine Corps. The one exception was Merrill L. Bartlett and Jack Sweetman's *Leathernecks: An Illustrated History of the U.S. Marine Corps* (2008), which is one of three fully illustrated coffee-table books that appeared around

[64] Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, xiv–xvi.
[65] Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 7–8.
[66] Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 23.

[67] Russell F. Weigley, review of *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* by Allan R. Millett, *Marine Corps Gazette* 64, no. 11 (November 1980): 106.

the turn of the twenty-first century.[68] *Leathernecks* is a concise narrative history that leverages graphic art and photographs to showcase Marine operational achievements and institutional development from the American Revolution to the Global War on Terrorism. Bartlett and Sweetman, the former a retired Marine officer and Vietnam veteran, the latter a former Army officer turned naval historian, both taught history together at the U.S. Naval Academy in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In terms of narrative detail and analysis the book is like Simmons's work. They contend that Continental Marines, like the Continental Navy, did not achieve any strategic victories, but during the war the nation developed a heritage and tradition of employing Marines with the Navy. They place the official conception of the U.S. Marine Corps on 11 July 1798 which was in line with interpretational trends in Marine Corps histories since the Vietnam War ended.

Bartlett and Sweetman's chapters covering 1798 to 1820 are celebratory and without much critical analysis. During the Barbary Wars, the Marines played a "vital role," and even after the defeat at Bladensburg in 1814, the authors note, "It did not save the national capital, but it saved national honor." During the war of 1812 they had "cemented" their reputation as "first-class fighting men."[69] Although clearly based on both primary and secondary research, the book provides no notes and a limited "Suggestions for Further Reading" section. The book, therefore, is of limited use for researchers or those looking for a more critical approach to Marine Corps history. It is beautifully published, however, and the result is a narrative that is supported by an excellent array of illustrations, particularly the first chapters, which are replete with dynamic Age of Sail paintings.

Going into the third decade of the twenty-first century, some Marine historians still lean on 10 November 1775 as the Corps' point of origin. Major General Jason Q. Bohm's (Ret) *Washington's Marines: The Origins of the Corps and the American Revolution, 1775–1777* claims that 10 November 1775 is the birth of the Continental Marines, which reflects the historical record. He falls back on heritage, however, by claiming that 1775 was when the Corps' history started, making it "older than the nation it serves." Bohm spent more than three decades in the Marine Corps with various combat and command experiences in the 1990s and during the Global War on Terrorism. He wrote *Washington's Marines* to highlight the Continental Marines' contribution to the war effort, particularly during the Trenton and Princeton campaigns, and the Corps' legacy of operating and fighting as members of a Joint force. This is a theme that would undoubtedly interest readers in the wake of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where the Marines spent more than two decades conducting Joint operations.[70]

The entwining of history and heritage is alive and well as of 2025. Despite the evolving nature of how historians have addressed and interpreted the Corps' late eighteenth-century beginnings, the Marine Corps still celebrates 10 November as the official birth date. The Marine Corps History Division, like they did in Parker's *A Concise History of the United States Marine Corps, 1775–1969*, continues to toe the line regarding the official birthday. Just in time for the 250th anniversary, the History Division published *Semper Fidelis: 250 Years of U.S. Marine Corps Honor, Courage, and Commitment*, the latest and most up-to-date one-volume narrative history and the first one since Parker's monograph.

The authors of *Semper Fidelis* assert simply that the Continental Marines came to be in 1775 followed by the U.S. Marine Corps in 1798 without commentary or analysis. They also explain, as Metcalf did in 1939,

[68] The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation's *The Marines*, edited by Edwin H. Simmons and J. Robert Moskin and the Marine Corps Association's *USMC: A Complete History* authored by Col John T. Hoffman, USMCR (Ret) and edited by Beth L. Crumley, were published in 1998 and 2002, respectively. Each book differs in approach, purpose, and organization. *The Marines* is a thematically organized anthology that devotes one chapter, written by Simmons, to the entire span of Marine Corps history. *USMC* is a work of chronology with brief narratives and vignettes interspersed through each chapter. The primary features of each book, however, are their illustrations, which make for two large, beautifully and ornately published works.

[69] Merrill L. Bartlett and Jack Sweetman, *Leathernecks: An Illustrated History of the U.S. Marine Corps* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 39, 53, 55.

[70] Jason Q. Bohm, *Washington's Marines: The Origins of the Corps and the American Revolution, 1775–1777* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2023), 1.

that it was not until Major General Lejeune's *Marine Corps Order No. 47* was issued on 1 November 1921 that Marines chose 10 November 1775.[71] *Semper Fidelis* covers the longest span of time, surpassing any of its predecessors and requiring sacrifices to narrative detail and analysis for breadth. The years between 1775 to 1815, therefore, get a single 32-page chapter that skims the wave tops. The writing team devoted just 10 pages to the American Revolution, just enough space to list Continental Marine activities. However, they omit many details like the controversial Willing expedition on the Mississippi River and withhold comment on the outcome of certain engagements, such as the unsuccessful 1779 Penobscot Bay expedition.[72] Their sections on the Marine Corps' early nineteenth-century operations have more detail on the Barbary Wars and the War of 1812, which includes expeditions in Georgia and Florida, all placed against the backdrop of the ongoing Napoleonic Wars raging on the Atlantic and in Europe.

The History Division's *Semper Fidelis* reveals how the Marine Corps continues to use its past for both historical and heritage purposes. It is a scholarly work produced by professional historians, but it is also a work about the Marine Corps, for the Marine Corps, produced in very close cooperation with the Marine Corps, using Department of the Navy funds. As such, it has both history and heritage functions. On one hand, the book is a narrative meant to educate the public and Marines about the Corps' history. Its other main purpose, however—"to help those just beginning their service to better understand the legacy they are inheriting and bear responsibility for preserving"—is heritage.[73] Some purist academic audiences may not appreciate the book's dual nature, nor its absence of notes, but they are not the target audience.

Conclusion

When the Marine Corps' birthday is, therefore, depends on who one asks and what one reads. Pre-1921 histories suffered from a dearth of citations and the mixing of lore with factual history. During the interwar period, McClellan and Metcalf brought the study of Marine history into the realm of professional scholarship, the former using both heritage and history. Most Marine Corps historians who have published one-volume histories since at least 1939 do not claim 10 November 1775 as the Corps' birthday.

The Marine Corps, however, still does because the date helps tell a story that motivates Marines and inspires the public. Beginning the institution's history in the fall of 1775 ties the Marine Corps' birth broadly with that of the nation it serves, while starting it in the summer of 1798 ties it more narrowly to the birth of the Department of the Navy during the Quasi-War with France, a later and relatively less significant affair. It may be true that the U.S. Marine Corps existed not a moment before 11 July 1798, but many Marines refuse to let the facts get in the way of a good story.

The Marine Corps prides itself on its long history of faithful service during periods of war and peace. Every remarkable story needs a beginning, and that beginning depends on a set of initial conditions. One of those conditions is the kind of story the author or authors set out to tell. For Collum and Aldrich, it was to attract popular attention and rescue the Marine Corps from obscurity. For authors like Moskin, Pierce, Hough, Heinl, and Simmons, who wrote after the Service had won laurels in world wars and cold wars, their task was to capture the Marine Corps' combat history as concisely as possible. Marine historians Millett, Metcalf, and McClellan, however, focused on institutional development and linked the growth of the Service with the expansion of the Navy and America's overseas interests.

The historical record and the evolution of Marine historiography may undermine the 10 November 1775 narrative. Ultimately, however, that does not matter all that much given what the Corps' past is used for. The Marine Corps, as an institution that has faced many threats to its existence, never had the luxury

[71] *Semper Fidelis: 250 Years of U.S. Marine Corps Honor, Courage, and Commitment*, 14.
[72] *Semper Fidelis: 250 Years of U.S. Marine Corps Honor, Courage, and Commitment*, 10.
[73] Shawn Callahan, preface to *Semper Fidelis: 250 Years of U.S. Marine Corps Honor, Courage, and Commitment*, ix.

of using history solely for academic purposes. From the earliest days of Marine Corps historiography, Marine historians used history to educate *and* inspire, to produce scholarship *and* pass along legacies of bravery and faithfulness. They did this to motivate Marines and gain public support. It is difficult, therefore, to completely divorce Marine heritage from history even among the most highly educated and academically inclined Marine historians. Metcalf dedicated his study "to the Marines who have fought their '. . . country's battles on the land as on sea'."[74] Even Millett, probably the most respected scholar in this essay, "most affectionately" dedicated his book to "Marines everywhere past and present."[75] It should perhaps be a maxim among historians that every Marine history is, first and foremost, for Marines.

•1775•

[74] Metcalf, *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, v.
[75] Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, xii.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

Remembering Chosin

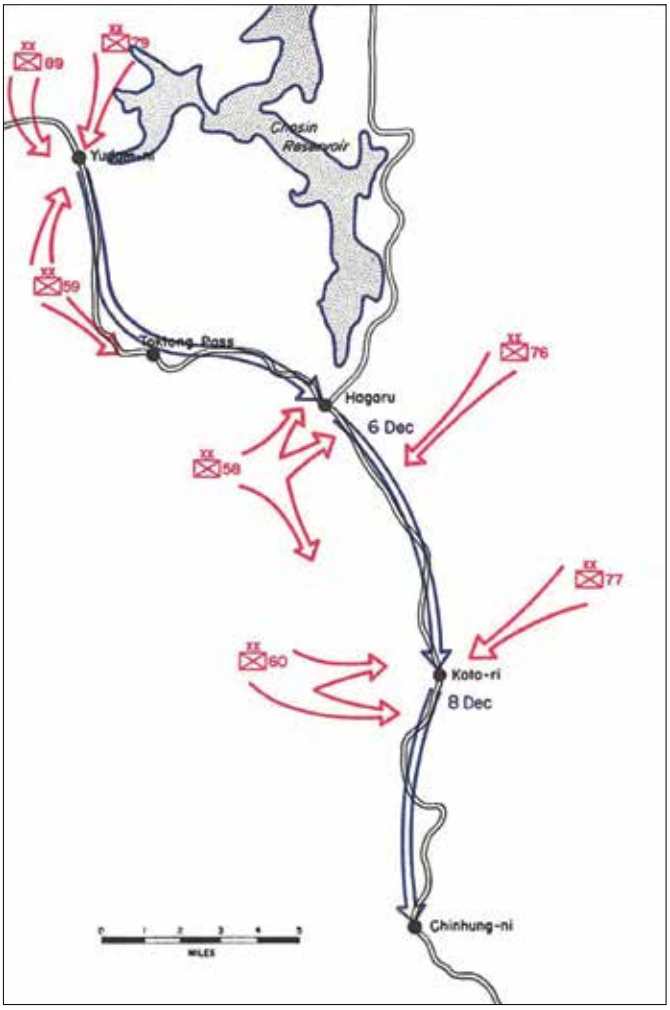
By Staff Sergeant Frank C. Kerr

Introduction

Fought during the Korean War from 27 November to 11 December 1950, the famed Battle of the Chosin Reservoir pitted 12 Chinese divisions (more than 120,000 men) against a vastly outnumbered force of U.S. Marines and Army soldiers, British commandos, and South Korean troops under the United Nations command of General Douglas MacArthur. Surrounded in the mountains of North Korea by an enemy determined to annihilate them, the men of the 1st Marine Division fought for 15 days in arctic-like cold to escape the Communist trap. To mark the 75th anniversary of that epic breakout, former Marine staff sergeant Frank Kerr shares his life-changing experience as a young combat photographer chronicling one of the most storied engagements in U.S. military history.

Prelude to Battle

Winter had come early to the North Korean high country. As our regiment pushed deeper into the



From Lynn Montross and Capt Nicholas A. Canzona, U.S. Operations in Korea, 1950–1953, vol. 3, The Chosin Reservoir Campaign *(Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1957), ii*
1st Marine Division's route of withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir, indicating Chinese Army points of attack, 27 November–11 December 1950.

Frank C. Kerr enlisted with the U.S. Marine Corps in 1948 and went to war in 1950 as a combat photographer with the 1st Marine Division in Korea, where he was awarded the Bronze Star and Navy Commendation Medal for valor and recognized by the commanding general, Oliver P. Smith, as the "ablest military photographer of the Korean theater." His photographs can be found in books, magazines, documentary films, and on the walls of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA. He was cofounder of The Chosin Few, an international organization of veterans who served at the Chosin Reservoir, and led a three-man delegation to North Korea in 1991, seeking cooperation in recovering the bodies of American servicemen missing since the Korean War. He died in Massachusetts at age 76 from the long-term health effects of a Cold War injury suffered during the Chosin campaign. This photographic essay is excerpted with permission from SSgt Kerr's memoir *When Hell Froze: A Marine Combat Photographer at the Chosin Reservoir*, posthumously self-published by his family. It has been lightly edited to conform to MCUP's editorial style preferences.

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Battle-weary men of the 1st Marine Division endured subzero temperatures and relentless combat as they withdrew from the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea, December 1950.

mountains along an unpaved, ice-encrusted road, the temperature hovered near zero and would soon plunge lower. I was a 20-year-old Marine combat photographer when I carried my camera into that frozen hell. Some of what I experienced during the coming days would be captured on film, but how do you capture the horror of watching men die, or fighting in weather so brutally cold that breath freezes and flesh turns black, or seeing an enemy soldier come screaming from the night as you try to reload your rifle before he does? You can't. Not really. To truly understand is to have been there in the late fall of 1950, at a cold and forbidding place known to history as the Chosin Reservoir.

When I quit school to join the Marine Corps in 1948, fighting a war in some godforsaken landscape on the other side of the world was the furthest thought from my mind. But after Communist North Korea invaded the South in June 1950 and the United Nations (UN) voted to send troops to drive them out, I was deployed as a combat photographer with the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, organized as a placeholder while the 1st Marine Division—demobilized after World War II—was hastily reassembled. The brigade's mission in those early days of the war was straightforward; reinforce beleaguered UN troops, including the U.S. Eighth Army, under siege by the North Koreans at the southeastern tip of the peninsula—a

Photo by Sgt James Powers
Sgt Frank C. Kerr holding the Graflex 4x5 Speed Graphic camera used during his wartime service in Korea.

From the collection of Sgt Frank C. Kerr
The first three Marines to capture the Korean War on film. Left to right: combat cameraman Cpl John Flynn, combat photographer Sgt Frank C. Kerr, and combat cameraman Cpl Jake McKay.

225-kilometer-long defensive position known as the Pusan Perimeter.

It was during combat at Pusan that I discovered how surprisingly difficult war is to photograph—not because of the danger involved, but because even the most savage firefight can appear tame in a picture. The key to capturing combat, I would learn, was to freeze in time those moments that declare, without question, that this is war; from infantrymen passing a burning building to taking enemy prisoners at gunpoint.

When the brigade was folded into the reactivated 1st Marine Division and inserted behind the Communist lines at Inchon, I applied those lessons on Wolmi-do, a heavily fortified island in Inchon Harbor that our ground forces captured after a merciless bombardment from the air and sea. With the Marines now sweeping inland from Inchon to retake the South Korean capital of Seoul, and the Eighth Army finally breaking free of the Pusan Perimeter, the decimated and demoralized North Korean Army fled north, chased by UN forces toward the Yalu River on the Manchurian border.

What our commander-in-chief, General Douglas MacArthur, failed to realize (or decided to ignore) was how the Communist Chinese would respond to allied troops knocking at their door. We would soon find out.

Yudam-ni

Tucked behind mountain ridges and rocky foothills on the northwestern fork of the Chosin Reservoir lies the remote North Korean village of Yudam-ni. Like every man who marched with the 1st Marine Division in late November 1950, I arrived there with hopes of seeing the Communists driven from the Korean Peninsula, putting an end to the war, and getting back

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr
Pusan Perimeter, ca. August–September 1950. Marines advance under heavy small-arms and machine-gun fire during action against the North Korean Army.

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr
A North Korean soldier waves a white cloth of surrender as he leads his companions into the custody of U.S. Marines on Wolmi-do Island, gateway to Inchon, 15 September 1950.

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr
Marine infantry stand by while their bazookaman fires a round into an enemy bunker on Wolmi-do.

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr
A leatherneck patrol moves past destroyed buildings during mop-up of Wolmi-do Island. Note the canvas leggings on the lead Marine, which would bleach out and yellow over time. North Korean prisoners of war told interrogators the "yellow legs" were the adversary their army feared most.

to the states before Christmas. Kilometers behind us along the same perilous route we had come, allied troops were digging in and establishing supply depots at Hagaru-ri and Koto-ri. To our north, behind a veil of rugged mountains, lay the Yalu River and communist China, where the retreating North Korean Army had taken refuge.

As I entered Yudam-ni's perimeter with the 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, fires were burning on one of the surrounding hills, the result of a napalm strike earlier that afternoon. Inside the encampment, men of the 7th Marines, who had arrived just ahead of us, huddled for warmth against the biting Manchurian cold. Although most were quiet, alone with their thoughts, there was also an undercurrent of tension in camp, with hard fighting still ahead and a nagging

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

U.S. Marine casualties assemble at Yudam-ni for medical aid and evacuation to hospitals behind the fighting fronts, 28 November 1950.

suspicion that Red China was drawing our forces into a trap.

As night fell on 27 November and the temperature began to plummet, I ducked into an abandoned schoolhouse to escape the cold and get some sleep, only to discover scores of other Marines had beaten me to it. I cleared some space, removed my heavy boots and climbed into a sleeping bag with my clothes on. But just as I was drifting off, a frantic voice bellowed from the schoolhouse door, "Get the hell up, the Chinese are attacking!"

Like every Marine in that room, I was immediately back in my boots and grabbing my weapon. When shit hit the fan (like it was that night at Yudam-ni) I served the Corps as a rifleman first and photographer second, so it was my trusty M1 Garand I took with me into the fight, not my camera. Back in the Pusan Perimeter, our military-issue carbine had a nasty habit of jamming at all the wrong times, and the damn thing flat-out refused to budge in the cold of Chosin, so I had traded it for the bolt-action M1. That rifle only fired one round at a time, but at least it worked in a pinch.

The battle was growing in intensity as I broke from the schoolhouse and headed for cover. Small arms and machine gun fire echoed from the foothills

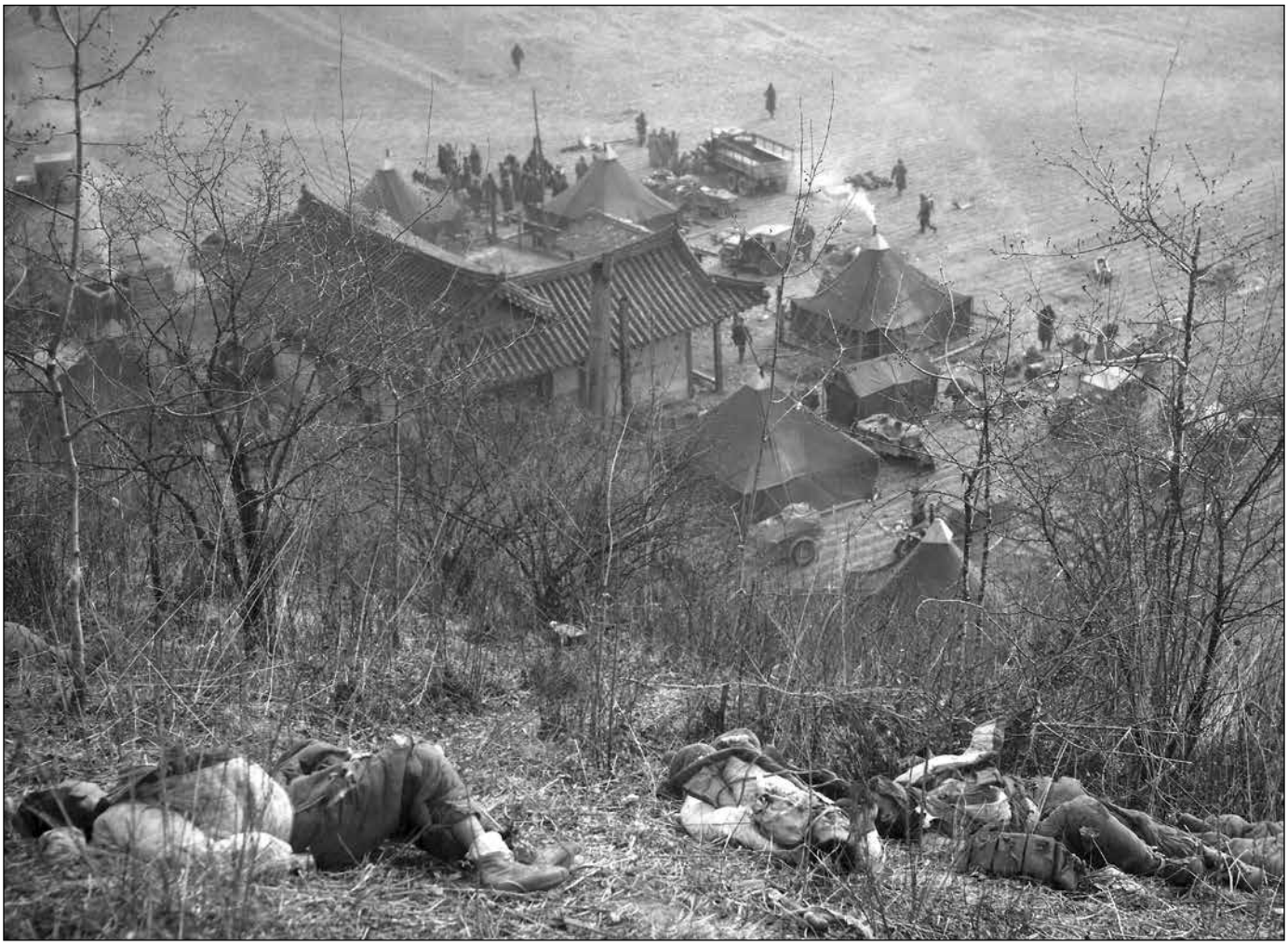


Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Following a night of fierce fighting, Chinese soldiers lay frozen in death on the hills overlooking the Marine camp at Yudam-ni.

and tracer bullets streaked through the dark, making bizarre patterns against the night sky. As the Chinese pressed closer to the camp's perimeter, alarming reports began coming in from our units fighting in the hills. The 2d Battalion radioed that the enemy had overrun their positions and was headed our way. We hastily organized a firing line to meet them, but a Marine infantry company formed in front of us and counterattacked, driving the Communists back into the hills.

Following a pattern that would repeat during the coming days, the Chinese broke off their assault before dawn, leaving behind a scene of heartbreak and desolation. Our first aid stations were jammed with injured men and still they kept coming; some walking, others carried, many on stretchers. As I moved among them with my camera, a wounded Marine asked with a grin, "How 'bout a picture, Sarge?" before another called out, "You should have been with us last night, Sarge." I'm no coward, but I was grateful I hadn't been in the hills with those infantrymen that night. They shared hair-raising stories of ferocious combat; how they had fought until they ran out of bullets, grenades, and men; how they had clubbed the enemy with rifle butts and entrenching tools and finally with their fists, when all else failed.

In one corner of the aid station, I came on a dazed, red-eyed platoon sergeant with a shattered arm and ice-encrusted beard, cursing the Chinese and himself through bitter tears. His platoon had been decimated during the fight, and in his crushing grief the sergeant was blaming himself for the loss of his men. Two wounded survivors of the battle were doing their

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

After fighting off three Chinese divisions, men of the 5th and 7th Marine Regiments burn their surplus gear and prepare to withdraw from Yudam-ni and the Chosin Reservoir on 30 November 1950.

best to comfort him, but the man was inconsolable. At that moment, my every instinct as a photographer screamed take the picture! To this day, I'm certain it would have made one of the great photographs of the Korean War. Instead, I turned away and moved on. I just didn't have the heart to take it.

With daylight fading and our troops bracing for another night attack, every able-bodied man in camp armed himself, regardless of rank or position. Even our wounded were asking for weapons. I joined two Marines in their machine-gun nest on the perimeter, helping fill sandbags and gathering extra grenades and ammunition before settling in for a tense night keeping watch.

As the evening grew longer and the air turned colder, my eyes began playing tricks on me. Shapes moved in the dark where there were none, and trees transformed into enemy soldiers then back into trees again. By the small hours of the morning, my brain was numb and so were my extremities as the temperature kept plunging—by some accounts as much as 35 below zero. I stomped my feet to keep the blood moving and thought of anything warm: hot coffee, the beaches of Southern California, even those miserably hot August days in the Pusan Perimeter. But mind over matter was no defense against such weather. Ask any man who lived through the Chosin campaign and he'll tell you that once the Manchurian cold got inside you, it was there to stay.

The feared assault never happened that night, but with China fully committed to war, the military situation in Korea had been turned on its head. The 1st Marine Division was encircled at Yudam-ni, Hagaru-ri, and Koto-ri by a massive force of more than 100,000 enemy soldiers, and it didn't take a genius to realize that General MacArthur's grand plan to drive the Communists from the Korean Peninsula before Christmas was now just a pipe dream. Instead of celebrating the holidays at home, we would be punching our way out of a Communist trap—marching 23 hard

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Yudam-ni, 1 December 1950. Taking their wounded and their equipment, 5th and 7th Marines begin their long march toward Hagaru-ri.

kilometers along a single-lane dirt road through rugged terrain, arctic-like cold, and enemy lines to reach the nearest supply depot at Hagaru-ri on the southernmost tip of the reservoir.

While the brass was drawing up plans to withdraw from Chosin, the Chinese were making our lives miserable with constant mortar barrages that drove us into overcrowded bunkers, and snipers who roamed the hills picking men off from the high ground. Back at Pusan, a World War II veteran told me to ditch the flashgun on my Graflex camera, concerned its shiny reflector would attract North Korean sharpshooters. I had seen more than a few Marines felled by that hidden enemy since then, but it never felt personal until one of those sneaky bastards put me in his crosshairs at Yudam-ni. I was crossing a frozen rice paddy, minding my own business, when a bullet struck the ground a few feet in front of me. For a brief moment, I thought it might be a stray round, until the next one hit even closer. That was my cue, and I took off running with bullets kicking at my heels. There are a few undeniable truths one learns in war, not the least of which is: it's no fun when someone is trying to kill you.

On 30 November, another bitterly cold day at the reservoir, preparations were well underway for abandoning Yudam-ni, which our fed-up and frostbitten troops were now calling "You-damn-me." As ordered, we burned our excess gear, needing all our strength

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Chosin Reservoir, ca. December 1950. Marines of the 5th and 7th Regiments halt on the main supply route between Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri, while lead units clear the ridges of enemy soldiers.

to carry ammunition and food on the difficult march ahead. In addition to my camera and rifle, I packed two extra bandoliers of ammunition, a couple of hand grenades, my sleeping bag, an extra pair of socks, and a .45-caliber pistol, which I shoved in my pocket for use as a last resort. Then I pulled on dry clothes and burned all the rest. Nothing was to be left for the Chinese.

Strange as this might sound, the bigger concern among most Marines in camp was not the Chinese Army, but how the world and those who served would view our withdrawal from Chosin. It is a point of great pride that U.S. Marines never turn from a fight, and by pulling up stakes and heading south, the men worried they were tarnishing the Corps' long and proud heritage. It hardly mattered that more Chinese would be in front of us than behind, or that the division's commanding officer, General Oliver P. Smith, insisted we were merely "attacking in a different direction." On a rational level, perhaps that made sense, but it sure didn't make the boys feel any better. Sitting around a Coleman burner, eating rations on our last day at Yudam-ni, one grizzled leatherneck snarled, "If I get out of here and anyone says we retreated, I'll let him have it."

Watching the 1st Marine Division begin its epic withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir on 1 December

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Enduring bitter cold and relentless combat, leathernecks of the 7th Marines take a break during their withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir.

1950 still moves me in ways I can't explain. Weeks earlier, I had witnessed the spectacular preinvasion bombardment of Inchon, but what I saw that morning at Yudam-ni struck a different kind of emotional chord. Beneath a thick haze of smoke from burning clothes and equipment, a seemingly endless column of men and military vehicles began the long trek south. Sick and injured Marines were piled onto trucks and jeeps, while alongside them trudged the walking wounded—men with bandaged heads, bullet-shattered arms, and frostbitten hands incapable of working a rifle.

The division's only tank at Yudam-ni rumbled toward the head of the convoy as the 5th Marines' regimental commander, Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. Murray, strode the line shouting directions and offering encouragement. His marching orders were to keep the train moving, but progress was painfully slow. It seemed another enemy roadblock was always around the next bend, and our vehicles were constantly breaking down, their batteries drained and motor oil turned to sludge by subzero temperatures. Sometime in the late afternoon, as a biting Manchurian wind whistled through the mountains, one truck lost control, swerved off the narrow, ice-covered road, and rolled over the bank, crushing and trapping the men inside. As the convoy came to a halt, exhausted

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Exhausted Marines take advantage of a lull in the fighting to catch some much-needed rest. The cold at Chosin was so intense that a man could lie down, fall asleep, and freeze to death.

Marines jammed their rifles, bayonet first, into the frozen earth and leaned against them to rest. Occasionally they fell asleep standing up, which seems impossible until you have witnessed a man utterly worn out by the rigors of combat, constant marching, and bone-numbing cold.

In fits and starts, the column continued its snail's pace toward Hagaru-ri, while our troops cleared enemy roadblocks, trudged through windblown drifts, along rocky chasms, and past hillsides scorched by napalm and littered with the charred bodies of Chinese dead. In our haste to escape the reservoir, we marched through the night, moving quietly in the mountain dark save for the clank of rifles against canteens and the crunch of our boots in snow. Even the wounded stayed silent, gritting their teeth against the pain and trusting their fellow Marines to get them through. When there was important news to share, it traveled by word of mouth, spreading in hushed voices along the column. "Seventy-fives to the front," one man would whisper to the next, "and stay clear of the ditches, they're mined."[1]

As morning broke on 3 December, and with a light snow falling over the North Korean high country, I ran into Corporal Walter Six, a combat cameraman from Sharonville, Ohio, who had trained with me in the Reproduction and Photographic Service Section at Camp Pendleton. Together we walked the column,

[1] "Seventy-fives to the front" refers to the M20 75mm recoilless rifle.

Photo by William R. Keating, USMC, Record Group 127, N-A5458, National Archives and Records Administration
Before withdrawing, men of the 1st Marine Division burn anything that might be of value to Communist forces in the North Korean town of Hagaru.

focusing our cameras on the snaking line of haggard, unshaven men. It was hard to believe these were the same Marines who had marched so confidently into North Korea just a few weeks before. Helmets were pierced and parkas torn by bullets and shrapnel, and the strain of combat was etched deep in every dead-eyed, wind-burned face. I swear, in seven days those boys had aged seven years.

With dusk creeping over the reservoir and with it the threat of another nighttime attack, the column's pace quickened toward Hagaru-ri. When we reached the outskirts of town, and without orders being given, our weary troops set exhaustion aside, closed ranks, and marched square-shouldered and proud through the camp's perimeter. It was a stirring sight to see, and more than a few battle-hardened men had tears in their eyes and lumps in their throats watching those "magnificent bastards" march into Hagaru-ri that night.

Hagaru-ri

Off the road and clear of the Chinese Army—at least for now—Walter Six and I found ourselves in a hut with hot coffee, plenty of rations, and a glowing stove that filled the room with glorious heat. It was there that I reconnected with my good friend and fellow still photographer, Corporal Peter MacDonald, who sat us both near the stove, removed our boots, and rubbed our frostbitten feet until the blood was flowing again. After pouring coffee, Pete shared the latest news from the war. None of it was good.

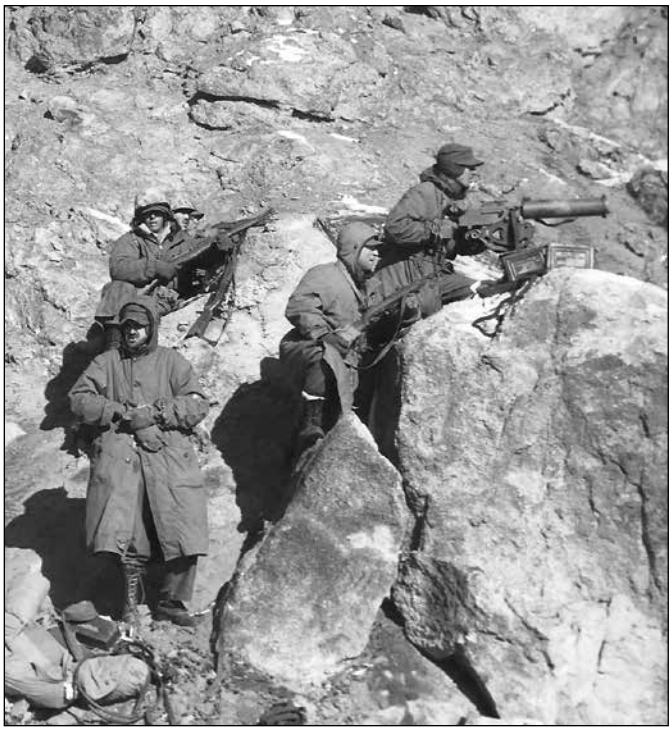


Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr
The infantrymen of 1st Marine Division take to a rugged hillside to engage Chinese troops who have set up a roadblock on the road from Hagaru-ri to Koto-ri, 6 December 1950.

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr
A Marine Corsair (partially obscured by smoke) offers close air support to ground units, dropping napalm on an enemy roadblock that was delaying the allied advance toward Koto-ri.

The Chinese had surrounded Hagaru-ri and cut off Koto-ri, our next supply depot 18 kilometers farther south. And if that wasn't enough of a gut-punch, the U.S. Eighth Army was in full retreat from North Korea, while three Army battalions on the reservoir's east side had been overrun and chopped to pieces. Just a few weeks earlier, those same GIs had relieved our regiment and we had tossed the usual wisecracks at each other, as soldiers and Marines often do. Now, a lot of those boys would never see home again.

It was astounding how quickly the war had turned. With its numerically superior army, China was out to exterminate the 1st Marine Division piecemeal, denying it the supplies and reinforcements necessary to reach its ultimate destination, the port city of Hungnam, where preparations were underway to evacuate our troops by ship. The situation looked bleak, but I still had a job to do.

With fresh film in my camera, I wandered through camp looking for photographs to take and eventually came on a group of Marines warming themselves by a fire. A few had set canteens close to the heat to melt the ice inside, while another was so fatigued, and his feet so numbed by frostbite, that he didn't realize his boot was burning until a sleepy-eyed Marine beside him said, "Hey, pal. Your foot's on fire."

As the boot was snuffed out, a visibly shaken combat engineer joined the circle. The man had spent a hard week helping build a runway at Hagaru-ri while under enemy fire and his nerves were shot. "We'll never make it out of here," he muttered anxiously. "They'll slaughter us." Without lifting his eyes, a bearded Marine growled back, "Shut the hell up." Message delivered; that engineer never spoke another word.

During the predawn hours of 6 December, U.S. Marines, British commandos, and remnants of the Army's 31st and 32d Infantry, 7th Division, began burning extra gear, rations, and clothing in preparation for departure from Hagaru-ri. Elsewhere, teams of men got busy putting the town's huts and buildings to the torch, burning anything that might give shelter to the Chinese once we moved out. Forced from their homes, North Korean civilians poured into the streets to join the allied withdrawal, taking whatever possessions they could carry.

Witnessing such abject human misery was nothing new to those of us who served in the war. On a

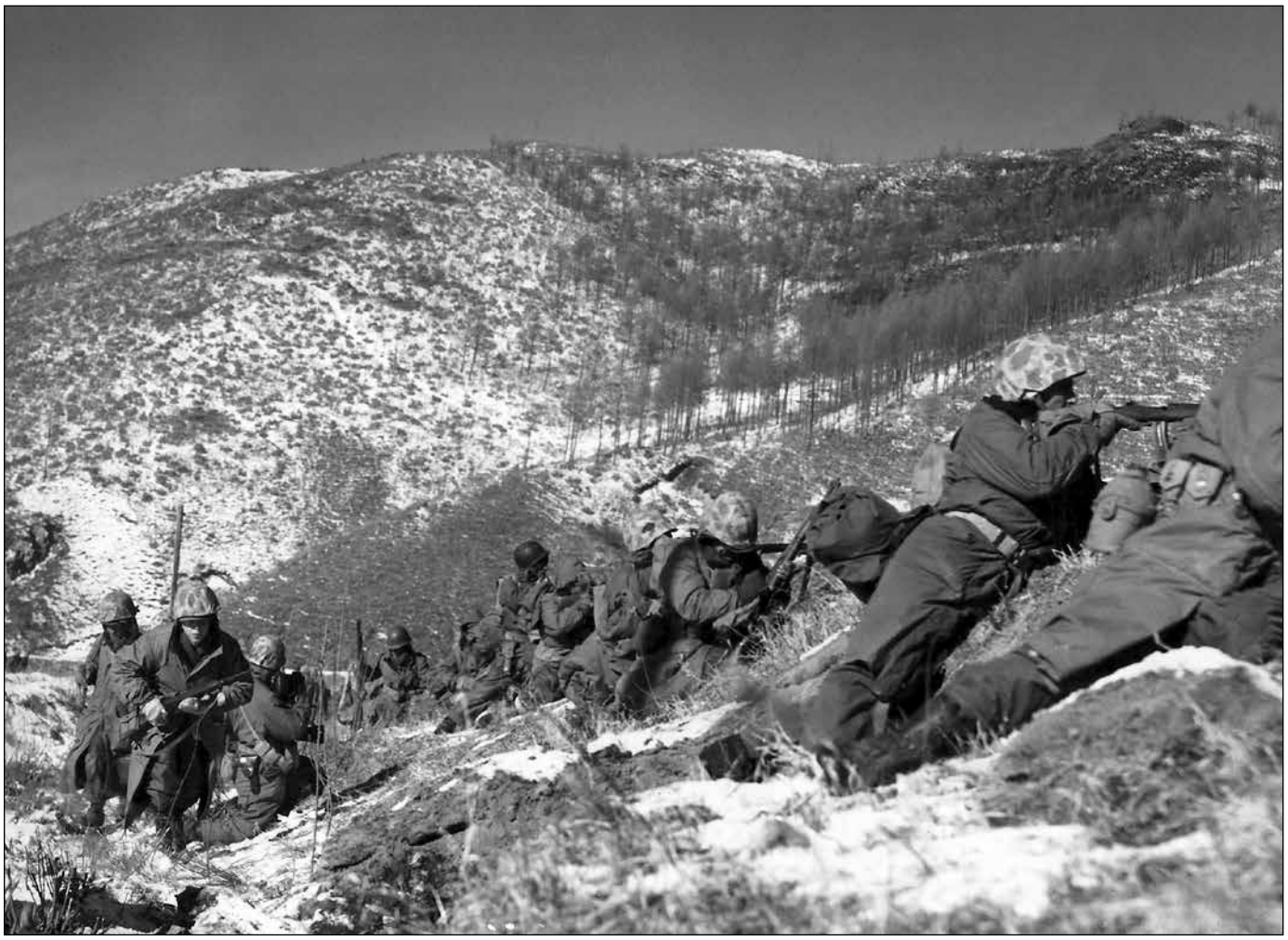


Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

U.S. Marine infantrymen engage enemy forces attempting to stop the allied withdrawal from Hagaru-ri to Koto-ri.

September afternoon during the Second Battle of Naktong, the platoon I was shadowing came on a river of fleeing South Korean refugees; mostly women, children, and babies. Some of those wretched souls were wounded, all of them were traumatized. More heartwrenching still was the sight of civilians hopelessly trapped in the crossfire of battle, not knowing what to do or where to turn, frozen like deer in headlights until they were finally gunned down. It is a sad fact of war that innocents get hurt and innocents die, but that doesn't make it any easier to swallow.

On 6 December, a kilometers-long convoy of some 10,000 allied troops began evacuating Hagaru-ri along a dangerous stretch of road christened "Hell Fire Valley," a name bestowed by British commandos following a deadly ambush there just days before. In short order, our advance units began making enemy contact, and Walter Six and I hurried forward to capture the action. At the head of the column, we found Marine infantry engaged in a furious firefight with Chinese entrenched on a rocky hillside. Flushed from their hiding places, the Communists began clawing their way up the slope to escape, but most never made it. As our troops picked them off one by one, a Marine Corsair came swooping in and blasted the hill with napalm—a particularly vicious weapon of war and a godawful way for men to die.

Having delivered its lethal payload, the Corsair buzzed low over the tactical air controller's jeep where Corporal Six and I were standing, then disappeared over the hills. Within seconds, I heard the distinct chatter of a machine gun and felt the sting of a bullet

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Leathernecks counter fire with fire when attacked by well-entrenched Chinese Communists during the breakout from Chosin.

as it grazed my face. Another round clipped Walter and a third went through the cheek of a Marine standing between us. As I was helping the injured man find cover, another spray of bullets peppered the jeep and the ground around us, prompting that wounded Marine to spit blood and rage toward the hills, "Damn it! If you're going to kill me, kill me, but stop trying to scare me to death!"

As combat cameramen, Corporal Six and I held one decided advantage over the infantry: carte blanche to move whenever and wherever we wanted. And at that moment, what we wanted was to move our butts back to the middle of the column where the action wasn't quite so warm. As it turned out, the middle was exactly where the Chinese decided to strike next. Sticking to their playbook, the assault came at night, announced with a flurry of hand grenades followed by a series of bugles and whistles—signals from their officers directing the attack. Suddenly, the enemy was everywhere, ghostly shapes in quilted winter uniforms, firing rifles and burp guns, hurling grenades, and screaming like men possessed.

Walter and I threw ourselves into a roadside ditch and returned fire, but bullets were coming in so thick and fast you could barely lift your head for fear of getting it blown off. Our outnumbered infantry battled furiously, but each time an enemy wave was beaten back, another would come rushing down

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

On the road to Koto-ri, leathernecks of the 1st Marine Division halt temporarily near the body of one of their own, 6 December 1950.

from the hills. The number of Chinese soldiers was staggering, and it wasn't long before the fighting on that narrow stretch of dirt road was fixed bayonets and hand-to-hand.

Amid this battle frenzy, I became aware of someone setting up a machine gun behind me, but the action was so close and confused I couldn't be certain if he was friend or foe. "Are you a Marine!?" I called in the dark. The man never answered, but his weapon commenced firing in the enemy's direction so I figured he must be one of the good guys. When the Chinese broke off the ground assault, their mortars took over. As shells began raining down, I spotted one of their soldiers rushing my position and rose to take a shot. At that instant came the zip of an incoming mortar round, followed by a deafening blast that showered me in frozen dirt. A dying moan came from the machine gunner behind me. Hit by shrapnel, he was gone before I could reach him.

In time, Walter and I realized we were the only able-bodied Marines left defending that bloody patch of turf. The bodies of dead Americans and Chinese lay piled in front of our ditch like sandbags, catching the bullets meant for us, and with our ammunition running low, we figured it was time to make a dash for the opposite side of the road. My feet were like blocks of ice, and I stumbled rather than dashed across, but we both managed to find cover and hunker down for the next assault.

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

A mass burial of allied dead at Koto-ri, 8 December 1950.

Fortunately for us that assault never came. Instead, the gray dawn revealed a remarkable sight almost too surreal to be believed. Across the blood-soaked snow, where the frozen dead lay twisted into grotesque shapes and the wounded begged for help, survivors from both sides wandered the battlefield in a daze, observing some strange, unspoken truce dictated by pure exhaustion. It was dreamlike and fascinating to watch, and the spell remained unbroken until a Marine bulldozer arrived to clear our destroyed vehicles from the road. As the enemy melted back into the hills, the wounded they left behind eyeballed us warily, expecting to be executed at any moment. But we were so preoccupied with our own casualties that we ignored them, not even bothering to confiscate their weapons until our somber work was done. Before long the wounded were secured, the dead cataloged, and our battered column was rolling again toward Koto-ri —one step closer to the sea.

Koto-ri

My first night in the hamlet of Koto-ri was spent in a tent with Marine correspondents, infantrymen, and a handful of British commandos. I was too tired for conversation and fell into a deep sleep until awakened by sporadic gunfire and a howling snowstorm blowing through the valley. This was bad news for all of us. Until the weather cleared, our troops would be deprived

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Men of the 7th Marines stand guard over a destroyed bridge at Funchilin Pass, which temporarily halted the division's withdrawal from Koto-ri, 9 December 1950.

of critical air support and the ability to evacuate our wounded.

Around midmorning I left the tent and walked the camp's perimeter, taking pictures of burial parties going about their grim business in the storm, unloading the frozen corpses of allied dead from trucks and stacking them for burial. When night returned, I took shelter with other Marines in a North Korean hut whose owner planned to evacuate with UN forces come morning and start a new life in the south. The man was all smiles as he tore planks from his home and burned them to keep us warm.

By sunup the weather had cleared and I went into the hills at Funchilin Pass to photograph an infantry company guarding a bridge the Communists had blown to keep the division trapped at Chosin. The Chinese had done a thorough job of it, leaving our combat engineers the herculean task of constructing a new crossing. I lingered awhile, took a few more pictures, then fell in with a Marine lieutenant who was taking his patrol south to make contact with a relief force coming north.

The patrol had not gone far before encountering a squad of Chinese soldiers who must have had their fill of war because they sent out a lone volunteer to surrender. The Marines were understandably wary, having learned from hard experience it might be an enemy trick, but when the rest of those Chinese saw their buddy was not shot, they left their weapons and emerged with hands in the air and nervous smiles on their faces.

Farther down the road, after brief firefights, still more Communists surrendered and were sent to the rear to join their comrades. For a time, it seemed that

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

Captured Chinese troops wearing sneakers, rags, and American footgear, wait for instructions from their captors after surrendering to Charlie Company, 7th Marines, south of Koto-ri.

Marine patrol would capture the whole damn Chinese Army, until they bumped into an enemy concentration more stubborn than the rest. These soldiers were well emplaced and opened up with machine-gun and small-arms fire from two directions, wounding a couple of our men and sending the rest of us scurrying for cover.

At dusk, the patrol managed to slip away from the ambush and cut across the valley floor to the opposite slope, where we expended our last bit of energy clawing over snow-and-ice-covered rocks while the prisoners carried our wounded. Darkness had settled by the time we reached the windswept hilltop and shook hands with a rescue team sent to find us. They informed the lieutenant we were the first Marines to break out of the reservoir and that the road ahead was clear all the way to the coast. For us, it seemed, the worst of Chosin was finally behind us.

Hungnam

There would be more hard fighting in the days ahead, but I would not be there to photograph it. On 11 December, I was trucked with other UN troops into the port city of Hungnam, passing through an Army perimeter that was like entering another world. Photographers and war correspondents were everywhere, taking pictures and slapping the backs of unshaven, bone-tired men like they were conquering heroes. By nightfall, the rest of the division was safely inside the perimeter and awaiting evacuation, having traveled the final 37 kilometers without food or sleep. Four days later, the last of our troops would be safely aboard ships bound for Pusan in South Korea, along with tens of thousands of North Korean refugees.

The 1st Marine Division's epic breakout from the Chosin Reservoir was over, and so was my assignment covering that extraordinary campaign. At the photo lab, I turned in the last of my exposed film then went looking for a bed. It had been two weeks of hardships and heartache almost impossible to imagine, yet through grit, discipline and esprit de corps, the division had survived to fight another day.

As I write this, the memories of a time and place that profoundly shaped my life are so thick that it is hard to sort them all. Some I hope to forget, others I never will. I will forever remember a quiet, pristine

Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

A mountain gale lashes U.S. Marines with subzero temperatures as they march from Koto-ri on their return to the sea, ca. December 1950.

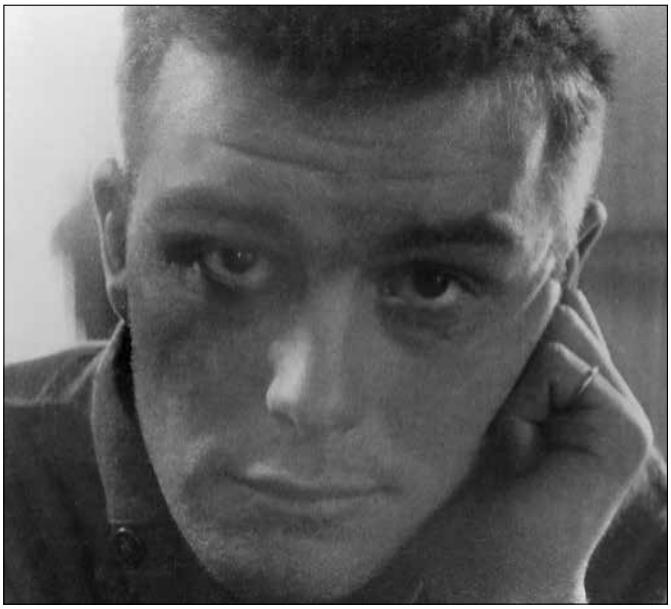


Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr

The strain of war. Sgt Frank Kerr in Korea, ca. 1950.

night in the mountains of North Korea, taking comfort knowing the stars were shining over places on Earth where people were not cold, tired, and hurting. I will remember the worn photograph of a smiling young family and wondering what kind of husband and father that dead Chinese soldier had been to his wife and kids. And I will remember a Marine machine gunner whose face I barely saw and whose name I will never know, but who fought beside me one black night in a roadside ditch, and for the briefest moment before he was killed became my brother. We who were fortunate enough to return from that war will never forget those who died there. And though some may think it impossible, the men who fought at Chosin would tell you this: once upon a time, Hell did indeed freeze over . . . and we were there.

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IN MEMORIAM

Lieutenant General Jefferson D. Howell Jr., USMC

10 AUGUST 1939–1 JULY 2025

By Major Fred H. Allison, USMCR (Ret), PhD

Lieutenant General Jefferson Davis Howell passed away on 1 July 2025. He served 37 years in the Marine Corps, starting his career as an infantry officer then becoming a fighter pilot. General Howell's most defining attribute was his wise, powerful, and inspiring leadership. He rose through the ranks of Marine Aviation from lieutenant colonel in charge of a fighter squadron to the command of Marine Forces Pacific. General Howell was influential in this time of transition as Marines built a force that proved effectively lethal and efficient in the wars of the twenty-first century.

General Howell was born in 1939 in Victoria, Texas, to parents who were career educators. While attending the University of Texas in Austin, a friend who was a Marine reservist dared him to join the Marine Corps. Howell met an officer selection officer on campus and immediately signed up. His hasty decision was not a bad one. He attended the Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) summer session in 1961, where he fell in love with the Marine Corps and finished school as quickly as possible. After graduation, he was commissioned into the Marines as a second lieutenant.

Official U.S. Marine Corps photo, Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division
LtGen Jefferson D. Howell Jr.

Graduating from The Basic School with a military occupational specialty of infantry officer in 1962, he then served with the 7th, 3d, and 5th Marine Regiments. While he enjoyed working and succeeding

Dr. Fred H. Allison served as the Marine Corps History Division oral historian for 19 years. He is a retired Marine Corps Reserve major, an aviator, and a native of Texas. He earned his PhD in 2003 from Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

as an infantry officer, he also had a long-held desire to fly. He was encouraged by helicopter pilots with whom he served during "floats." He applied for flight school, was selected in 1964, and was "winged" in October 1965. He performed well in flight school and earned his choice of aircraft to fly tactically. He selected the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II. At this time also, he married his life's love, Janel Crutchfield. At the time of General Howell's death, they had been married nearly 60 years.

He flew the F-4 and trained in fighter tactics for the next two years with Marine Fighter Attack Squadrons (VMFA) 531 and 323. In 1967, Howell went to war in Vietnam, joining VMFA-542, the Tigers, at Chu Lai, South Vietnam. In this yearlong tour, the Tigers flew principally close air support strikes in support of Marines battling in I Corps, including strikes at the hard-fought, pivotal battle of Khe Sanh. Other missions were flown over the Ho Chi Minh trail, where Marine F-4 crews struck North Vietnamese vehicles moving supplies for the Communist army.

After this combat tour, Howell, to his great delight, was assigned to Kingsville, Texas, first as a flight instructor with the Navy's advanced Training Squadron (VT) 21. A notable event during this tour was the introduction of the Douglas TA-4J Skyhawks as a new training aircraft, with VT-21 being the first squadron to fly it. He was among the squadron's first pilots to pick up factory-fresh Skyhawks and fly them to Texas. Howell was then selected for the advanced degree program and earned a master's degree in economics at the University of Texas in 1971.

He was next assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT) 101 as an instructor in the Corps' F-4 replacement air group. There, instructors trained recently designated naval aviators (pilots) and naval flight officers (radar intercept officers) in the tactical operation of the F-4 Phantom. Howell, now a major, revealed a real talent for running squadron aircraft maintenance. Along with other Marines, he initiated an integrated weapons review of its F-4s that positively and significantly increased the number of "up" aircraft. This earned him a reputation for being an outstanding aircraft maintenance officer.

In 1972, General Howell returned to Vietnam, where the North Vietnamese Communists had launched a powerful conventional-style invasion of South Vietnam. Howell had just joined VMFA-115, the Silver Eagles. The Silver Eagles were first based at Da Nang then redeployed to a jungle base in Thailand, the austerity of which caused the Marines there to christen it "the Rose Garden." That name derived from a period recruiting poster featuring a drill instructor screaming at a recruit and emblazoned with the phrase "We Never Promised You a Rose Garden" (a play on the title of a popular country and western song by Lynn Anderson). Marine squadrons specialized in close air support and employed that tactic with good effect in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Indeed, the ability of Marine fighter crews to hit enemy troops who were in close combat with friendly troops caused forward air controllers to specifically request Marines for these missions. Marines also flew interdiction missions and combat air patrol missions in support of the war-ending Operation Linebacker. General Howell flew 12 barrier combat air patrols in support of Linebacker.

He flew 334 combat missions during his two tours in Southeast Asia and was awarded a Bronze Star for a particularly effective close air support strike. Additionally, he received the Air Medal, two individual and 25 Strike Flight Awards, a Navy Commendation with Combat V, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

General Howell returned to the United States in 1973 and commenced a three-year assignment as an economics instructor at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. This was followed by a year at Marine Corps Command and Staff College in Quantico, Virginia.

In 1977, Howell and his family were back in Hawaii (his favorite duty station outside of Texas) where he served, initially, as the executive officer of VMFA-212, the Lancers. In 1978, he became the Lancers' commander. This was probably General Howell's favorite tour of duty of his career. He led the Lancers through personnel issues and aircraft maintenance issues that produced a superior fighter squadron. Gen-

Photo courtesy of Fred H. Allison

LtCol Jefferson B. Howell in 1980 at the change of command ceremony for Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 212.

eral Howell's leadership inspired squadron Marines toward a professional and Marine-like devotion toward mission accomplishment. During his command (1978–80), the Lancers deployed twice to the Western Pacific for six months as part of the Unit Deployment Program (UDP) where they trained toward war readiness. Indeed, war loomed in the form of the Iranian Revolution (1979) and hostage crisis, which lent an urgency to their training. During the UDP, the Lancers, at times, had detachments in as many as four far-flung locations. This reflected the high quality of Lancer officers and enlisted Marines and the confidence he had in them.

During the second UDP, Howell and his radar intercept officer, Gary McCutcheon, cheated catastrophe, if not death, when in a training dogfight with Japanese Mitsubishi F-1 fighters, a mid-air collision occurred. The tip of their F-4's nose and the stabilator of the opponent's F-1 tail came in contact and small pieces were knocked out of both. Fortunately, it was so mild that neither Howell and McCutcheon, nor the Japanese pilot knew it. Only when the fiberglass nose of the F-4 began to unravel, producing a glob of fiberglass threads blowing in the wind, was it obvious that something bad had occurred. Both aircraft landed safely. The international incident blew over when the Japanese assumed responsibility for the collision.

After completing of his tour as commanding officer of the Lancers, General Howell was awarded the prestigious John Paul Jones Award for Inspirational Leadership by the Navy League. Under his leadership, the Lancers had developed a strong sense of unity and family. Veterans of this period continue to regularly reunite to renew friendships and celebrate the memorable times as a Lancer (even though the squadron has been decommissioned for years).

Howell commanded other units as he rose in rank: Marine Aircraft Group 24 (1984–86) and the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing (1992–94). His final command before retirement was Marine Forces Pacific (1995–98), headquartered at Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii, the Corps' largest operational command.

Howell attended the Air War College (1980–81), served in important staff positions including three tours at Headquarters Marine Corps, Department of Aviation, as a staff member in the Plans and Programs Office (APP), and the Navy's OP-50M (1981–84), then as head of APP (1987–89) and OP-50M and as assistant chief of staff for the Department of Aviation (1991–92). He was the chief of staff for the 1st Marine Brigade (1986–87); assistant chief of staff and senior naval officer at NATO Headquarters, Northern Command; and chief of staff- operations, senior naval officer, Kolsas, Oslo, Norway.

In retirement, General Howell joined Science Applications International Corporation as senior vice president from 1999 to 2002, and he served as the director of NASA's Johnson Space Center from 2002 to 2006. It was a time of great success, with Howell leading the center as it built the International Space Station and launched four shuttle flights. It was also a time of tragedy with the loss of the *Columbia* shuttle in 2003. Howell led the center through this extremely challenging time, and NASA awarded him its Outstanding Leadership Award in 2003. In 2006, he retired. Not ready to rest easily at his Austin home, he then taught leadership, a subject for which he was well-qualified, as an adjunct professor at the University of Texas.

General Howell flew a total of 4,292 flight hours during his career. More importantly he earned the respect, love, and admiration of Marines with whom he served. Howell had a distinct influence on fellow Marines. His Christian faith was displayed as he sought the best interest of those with whom he served as they strived toward mission success. He loved and respected his Marines; they knew it, and they in turn loved him.

His wife, Janel, passed away on 10 November 2025. Howell is survived by his son, Jefferson Davis Howell III and his wife Beth; his daughter, Melissa Jane Howell Strubbe and her husband Steve; and his grandchildren, Colton, Teegan, and Beckett Howell, and Wolfgang and Johann Strubbe.

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IN MEMORIAM

Major John M. "Jack" Elliott, USMC

9 APRIL 1923–22 MARCH 2025

By Timothy Heck

Retired major John McClelland Elliott, better known as Jack, passed away on 22 March 2025 surrounded by friends and loved ones. A towering figure in Marine Corps aviation history, Elliott's work and efforts are on display to every visitor to the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC), located in Quantico, Virginia, where many of the large artifacts on display were originally acquired by Elliott while he was part of the Smithsonian Institution for the unbuilt National Armed Forces Museum. In addition to the exhibits, Elliott was the face of the Marine Corps to countless visitors as he volunteered thousands of hours as a docent, serving at the NMMC until he was almost 100 years old.

Born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, Elliott immigrated to the United States as a young child with his parents and two older brothers. His father, Robert, was a veteran of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in World War I. The local airport, which later became Marine Corps Air Station Santa Barbara, California, was a frequent stop on Elliott's youthful bike rides, and there he saw the growth of naval aviation in the 1930s, which made a lasting impression on him. With America's entrance into World War II, Elliott

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott

Maj John M. "Jack" Elliott, as a technical sergeant in 1945 or 1946.

Timothy Heck is a supervisory historian with Naval History and Heritage Command and a member of the *Marine Corps History* editorial board. An artillery officer by training, he is a reservist serving as a plans officer at Headquarters Marine Corps.

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott

Maj Jack Elliot (left) with MSgt Darrel D. Porter (right) at Outpost One, Suyon Beach, after driving from Daegu. This outpost is likely on Suyeong-gu beach near Busan.

worked for the Army under the National Youth Administration, conducting maintenance on more than 300 M1903 Springfield rifles.

He then enlisted in the Marine Corps in November 1942, completing boot camp with Platoon 1020 at Marine Recruit Depot San Diego, California, in early 1943.[1] Assigned to Aviation Engineering Squadron (AES) 22 at North Island as an aviation ordnance striker, he worked on a variety of aircraft, including installing field fixes on Vought F4U-1 Corsairs destined for combat in the Pacific.

After several months with AES-22, Elliott reported to the Naval Air Technical Training Center, Memphis, Tennessee, for training as an aviation ordnanceman. He later described this experience as "a bit difficult as we had more practical experience than some of the instructors who had been in the class ahead of us."[2] In his class book, he wrote that he "gets a kick out of making airplane models, and would like to retire from the Marine Corps."[3] He graduated near the top of his class, later recounting that he and another Marine were constantly vying for top markings but

[1] *Marine Log: AOM*, Section G of Class G-5, author's personal collection.

[2] Maj John M. Elliott, "My Resume," Elliott Collection, Archives, Marine Corps History Division (MCHD), Quantico, VA.

[3] *Marine Log: AOM*, Section G of Class G-5.

he was bested in the end. When looking at his class graduation book in February 2025, Elliott remarked with his traditional grin, "I can remember stories . . . they may not be true."[4]

From Memphis, Elliott reported to Marine Scout Bombing Squadron (VMSB) 341, nicknamed the Torrid Turtles, then stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. VMSB-341 was flying the Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bomber. In September 1943, he was part of the squadron's detachment that prepared the Dauntlesses for overseas deployment, embarking on USS *Nassau* (CVE 16) and arriving in American Samoa on 6 October. The squadron's aircrews followed in trace and the squadron was based at Upolu, British Samoa, where Elliott disassembled the bomb fuses, which frequently became fouled with the dust from the red volcanic rock that comprised the runway. The job was a dangerous one and, as he later quipped, "There weren't too many visitors to that hut."[5]

In March 1944, Elliott moved to Green Island where his primary job was fusing bombs and later air-to-ground rockets. According to Elliott, VMSB-341 was one of the first Marine Corps squadrons to use rockets in combat and the only SBD (Scout Bomber Douglas) squadron to do so. Later that year VMSB-341, after a lengthy and uncomfortable sea movement for the ground echelon, relocated to the Philippines and joined Marine Air Groups, Dagupan (MAGSDAGUPAN). For the next few months, VMSB-341 flew missions in support of Army units liberating the Philippines.[6] While bombs and rockets were his primary work, Elliott also assisted in maintenance for the squadron's weapons, including the aircraft's machine guns. He later commented that there were so many machine guns to service that he learned to set the headspace and timing by feel rather than using the issued gauges, often working at night on the unlit airstrip. Later, as a student at The Basic School, Elliott did just that in class. He was questioned by his instructor. Never one to back down from a question of competence or knowledge, Elliott then proceeded to set every machine gun on the range and fired them without incident.

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott
Maj Jack Elliott's promotion to captain in the late 1950s.

During his tour in the Pacific, Elliott frequently drove an ordnance tractor loaded with fused bombs out to the waiting aircraft. At one airfield, he was crossing an active taxiway with the right of way when a Vought F4U Corsair pilot attempted to cross in front of him. Elliott was able to wave the pilot off but caught several obscene gestures in the process, much to his delight. In later years, he referred to the Corsair's pilot as "that young pilot," despite the fact that while driving the tractor Elliott was barely 20 years old.

Returning to the United States in the spring of 1945, Elliott was once again assigned to AES-22, now at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, this time in the cleaning section of the ordnance shop working on machine guns. War's end saw him reassigned as an ordnance inspector, evaluating material being turned in by Marine Corps air stations in southern California.

[4] John M. Elliott, interview with LtCol Timothy Heck and Annette Amerman, 2 February 2025, transcript (Oral History Section, MCHD, Quantico, VA).
[5] Elliott, "My Resume."
[6] For more on MAGSDAGUPAN, see Charles W. Boggs Jr., *Marine Aviation in the Philippines* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1951).

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott
Maj Jack Elliott, after Korea, with Helen Giles on the day she finally accepted his proposal of marriage.

He was discharged in November 1946 as a technical sergeant and reenlisted a month later.

Initially assigned to VMF-312 at El Toro, Elliott attended Marine Corps Aviation Technical Schools at Marine Corps Base Quantico in 1947 and 1948 with other senior enlisted aviation specialists and officers. After graduation, he returned to El Toro and F4U Corsair squadrons.

The Korean War saw Elliott deployed and reassigned to VMF-214, where he became noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) of the advance echelon. After completing a tour with VMF-214, he moved to the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing as NCOIC of the wing's ordnance section. It being a small Marine

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott
Jack and Helen in 2010.

Corps, Elliott's boss in Korea was Major Charles B. "Charlie" Guy, who had been VMSB-341's ordnance officer during World War II. Ever downplaying their success, Elliott described their efforts in Korea as the blind leading the blind but that "we managed to learn the ropes and turned in a creditable job."[7]

The return from Korea brought two major changes in his life. First, Elliott was engaged to and married Helen Giles, a schoolteacher he met while home on leave in 1946. It took him several proposals of marriage before she finally agreed. The two were happily married until her passing in 2021. Second, at the insistence of Major Guy, Elliott applied for and was accepted to a commissioning program. Initially reluctant, he later remarked, "It was Charlie that forced me to apply for a commission. It was either that, or explain to Lieutenant General Christian F. Schilt, a boyhood hero, why I didn't want to be a Marine Corps officer." General Schilt was, at the time, the commanding general of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and had received the Medal of Honor for actions in Nicaragua in 1928.

Elliott was one of a handful of senior NCOs attending The Basic School with the 22d Special Basic

[7] Elliott, "My Resume."

Class. While there, he, like the others, wore his master sergeant insignia. Unlike the others, he was granted a period of absence to support the testing of an experimental aircraft fire control system he had developed. Being excused from instruction at The Basic School was certainly uncommon but had its advantage, as only Elliott and one other lieutenant were assigned to aviation on graduation in April 1953.

The remainder of the 1950s and early 1960s saw Elliott filling aviation ordnance officer billets at the squadron, group, and wing-level, in Japan, California, Florida, and Virginia. His career at this point also involved a series of firsts and lasts, including serving in the first squadron to receive the North American FJ-2 Fury and in the last aviation engineering squadron (AES-12) aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico. Helen accompanied Elliott around the world, teaching in a variety of schools in local communities.

In June 1965, Elliott deployed to Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam, as the ordnance officer for Marine Airbase Squadron 12, part of MAG 12. The air base was part of expanded American efforts in South Vietnam and a central hub for Marine Corps aviation. At Chu Lai, Elliott oversaw "ordnance support for four tactical jet squadrons flying around-the-clock combat operations."[8] Additionally, Chu Lai featured a short airfield for tactical support (SATS) system, which was a metal landing mat placed over the ground with a catapult and arresting system, in effect mimicking a carrier's landing deck. The SATS was installed in the months prior to Elliott's arrival and it was a system he was familiar with from previous tours.[9] From June 1965 until April 1966, Elliott continued the expansion of facilities at Chu Lai, including personally planning and initiating construction of the ammunition dump, and organizing an ordnance trailer repair facility to keep the valuable assets working. For his time in Vietnam, Elliott was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V. He returned to the United States in April 1966 and retired from active duty that June, accomplishing the goal he laid out as a young private in 1943.

His retirement, however, did not end his affinity for and affiliation with Marine Corps aviation. Within a month of retiring, Elliott joined the staff of the Smithsonian Institution. He was hired to help create a Smithsonian military museum. As a member of the National Armed Forces Museum Advisory Board, he located, acquired, and preserved major end items from around the world, ranging from the last U.S. Navy Martin P5M Marlin flying boat to the M65 Atomic Cannon. While the museum never came to fruition, his work and efforts resulted in multiple historic aircraft and armored vehicles being preserved and restored for future generations. With the phasing out of the planned museum, he transitioned to contract management for the Smithsonian.

After 18 years, Elliott left the Smithsonian and became an assistant naval aviation historian in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air Warfare) in the mid-1980s (later part of the Naval Historical Center, now the Naval History and Heritage Command). He remarked, "As I had been working with this office in my spare time for a number of years, and I could now be paid for doing what I enjoyed, there was no time lost in accepting the position."[10] Here, his previous hobby of researching, collecting, and preserving early naval aviation stories and artifacts, often from the pilots themselves, came into its own. Elliott contributed to a variety of projects, including the 75th anniversary of naval aviation commemorative series.[11] Even after his retirement, he continued to work as a volunteer at the Naval Historical Center.

It was while with the Navy that he participated in a commemoration of the May 1919 Transatlantic Crossing of Seaplane Division One. When the flying boat he was in hit a buoy in the United Kingdom, El-

[8] Navy Commendation Medal citation, John M. Elliott personal files.
[9] For more on the installation of the development of Chu Lai and the installation of the SATS, see Jack Shulimson and Charles M. Johnson, *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Landing and the Buildup, 1965* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1978), especially pages 39–42. Visitors to the NMMC can see a SATS in the Vietnam gallery.

[10] Elliott, "My Resume."
[11] See, in particular, MajGen John P. Condon, *U.S. Marine Corps Aviation*, ed. John M. Elliott (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1986).

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott

Maj Jack Elliott, at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in 2023, with Annette Amerman, one of the many historians he taught, mentored, and inspired. Hanging behind him is his beloved Douglas SBD Dauntless.

liott and the others just walked ashore without going through formal immigration proceedings. Only on his attempted return did he realize the mistake when he was briefly detained as his paperwork was sorted. That was not the only mishap on the trip. On his return to northern Virginia, he was greeted by Helen at the door, who asked him where he had been. It seems, in his excitement to participate, he forgot to mention the trip to his wife.

In 1990, he retired again, ending 47 years of federal service. Helen also retired from the Prince William County school system, and they set out to enjoy retirement to the fullest, engaging in worldwide travel, often to aviation museums and sites, square dancing, and a series of very-loved cats. As with his retirement from the Marine Corps in 1966, Elliott's retirement from federal civilian service did not end his love of naval and Marine Corps aviation history. In 1985, the Marine Corps Air Ground Museum opened at Brown Field at Marine Corps Base Quantico. Elliott volunteered as a docent there until its closure nearly two decades later. When the NMMC opened in 2006, Elliott was one of its first volunteers. Many of the aircraft on display there, including the SBD Dauntless, were preserved as a direct result of his previous efforts at the Smithsonian. During the next 14 years, Elliott volunteered tens of thousands of hours of his time. He quipped that he was one of the oldest living artifacts at the museum. When he turned 100, the museum hosted his birthday party. He was surrounded by Ma-

Courtesy of the estate of John M. "Jack" Elliott

In a pose familiar to all who worked with him, Maj Jack Elliott is seen here reviewing the manuscript for the revised edition of *Marine Aviation at Quantico, 1918–1941*, at age 101.

rines, friends, historians, and admirers who came to see him honored in what was effectively his second home. At 101, he was the oldest Marine present for the Corps' birthday celebration and thoroughly enjoyed his piece of cake.

Elliott's scholarly legacy includes dozens of published and unpublished books, monographs, and articles, mostly focused on pre–World War II Marine Corps aviation. Among his titles are *Marine Aviation at Quantico, 1918–1941* (privately published), three volumes of *The Official Monogram U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Aircraft Color Guide*, and a history of VMSB-341. His files are currently being accessioned by Marine Corps History Division's Archives Branch.

Although he lacked a college degree, he had many years of practical experience and counted many historical figures in Marine aviation as dear friends. He was a historian of the highest caliber who took the time to train, mentor, and develop those entering what he rightfully considered his world of naval aviation. Elliott's legacy as an aviation historian remains present in the successor organization, the Naval Heritage and History Command (NHHC), where books bearing his personal bookplate stamp still turn up on the desks of NHHC's historians, librarians, and archivists. His last book, *Marine Aviation at Quantico, 1918–1941*, was completed after his 100th birthday.[12] Even at 101, he continued to contemplate additional books that

[12] A commercial version is available for purchase. Elliott, ever seeking to refine and expand his work, privately published a revised edition at the age of 101.

needed to be written and encouraged other historians in their research and writing, this author included.

His awards included the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V, four Good Conduct Medals, and numerous campaign awards, including the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with three bronze stars, the Korean Service Medal with four bronze stars, Philippine Liberation Medal, and the Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze stars. Numerous civilian and writing awards also followed. Jack and Helen Elliott had no children, but their legacies, especially hers in the generations of students she taught, live on. On the event of his passing, the NMMC remarked, "We bid farewell to a devoted Marine and a living connection to our history. Elliott dedicated his life to service, first in uniform and later as a passionate steward of Marine Corps history." He was noted for bringing "history to life with a depth and authenticity that only a Marine of his era could provide. He will be missed, but his legacy will live forever."[13] In his last hours, he summed his life up, quietly whispering, "I had a happy life." Jack was buried in the Quantico National Cemetery next to Helen on 2 May 2025.

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[13] National Museum of the Marine Corps, "Farewell to a Legend: Major John "Jack" Elliott, USMC (Ret.). It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of Jack Elliott, a devoted Marine, historian, and longtime docent at the National Museum of the Marine Corps," Facebook, 25 March 2025.

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Thomas Zakharis

A Revolutionary Army and Its Officers: Washington's Revolutionary War Generals. By Stephen R. Taaffe. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. Pp. 360. $39.95, cloth; $32.95, e-book.)

The Road to Yorktown: The French Campaigns in the American Revolution, 1780–1783. By Louis-François-Bertrand du Pont d'Aubevoye, comte de Lauberdière, edited and annotated by Norman Desmarais. (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2021. Pp. 312. $11.99, cloth; $12.99, e-book.)

No Turning Point: The Saratoga Campaign in Perspective. By Theodore Corbett. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012. Pp. 438. $24.95, paperback; $21.95, e-book.)

Even the greatest generals need good lieutenants. In *Washington's Revolutionary War Generals*, Professor Stephen R. Taaffe investigates the biographies and actions of the senior officers who helped make George Washington's Revolutionary War Continental Army what it was.

One reason that the American War of Independence is an anomaly in U.S. military history was the selection of the Continental generals by the Congress, rather than by the Congress-appointed commander. During that war, Congress, which also served in the role of government, appointed 73 major and brigadier generals to serve in its various departments and field armies. The author's disappointed conclusion is that their performance was, for the most part, mediocre. The main reason for this mediocrity was the British military's avoidance of assigning colonists to high-level commands, preventing colonists from gaining command-level experience. Second, and perhaps more important, the colonists regarded a permanent army as a threat to civilian rule and liberty.

Consequently, prior to 1775, the different American colonies were content to depend on their local militias for defence. As another consequence, when war broke out, Congress looked to the colonial upper class for its Continental Army generals rather than militia leaders. But as observed by John Adams: "A colonel is killed in New Hampshire. The next colonel in the American army to replace to him is in Georgia. Must we send the colonel from Georgia to command the regiment in New Hampshire?" (p. 45). Seniority, Adams concluded, had its place, but was hardly foolproof.

Another pool of officers consisted of the Europeans who crossed the Atlantic to offer their services. Many of them were adventurers, of whose quality and reliability most of Congress had little or no inkling.

So who, ultimately, were Washington's best generals? The author mentions the aggressive Benedict Arnold, long before his act of betrayal; John Glover, whose boatmen saved the Continental Army from destruction at Long Island and conveyed it across the Delaware River to victory at Trenton; the western-Virginia rifleman Daniel Morgan; John Stark, Vermont-born victor at Bennington; Anthony Wayne, who backed his "mad" attacks with careful planning beforehand; Nathanael Greene, loser of battles and winner of campaigns; French volunteer Gilbert de Motier, marquis de Lafayette; talented artillerist Henry Knox; and master instructor Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Steuben. One common factor among these individuals was that they were all relatively young and prepared to think outside of the box.

Thomas Zakharis was born in Thessaloniki, Greece, and is an enthusiast of history, particularly of the Napoleonic era. He is the author of many book reviews on this and other subjects in several journals. For his writings about the Napoleonic era, he was decorated by the president of the International Napoleonic Society.

Washington's Revolutionary War Generals takes an approach that is likely to satisfy scholars of the period.

In recent years, historians have been turning their attention to the diaries of soldiers and officers as valuable research resources, including Professor Norman Desmarais. In *The Road to Yorktown*, he turns to the translated diary of Louis-François-Bertrand du Pont d'Aubevoye, comte de Lauberdière, aide-de-camp to and nephew of Lieutenant General Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau.

It is ironic that by 1780, the royalist and aristocratic French were helping the American Patriots, many of whom had fought against them during the previous war in North America. In any case, it is now generally agreed that without the help of their army and fleet, the American cause would eventually have been lost, notwithstanding the command capabilities of General Washington.

The young comte watched the Americans from the eye of a French aristocrat and wrote down many intriguing personal observations. However, in his capacity as aide-de-camp, the comte de Lauberdière recorded more pertinent details, including of the Anglo-French campaigns, such as the exact places where the French expeditionary force landed in America. In both technical and human respects, this book should add an invaluable firsthand account to any student of the American Revolutionary War.

In *No Turning Point: The Saratoga Campaign in Perspective*, historian Theodore Corbett contradicts one of the established notions regarding the American Revolutionary War. To cite just one example, Sir Edward S. Creasy's monumental book *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World from Marathon to Waterloo* rated the Saratoga Campaign of 1777 as 13th. Corbett sets out to prove that conventional wisdom wrong.

First, the author sets that stage with the region's development as a colony. After the Seven Years' War, waves of European immigrants (from Germany, England, Scotland, and Ireland), plus colonists from New Hampshire and Massachusetts, began to settle in the sparsely populated Hudson Valley and in the territory around Albany, New York. Those settlers from different countries and different religious doctrines usually became farmers, eventually adding lumber mills and sawmills that were usually operated by Black slaves. While the local fur trade remained in the hands of old Anglo-Dutch families, the new colonists added a fresh process of capitalist development. When the German mercenary soldiers of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne's army marched into the territory, they were impressed with the prosperous appearance of the farms and the houses they saw, inducing many to desert or, after being taken prisoner, choosing to settle in the area themselves.

According to Corbett, Burgoyne's greatest failure came when he organized the Loyalists into corps for military action. Another mistake was the use of Native Americans, such as the Mohawk, whose often indiscriminate raiding terrified both Loyalist and Patriot alike.

Although he does not regard the Battle of Saratoga as a pivotal American victory, the author does regard General Sir Guy Carleton's naval victory on Lake Champlain in October 1776 as the most strategic victory of the Revolutionary War, since it gave the British control of the invasion route from Canada to Saratoga, for the rest of the conflict. From 1778 to 1782, the British would launch continual forays into New York and Vermont.

Going beyond his appraisal of the Saratoga campaign, Corbett also describes a virtual civil war going on within the American struggle for independence from Britain. For example, he notes the Vermont assembly, which succeeded in gaining a separate free trade agreement with Canada from the British Government in May 1790, while ignoring the other states. Scholars interested in examining a different perspective on the birth pangs of the modern American nation and the difficult process by which its states became united will find *No Turning Point* intriguing food for thought.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Major Blake I. Campbell, USAF, PhD

Life and Death at Abbey Gate: The Fall of Afghanistan and the Operation to Save our Allies. By Mikael Cook, with Robert Conlin. (Havertown, PA: Casemate, 2023. Pp. 192. $24.95, paperback; $14.95, e-book.)

Mikael Cook and Robert Conlin's book *Life and Death at Abbey Gate* recounts the tragic events during the final weeks of the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan in August 2021 at the conclusion of America's longest war. Afghanistan war veteran Cook, who served as a former U.S. Army staff sergeant, begins the book with a brief biographical summary of his life, his time in the Army, and his reasons for serving. After this introduction, Cook explains the events of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, including the military's withdrawal from Bagram Air Base in the Parwan Province and the Taliban's early victories in northern Afghanistan and its swift advance on Kabul.

Cook provides a firsthand account of his efforts, along with a network of other Afghanistan war veterans, politicians, and U.S. State Department employees, to evacuate the thousands of Afghan special immigrant visa (SIV) allies, now threatened by the Taliban's resurgence and advance on Kabul. Cook's efforts, along with this network of Afghanistan ally advocates, became known as #DigitalDunkirk, named after the famous 1940 evacuation of Allied soldiers from France during World War II, in which hundreds of civilian boats assisted the British Royal Navy. Cook reveals the behind-the-scenes heroism of hundreds to influence operations during the Afghanistan evacuation operations. These grassroots efforts, independent of military or other official channels, are credited with rescuing thousands of Afghan allies and their families from the clutches of the Taliban in this unprecedented humanitarian mission.

Although this conglomerative and amalgamative effort to rescue our Afghan allies was significantly successful, Cook provides a raw and unfiltered assessment of the final days of the withdrawal. Cook's scathing criticism focuses on the failures of the U.S. military withdrawal, in particular events at Bagram Airfield, and the ensuing abandonment of our Afghan allies. Specifically, Cook explains how one of the prisoners released from the Bagram prison when the Taliban took over would become the Islamic State–Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) terrorist to attack the Abbey Gate at Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) just weeks later. Cook warns that these failures have yielded humanitarian and geopolitical consequences for the United States on the global stage.

Beyond the situation of the Afghan allies, Cook provides an intimate examination of the final moments of the U.S. servicemembers, particularly the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, who were stationed at HKIA to assist in the Operation Allies Refuge evacuation efforts. The immediate events leading up to and during the Abbey Gate attack are collected from firsthand accounts and recorded in vivid detail. Cook avoids the all-too-common practice of sterilizing war and records the unadulterated horror of the attack on Abbey Gate. He provides vivid detail of the carnage of the attack, which resulted in 13 Americans killed in action and 45 wounded. The reader is invited into the hearts and minds of some of the survivors. These accounts, combined with the stories and experiences of

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his fellow veterans, and the stories of two of his Afghan SIV friends, offer an extensive examination of America's darkest hours in the Afghanistan War and failures to our Afghan allies.

Cook repeatedly criticizes the State Department and U.S. government for what he perceives to be bureaucratic, administrative, and logistical failures in the SIV program. He argues that nearly two years later, the fate of these Afghan allies remains dire under the Taliban's resurgence to power. Understandably, Cook's frustration with these events as an Afghan veteran is palpable, feelings with which many American veterans will undoubtedly concur. However, there are points in the book when Cook's animus may have come through a bit too candidly.

However, although this book highlights many failures of the Afghanistan evacuation, Cook demonstrates the humanity and resilience of the U.S. and Afghan forces during this intense and chaotic evacuation operation. Cook contends that his motivation for writing this book is to correct misinformation on the Abbey Gate attack and the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and to honor the 13 servicemembers who lost their lives during the attack. Cook's concern for the Afghan SIVs who were unable to successfully evacuate during the operation is driven by his love and loyalty to the Afghan allies, most clearly notated in his relationship with his Afghan friends Abdul and Mohammed, whom he successfully rescued.

The reader will experience the raw realities of this conflict and its complicated withdrawal, as experienced by many of the men and women who served there. Woven into this book are touching personal stories, heroic actions, gripping recollections, and tragic recounting of the Afghanistan withdrawal and the fate of America's Afghan allies. The events detailed in this book will surely be studied for many years to come as America's longest war came to an emotional end.

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Adam Givens, PhD

Hueys Over Khe Sanh: Missions with VMO-6. By Peter Greene. (Havertown, PA: Casemate, 2024. Pp. 288. $34.95, cloth; $20.95, e-book.)

The memoir *Hueys Over Khe Sanh* offers a compelling view of Marine Corps helicopter operations during the Vietnam War. In 28 short chapters organized chronologically, author Peter Greene details his tour of duty from December 1966 to January 1968 as a Bell UH-1E Iroquois crew chief in Marine Observation Squadron 6 (VMO-6). Greene's war was unique to most Marines on the ground, as he experienced it from the rear of an armed "Huey." His reminiscences, however, are representative of what many Marine helicopter crewmen in the handful of gunship squadrons experienced during Vietnam. They were dedicated to their aircraft, conducting early morning preflight inspections, flying exhausting daytime sorties as gunners, and fulfilling maintenance and repair duties sometimes late into the night. Rotary-wing operations relied on the professionalism of crew chiefs such as Greene. With a half century of perspective, this memoir looks back on the 13-month tour that was "probably the most valuable experience of" his life (p. 180).

Greene and a friend enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1966 to avoid being drafted into the Army. Opting for Marine Aviation, Greene attended jet engine school and was slated to begin helicopter school directly after. He never completed any training on rotary-wing aircraft, however. His jet engine class suddenly received graduation certificates and orders to Southeast Asia to become helicopter crew chiefs. The first Greene had seen or even heard of Huey gunships was in South Vietnam. Such was the rapid development of helicopter warfare and the manpower demands on the Marine Corps. For lance corporals like Greene, sudden and total immersion through on-the-job training was their introduction to helicopter operations. It was up to the replacements to learn as much as possible by observing the veterans they would replace. Each became a provisional crew chief before gaining a few months experience, eventually leading to certification and official crew chief status.

The author joined a unit with a pioneering heritage. VMO-6 was the inaugural Marine squadron reorganized to include helicopters in combat missions in the 1940s. It was the first such unit in the Korean War to conduct combat operations. Greene was present for some of the unit's most notable moments in Vietnam. As part of Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 36, the squadron was headquartered at the newly built Ky Ha Air Facility at Chu Lai on the coast in I Corps. With much of the base surrounded by water, it was mostly safe from enemy action compared to Marble Mountain and Phu Bai, the other two Marine helicopter bases in South Vietnam at the time. On paper, the squadron was intended to have between 21 and 27 aircraft, but attrition, maintenance, and spare parts availability meant only half that number were typically available.

Greene's reminiscences thoroughly describe his squadron's various roles in the southern portion of I Corps. Normal missions for VMO-6 while at Ky Ha involved escorting transport helicopters for resupply, flying protection for medevacs, and supporting the insertion and extractions of recon teams. Armed UH-1s were the most ideal gun platforms in the Marine helicopter inventory at the time, equipped with rocket pods and multiple M-60 machine guns. They could generally fill close air support roles, observation and assault support duties, enemy ground fire suppression, and command and control. Crew chiefs were typically

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former mechanics who had been promoted. Flying in the back of the Huey and manning an M-60 along with an enlisted gunner, crew chiefs were assigned an aircraft and were responsible for keeping it in good working order through inspections and maintenance.

The author provides excellent insights into common menial duties, but also unique experiences. Beginning in March 1967, he worked with U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Special Operations Group (USMACV-SOG). Throughout the spring and summer, VMO-6 helicopters flew to northern I Corps close to the borders of North Vietnam and Laos to escort and protect special forces teams during their information-gathering missions. The work was so secretive, Crews were ordered to conceal their personal and unit identities. Details of their duties remained classified until 2005. Each mission was different, but Greene's aircraft and a handful of others from his squadron typically operated out of Khe Sanh escorting South Vietnamese transports carrying SOG teams. After returning to Ky Ha after two or three days up north, they resumed normal duties. It was during these SOG missions that Greene witnessed the famous Hill Fights around Khe Sanh in spring 1967.

The tone of the book shifts when the author begins recounting the squadron's relocation to I Corps. In October 1967, VMO-6 temporarily moved north to Phu Bai in response to increasing enemy activity in the border area. A month later it relocated more permanently to a new helicopter base just west of the town of Quang Tri. From here, Greene and his fellow Huey crews routinely flew in the Khe Sanh vicinity, where enemy activity was increasing. The author notes how life changed for VMO-6. Quang Tri's proximity to enemy strongholds meant a more dangerous area of operations. Their base was also now vulnerable to mortar, rocket, and artillery fire. The squadron's move also meant facing better-equipped Viet Cong along with North Vietnamese Army regulars. The area's rugged terrain affected the character of operations, with thick jungle and heavy foliage obscuring friend and foe alike. For the reconnaissance teams that the squadron supported, the omnipresence of the enemy in the Khe Sanh area, along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and in the highlands typically resulted in emergency extractions under fire.

By the end of his tour, Greene recognized that the war was escalating. Daily attacks against Khe Sanh, Leatherneck Square, Camp Carroll, and Camp Evans kept everyone on edge. Constant operations and battle damage took a toll on the squadron's helicopters and crews and its ability to provide aviation support. By late 1967, only 3 or 4 aircraft were available per day compared to the normal 10 at Ky Ha. The author points out how this affected the acclimation of new crew members, as their opportunities to gain experience were limited. Greene experienced the steady and extraordinary enemy buildup for the Tet Offensive but returned overseas just before the Communists launched their coordinated attacks; he heard the first reports of the massive offensive only a day and a half after returning to the United States. Within three months, Greene separated from the Marine Corps.

Common themes run throughout the book, illustrated in anecdotes and occasionally vivid reminiscences. The command culture in VMO-6 was relaxed. In the air and on the ground, enlisted were often treated as equals to officer pilots, as part of the same team. Readers will learn of the effects that high-tempo operations had on crews. While officers could walk away from the aircraft following missions, the work for Greene and his fellow crew chiefs continued. Their work greatly relied on ground crews, who labored through the night to complete repairs and scheduled maintenance. The professionalism of these combined efforts is an often-overlooked component of helicopter operations. Interactions between crew chiefs was also an important aspect of daily rituals that strengthened camaraderie. Coming together in the evenings was a crucial way to reconnect with friends. It was during one such occurrence that Greene and others heard firsthand about the extraordinary heroism of Captain Stephen W. Pless and his crew on 19 August 1967 from fellow VMO-6 crew chief Corporal John G. Phelps, actions for which Pless received the Medal of Honor and the rest of the crew Navy Crosses.

Greene's book is more than a collection of his own memories. In a sense, it is a way to connect fur-

ther with his squadron mates, some of whom may have flown on the missions he describes. In Vietnam, crews were often separated from one another, either carrying out maintenance tasks, waiting near their aircraft on standby, or out flying missions. After the war, the author recognized unit reunions were a valuable way to reconnect with old friends and make deeper connections. This book continues those efforts.

Many readers will find much to celebrate in *Hueys Over Khe Sanh*. The inclusion of a generous number of color photographs taken by the author during the war is exceptional. In addition to fellow veterans, this is a valuable work for students of the Vietnam War, helicopter warfare, and Marine Aviation. The book is useful for the insights it provides about Marine helicopter enlisted crewmen, as so few memoirs from those personnel exist. Additionally, it augments a modest list of book-length works on the VMO squadrons in Vietnam. In the main, this book is an acknowledgement of the special quality of VMO-6 and its men, one that rightly reflects the author's sense of pride for having been a member.

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Lieutenant Colonel Jason Kemp, USMCR

What It Means to Be a Man: How to Become a Better Person. By MajGen Bill Mullen. (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2023. Pp. 208. Open access, paperback, e-book, audiobook.)

Major General Bill Mullen's recent work, *What It Means to Be a Man: How to Become a Better Person*, is an adept exploration of self-reflection, integrity, and personal growth. The potentially provocative title is an attention-getter. Spoiler alert: the book is not intended just for men but explicitly aims to draw in both men and women to explore the topic of character development and self-improvement. Drawing from his extensive military career and personal experiences, Mullen crafts a narrative that challenges conventional definitions of manhood while steering readers toward a more reflective, meaningful, and purposeful existence. This book serves as a universal call to all individuals seeking to cultivate integrity and become better versions of themselves. The narrative and background stories resonate particularly with Marines or those who have served in the military or a similar institution.

Mullen begins by dissecting the traditional ideals of masculinity, which have often been narrowly defined by traits such as strength, stoicism, and dominance. He argues that these outdated notions can be detrimental not only to men but also to society at large. By reflecting on his own journey and the lessons learned along the way, he encourages readers to reevaluate their understanding of what it means to be a man. Mullen asserts that true manhood is not about power or aggression but rather about fostering compassion, respect, and responsibility.

The book is structured around key themes that form the foundation of Mullen's philosophy on masculinity. Each chapter offers insights into the qualities that contribute to being a better person, such as humility, empathy, and courage. Through a combination of personal anecdotes, historical references, and practical advice, Mullen crafts a narrative that is both engaging and enlightening.

The book's organization lends itself to convenient reading periods of 10–15 minutes. The short and focused chapters make for easy night-time reading or while on board an airplane; one could can consume a chapter in one sitting. Two features of the book added depth and value. First, each chapter concluded with a handful of self-reflection questions that, for this reviewer, made for substantial dinner conversation with friends and family. Second, the bibliography and recommended readings are valuable resources. To quote retired Secretary of Defense James Mattis, "If you haven't read hundreds of books, you are functionally illiterate, and you will be incompetent because your personal experiences alone aren't broad enough to sustain you."[1] Major General Mullen provides a healthy, targeted reading list that led me to expand my personal reading list and offered motivation to pursue learning the specific contributions of great thinkers and practitioners of the topics within the book.

One of the most compelling aspects of Mullen's work is his emphasis on integrity as a cornerstone of being a good person. He argues that integrity is not just about honesty but also about aligning one's actions with their values. In a world that often rewards manipulation and deceit, Mullen challenges readers to stand firm in their principles, even when it is inconvenient or difficult.

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[1] Jim Mattis and Bing West, *Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead* (New York: Random House, 2019), 237.

Mullen provides numerous examples from his military career, illustrating how integrity played a crucial role in leadership and decision-making. He recounts stories of challenging situations in which he had to choose between personal gain and doing what was right. These anecdotes serve as powerful reminders of the importance of ethical behavior and the long-term consequences of one's choices.

In addition to discussing integrity, Mullen highlights the significance of reading good books as a pivotal means of personal development, serving as a gateway to new ideas, perspectives, and self-reflection. Mullen underscores the importance of literature in shaping one's understanding of masculinity and integrity. Through reading, individuals can explore the complexities of human behavior and morality, gaining insights that foster empathy and critical thinking.

Books challenge our preconceptions and encourage us to question societal norms, much like Mullen does in his exploration of manhood. Engaging with diverse narratives allows readers to learn from others' experiences, cultivating a sense of connection and shared humanity. Moreover, reading promotes emotional intelligence—an essential quality Mullen advocates for in redefining masculinity and for people who intend to contribute meaningfully in the community and our nation. By immersing ourselves in literature, we equip ourselves with the tools to grow, evolve, and ultimately become better versions of ourselves, making reading an indispensable element of personal development. Each of the 14 chapters includes a list of recommended books to further explore that chapter's topic.

I enjoyed Mullen's book, as it provoked me to consider questions of integrity in my own life experience, challenged me to deliberately reflect on my own thoughts, words and behaviors, and also expanded my personal reading list.

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Anthony Marcum, PhD

The Tormented Alliance: American Servicemen and the Occupation of China, 1941–1949. By Zach Fredman. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022. Pp. 334. $99.00, cloth; $34.95, paperback; and $22.99, e-book.)

Security cooperation requires more than politicians, diplomats, and military officers. The everyday interactions of soldiers and citizens—such as communicating, working, training, eating, socializing, etc.—can influence whether cooperative efforts succeed in fulfilling military objectives. In *The Tormented Alliance*, Zach Fredman explores how everyday interactions between American soldiers and Chinese citizens undermined the two countries' efforts at security cooperation during and after World War II.

In 1941, the Nationalist Party of the Republic of China (ROC) and the United States began to coordinate their efforts against the encroaching Japanese forces. Each side brought differing expectations to the relationship, and Fredman explores how those expectations strained efforts at cooperation between the two states. The Nationalist government, led by Chiang Kai-shek, wanted to end imperialism and begin building a new nation. The Americans wanted a partner to help defeat the Japanese and to forge their new world order after the war. Unfortunately, American efforts to realize these goals were undermined by the harsh reality of American racism. American soldiers from the lowest rank to the highest commanders brought their bigotry to the ROC and to every interaction with Chinese citizens. Rather than approach Chinese officials and civilians as peers, Americans viewed them with disgust and contempt. The Nationalist government risked domestic illegitimacy were it to tolerate American racism and ultimately lost everything in 1949.

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Fredman explores these arguments by examining the American military interaction with Chinese soldiers and civilians. Through the interaction of the two countries' militaries, Chiang and his government sought to reform their nation and American perceptions in three ways. First, the hostel project offered to house American soldiers, at Chinese expense, was a contribution to the war effort. More broadly, the ROC wanted to demonstrate the achievements of Chinese culture and show how the country could follow American standards. Second, the interpreter program sought to improve communications between the two militaries, while also demonstrating how the Chinese could learn "American values, technology, and habits" (p. 49). Third, the Chinese military sought to benefit from "military advising, technical training, and army building" (p. 81) to create a modern fighting force. That army would be essential in defeating Japan and eventually the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Unfortunately, none of these efforts succeeded.

Americans brought their racism to these everyday interactions, undermining the alliance and Chinese efforts at nation building. First, the hostel program disturbed American senses by pushing them into "seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching" the poverty of China (p. 12). Instead of perceiving the Chinese as equals, the hostel program unintentionally reinforced American racist beliefs that the Chinese people were somehow less than themselves. Second, the interpreter program failed on all fronts. The American soldiers continually mistreated the interpreters by insulting, excluding, and/or segregating them. At the same time, the Chinese government failed to keep up its commitments to interpreters from the beginning of the program to its end in 1945. Instead of instilling American values, the program convinced interpreters to turn

against both the Nationalists and the United States. Third, the military training programs had American soldiers—from the lowest to highest rank—treating the Chinese military as junior partners. American soldiers were distrustful of Chinese capabilities and intentions. Instead of creating a modern military for the government, U.S. Army general Joseph Stilwell openly challenged Chiang, seeking American authorization to put himself in full command of the Chinese Army. The next Army commander, General Albert C. Wedemeyer, improved relations with ranking Chinese officials. However, he offered few solutions to the rising tensions and increased violence between the soldiers of the two armies.

Interactions between the American military and Chinese civilians did not fare better. Fredman explains how American soldiers often acted with reckless abandon toward civilians, and the Chinese government suffered multiple violations of its sovereignty as a result. For their part, American servicemembers engaged in several dangerous behaviors, including reckless driving and indiscriminate shooting that proved injurious or deadly to civilians. Chinese law enforcement had few remedies for crimes committed by Americans. During the entirety of the war and for some time thereafter, the American military retained complete jurisdiction over all criminal matters involving their soldiers. Chiang and the Nationalist government formally approved of this arrangement, allowing for extraterritoriality and its humiliating effects to continue. At the same time, theft of goods and supplies had become a problem for the American military. As theft increased, American soldiers conducted their own searches for missing property and even authorized the shooting of unarmed civilians without due process. ROC officials did little to stop these actions. Instead, Chinese authorities imitated the Americans with similarly harsh measures against Chinese civilians. The inability of the Nationalist government to protect its civilians or to reign in American soldiers further diminished its legitimacy in the eyes of the population.

Fredman also explores the two narratives about "Jeep Girls" that emerged among the Chinese population. The first narrative held that Chinese women who had relations with American soldiers betrayed their country while losing their womanhood. The second narrative held that American soldiers—using their Jeeps—were kidnapping Chinese women and sexually assaulting them. The two narratives turned women's bodies into "territory to be recovered, living embodiments of national sovereignty" for the Chinese population (p. 136). American commanders understood that the emerging narratives were detrimental to their continued relations with China. Rather than discipline American soldiers, however, American commanders pressured Chiang into propagating a counternarrative. Fredman explains that these efforts to repress the narratives cost Chiang significant political support within his regime and among the population.

The final chapter explores the American military intervention after Japan's surrender in 1945. The introduction of the intervention force did not change the unequal relations between the two allies, and racism continued to influence everyday interactions. Vehicle accidents, shootings, and the absence of justice combined with the fear of rape and Jeep girl narratives gave the Chinese people reason to loathe their ally. The CCP took advantage of these sentiments, offering a narrative of continuing imperialism. The rapid emergence of the Anti-Brutality Movement provided the Communists an opportunity to unify the population against the Americans. The exit of the last Marines in May 1949 precipitated the eventual defeat of the Nationalists later that year.

As part of these discussions on how everyday interactions influenced cooperation, Fredman attempted to categorize and theorize about the overarching relationship that existed between China and the United States. He focused on China becoming part of the emerging American empire. Within this imperial context, the book contends that the relationship started as an alliance between the two states and developed into an occupation of Chinese territory by American soldiers. Fredman's discussion on empire (pp. 10–16) does offer some interesting insights, such as tutelage between the dominant power and the dominated power. Several chapters demonstrated how American

soldiers certainly attempted such efforts, but their racialized expectations negatively influenced relations with Chinese soldiers and civilians. While the historical accounts and transcultural approach offer valuable insights for understanding the influence of everyday interactions on security cooperation, the descriptions of the relationship between the two states created some issues.

One such problem throughout the book is the confusing designation of the Sino-American relationship as an *alliance*, an *occupation*, or some combination of both within an American *empire*. Fredman never defines these terms or explains how they apply to China and the United States during this time. These ideas—alliances, occupations, empires—are different types of hierarchy that denote various levels of investment, influence, and control between states.[1] One can debate these differences and the ways to distinguish between the relationships. Regardless of how a scholar defines these hierarchies, distinguishing between alliances, occupations, and empires provides foundations for understanding them, recognizing when changes occur, and exploring the consequences that emerge.

Without explaining the differences, Fredman claims that "a military alliance with the United States means a military occupation by the United States" (p. 1). That statement generates some problems for the arguments and evidence in the book, such as identifying critical moments when the relationship changed and the consequences that emerged from those changes. For example, Fredman suggests that the Chinese government lacking police power to enforce their criminal jurisdiction over American troops "turns them into an occupying force" (p. 206). The claim of a change in the relationship raises two issues. First, the change occurring in May 1943 means that the alliance initiated in May 1941 was not an occupation. This shift suggests that alliances and occupations are distinct relationships, yet that distinction is not explained. Second, Fredman claims simultaneously that this arrangement constitutes the "alliance's transformation into a military occupation" (p. 133) and that this agreement in May 1943 was "effectively continuing the extraterritorial system supposedly abolished" (p. 129). These two passages suggest some confusion on how to interpret the events of May 1943, as China continued to have little to no authority over American soldiers before and after this event.

The absence of policing power over U.S. soldiers suggests that American officials did not perceive China as an equal. The book demonstrates how that lack of equality resulted from and subsequently reinforced American prejudices against China. Unfortunately, the absence of any definitions makes it difficult to understand whether a change in the relationship did occur between the governments. This confusion complicated any claims that the events of May 1943 altered everyday interactions between American soldiers and Chinese citizens. While Fredman demonstrates how bottom-up relations influenced security cooperation, his arguments on hierarchy between the two governments needed further development.

In *Tormented Alliance*, Fredman theorizes that expectations are influential for understanding security cooperation. However, the discussion of the two sides' expectations does seem incomplete at points. For example, the book misses an opportunity to talk about Chinese expectations regarding an "alliance" with the United States. Fredman asserts that the alliance between the two countries constituted a tacit arrangement initiated in April 1941 with the lend-lease program (p. 27). An unexplored question in the book is whether the Chinese government (or even the Americans) expected just a tacit arrangement for security cooperation. The evidence suggests that such an arrangement was not their preferred outcome. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Chiang proposed to the American ambassador in China the need for an alliance among states who opposed Japan and the other Axis powers.[2] That idea eventually became a multilateral alliance. Yet, the Chinese government also wanted a bilateral alliance with the United States, and the

[1] For example, see David A. Lake, "Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations," *International Organization* 50, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 1–33, on the discussion of different types of hierarchies.

[2] Xiaohua Ma, "The Sino-American Alliance during World War II and the Lifting of the Chinese Exclusion Acts," *American Studies International* 38, no. 2 (2000): 41, https://doi.org/10.1163/2468-1733_shafr_sim130100177.

two countries never signed a such treaty.[3] As Xiaoyuan Liu notes, the Chinese expressed disappointment that the Americans did not seek a bilateral security arrangement with them.[4] That disappointment likely influenced how Chiang and others viewed the emerging security cooperation with their supposed ally. The absence of a bilateral alliance and resulting Chinese dissatisfaction would better support Fredman's arguments than asserting that the two countries accepted a tacit arrangement.

Everyday interactions between citizens and soldiers play an influential role in whether governments can achieve grand security objectives. The book is an invaluable read for understanding how everyday interactions can serve to undermine high-level diplomacy. Policymakers and academics alike can find lessons to learn here on how soldiers engage with host populations.

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[3] For datasets on alliances for the absence of a formal arrangement, see Douglas M. Gibler, *International Military Alliances from 1648 to 2008* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2009); and Brett Leeds, Jeffrey Ritter, Sara Mitchell, and Andrew Long, "Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions, 1815–1944," *International Interactions* 28, no. 3 (2002): 237–60, https://doi.org/10.1080/03050620213653.

[4] Xiaoyuan Liu, *A Partnership for Disorder: China, the United States, and Their Policies for the Postwar Disposition of the Japanese Empire, 1941–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 17, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511529214.

Commander Daniel J. McGrath, USN

Duty to Serve, Duty to Conscience: The Story of Two Conscientious Objector Combat Medics during the Vietnam War. By James C. Kearney and William H. Clamurro. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2023. Pp. 237. $34.95, hardcover.)

'Twas the Summer of '69, but not all of America's youth were on their way to Woodstock. For James Kearney, William Clamurro, and tens of thousands of their generation, it was a time of existential crisis. The clash between the Free World and the Communist World was playing out in a fearsome proxy war between North and South Vietnam. When American ships came under attack in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1965, America's direct participation continually escalated. This led to the draft, with tens of thousands of young Americans thrust into combat regardless of their personal feelings toward the war. This book is a timely examination of the dynamics of the Vietnam War Era, now that 50 years have come and gone since America's withdrawal, and the corporate knowledge of that generation begins to follow World War I, World War II, and the Korean War into the mists of time.

The title of the book combines two ideas that do not often appear together: conscientious objector and combat. Those who are familiar with the history of conscientious objectors in our country may associate them with Quakers, Amish, Mennonites, and others from historically pacifist traditions. As these groups are opposed to all bearing of arms, our nation has provided alternative service for them during times of war, often in hospitals, schools, or other public institutions. When facing a draft board, it was best if you had been born into one of these traditions rather than join during wartime and be suspected of doing so for the sake of expediency. By 1965 however, a Supreme Court decision in *United States vs. Seeger* had loosened the requirements for conscientious objectors to include nonreligious beliefs. Kearney and Clamurro did not come from the pacifist religious traditions, nor were they opposed to bearing arms in general. Rather, as college graduates, and being a little older than most draftees, they had developed their own political beliefs on the war as well as the ability to articulate those beliefs. The U.S. Army designated this type of political conscientious objector 1-A-O and they entered the battle space as unarmed medics. As the book shows, this created some tricky situations the military did not always know how to handle, for example, when unarmed 1-A-Os actually stood guard duty.

The writing of this book unfolded in several stages over many decades. First there were military documents gathered from Kearney's draft board and other proceedings. Then there were many letters written over the time Kearney and Clamurro spent in Vietnam, revisited years later. There were poems written by Clamurro along the way. There were live tape recordings made by Kearney of some of his actual experiences, including in combat. Kearney further honed his thoughts by teaching a course at the University of Texas and by telling his stories in an award-winning podcast series for the Texas State History Museum in Austin. Finally, the book came to fruition, the refining of all these components in a cohesive volume. The two authors each provide something unique and special to the book. Kearney serves the function of historian, recounting dates, events, stories, and locations. Clamurro serves a poetic function, not only through his actual poems but also in his recounting of what it felt like to be there.

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Kearney and Clamurro document many angles of the American experience in Vietnam, usually from behind the wire, although both men had their share of kinetic experiences. As first-line providers of medical care, they dealt with all sorts of battle trauma as well as the processing of the deceased. They provided more routine care at daily sick call. Common medical cases included sexually transmitted infections and drug addiction, as American boys from the heartland were ingested by the marketplace of sex and drugs in Southeast Asia. Added to the generous dispensation of pharmaceuticals at the hands of minimally trained medics, drug addiction became a significant concern. Kearney and Clamurro are judicious in their rendering of what they saw, giving the reader a glimpse but sparing us the worst of it. The processing of the deceased was also a big part of their experience. Often extracted from the combat zone in haste, the bodies of the dead needed to undergo further preparation before being flown back to the United States. One experience that particularly moved Kearney, and which also moves the reader, is the story of a body bag containing the remains of a young officer who had only been in country for two weeks. He had taken a machine gun round to the chest and died instantly. From a respected military family and recently graduated from West Point, his military bearing was still evident in the starch of his uniform and the polish of his boots.

While not all draftees saw actual combat in Vietnam, the complexity of the situation for conscientious objector medics made for a more difficult experience than for many on the combatant side. Not only were they involved in a war they objected to, but they were constantly on the receiving end of the carnage without being the actual war fighters. Thus, it is even more interesting that the two came to accept their circumstances to such a degree that they ended up extending their combat tours by several months. It was during this extension that Kearney was on the receiving end of a burst of North Vietnamese machinegun fire during an attempted hot extraction. The nature of Kearney's wounds required extensive surgeries, treatment, and convalescence, but he recovered and received the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism from Brigadier General George W. Putnam, commanding general of the U.S. Army 1st Air Cavalry.

The subject of the draft is an interesting thread that runs through the book. Without the draft, there would have been no need of conscientious objector status or alternate service in the first place. The draft brought large numbers of young Americans into the conflict who otherwise would not have been there, and within this large group was manifested some of the uncomfortable tensions of American society. The authors document some of the divisions that were present within the U.S. military in Vietnam. Black and White servicemembers were divided along racial lines; southern Whites were divided from other Whites; career military personnel, "lifers," kept away from draftees, whom they also generally despised. Violence and even killing occasionally erupted from some of these tensions. Perhaps this factored into the decision by Richard M. Nixon and Congress to allow the draft to expire, opting for an all-volunteer military going forward. Kearney touches on some of the arguments that have been made for a continuation of the draft. Some have argued that our all-volunteer force makes it too easy for elected leaders to engage in military adventures around the world without fully mobilizing the American people behind these efforts. Others have admired countries that have an established culture of compulsory military service. If Kearney and Clamurro had more space in the book, I would have liked them to write more on the subject of how future generations of Americans can be encouraged to serve their country in ways that fully align with their principles.

The year 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, and many have relived the tense scenes of helicopters and refugees on the embassy rooftop that define this war's unhappy ending. As the surviving Vietnam War generation continues to make sense of their experiences, this book stands out as a compelling part of the story that few even thought possible. *Duty to Serve, Duty to Conscience* is a case study in how some Americans attempted to perform their duty while protecting their conscience—something that should be important to us all.

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Colonel John C. McKay, USMC (Ret)

Indochina Hand: Tales of a CIA Case Officer. By Barry Michael Broman. (Havertown, PA: Casemate, 2024. Pp. 288. $34.95, cloth; $20.95, e-book.)

> And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain.[1]
>
> One cannot use spies without sagacity and knowledge, one cannot use spies without humanity and justice, one cannot get the truth from spies without subtlety. This is a very delicate matter indeed. Spies are useful everywhere.[2]

Although posed, the jaunty photograph on the dust jack of Barry Broman's recent *Indochina Hand: Tales of a CIA Case Officer* nicely captures the author's persona and élan while reflecting authorial essence in a very engaging book. A combat veteran of the Vietnam War, he is inured to the harsh travails, the vicissitudes and the verisimilitudes, of life. He possesses an inborn sense of empathy for the downtrodden and for victims of violence and conflict. Early on, Barry opted for a career with the CIA, where he performed with distinction from 1971 to 1996, as a case (clandestine) officer. (Full disclosure: the author and I served together in Vietnam.) As in his first recounting of an adventurous and often dangerous career, *Risk Taker, Spy Maker: Tales of a CIA Case Officer*, in *Indochina Hand* Broman superbly portrays the excitement, travails, disappointments, betrayals, and double dealings of clandestine service. Broman is a true "results count" operative, easily comparable to many of John le Carré's fictional fellows. Their titles' similarity notwithstanding, Broman's books are refreshingly distinct from each other, although comparable in narrative style and geographies traversed.

In today's tumultuous world, we all too quickly lose sight of what preceded the current day's challenges. William Faulkner's prescient words carry a strong current of resonance: "The past is never dead. It's not even past. All of us labor in webs spun long before we were born, webs of heredity and environment, of desire and consequence, of history and eternity."[3]

Broman joined the CIA in 1971 amid the throes of the Cold War. His keen interest in Southeast Asia, sparked while his father, a U.S. Air Force officer and World War II glider pilot was posted to Thailand in 1962. He suggested his son take a year off from a Naval Reserve Officers Training Course (NROTC) scholarship at the University of Illinois and spend it in Thailand. A firm stipulation was that Broman work during this sojourn. Through chutzpah and real talent, he was taken on as a photographer by the Associated Press. Another of Broman's very admirable faculties is a seemingly inherent ability to master foreign languages. He returned to the NROTC unit at the University

Col John C. McKay enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1962. He deployed with combat elements during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, received a Secretary of the Navy appointment (from the ranks) to the U.S. Naval Academy in 1964, served two tours in Vietnam as an infantry officer, and was twice wounded, losing an eye. He was a U.S. naval attaché to El Salvador during that country's civil war. An Olmsted Scholar (Spain), he holds master's degrees from Georgetown University and the National War College. Col McKay provided sworn depositions during the Iran-Contra hearings, and has commanded infantry units up to a Joint Task Force. Post-retirement assignments have included time with the Central Intelligence Agency, Department of State, and Drug Enforcement Administration. Until the COVID-19 pandemic, he was an adjunct professor at California State University, Sacramento. At present, he is a key prosecutorial witness in two ongoing war crime trials. He is married to Margo, née Pace; they have three sons, all veterans.

[1] Numbers 13:17 (KJV Compact Reference Bible).

[2] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Thomas Cleary (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, 1988), 170.

[3] William C. Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (New York: Random House, 1951), 73.

of Washington, where he met his charming wife, Betty Jane (BJ) Apilado, a woman of equally remarkable accomplishments and talents. Fittingly, a short chapter in *Indochina Hand* is titled "BJ and the CIA." Following graduation from The Basic School, Broman and BJ were married in the Quantico, Virginia, chapel in November 1968. Vietnam beckoned.

Risk Taker, Spy Maker details Broman's involvement in the Vietnam War. *Indochina Hand* is a series of vignettes, generally in chronological order, but more focused on spycraft. Passing reference is made to the Vietnam imbroglio, with a short chapter on an outstanding Native American Marine, Cletus Foote, whom I had the privilege of having in my platoon. There is also a short chapter on the unsung heroes of the Marine Corps Combined Action Platoon (CAP) program.[4] CAP was one of the very few success stories to come out of a misbegotten war. That General William Westmoreland, commander of U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (USMACV), 1964–68, intensely disliked and criticized the program is but a seal of approval. As a Marine brigadier general, Gary Brown, a company commander under whom Broman and I served in Vietnam, observed: "If the CAP concept had been implemented and fully supported [country wide] early in the war, the outcome could have been much more positive than the April 1975 TV debacle."[5] The CAP concept has relevance in today's challenging world environment.

Indochina Hand tracks Broman's fascinating journey through a sphere that is rarely understood or appreciated often touted but only facially comprehended (multiple movies and television features notwithstanding): life in the clandestine service. In actuality, the men and women who practice the trade in earnest are quietly unique, often multilingual, and possess a sense of self, dedication, and a focus of purpose that clearly distinguishes them from the vast majority. That is not to say there are not notable stand-out characters, as Broman skillfully recounts. Recognizing that the manuscript of *Indochina Hand* was cleared for publication by the CIA, the level of detail revealed in *Indochina Hand* on planning, operational implementation and execution surpasses anything I have previously read.

"In 1962, one of CIA's best Soviet agents, Colonel Oleg Penkovsky was arrested, tried, and executed. The military intelligence officer had provided vital intel to the West, including valuable information on Soviet missile installations in Cuba that allowed President [John F.] Kennedy to face down Soviet leader [Nikita] Krushchev and avert a nuclear war. Penkovsky was credited with altering the course of the Cold War" (p. 133). Cuba today, quite mistakenly, is taken as a minor nuisance a hollow shell of its former self. Cuba possessed, and possesses, a well-trained, professional intelligence service, often characterized as "punching above its weight."[6] One cannot but ponder what role Cuban intelligence, *Dirección de Inteligencia* (Directorate of Intelligence), might play in the current U.S.-stated intent vis-à-vis the Panamá Canal or in the ongoing tiff over tariffs with Mexico.

A focused role of clandestine services worldwide is recruiting human intelligence sources. As Broman notes, "Espionage is more an art than a science. The key to espionage is the successful recruitment of spies. It is not easy, hence the small number of successful "headhunters in the Clandestine Service of my day at the CIA" (p. 213). To be sure, the same applies today. Barry continues, "The most coveted recruitment is a spy from a 'hard target' country, typically Chinese, Russian, or terrorists; someone who can provide crucial information on plans and intentions" (p. 213).

As some nonexperts might imagine, the clandestine exploitation of any adversary relies largely on the frailties and foibles of humankind, and to whom or what they ultimately owe fealty. The exploitation bit,

[4] The paucity of serious books on the CAP program is disappointing. One of the initial post–Vietnam War histories to pay tribute to the program is Guenter Lewy, *America in Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 116–17, 183, 439. See also, Michael E. Peterson, *Combined Action Platoons: The United States Marines Other War in Vietnam* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989); and Al Hemingway, *Our War Was Different: Marine Combined Action Platoons in Vietnam* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994).

[5] The fall of Saigon to the North Vietnamese Army, and the demoralizing evacuation of the U.S. embassy was televised worldwide.

[6] "America Has Had a Cuban Agent in Its Midst for 42 Years," *Economist*, 7 December 2023.

like recruiting high-level targets, is an art rather than a science, as Broman notes. Identifying human frailties and foibles and subsequently successfully exploiting them is truly a skill possessed by few. It requires a level of keen understanding of human nature and a finesse grounded in an innate ability to read, get into the mind, of the target. Perspicacity is a rare attribute that can pay incalculable returns.

John le Carré is said to have coined the term *honey trap*, the operational practice of using a covert agent (usually a female) to create a romantic or sexual relationship to compromise a target. As Broman notes,

> It is sometimes said that espionage is the second-oldest profession, the oldest, of course, being prostitution. Sometimes one profession helps the other. . . . The Soviet intelligence service, the Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti, the Committee for State Security, which existed from 1954–1991 and was known as KGB, perfected the ploy. The Russians made many recruitments through honey trap, often by blackmailing the men (and women) involved. "Work for us, or else!" is a common pitch. Senior foreign officials, including Americans, were coerced into cooperating with the KGB or its successor, the Federal Security Service (FSB), some of them for decades. . . . Unlike the Russians, the CIA does not include the honey trap in its playbook to attract spies. But that does not mean that prostitutes are completely off limits. I knew an officer who made the best recruitment of his career with the assistance of a few ladies of the night. The irony of the story is that the officer was a churchgoing, all American boy, and an upstanding citizen (p. 79).

As further described, Louis (a pseudonym) is a character.

Aside from being entertaining—and it is entertaining—*Indochina Hand* is a serious work that warrants the attention of those in the current presidential administration who are involved in ensuring the safety, security, and well-being of the United States.

Two minor quibbles: like its predecessor, *Risk Taker, Spy Maker*, *Indochina Hand* would benefit from the inclusion of an index and from more editorial attention to detail in proofreading.

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Michael Westermeier

How to Lose a War: The Story of America's Intervention in Afghanistan. By Amin Saikal. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2024. Pp. 320. $30.00, cloth and e-book.)

The Taliban entered Kabul, Afghanistan, on 15 August 2021, ushering in the end of America's 20-year intervention in that country. During those 20 years, the U.S. Marine Corps added to its already impressive military history, notably as part of Task Force 58, the first conventional U.S. military forces to enter Afghanistan, the grueling counterinsurgency operations conducted in Helmand Province, and as a part of the evacuation from Kabul. Over the course of those two decades, there have been many books debating the pros and cons of counterinsurgency, Afghan culture, ways ahead, and lessons learned. However, in the three years following the fall of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, there has been little written on why America's attempt to build a democratic nation in Afghanistan failed. Professor Amin Saikal's book *How to Lose a War: The Story of America's Intervention in Afghanistan* is a solid foundation on which the next generation of Afghanistan war historians will be able to complete a more thorough examination.

Professor Saikal is internationally recognized as an expert on the history, politics, and economics of the Middle East and Central Asia. Born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1950, Saikal is an Australian national and adjunct professor of social sciences at the University of Western Australia. He is also the emeritus professor of Middle Eastern and Central Asian studies and founding director of the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (Middle East and Central Asia) at the Australian National University and served as a visiting professor at a number of universities around the world, including Princeton University, Cambridge University, the Institute of Development Studies (University of Sussex), Indiana University, the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, and was a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow in International Relations from 1983 to 1988. He has authored or coauthored 18 books on Middle Eastern or Central Asian history and politics, contributed numerous articles to international journals or news organizations, and has served as a commentator on radio and television programs.

Saikal presents a well-balanced argument as to why the United States and its allies ultimately failed to bring a permanent end to the Taliban in Afghanistan. He points to Afghanistan's history and culture, Pakistan's duplicity, the United States' inability to create a coherent strategy toward defeating the Taliban, and rampant corruption within the Afghan government. While it is said that victory has a thousand fathers and defeat is an orphan, Professor Saikal has shown that the United States' defeat in Afghanistan in fact has partible paternity.

First, America's inability to capture Osama bin Laden until 10 years after the invasion of Afghanistan led to mission creep and to the second contributing factor to America's loss, conflation of the Afghanistan campaign with larger U.S. foreign policy goals of "democracy promotion" and "war on terrorism." Third, Afghanistan's ruling elites engaged in massive corruption and poor governance under the U.S. watch. Fourth, Pakistan's "Janus-faced" stance against terrorism undermined the U.S. and allied campaign in Afghanistan by paying lip service to their support of the antiterrorism operations while also supporting the Taliban and their terrorist partners to maintain their influence in Afghanistan. Finally, the United States'

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lack of a strategy to handle the variables confronting them in Afghanistan along with their failure to fully comprehend the historical complexities of Afghanistan and the region surrounding it doomed their efforts to failure (p. 7).

According to Saikal, President George W. Bush's administration had three options to respond to al-Qaeda's 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. The first option was to treat the attacks "as a criminal act" and use Interpol to "hunt down its masterminds" instead of declaring war (p. 7). While this might have been an option, it certainly could never be a politically viable one in the United States due to the widespread outrage engendered by the attacks. Bush's second option "was to lean decisively on Pakistan to curtail all links with Al Qaeda and the Taliban" (p. 7). Saikal says the United States was aware that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) "operated as a 'government within a government' " in Pakistan, "facilitated the Taliban-Al Qaeda alliance, and used radical Islam as a foreign policy tool" (p. 7). This approach alone would most likely not have been enough to whet America's appetite for vengeance but certainly should have been combined with U.S. military action in Afghanistan to deny the cross-border safe havens enjoyed by the Taliban for most of the war. The option adopted by the United States was to conduct an "intervention" using their military assets as the most effective way "to achieve its Afghanistan-related" objectives and further the Bush administration's global strategy (p. 8). Military action was, realistically, the only politically viable option open to President Bush at the time, however, the failure to identify limited, achievable objectives would set the stage for the ultimate failure of the American effort to build a democratic Afghan nation.

President Barack H. Obama, according to Saikal, realized that America "was entangled in an endless and unwinnable war" and decided to reset U.S. strategy. During Obama's administration, the United States moved away from its counterinsurgency and counterterrorism focus in Afghanistan and sought to "Afghanize" the war while pressuring Pakistan to prepare for a political settlement (p. 213). However, the military realities on the ground precluded America from creating a conditions-based timeline and instead set a time-based withdrawal plan. This gave a clear signal to the Taliban that the United States was ready to withdraw and that they merely had to keep the pressure on until the withdrawal date (p. 213). The U.S. drawdown in 2011 from 147,000 combat troops to 20,000 advisors dedicated to training and supporting the Afghan security forces in 2015 severely undercut America's ability to negotiate a viable political settlement between the Taliban and what they perceived as the puppet government in Kabul (p. 214).

Professor Saikal is highly critical of the settlement negotiated by President Donald J. Trump and Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad. He characterizes the negotiation of the Doha Agreement between the United States and the Taliban as an "impulsive and impatient quest for an urgent, total pull-out" and further emboldened the Taliban as they saw that the negotiations would soon deliver Afghanistan to them (p. 214). The fact the United States negotiated the settlement without Afghan president Ashraf Ghani completely undermined his legitimacy as a leader and, despite Ghani's efforts to resist the Doha Agreement's implementation, left him a furious but impotent leader of a house of cards (p. 216).

Although the Trump administration may have negotiated a bad deal, President Joseph R. Biden ultimately chose to follow through with the U.S. withdrawal despite warnings that the Afghan military was incapable of resisting the Taliban and that the Afghan government would undoubtedly collapse. The American withdrawal, one of the largest noncombatant evacuation operations undertaken by the U.S. military, devolved into chaos as the Afghan government fled Kabul and the Taliban took over. While the tragedy played out on television screens across the globe, the Biden and former Trump administrations took turns blaming each other for the outcome of America's 20-year war in Afghanistan (pp. 214–17).

Saikal places blame for the collapse of Afghanistan on the shoulders of the Afghans, as well. According to Saikal, "[Afghan leaders] had unprecedented opportunities to move Afghanistan towards a functioning state; instead, they personalized, ethnicized,

and polarized politics to bolster their power" (p. 219). The United States may have been naïve to think they could turn Afghanistan into a Western-style democracy, but the cynical leaders of Afghanistan used positions that might, under honest leadership, have created a country that—while imperfect—might have been able to stand against the Taliban's resurgence. Instead, leaders engaged in corruption on a massive scale while local warlords remained in control of most areas outside of Kabul. Their moral failures collapsed Afghanistan back into a fundamentalist Islamic regime, undoing almost two decades of social progress, and led to the deaths of thousands of Afghans who had supported the government at the hands of the returning Taliban.

According to Saikal, there are lessons to be learned from America's war in Afghanistan. First, state-building in Afghanistan should be developed according to its specific social, cultural, and political traditions that are deeply rooted in its entho-tribal and Islamic landscape. Second, the United States should have recognized the need to conduct a "bottom-up" state building process rather than creating "top-down" government institutions that lacked popular support. Third, democratic institutions and processes will always come second to security objectives, which in turn ultimately undermines the democratic government (p. 227). In this case, the United States tried to build democratic institutions while also conducting large-scale military operations when they would have been better served by establishing security under a more authoritarian government followed by creation of democratic institutions in a more stable environment (p. 226). Finally, the rampant corruption that was a feature of the Afghan government could have been avoided by the creation of a well-regulated and transparent aid organization. Without this, aid provided to a post-conflict state is essentially wasted as it is siphoned off by corrupt officials (p. 228). Saikal writes in summary, "If Afghanistan's history and the U.S. intervention tell us one thing, it is that no single group, with or without the support of an outside player, can succeed in creating the necessary conditions for modern statehood in the country" (p. 228).

Although Saikal did not use military archival sources, most likely because the U.S. government has still not declassified most of the documents concerning military operations during the Global War on Terrorism, he assiduously cited academic sources, contemporary articles about the war in Afghanistan, and personal notes from interactions and interviews with key players that he used to write his book. His long experience in writing about the history of Afghanistan and Central Asia is evident in his smooth writing and the progression of his argument. Although this book will not be the final word on the U.S. war in Afghanistan, it is certainly worth reading for students of the conflict and those interested in the overall strategy of America in Central Asia in the early twenty-first century.

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