



Military Despatches

Vol 11 May 2018

Ten military blunders of WWII

Ten military mistakes that proved costly

Under three flags

The man who fought for three different nations

Head-to-Head

World War II fighter aces

Battlefield

The Battle of Spion Kop

The Boer Commandos

A citizen army that was forged in battle

For the military enthusiast

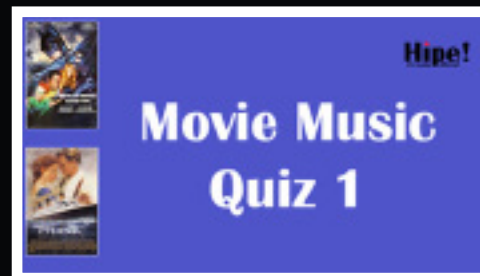


Click on any video below to view



Hipe's Wouter de Goede interviews former 28's gang boss David Williams.

How much do you know about movie theme songs? Take our quiz and find out.



Part of Hipe's "On the couch" series, this is an interview with one of author Herman Charles Bosman's most famous characters, Oom Schalk Lourens.



A taxi driver was shot dead in an ongoing war between rival taxi organisations.



The old South African Defence Force used a mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand. Some of the terms were humorous, some were clever, while others were downright crude.



Hipe spent time in Hanover Park, an area plagued with gang violence, to view first-hand how Project Ceasefire is dealing with the situation.

Hipe TV brings you videos ranging from actuality to humour and everything in between. Interviews, mini-documentaries and much more.

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Military Despatches May 2018 What's in this month's edition

Feature Articles

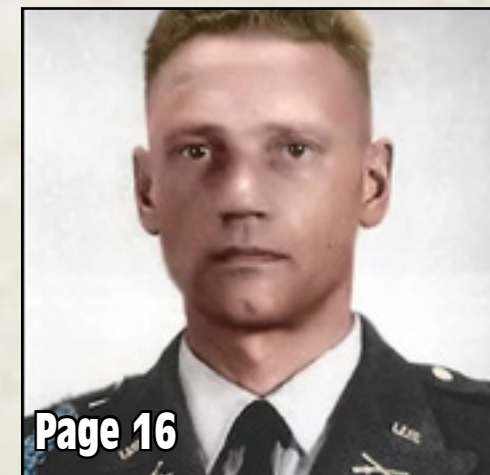
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We look at those aces that achieved 20 or more kills.

Cover Photograph

The editor took this photograph while observing a FIBUA training exercise by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). FIBUA is training in urban warfare and stands for Fighting In Built Up Areas. In the British Army it is known as Fish & Chips. Fighting In Someone's House & Causing Havoc In People's Streets.



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Editor's Sitrep

Next month will be the 12th edition of Military Despatches. That means we're nearly a year old. No wonder I need a drink.

I love reading about personal accounts of people that fought in wars. Or finding out about unusual incidents. Which is why I enjoyed the article "Under three flags" in this month's issue.

I remember reading a book by George Robert Elford called Devil's Guard. It was published in 1971 and told the story of Hans Josef Wagemueller.

Wagemueller fought in the Waffen-SS during World War II and afterwards joined the French Foreign Legion and fought in Indo-China.

The book is presented by the author as nonfiction but considered to be untrue by military historians, and usually sold as fiction. Yet it does make you think about how many war criminals escaped prosecution by joining other armies.

I'm sure that many of those that fought in our own Border War have stories to tell. The sad thing is that none of us are getting any younger and unless

those stories are told soon, they will never be heard and remembered.

In other words, it's about time that you told those stories.

I must say that I am looking forward to our trip to Kimberley in June. I did a similar trip in 2011 and it was a lot of fun.

The train trip especially brought back memories. Twice during my military service I went from Johannesburg to Windhoek by train.

We would actually catch the Transkaroo and then the coach was taken off at De Aar. You would sit there from 22h00 in the evening through until 17h00 the following day.

It took something like three days to get to Windhoek and from there it was on by bus to Grootfontein and then further north. Both those train trip were a blast.

That's about it for this month. Some interesting articles coming your way in the June edition, so look out for them.

Until next month.

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media

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Famous Figures

Alvin York

The most decorated pacifist of World War I.

Quiz

Nicknames

The military loves nicknames and slang. Here are a few questions about nicknames. See if you know the answers.

Forged in Battle

Boer Commandos

The Boer Commandos, or Kommandos, were fiercely independent farmers who had spent most of their working lives in the saddle, they were skilled hunters and expert marksmen. Something that the British were to learn the hard way.

Battlefield

The Battle of Spion Kop

During the Second Boer War campaign to relieve Ladysmith, the British managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

Reviews

Game Review - This War of Mine

During war, there are no good or bad decisions; there is only survival. **Matt O'Brien** tries to keep a group of survivors alive in his own inept way.

DVD Review - Blackadder Goes Forth

Set in the trenches of World War I, this is sarcastic comedy at its best.

Book Review - Operation Askari 1983/84

An inside account of the operation.

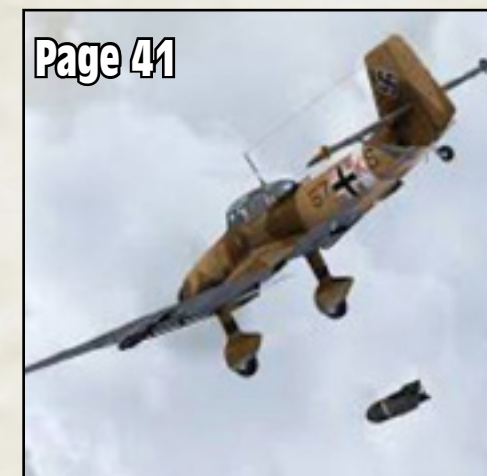
The Lighter Side

Blackadder - Private Plane

Here is the full script from the Private Plane episode from Black Adder Goes Forth



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10 Military blunders of World War II

Ten military operations of World War II that had a major impact on the final outcome of the war.

There is little doubt that World War II was the greatest conflict in modern history and one that continues to impact our world to this day. It is a conflict filled with “what ifs...”.

What if Germany or Japan had won the war? What if Germany had developed an atomic bomb? What if the Invasion of Normandy had failed? What if B had happened instead of A? The world today could have looked very different.

The fact that things turned out the way they did was the result of a number of factors – both positive and negative. What’s perhaps most important in understanding why one side won and the other lost is in recognising that victory was not determined so much by who won the most battles - although ultimately that was a factor - but by who made the fewest costly mistakes.

Tactical blunders, missed opportunities, bad judgement and just plain bad luck by both sides was instrumental in the final result. Here are ten blunders that were instrumental in either lengthening the war or where they managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

Philippine Liberation, 1944

While this ended in a victory for the Americans, many consider it an unnecessary operation that may have extended the war by months. After being kicked out of the Philippines two years earlier, General Douglas MacArthur was keen to get back. He convinced American President Franklin D. Roosevelt that he may lose re-election in 1944 if he didn’t liberate the island chain that MacArthur had ineptly failed to defend in 1942.

The fact is that by 1944 the Japanese air and naval presence on the island had been largely nullified, and it was too far from Japan to use as a base from which to launch raids on the Japanese mainland. There was little reason to invade the place, other than that’s what Douglas MacArthur wanted. And what MacArthur wanted, he usually got.

The time spent securing the island and the resources used in doing so delayed the invasion of Okinawa and probably extended the war by a few months. But at least it gave MacArthur a perfect photo opportunity to wade ashore at Leyte Gulf and proclaim that he had returned.

The liberation of the Phil-

ippines commenced with amphibious landings on the eastern Philippine island of Leyte on October 20, 1944. United States and Philippine Commonwealth military forces were progressing in liberating territory and islands when the Japanese forces in the Philippines were ordered to surrender by Tokyo on August 15, 1945, after the dropping of the atomic bombs on mainland Japan and the Soviet invasion of Manchuria.

The campaign cost the Americans more than 79,000 dead and wounded. They also lost 485 aircraft, had 33 ships sunk, and another 95 ships damaged. Japanese losses were even higher.

Kursk, 1943

One thing you’ve got to say about Adolf Hitler was that he sure didn’t learn from his mistakes. Only six months after the débâcle at Stalingrad, Hitler decides that once again it’s time to go on the offensive. He launches *Unternehmen Zitadelle* (Operation Citadel) on 5 July 1943. The operation has the objective of pinching off the Kursk salient with attacks on the base of the salient from north and south simultaneously.

The Germans were suffering



TOLD YOU I'D BE BACK: General MacArthur wades ashore on his return to the Philippines.

at a huge disadvantage in terms of numbers. They had 80,900 men, 2,928 tanks, and 9,966 guns and mortars. The Germans also delayed the offensive while they tried to build up their forces and wait for new weapons. They were relying on the new Panther tank and larger number of the Tiger I heavy tank.

The problem was that the Russian had been aware months in advance that the German attack would fall on the neck of the Kursk salient. This gave the Red Army time to construct a series of deep defensive positions. These included minefields, fortifications, artillery fire zones and anti-tank strong points that extended about 300 km in depth. Their mobile formations were moved out of the salient and a large reserve force was formed, ready for strategic counter-offensives. The Russians had 1,910,361 men, 5,128 tanks, and 25,013 guns and mortars ready to meet the Germans.

Many German generals argued strongly against the operation, saying that the attack was pointless.

On 10 May 1943, General Heinz Guderian asked Hitler, “Is it really necessary to attack Kursk, and indeed in the east this year at all? Do you think anyone even knows where Kursk is? The entire world doesn’t care if we capture Kursk or not. What is the reason that is forcing us to attack this year on Kursk, or even more, on the Eastern Front?”

Although Hitler did have reservations, he was committed to the offensive.

The German offensive stalled on the northern side of the salient. While the Russian lines bent, they did not break. On 12 July the Soviets launched Operation Kutuzov against the rear of the German forces on the northern side of the salient.

On the southern side the Soviets launched a counter-attack on the same day. This would

lead to the Battle of Prohorovka, one of the largest tank battles in military history. On 3 August the Soviets began their second phase of the counter-attack, Operation Polkovodets Rumyantsev.

As if this was not enough, on the night of 9/10 July 1943 the Allies launched Operation Husky – the invasion of Sicily. Hitler was forced to divert troops training in France to meet the Allied threats in the Mediterranean, rather than use them as a strategic reserve for the Eastern Front. Hitler then cancelled the offensive at Kursk after only a week, in part to divert forces to Italy, resulting in a reduction of German strength on the Eastern Front.

During Operation Citadel the Germans suffered 54,182 casualties. Between 250 and 300 tanks and assault guns were destroyed, and between 600 and 1,600 were damaged. They also lost 159 aircraft and 500 guns. During the Battle of Kursk another 50,000 men were killed or missing, and 134,000 were wounded. They also lost about 760 tanks and assault guns and 681 aircraft.

Russian casualties were even higher. Operation Citadel cost them 177,847 casualties. Between 1,614 and 1,956 tanks and assault guns were destroyed, and between 459 and 1,000 aircraft. At the Battle of Kursk 254,470 men were killed, missing or captured. 608,833 were wounded or became seriously ill. 6,064 tanks and assault guns were destroyed, and between 1,626 and 1,961 aircraft. The Russians also lost 5,244 guns.

While the Russians could ab-

sorb the losses, the Germans could not.

Kursk was the final strategic offensive that the Germans were able to launch on the Eastern Front. From there the retreat that would finally end in Berlin began.

Anzio, 1944

When the Allies launched the Invasion of Italy at the end of 1943, they became bogged down at the Gustav Line. This German defensive line stretched across Italy south of the strategic objective of Rome. The terrain was ideally suited to defence, something that German commander Field Marshal Albert Kesselring took full advantage of.

It was none other than British Prime Minister Winston Churchill who conceived Operation Shingle. The plan was to land two divisions at Anzio, north of the Gustav Line and only 62,4 km from Rome. Not only would the Allies be able to take Rome, they would also cut off the German defenders to the south.

The landing at Anzio on 22 January 1944 took the Germans totally by surprise. Not only was there no opposition, an American Jeep patrol drove as far as the outskirts of Rome without any hindrance. It was a golden opportunity for the Allies, except for one small problem - Major General John P. Lucas.

General Lucas, of the American Army, was in command of the operation. From the start he had little confidence in the operation as planned. He failed to take advantage of the element



BASTION: While the Maginot Line was formidable, it wasn't much good when attacked from the rear.

of surprise and he ordered his men to dig in and wait until he judged his position was sufficiently consolidated and he had sufficient strength.

While Lucas waited on the beach, Kesselring moved every unit he could spare into a defensive ring around the beachhead. His artillery units had a clear view of every Allied position. After a month of heavy but inconclusive fighting, Lucas was relieved and sent home. His replacement was Major General Lucian K. Truscott.

It was only in May 1944 that the Allies were finally able to break out of the Anzio beachhead. Rome was eventually captured on June 4, 1944.

What if someone like General George S. Paton had been in command of Operation Shingle? It is unlikely that he would have sat kicking his heels on the beach at Anzio. Especially if he knew the road to Rome was open. The Germans would probably have been forced back to the Austrian border far earlier than they eventually were. It could have saved thousands of Allied and Axis lives.

Italy's Invasion of Greece and Egypt, 1940-41

There must have been times when Italy's Benito Mussolini imagined that he was a modern day Caesar. There is no doubt that he wanted to expand his empire. In the later part of 1940 he decided to invade Greece through Albania, as well as invading Egypt from his colony in Libya.

His army was large, but rather inept. Not surprisingly he had his head handed to him by the Greek and British forces in the Balkans and by the British Allied forces in Egypt. Hitler was forced to send in the German army to save his hapless ally.

Not only did Hitler have to pull valuable resources away from other fronts, it also delayed the start of Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of Russia. Chances are that if Italy had followed the lead of Spain's General Franco and remained neutral, Germany may have won the war.

Maginot Line, 1940

After World War I, the French were very wary of the Germans



BOMBS AWAY: German bombers over London during the Blitz in 1940.

- and with good reason. They came up with a plan based on their experience of trench warfare during World War I. They would build an impregnable fortress of concrete, steel and iron that would deter German aggression, because it would slow an invasion force long enough for French forces to mobilize and counter-attack.

Named the Maginot Line, after French Minister of War André Maginot, it was constructed on the French side of its borders with Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Luxembourg. The Maginot Line was everything that the French claimed. It was impervious to most forms of attack, including aerial bombings and tank fire, and had underground railways as a backup; it also had state-of-the-art living conditions for garrisoned troops, supplying air conditioning and recreating areas for their comfort. It boasted a formidable array of weapons that included artillery, anti-tank guns, mortars and heavy machine guns.

There was, however, one small flaw with the Maginot

Line. It did not extend all the way to the English Channel. This was, believe it or not, part of the French plan. They envisioned a move into Belgium to counter a German assault. It was something that did not go unnoticed by the Germans.

When the Germans did launch their attack on France, it was not against the Maginot Line. Instead of going straight at it, they went around it, bypassing the line to the north through the Low Countries. This was something that French and British officers had anticipated when Germany invaded the Netherlands and Belgium. They carried out plans to form an aggressive front line that cut across Belgium and connected to the Maginot Line.

The French line was weak near the Ardennes forest. The French believed that this region, with its rough terrain and thick forests, would be an unlikely invasion route for the Germans. After all, there was no way that armour would be able to negotiate the forests. It seems as if the Germans didn't

get the memo.

Once the Germans became aware of this weak point in the French defensive front, it was quickly exploited. A rapid advance through the forest and across the River Meuse encircled much of the Allied forces, resulting in a sizeable force being evacuated at Dunkirk leaving the forces to the south unable to mount an effective resistance to the German invasion of France.

Once the Germans were behind the Maginot Line, it was game over for the French. All of the defences faced forward. What they had failed to accomplish in four years during World War I, the Germans managed to do in six weeks from 10 May 1940 - they had conquered France.

The London Blitz, 1940

"What General Weygand called the battle of France is over. I expect that the battle of Britain is about to begin." These were the opening lines of a speech made by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to the House of Commons on 18 June 1940.

France had surrendered and only Britain stood between Hitler and total victory in Europe. There was one slight problem, however. He would first have to cross the English Channel to get at Britain. To this end the Germans planned *Unternehmen Seelöwe* (Operation Sea Lion), an amphibious invasion of England. Hitler hoped the British government would seek a peace agreement and he reluctantly considered invasion only as a last resort if all other op-

tions failed. As a precondition, he specified the achievement of both air and naval superiority over the English Channel and the proposed landing sites.

In July 1940 the air and sea blockade began, with the Luftwaffe mainly targeting coastal-shipping convoys, ports and shipping centres, such as Portsmouth. On 1 August, the Luftwaffe (Air Force) was directed to achieve air superiority over the RAF (Royal Air Force) with the aim of incapacitating RAF Fighter Command. The Luftwaffe soon discovered that this was no easy task.

Britain had a secret weapon – radar. A chain of radar stations meant that the British could detect German aircraft while they were still forming up over France. They could track the height and direction of German fighter and bomber formations. They could then scramble the nearest British fighters to intercept them.

After 12 days the Luftwaffe shifted their attacks to RAF airfields and infrastructure. The Germans were bombing the airfields quicker than the British could repair them. And it was working. RAF leader Air Chief Marshal Hugh Dowding was unsure of how much longer the RAF could last.

Then, on 24 August 1940, Luftwaffe planes had bombed London. This was probably by mistake or simply because they were unloading their bombs randomly in order to escape fighters. Churchill ordered the first deliberate bombing of the German capital in retaliation.

At 00h20 on 26 August 1940, Berlin was bombed by the



PANZER MARCH: German tanks roll into Russia at the start of Operation Barbarossa.

RAF. Head of the Luftwaffe, Hermann Göring, was furious. Only days before he declared, “If one enemy bomb falls on Berlin, you can call me Meyer.” And if Göring was furious, Hitler was even more so.

He ordered retaliation against London and Göring was more than happy to oblige. The Luftwaffe turned their attention from RAF infrastructure to London. It would become known as ‘The Blitz’.

It was a huge mistake on Hitler’s part. It gave the RAF a breather during which they could repair their airfields and service and repair their aircraft. By 31 October 1940 the Battle of Britain was over. The Germans had failed to gain air superiority and Hitler first postponed and the later cancelled Operation Sea Lion.

Invasion of Russia, 1941

It was the philosopher, essayist, poet and novelist George Santayana that said, “Those

who do not remember their past are condemned to repeat their mistakes. Those who do not read history are doomed to repeat it. Those who fail to learn from the mistakes of their predecessors are destined to repeat them. Those who do not know history’s mistakes are doomed to repeat them.”

When Adolf Hitler decided to invade the Soviet Union in 1941, it appears that Santayana wasn’t on Herr Hitler’s reading list. It was only slightly more than a century earlier, in 1812 to be exact, when Napoleon launched his *Campagne de Russie* and sent his *Grande Armée* across the Neman River to invade Russia. As history tells us, Napoleon was not successful.

Military doctrine also tells us that it is not a good idea to fight a war on two fronts. By failing to defeat the British before he invaded Russia, Hitler had done exactly that – started a war on two fronts. Yet Hitler was convinced that *Unter-*



TORA, TORA, TORA: The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour brought America into World War II.

hmen Barbarossa (Operation Barbarossa), his invasion of Russia, would succeed. “We only have to kick in the door and the whole rotten structure will come crashing down,” he was quoted as saying.

The Russian military was in a mess. Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin had begun his ‘Great Purge’ in the late 1930s when much of the officer corps of the Red Army was decimated and their replacements, appointed by Stalin for political reasons and most of them lacked military competence.

Of the five Marshals of the Soviet Union appointed in 1935, only Kliment Voroshilov and Semyon Budyonny survived Stalin’s purge. Tukhachevsky was killed in 1937. Fifteen of 16 army commanders, 50 of the 57 corps commanders, 154 of the 186 divisional commanders, and 401 of 456 colonels were killed, and many other officers were dismissed. In total, about 30,000 Red Army personnel were executed.

Stalin further underscored his control by reasserting the role of political commissars at

the divisional level and below to oversee the political loyalty of the army to the regime. The commissars held a position equal to that of the commander of the unit they were overseeing.

Initially Operation Barbarossa was a success. German forces achieved major victories and occupied some of the most important economic areas of the Soviet Union, mainly in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and inflicted, as well as sustained, heavy casualties. Despite these Axis successes, the German offensive stalled in the Battle of Moscow and the subsequent Soviet winter counteroffensive pushed German troops back. The Germans were not prepared for the early Soviet winter.

The Red Army absorbed the Wehrmacht’s strongest blows and forced the unprepared Germans into a war of attrition. The Wehrmacht would never again mount a simultaneous offensive along the entire strategic Soviet–Axis front. The failure of the operation drove Hitler to demand further operations of in-

creasingly limited scope inside the Soviet Union, such as Case Blue in 1942 and Operation Citadel in 1943 – all of which eventually failed.

Pearl Harbour, 1941

The coded message contained just three words, “*Niitaka yama nobore*” (Climb Mount Niitaka). The events that would follow would change the course of World War II.

It was a message sent from Admiral Yamamoto to Vice Admiral Nagumo on 2 December 1941. It ordered him to open a top secret envelope that told him that the Japanese Empire had decided to go to war with the United States, Britain and Holland.

On 26 November 1941, a Japanese task force that included six aircraft carriers – Akagi, Kaga, Sōryū, Hiryū, Shōkaku, and Zuikaku – departed Hitokapu Bay on Kasatka Island in the Kurile Islands under strict radio silence. Their aim was to take a position northwest of Hawaii from where they could launch a surprise attack on the US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii.

At 07h48 on 7 December 1941 the US Naval Base at Pearl Harbour came under attack by 353 Imperial Japanese aircraft in two waves. The aircraft included fighters, level bombers, dive bombers, and torpedo bombers, launched from six aircraft carriers.

They sent a signal back, “*Tora, tora, tora*” (Tiger, tiger, tiger), the code to indicate that the attack had achieved total surprise. Japanese losses were light: 29 aircraft and five mid-

et submarines lost, and 64 servicemen killed. One Japanese sailor, Kazuo Sakamaki, was captured.

All eight US Navy battleships were damaged, with four sunk. All but the USS Arizona were later raised, and six were returned to service and went on to fight in the war. The Japanese also sank or damaged three cruisers, three destroyers, an anti-aircraft training ship, and one minelayer. One hundred eighty-eight U.S. aircraft were destroyed; 2,403 Americans were killed and 1,178 others were wounded.

While the Japanese attack had achieved surprise and caused considerable damage, they had missed their main target – the American aircraft carriers. The USS Lexington was on its way to Midway Island. The USS Enterprise was scheduled to be in Pearl Harbour on 6 December on her way back from Wake Island, but was delayed by bad weather. The USS Saratoga was in San Diego.

The biggest mistake the Japanese made at Pearl Harbour was that they didn't attack the important base installations. The power station, dry docks, shipyard maintenance, fuel and torpedo storage facilities, submarine pens and headquarters building, which also housed the intelligence section, were not attacked. Had they been attacked and damaged or destroyed, the Americans would have been denied Pearl Harbour as a base.

The following day US President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on Japan and proclaimed 7 December 1941 "a day which will live in infamy."



OPERATION DYNAMO: The Royal Navy was able to evacuate more than 300,000 British and French troops off the beaches at Dunkirk.

On 11 December 1941 Germany and Italy declared war on America.

Commander-in-chief of the Japanese Imperial Navy, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto must have had a foreboding. "I fear all I have done is awakened a sleeping giant and filled him with terrible resolve," he said after the bombing of Pearl Harbour.

Dunkirk, 1940

By 26 May 1940, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and the French 1st Army were bottled up in a corridor to the sea, about 97 km deep and 24–40 km wide. Most of the British forces were still around Lille, over 64 km from Dunkirk, with the French further south. Two massive German armies flanked them. General Fedor von Bock's Army Group B was to the east, and General Gerd von Rundstedt's Army Group A to the west.

The Germans confidently believed that the Allied troops were doomed. BEF commander General Lord Gort tended to agree with the Germans. Writing to Secretary of State for War, Anthony Eden, he said, "I

must not conceal from you that a great part of the BEF and its equipment will inevitably be lost in the best of circumstances".

On 26 May Eden told Gort that he might need to "fight back to the west", and ordered him to prepare plans for the evacuation, but without telling the French or the Belgians. Gort was already one step ahead. He had foreseen the order and preliminary plans were already in hand. The first such plan, for a defence along the Lys Canal, could not be carried out because of German advances on 26 May, with the 2nd and 50th Divisions pinned down, and the 1st, 5th and 48th Divisions under heavy attack.

The 2nd Division took heavy casualties trying to keep a corridor open, being reduced to brigade strength, but they succeeded; the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 42nd Divisions escaped along the corridor that day, as did about one-third of the French First Army. As the Allies fell back, they disabled their artillery and vehicles and destroyed their stores. On 27 May, the British fought back to the Dunkirk perimeter line.



GAME OVER: A German survivor of the 6th Army is taken prisoner by the Russian.

Then, in one of the most debated decisions of the war, the Germans halted their advance on Dunkirk. Contrary to popular belief, what became known as the "Halt Order" did not originate with Adolf Hitler. *Generalobersten* (Colonel-Generals) Gerd von Rundstedt and Günther von Kluge suggested that the German forces around the Dunkirk pocket should cease their advance on the port and consolidate to avoid an Allied breakout. Hitler sanctioned the order on 24 May.

Hitler did not rescind the Halt Order until the evening of 26 May. The three days thus gained gave a vital breathing space to the Royal Navy to arrange the evacuation of the British and Allied troops. About 338,000 men were rescued in about 11 days. Of these some 215,000 were British and 123,000 were French, of whom 102,250 escaped in British ships.

The War Office made the decision to evacuate British forces on 25 May. In the nine days from 27 May–4 June,

338,226 men escaped, including 139,997 French, Polish, and Belgian troops, together with a small number of Dutch soldiers, aboard 861 vessels (of which 243 were sunk during the operation that was code named Operation Dynamo).

The docks at Dunkirk were too badly damaged to be used, but the East and West Moles (sea walls protecting the harbour entrance) were intact. Captain William Tennant—in charge of the evacuation—decided to use the beaches and the East Mole to land the ships. This highly successful idea hugely increased the number of troops that could be embarked each day and on 31 May, over 68,000 men were embarked.

The last of the British Army left on 3 June, and at 10:50, Tennant signalled Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Navy, Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay, to say "Operation completed. Returning to Dover". Churchill insisted on coming back for the French and the Royal Navy returned on 4 June, to rescue as

many as possible of the French rearguard. Over 26,000 French soldiers were evacuated on that last day, but between 30,000 and 40,000 more were left behind and forced to surrender to the Germans.

Luftwaffe commander Hermann Göring asked for the chance to destroy the forces in Dunkirk. The Allied forces' destruction was thus initially assigned to the air force while the German infantry organised in Army Group B. Von Rundstedt later called this "one of the great turning points of the war."

By not finishing off the BEF at Dunkirk and allowing more than 300,000 men to escape, the Germans had made a costly mistake. If those men had not been available it is doubtful that the British would have been able to defend Egypt the following year. If the Germans had taken Egypt and the valuable oil field of the Middle East, the final outcome of the war could have been very different.

Stalingrad, 1942

This was the battle that ultimately cost Germany the war. The battle took place from 23 August 1942 to 2 February 1943 at a city on the banks of the Volga River in Southern Russia. The city was named Stalingrad, after Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Marked by fierce close quarters combat and direct assaults on civilians in air raids, it is often regarded as the single largest (nearly 2.2 million personnel) and bloodiest (1.7–2 million killed, wounded or captured) battle in the history of warfare. It was a battle in which Germany lost an entire

army of more than half a million men.

The German 6th Army and elements of the 4th Panzer Army were used for the offensive. The attack was supported by intensive Luftwaffe bombing that reduced most of the city to rubble. The fighting degenerated into house-to-house combat and both sides poured reinforcements into the city. Stalin was determined that the city named after him would not fall. Hitler was just as determined that it would.

By mid-November 1942 the Germans had pushed the Soviet defenders back at great cost into narrow zones along the west bank of the Volga River. It seemed that victory was within the grasp of the Germans.

On 19 November 1942, the Red Army launched Operation Uranus, a two-pronged attack targeting the weaker Romanian and Hungarian armies protecting the German 6th Army's flanks. The Axis forces on the flanks were overrun and the 6th Army was cut off and surrounded in the Stalingrad area.

The 6th Army could have attempted a break out of Stalingrad when it was clear that defeat was inevitable, and before the noose surrounding Stalingrad tightened. Adolf Hitler would have nothing to do with the idea. He ordered General Freidrich Paulus to remain in Stalingrad and make no attempt to break out. His order were "to fight to the last man and last bullet." Instead attempts were made to supply the army by air and to break the encirclement from the outside.

By the beginning of February



ROOM BY ROOM: The Battle of Stalingrad featured fierce house-to-house fighting and close combat.

1943 the Axis forces in Stalingrad had exhausted their ammunition and food. Field Marshal Paulus, recently promoted by Hitler, surrendered the remaining units of the 6th Army. The battle has lasted five months, one week and three days.

The Axis suffered 627,899 total casualties (wounded, killed, captured) among all branches of the German armed forces and its allies; 282,606 in the 6th Army from 21 August to the end of the battle, 17,293 in the 4th Panzer Army from 21 August to 31 January, 109,000 Romanians of which at least 70,000 were captured or missing, 114,000 Italians and 105,000 Hungarians were killed, wounded or captured.

The Germans lost 900 aircraft (including 274 transports and 165 bombers used as transports), 500 tanks and 6,000 artillery pieces. According to a contemporary Soviet report, 5,762 guns, 1,312 mortars, 12,701 heavy machine guns,

156,987 rifles, 80,438 sub-machine guns, 10,722 trucks, 744 aircraft; 1,666 tanks, 261 other armoured vehicles, 571 half-tracks and 10,679 motorcycles were captured by the Soviets. An unknown amount of Hungarian, Italian, and Romanian materiel was lost. Out of the nearly 91,000 German prisoners captured in Stalingrad, only about 5,000 ever returned to Germany.

The USSR, according to archival figures, suffered 1,129,619 total casualties; 478,741 personnel killed or missing, and 650,878 wounded or sick. The USSR lost 4,341 tanks destroyed or damaged, 15,728 artillery pieces and 2,769 combat aircraft. 955 Soviet civilians died in Stalingrad and its suburbs from aerial bombing by Luftflotte 4 as the German 4th Panzer and 6th Armies approached the city.

Stalingrad was a turning point for the Germans, and in fact a turning point in World War II.



Bush War Books has probably one of the finest collections of military titles available. Especially on the South African Border War.

Click [here](#) to visit their website.

“War does not determine who is right - only who is left”

Under three flags

Some men have fought in three different wars, but rarely have they fought for three different countries. This was one such man.

Men, and women, fight in wars for different reasons. Often it is because they have no choice in the matter. Many are conscripted or forced to fight. Yet many others fight because they want to do.

Those that choose to fight also do so for different reasons. Some will fight because they feel it is a duty they owe their country. Others will fight to defend their family and home. Then there are those that choose to fight because of what they believe in. The last type will sometimes fight regardless of what side they are on.

One such man not only fought for three different countries, he also fought in three separate wars. Yet even though he fought for different sides, he fought against what he considered to be the same enemy.

Lauri Allan Törni was born on May 28, 1919 in Viipuri, Finland. As a youngster he enjoyed sports and was friends with Sten "Stepa" Suvio, the welterweight boxer that won a gold medal at the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin.

While Törni was studying at business school he joined the Civil Guard. When he graduated in 1938 at the age of 19, he joined the 4th Independent Jaeger Battalion, an elite infantry unit.

Not long after that, on 30 November 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Finland. It was the start of the Winter War.

The Soviets were confident of a quick victory over Finland. After all, they had more men and were better armed. This confidence was soon shattered.

The Finns were realistic. They knew that had no hope of defeating the Soviet invaders. Their plan was to fight a war of attrition while they tried to convince the outside world to help.

When no outside help was forthcoming, the Finns went it alone. They surprised not only the Russians, but the rest of the world as well.

Törni did his part, fighting against the Soviets at Rautu and again at Lake Ladoga. In this last battle the Finns took advantage of poor Soviet tactics. Using a guerilla tactic known as *motti*, the Finns encircled three enemy divisions near Viipuri on 23 December.

Although the Soviets were defeated at this battle, it came at a heavy price. More than 1,300 Finns were killed. Soviet losses were even higher.

Although the Finns held out for over three months, the end result was inevitable. On 12 March 1940 they signed the Moscow Peace Treaty. The war officially ended the following day, with Finland losing territory in exchange for the guarantee of independence.

Törni had distinguished himself during the Winter War and had been promoted to the rank of 2nd lieutenant. Yet instead of celebrating, he was seething.

He vowed revenge against the Soviet Union and he was not particular how he achieved it.

Which was probably why in 1941 he headed for Vienna in Austria. He spent the next seven weeks training with the *Waffen Schutzstaffel* (Waffen SS), the 'Protective Squadron' of German's Nazi party. He did so well during his training that he was given the rank of *Untersturmführer*.

Once he had completed his training he returned to Finland, and just in time. On 22 June 1941 the Soviets invaded Finland once again, kicking off the Continuation War.

In the Soviet's defence, they had little choice. That was the same day that Germany invaded Russia and to secure their northwestern border they had to take Finland - or at least try.

This time, however, Finland was not alone. They now had an ally against the Soviets - Nazi Germany.

And Törni would get the revenge he had been seeking. Once again he distinguished himself and was placed in charge of a unit informally named "Detachment Törni".

His group was a constant thorn in the Soviet's side. They operated behind enemy lines, carrying out attacks and sabotage operations. They were so effective that the Soviets put a bounty on Törni's head for 3 million Finnish marks (more than six million rands). No one ever tried to collect the bounty.



THREE COUNTRIES, THREE SIDES: Lauri Törni fought against the communists with three different armies, from left: Finland, Nazi Germany, and the United States Army.

Finland gave a good account of themselves in the fight against Russia. They actually penetrated Soviet territory until the Finns were forced to retreat and sign the Moscow Armistice on 19 September 1944. This was followed by the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty, which formally ended the war. The Finns had to give up territory and pay reparations, but had firm guarantees of their independence - a state of affairs still recognised today.

Törni was awarded Finland's highest military decoration - the Mannerheim Cross of the Order of the Cross of Liberty. The celebrations were, however, very brief.

As part of the armistice signed with the Soviets, the Finns were required to expel all German forces on their soil. This resulted in the Lapland War between Finland and Germany. The war would last from September to November 1944 and result in over 8,000 casualties.

Törni played no part in this war. Part of the armistice that

Finland had signed required them to demobilise its military, leaving only a small force to deal with the Germans. Törni found that by November he was unemployed.

Although Törni was a patriot, he did not agree with his country's decision to expel the German forces. It wasn't that he had become pro-Nazi, it was just that he was fiercely anti-Soviet and fanatically anti-Communist.

He was also convinced that Finland had not seen the last of the Soviet Union. So when a pro-German resistance movement approached him in January 1945, he was all ears. Once again he found himself in Germany, learning to be a saboteur until his training was cut short in March.

Unable to return to Finland, he joined a local unit fighting the Soviets near Schwerin before surrendering to the Allies.

They threw him in a POW camp in Lübeck, which he escaped, finally returning to Fin-

land in June.

The timing couldn't have been worse for Törni. Finland was anxious to disassociate itself from its former ally, so Törni was arrested for fighting for the wrong side. He was charged with treason. He was thrown into prison, but he escaped.

He was recaptured in April 1946 and sentenced to six years in prison. Yet again he escaped, and yet again he was recaptured. He served two years before receiving a pardon from the president in December 1948.

By this stage he was fed up with his country and he made his way to Sweden the following year.

In 1950 he boarded a cargo ship bound for America. In 1954 he joined the US Army. By then he had a new name - Larry Thorne.

With his experience he was soon on his way into the Special Forces. While in the Special Forces, he taught skiing, survival, mountaineering, and

guerrilla tactics. In turn he attended airborne school, and advanced in rank; attending Officer Candidate School, he was commissioned as a 1st lieutenant in the Signal Corps in 1957.

In November 1963 he was deployed to South Vietnam as part of Special Forces Detachment A-734. They were stationed in the Tỉnh Biên District and assigned to operate Civilian Irregular Defence Group (CIDG) encampments at Châu Lăng and later Tỉnh Biên.

During a fierce attack on the CIDG camp in Tỉnh Biên, he received two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star Medal for valour during the battle. This attack would later be described by author Robin Moore in his book *The Green Berets*.

His second tour in Vietnam began in February 1965 with 5th Special Forces Group; he then transferred to Military Assistance Command, Vietnam - Studies and Observations Group (MACV-SOG), a classified US special operations unit focusing on unconventional warfare in Vietnam, as a military advisor.

On 18 October 1965, he was supervising a clandestine mission to locate Viet Cong turn-around points along Ho Chi Minh trail and destroy them with airstrikes.

During the operation his Republic of Vietnam Air Force CH-34 helicopter crashed in a mountainous area of Phước Sơn District, Quảng Nam Province, Vietnam, 40 km from Da Nang. Rescue teams were unable to locate the crash site.

Shortly after his disappearance, he was promoted to the

rank of major and posthumously awarded the Legion of Merit and Distinguished Flying Cross.

In 1999 his remains were found by a Finnish and Joint Task Force-Full Accounting team and repatriated to the United States following a Hanoi Noi Bai International Airport ceremony that included Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Ambassador Pete Peterson.

Formally identified in 2003, his remains were buried on 26 June 2003 at Arlington National Cemetery. He was memorialized on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

As for Finland, they consider him a national hero, once more.

Lauri Allan Törni Decorations

Finnish Decorations

- 2nd class medal of Freedom, 26 July 1940
- 1st class medal of Freedom, 24 August 1940
- 3rd class Cross of Liberty, 9 October 1941
- 4th class Cross of Liberty, 23 May 1942
- Mannerheim Cross, 9 July 1944
- 1st Div. Memorial Cross
- Border Jaeger Troops Cross
- Defense Forces Bronze Medal

German Decorations

Iron Cross, 2 class, 11 December 1943

United States Army Badges

- Combat Infantry Badge
- Master Parachutist Badge



**Mannerheim Cross of the
Order of the Cross of Liberty.**

Decorations and medals

- Legion of Merit
- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Bronze Star Medal with “V” device
- Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster
- Air Medal
- Army Commendation Medal
- Good Conduct Medal
- National Defense Service Medal with star
- Vietnam Service Medal with two campaign stars
- Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Winterhope 2018



Mutual Help Project

DATE: FRIDAY 01 JUNE 2018
PLACE: TOMMY RENDLE VC SHELLHOLE, KOEBERG ROAD, RUGBY
TIME: 19H00
ENTRANCE FEE: OLD CLOTHES, BLANKETS ETC

Come open your hearts and cupboards. Please donate old clothes, tinned food, blankets – anything that will keep somebody in need, warm this coming winter.

You will receive a complimentary sherry (for the cold) at the door. Homemade soup and bread will be available for R10.00 per cup. Cash Bar will be open.

Hope to see you there

Rank Structure - WWII German Military

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles looking at the rank structure of various armed forces. This month we look at the German Military in World War II

The German Wehrmacht (Defence Force) was divided up into four main fighting branches.

These were the Heer (Army), Luftwaffe (Air Force), Kriegsmarine (Navy), and the Waffen Schutzstaffel or Waffen SS (Armed Protective Echelon).

The Waffen SS was the armed wing of the Nazi Party's SS organisation.

The Waffenfarbe was a colour code system to identify branch of service i.e. white was the colour of the Infantry. The Waffenfarbe was used on head gear either as Soutache or piping, or on the uniform of collar patches, epaulets and on certain uniforms piping on the collar. See the chart on the right.

Colour	Army
[Red]	Generals, Artillery, Heavy Anti-Aircraft
[Dark Red]	General Staff Corps, Veterinary
[Pink]	Armour, Armour Reconnaissance
[Orange]	Military Police
[Purple]	Specialist Service
[Light Orange]	Ordnance
[Yellow]	Reconnaissance, Cavalry
[Light Yellow]	Signal
[Green]	Mountain & Light Infantry
[Dark Green]	Armoured Infantry
[White]	Infantry
[Blue]	Transport & Supply
[Dark Blue]	Medical
[Black]	Combat & Construction Engineer
[Teal]	Specialist Officers
[Grey]	Propaganda Troops



Heer (Army)

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO)

Obergrenadier (Private 1st Class)	Gefreiter (Lance Corporal)	Obergefreiter (Corporal)	Obergefreiter (Senior Corporal)	Stabsgefreiter (Admin Corporal)

Unteroffizier (Sergeant)	Unterfeldwebel (S/Sergeant)	Feldwebel (Sergeant 1st Class)	Oberfeldwebel (Master Sergeant)	Stabsfeldwebel (Sergeant Major)

Officers

Leutnant (2nd Lieutenant)	Oberleutnant (1st Lieutenant)	Hauptmann (Captain)	Major	Oberstleutnant (Lt/Colonel)	Oberst (Colonel)
Generalmajor (Brig Gen)	Generalleutnant (Major General)	General der (arm) (Lt General)	General	Generalfeldmarshall (Field Marshal)	



Luftwaffe (Air Force)

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO)

Gefreiter (Aircraftman 1st Class))	Obergefreiter (Leading Aircraftman)	Hauptgefreiter (Senior Aircraftman)	Unteroffizier (Corporal)	Unterfeldwebel (Corporal)



The Fallschirmjäger were the parachute branch of the Wehrmacht. They fell under the control of the Luftwaffe. You can read more details of the Fallschirmjäger and their leader, General Kurt Student, in the December 2017 issue of Military Despatches.



Feldwebel
(Sergeant)



Oberfeldwebel
(Flight Sergeant)



Stabsfeldwebel
(Warrant Officer)

Officers



Leutnant
(Pilot Officer) Oberleutnant
(Flying Officer) Hauptmann
(Flight Lieutenant) Major
(Squadron Leader) Oberstleutnant
(Wing Commander) Oberst
(Group Captain)



Generalmajor
(Air Commodore) Generalleutnant
(Air Vice Marshal) General der
(arm) (Air Marshal) Generaloberst
(Air Chief Marshal) Generalfeldmar-
shall (Air Chief Marshal) Reichs-
marschall



Kriegsmarine (Navy)

Seaman Ranks



Matrosengefreiter Matrosen-
obergefreiter Matrosen-
hauptgefreiter Matrosen-
stabsgefreiter Matrosen-
oberstabsgefreiter

Petty Officer, Chief Petty Officer, & Warrant Officer

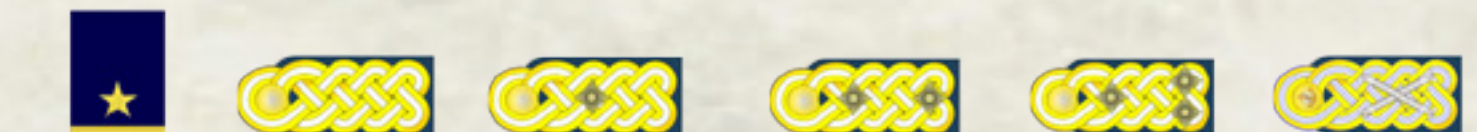


Maat Obermaat Feldwebel Stabs-
feldwebel Ober-
feldwebel Stabsober-
feldwebel

Officers



Leutnant zur
See Oberleutnant
zur See Kapitän-
leutnant Korvetten-
kapitän Fregatten-
kapitän Kapitän zur
See



Kommodore Konteradmiral Vizeadmiral Admiral General-
admiral Großadmiral



Waffen SS

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO)



SS-Oberschutze



SS-Sturmann



SS-Rottenfuhrer



SS-Unter-
scharfuhrer



SS-Scharfuhrer



SS-Oberscharfuhrer



SS-Haupt-
scharfuhrer



SS-Sturm-
scharfuhrer

Officers



SS-Unter-
sturmfuhrer SS-Ober-
sturmfuhrer SS-Haupt-
sturmfuhrer SS-Sturm-
bannfuhrer SS-Obersturm-
bannfuhrer SS-Stand-
artenfuhrer



SS-Oberfuhrer



SS-Brigade-
fuhrer



SS-Grup-
penfuhrer



SS-Obergrup-
penfuhrer



SS-Oberstgrup-
penfuhrer

A matter of survival - survival tin

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles looking at survival, something that has always been important for those in the military. We start off by looking at how to put together a survival tin.

In our modern world of high-tech gadgets and instant communication, it is difficult to believe that anyone could find themselves in a survival situation. Think again.

You go for a hike in the mountains. The next thing the weather closes in, the temperature plummets, and you find yourself lost. Congratulations, you're in a survival situation.

You're on a flight somewhere and the plane has to make a forced landing in some remote jungle or a desert. Once again you're in a survival situation.

The problems of survival are the same for both soldiers and civilians. The difference is that soldiers may need to hide their presence, whereas civilians will want to attract attention.

Water, food, fire and shelter are essential needs for survival. You must know how to obtain them if you want to survive.

In many countries around the world soldiers are taught survival skills. Some of the training is very basic, while some special units are taught advanced survival skills.

No matter what your level of training is, in a survival situation you will have to do exactly that - survive. You need to stay alive until help either reaches you, or you reach help.

Personally, I like the Boy Scouts motto "Be Prepared". While you can never really be prepared for a survival situa-

tion, a few key items can make all the difference.

The idea is to put together a small survival kit. An old tobacco tin is ideal for this. Make sure the inside is polished so that it can be used as a signaling mirror.

Each of the items in the tin have earned their place. Make it a habit to keep your tin on you when you are travelling anywhere. I keep mine in my camera jacket pocket and there have been many occasions when the contents have helped me out.

Some of the items are more useful in certain situations. For example a fish hook and line is invaluable in a jungle where there are rivers, but would be useless in a desert.

Seal the tin with electrical tape to keep it waterproof. Check the contents often and replace any items that have deteriorated. Mark all drug containers with the use and dosage and keep an eye on the expiry date. Replace when needed.

Pack any spare space in the container with cotton wool. This will keep the contents from rattling around and it can be used for fire lighting. Fire is vital to survival and there are four items in the tin for making it.

1. Matches

Waterproof matches are useful but are often expensive to buy. You can make your own



waterproof matches by dipping the head in melted candle wax.

Matches are the easiest way to start a fire, but don't waste them. Use a match only when you have tried any of the other methods. Take them from the tin one at a time and replace the lid. Never leave the container open or lying on the ground.

2. Candle

A candle has two uses. Once it is lit you can use it to start a number of fires. It is also a source of light.

Shave your candle into a square shape so that it fits into the tin.

3. Flint and striker

Flints will work even when wet. They will go on striking long after you have run out of matches.

Invest in a good flint with a saw striker.

4. Magnifying glass

A magnifying glass can be used to start a fire from direct sunlight. It is also useful for searching for splinters and stings.

Get a small magnifying glass



and remove the handle to save space.

5. Needles and thread

Pack several needles, including one with a very large eye that can be threaded with sinew and coarse threads. Choose strong thread and wrap it around the needles or a piece of cardboard.

6. Fish hooks and line

Take a selection of fish hooks in a small packet. Add a few small lead weights. Remember that a small hook can catch both large and small fish, while a big hook will only catch big ones.

Include as much line as possible as it will also be useful for catching birds.

7. Compass

A small luminous button compass is ideal. Don't go for something cheap and nasty. It is pointless taking something that is not going to indicate the correct direction.

It is also advisable that you know how to read a compass.

8. Beta light

These work similar to a glow-stick, except that they will last for ages and can be turned on and off.

They are ideal for reading a map at night and can also be used as a fishing lure.

9. Snare wire

Brass wire is the best. About 60-90 cm should do. It is used to make snares, but could solve many survival problems.

10. Flexible saw

These can be used to cut even quite large trees. Invest in a de-

cent one because some of the cheap ones are useless.

Cover it in a light film of grease to protect it from rust.

Medical Kit

If you are on any prescription drugs, may sure you pack some. Otherwise there are certain items that will always useful.

11. Pain killer

Myprodol is good for this. Not only is it a pain killer but it is also an inflammatory.

12. Intestinal sedative

Diarrhea is not fun in any situation. One of the problems is that it can cause rapid dehydration.

Immodium is usually favoured to treat this condition.

13. Antibiotic

For general infections Tetracycline can be used even by people hypersensitive to penicillin.

14. Water sterilizing tablets

These are vital. Water should always be boiled if possible yet this cannot always be done.

Invest in a good brand of water sterilizing tablet. They may save your life.

15. Anti-malaria tablets

Malaria is not something to play around with. These are essential in areas where malaria is present. There are some types which require only one tablet a month.

16. Antihistamine

For allergies, insect bites and stings. Benadryl is good for this and is readily obtainable.

17. Scalpel

You can get a credit card type surgical scalpel that was designed by the World Health Organisation.

I actually keep mine in my wallet. I don't know how many times I've been through airport security, forgetting that it's in my wallet. As yet, no-one has ever stopped me.

18. Butterfly sutures

These are normally used for fastening bandages. Yet they are also excellent for closing a wound.

19. Plasters

Assorted sizes, preferably waterproof. They can be used for minor abrasions and keeping cuts clean. They can also be cut as butterfly sutures.

20. Credit card survival tool

You can get various different types and they are far more useful than they seem.

Like the scalpel, they can easily be carried in your wallet.

21. Condom

This may seem like an odd item. Yet they make an excellent water bag and can hold a litre of water with ease.

Try and find a non-lubricated one if possible as lubricated ones can give the water an odd taste.

And that's it for this first article in the series. Next month we will look at putting together a survival pouch as well as choosing a survival knife.

Semper fi Gunny

Former Marine drill instructor and actor R. Lee Ermey, who played the iconic role of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman in *Full Metal Jacket*, has passed away at the age of 74.

Often as former military people we will watch a movie and think that the actor is about as believable as a politician dishing out election promises.

Yet sometimes you will watch an actor and think, "that guy is for real. He's been there before."

Many actors, and actresses, actually served in the military (Read "10 Celebrities that served in the military" - October 2017). Ronald Lee Ermey was one such person.

Born in Kansas on 24 March 1944 he often got into trouble with the local authorities as a teenager. After he was arrested for the second time for criminal mischief at the age of 17, the judge gave him the choice between prison and joining the military. He chose the military.

In 1961 he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and did his recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

He spent 14 months in Vietnam and would go on to rise to the rank of staff sergeant. He became a drill instructor at the very same base where he did his initial training.

He was medically discharged because of several injuries incurred during his service. On 17 May 2002 he received an honorary promotion to the rank of gunnery sergeant by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James L. Jones.

On leaving the military, Em-

rey enrolled at the University of Manila in the Philippines. It was while there that he was cast in his first film. He played a First Air Cavalry chopper pilot in *Apocalypse Now*, doubling as a technical advisor to director Francis Ford Coppola.

For the next few years he played a series of minor film roles. Then came his big break.

He was hired as a technical advisor for Stanley Kubrick's 1987 film *Full Metal Jacket*. Kubrick saw an instructional video tape which Ermey put together in which he went on an extended tirade towards several extras. Kubrick cast him in the role of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman.

Kubrick allowed Ermey to write or edit his own dialogue and improvise on the set, a notable rarity in a Kubrick film. Kubrick later indicated that Ermey was an excellent performer, often needing just two or three takes per scene, also unusual for a Kubrick film.

He was brilliant in the film, stealing every scene he was in.

Ermey's performance won critical raves and he was nominated for a Golden Globe Award as Best Supporting Actor.

Ermey subsequently appeared in about 60 films and made a number of appearances in television shows.

In *Mail Call*, which was shown on the History Channel, Ermey discussed weaponry, tactical matters, and military history. Mail Call's subject matter



DON'T EYEBALL ME: R. Lee Ermey as Gunnery Sergeant Hartman in *Full Metal Jacket*.

was dictated by viewer e-mails; one episode focused on an M1 Abrams tank, while others involved World War II secrets, and others focused on elements of medieval warfare.

In 2009, Ermey hosted a second History Channel show entitled *Lock n' Load with R. Lee Ermey*, which discussed the history of various weapons used by militaries of today.

Ermey died at a hospital in Santa Monica, California from complications related to pneumonia on the morning of 15 April 2018. He was 74 years old.

The last line of the Marine Corps Hymn go;

If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven's
scenes;

They will find the streets are
guarded

By United States Marines.

And R. Lee Ermey is sure to be one of those marines guarding the streets.

Fighter Aces of World War II

In last month's head-to-head, we looked at the top fighter aces of World War I. As mentioned in the last article, a fighter ace was someone that had been credited with shooting down five or more enemy aircraft. This month we look at the top fighter aces of World War II.

The aircraft flown in World War II were far superior to those flown 21 years earlier. Aircraft technology also increased in leaps and bounds. By

Germany

German pilots flew for the *Luftwaffe*, which was headed by *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Göring. He had been a fighter ace in World War I with 22 kills.

Germany had 427 pilots with 20 or more kills. The most of any country during the war.

In fact the top 120 aces of the war were all German. 182 of these aces were killed in action.

- Erich Hartmann (352 kills). He was nicknamed *Bubi* (The Kid) by his comrades and the 'Black Devil' by the Soviets. He flew 1,404 combat missions and participated in aerial combat on 825 separate occasions. 345 of the aircraft he shot down were Soviet, while seven were American. He was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds. After the war he surrendered to the Americans, but was handed over

June 1944 the first jet-powered aircraft was in combat. By the end of the war a total of five different jets had seen combat.

Fighter aces in World War II had tremendously varying kill scores, affected as they were by many factors: the pilot's skill level, the performance of the airplane he flew and those he flew against, how long he served, his opportunity to meet the enemy in the air (Allied to Axis disproportionate), and the standards

his air service brought to the awarding of victory credits.

The pilots of World War II achieved a far greater number of kills than those of World War I. The top fighter ace of World War I was Manfred von Richthofen, the famed 'Red Baron', with 80 kills. In World War II, 150 pilots surpassed von Richthofen's score.

Once again in this article we are looking at pilots that achieved 20 or more kills.

to the Red Army. He spent 10 years in various Soviet prison camps and gulags until he was released in 1955. In 1956 he joined the newly established West German German Air Force in the *Bundeswehr*.

- Gerhard Barkhorn (301 kills). He was the only other pilot besides Hartmann to achieve more than 300 kills. In March 1944 he was awarded the third-highest decoration in the Wehrmacht when he received the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords. After the war he joined the German Air Force of the *Bundeswehr*, serving until 1976.
- Gunther Rall (275 kills). He ended the war with the rank of major. He served as Inspector of the Air Force 1971–1974 and as the German Military Representa-



Bubi Hartmann

- tive to the NATO Military Committee 1974–1975.
- Otto Kittle (267 kills). He flew 583 combat missions on the Eastern Front before being killed on 14 February 1945.
- Walter Nowotny (258 kills). He flew 442 combat missions and was killed on 11 November 1944.

Finland



Ilmari Juutilainen

Pilots from Finland flew for

the *Ilmavoimat* (Finnish Air Force). They had 13 aces with 20 or more kills. All of their aces survived the war.

Their top five aces were:

- Ilmari Juutilainen (94 kills). He was the top non-German ace of World War II. After the wars he served in the air force until 1947. He worked as a professional pilot until 1956.
- Hans Wind (75 kills). He was awarded the Mannerheim-risti (Mannerheim Cross of Liberty), Finland's highest military decoration, twice.
- Eino Luukkanen (56 kills).

After the war, he was convicted of spying for Sweden. He retired in November 1951 after he was found guilty of espionage for having handed over some aerial photographs to a man who worked for the Swedish intelligence service.

- Urho Lehtovaara (44 kills). He was awarded the Mannerheim Cross on 9 July 1944.
- Oiva Tuominen (44 kills). After the war Tuominen resigned from military service and became a taxi operator. He remained an active sports pilot well into old age.

Japan



Tetsuzo Iwamoto

Japanese pilots flew either for the *Dai-Nippon Teikoku Kaigun Kōkū-tai* (Japanese Imperial Navy Air Service) or the *Dainippon Teikoku Rikugun Kōkūbutai* (Japanese Imperial Army Air Service).

In total 13 of their aces achieved 20 or more kills, and

four were killed in action.

- Tetsuzo Iwamoto (80 kills). He survived the war only to die from septicemia at the young age of 38.
- Shigeo Fukumoto (72 kills). While he did survive the war, there are no records as to what happened to him afterwards.
- Shoichi Sugita (70 kills). He was killed in action on 15 April 1945.
- Hiromichi Shinohara (58 kills). On his first day in combat he recorded 10 kills. He would also go on to claim a Japanese record by shooting down 11 enemy aircraft in a single day. He was killed in action on 27 August 1939 during the undeclared Soviet–Japanese border conflicts in 1939.
- Takeo Okumura (54 kills). He was killed in action on 22 September 1943.

Kills in other Wars

- 12 German aces scored kills in the Spanish Civil War and six of them became aces.
- Lev Shestakov (Russia) - had 39 kills in the Spanish Civil War.
- Seven Italian aces scored victories in the Spanish Civil War and two became aces. American ace Albert Baumler also became an ace in the Spanish Civil War.
- Fourteen American aces scored kills in the Korean War. Two of them became aces.
- Three German aces had kills in World War I. Two of them were also World War I aces.
- Robin Olds of the USA scored four kills in Vietnam.

Romania

Romanian pilots were part of the *Aeronautica Regala Romana* (Royal Romanian Air Force).

Eight of their aces scored more than 20 kills and one of them was killed in action.

- Constantin Cantacuzino (69 kills). Nicknamed Bâzu, he came from a noble family. He was the captain of the Romanian ice hockey team at the World Championships in 1931 and 1933. Not wanting to live under a communist regime after the war, he escape to Italy and later went to Spain where he flew in air shows to earn a living.
- Alexandru Șerbănescu (47 kills). While most of his victories were against the Russians, he did shoot down an American B-17 Flying For-

tress and two P-51 Mustangs. He was killed on 18 August 1944.

- Ion Milu (45 kills). After the war he became a test pilot.
- Daniel Vizanty (43 kills). He accumulated 4,600 flying hours during the war. After the war he was removed from the army by the Communist regime. He was charged with “conspiracy against social order” and sentenced to five years in prison, of which he served two. In June 1977 he was invited to Paris by mayor Jacques Chirac. He never returned to Romania.
- Tudor Greceanu (42 kills). After the war he was arrested by the communist government and spent a number of years in prison.



Constantin Cantacuzino



Romanian aircraft marking

Flying for the *Voyenno-Vozdushnye Sily* (Soviet Air Force), Russian pilots saw extensive action on the Eastern Front.

Twelve of their pilots would go on to score more than 20 kills.

- Ivan Kozhedub (66 kills). He was the Allied “Ace of Aces” in World War II. In 1951, with the rank of colonel, he took part in the Korean War but was not allowed permission to participate in combat missions. He went on to become a general and was made an Aviation Marshal in 1985.
- Alexdandr Pokryshkin (59 kills). Among the medals he was awarded were three Hero of the Soviet Union

golden stars and six Orders of Lenin. He continued to serve after the war and in 1968 he became Deputy Chief of the Air Defense Forces.

- Kiriil Yevstigneyev (53 kills). He ended World War II as the commander of the 178th Guard Fighter Air Regiment. In 1966 he became a major general.
- Dmitir Hlinka (50 kills). He was made a Hero of the Soviet Union twice.
- Arseniy Vorozheikin, Alexander Koldunov, and Nikolay Skomorohov (all with 46 kills). In 1984 Koldunov was promoted to Chief Marshal of Aviation.

Russia



Ivan Kozhedub

Croatia



Mato Dukovac

Croatian pilots flew for the Zrakoplovstvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske (Air Force of the Independent State of Croatia) and fought on the side of the Germans.

Two of their pilots went on to achieve more than 20 kills, with one of them being killed in action.

- Mato Dukovac (44 kills). He defected to the Soviet Union in September 1944 and was returned to Yugoslavia in November 1944. After the war he worked as a flight instructor for the Yugoslav Air Force. In April 1945 he defected to Italy and left in 1946 and became a captain in the Syrian Air Force. Dur-

ing the 1948 Arab-Israeli War he flew combat missions against Israel. Following the war, he emigrated to Canada.

- Cvitan Galic (38 kills). He was awarded the German Cross in Gold on 23 June 1943. He also won the Iron Cross 1st Class and 2nd Class. He was killed in action on 6 April 1944. He had just landed after completing a patrol and was in the act of getting out of the cockpit when Spitfire IXs of No.2 Squadron SAAF South African Air Force strafed the airfield. His plane was hit by a bomb.

America

American pilots flew for either the United States Army Air Forces, United States Navy, or the United States Marine Corps Aviation.

A total of 27 Americans would go on to score 20 or more kills and six of them were killed in action.

- Richard I. Bong (40 kills). He was one of the most decorated American fighter pilots of World War II. His awards included the Medal of Honor. He was killed on 6 August 1945 while testing a P-80 Shooting Star jet fighter in California.
- Thomas B. McGuire (38 kills). He was killed in action on 7 January 1945 and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.
- David McCampbell (34 kills). He flew for the United

States Navy and was a winner of the Medal of Honor. He also set a world single mission aerial combat record of shooting down nine enemy planes in one mission, on October 24, 1944.

- Francis “Gabby” Gabreski (28 kills). He was the top American and United States Army Air Forces fighter ace over Europe in World War II and a jet fighter ace with the Air Force in the Korean War.
- Gregory “Pappy” Boyington (28 kills). He received both the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross. He flew for the United States Marine Corps Aviation and the 1st American Volunteer Group, the ‘Flying Tigers’, in the Republic of China Air Force in Burma.



Richard I. Bong



US aircraft marking

South Africa

South African pilots flew for the Royal Air Force and the South African Air Force.

Four South African would score 20 or more kills and one of them was killed in action.

- Marmaduke “Pat” Pattle (40 kills). When he was rejected by the South African Air Force at the age of 18, he travelled to the UK and joined the RAF in 1936. He was the top British Commonwealth ace and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar. He was killed in action on 20 April 1941.
- Adolph “Sailor” Malan (32 kills). He led No. 74 Squadron RAF during the Battle of Britain. In the 1920s he

Britain



Johnnie Johnson

Britain had 12 pilots that would achieve 20 or more kills. One of them was killed in action.

- James Edgar Johnson (38 kills). Early in the war he often flew alongside Wing

served as a cadet on the South African Training Ship *General Botha*. This would later earn him the nickname ‘Sailor’. After the war he became involved in the South African domestic political scene and was a fierce opponent of the National Party and the Apartheid system.

- Johannes Jacobus le Roux (23 kills). Known as Chris, he saw action in the Battle of France and later in North Africa. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and two Bars. He died in an aircraft accident on 9th September 1944.
- Petrus ‘Dutch’ Hugo (22 kills). He was awarded the Distinguished Service Or-

Commander Douglas Badger and Australian ace Tony Gaze. His numerous awards included the DSO and DFC and Bar. After the war he participated in the Korean War, flying the American Lockheed F-80 Shooting Star. He ended his career as an air vice marshal and was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB).

- Robert Tuck (30 kills). He won the DSO, DFC and two Bars, and the Air Force Cross. On 28 January he was shot down and taken prisoner of war. In February 1945 he escaped and joined up with the advancing Russians, where he spent some time fighting alongside them.
- William Vale (30 kills). He fought in the North African



Marmaduke Pattle

der, the Distinguished Flying Cross and two Bars. He retired from the RAF in 1950 as a Group Captain.

Campaign and the Greek Campaign. He was awarded the DFC and Bar and the Air Force Cross. He retired from the RAF as a squadron leader on 3 June 1959.

- Bob Braham (29 kills). He flew Hawker Hurricanes and De Havilland Mosquitos. He was awarded the DSO and two Bars, the DFC and two Bars, and the Air Force Cross. He was shot down in June 1944 and spent the remainder of the war as a POW at Stalag Luft III.
- James ‘Ginger’ Lacey (28 kills). He was the second highest scoring RAF fighter pilot of the Battle of Britain. He retired from the RAF on 5 March 1967 as a flight lieutenant

France



Pierre Clostermann

French pilots flew for either the Royal Air Force or the Free French Air Force

Three French pilots achieved 20 or more kills.

- Pierre Clostermann (33 kills). He was born in Brazil but moved to France to complete his secondary education. He wrote a very successful book *Le Grand Cirque* (The Big Show), on his experiences in the war. He also briefly re-enlisted in the *Armée de l’Air* in 1956–57 to fly ground attack missions during the Algerian War.
- Marcel Albert (23 kills). He flew for both the Roy-

al Air Force and the Free French Airforce. After the war he flew as a test pilot in 1946 and was later sent to Czechoslovakia as air attaché. In 1948, he left the military and moved to the United States with his wife.

- Jean Demozay (21 kills). Another pilot that flew for the RAF and the Free French Airforce. When the war ended he became deputy general commander of the Air Schools in October 1945 and died in a plane crash on December 19, 1945, three months after the war had ended.

Slovak Republic

Their pilots flew for the *Slovenské vzdušné zbrane* (Slovak Air Force). They fought on the side of the Germans in the Russian Campaign.

Three of their pilots achieved more than 20 kills. Two of them survived the war.

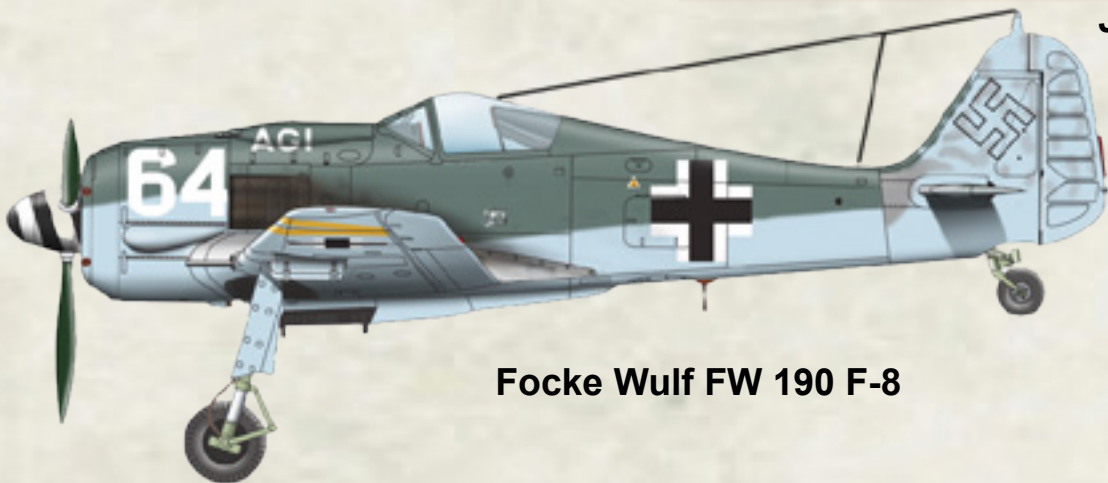
- Ján Režňák (32 kills). He flew for the Slovak Air Force until April 1945 when the retreating Germans invited him to join the *Luftwaffe*. After the war he worked as a private flying instructor and later as an aircraft designer

and engineer.

- Izidor Kovárik (28 kills). Among the medals he was awarded were the German Cross in Gold, and the Iron Cross 1st and 2nd Class. He was killed in an aircraft accident on 11 July 1944.
- Jan Gerthoffer (26 kills). Although credited with 26 kills, his final tally may have been as high as 33. This would have made him the top Slovak ace of World War II.



Ján Režňák



Focke Wulf FW 190 F-8

Hungary

Hungarian pilots flew for the Magyar Királyi Honvéd Légierő (Royal Hungarian Air Force). They fought on the side of the Germans against the Russians.

Three of their pilots would score more than 20 kills.

- Dezső Szentgyörgyi (30 kills). After the war, he returned home and became a pilot of the MASZOVLET (Hungarian-Soviet Airlines) between 1946 and 1949. Between 1950 and 1956 he spent several years in Communist prisons, before becoming a pilot of the renamed Malév Hungarian Airlines. On 28 August

1971 he died in a crash near Copenhagen while flying an Ilyushin Il-18 (HA-MOC). He was due to retire in less than three weeks.

- György Debrődy (26 kills). Not much is known about him. While he did survive the war, he was seriously injured.
- Lajos Tóth (26 kills). In March 1951 he was one of 12 people charged with conspiracy. He was sentenced to death and executed on 11 June 1951. In 1990 his sentence was overturned and he was promoted to posthumous lieutenant colonel.



Dezső Szentgyörgyi

Australia

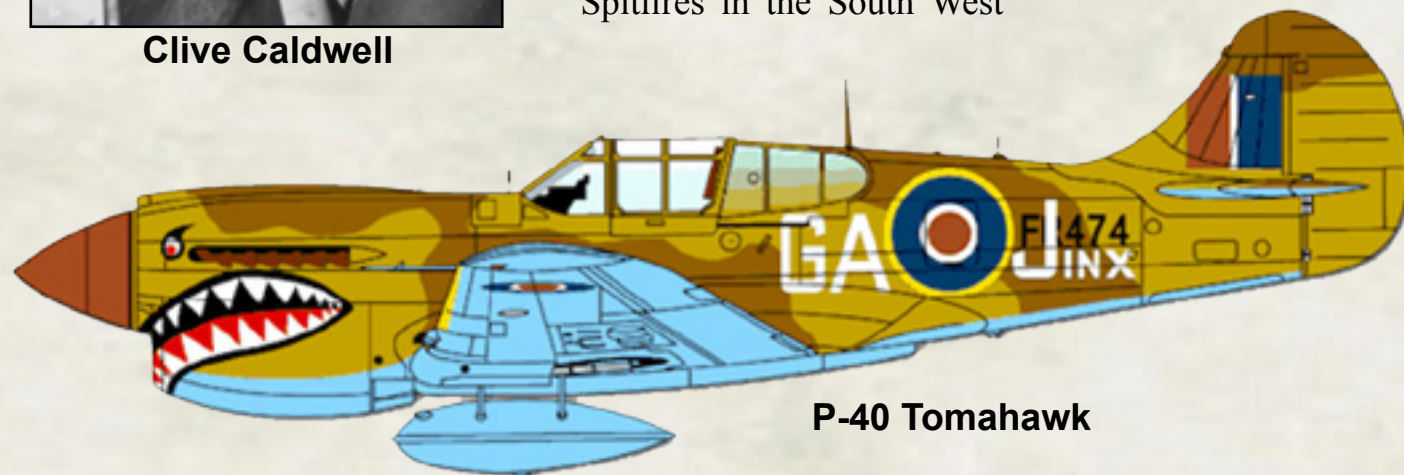


Clive Caldwell

Australian pilots flew for the Royal Australian Air Force. Only one Australian pilot would achieve more than 20 kills.

- Clive Caldwell (28 kills). He flew over 300 operational sorties and was one of the few pilots to become "an ace in a day". In other words he shot down five or more enemy aircraft in a single day. He flew Curtiss P-40 Tomahawks and Kittyhawks in the North African Campaign and Supermarine Spitfires in the South West

Pacific Theatre. He was the highest-scoring P-40 pilot from any air force and the highest-scoring Allied pilot in North Africa. He was awarded the DSO, DFC and Bar. His military service ended in controversy, when he resigned in protest at the misuse of Australian First Tactical Air Force's fighter units and was later court-martialed and convicted for trading liquor.



P-40 Tomahawk

Canada



George Beurling

Canadian pilots flew for the Royal Air Force or the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Four Canadian pilots achieved more than 20 kills with one of

Ireland

A number of Irishmen decided to take up the fight against Germany. They joined the Royal Air Force.

Only one of them would go on to score more than 20 kills, and he in turn was killed in action.

- Brendan 'Paddy' Finucane (28 kills). He was awarded the DSO, DFC and two Bars. He flew in the Battle of Britain. He is noted as being the youngest person ever given command of a fighter

them being killed in action.

Four Canadian pilots achieved 20 or more kills, with one of them being killed in action.

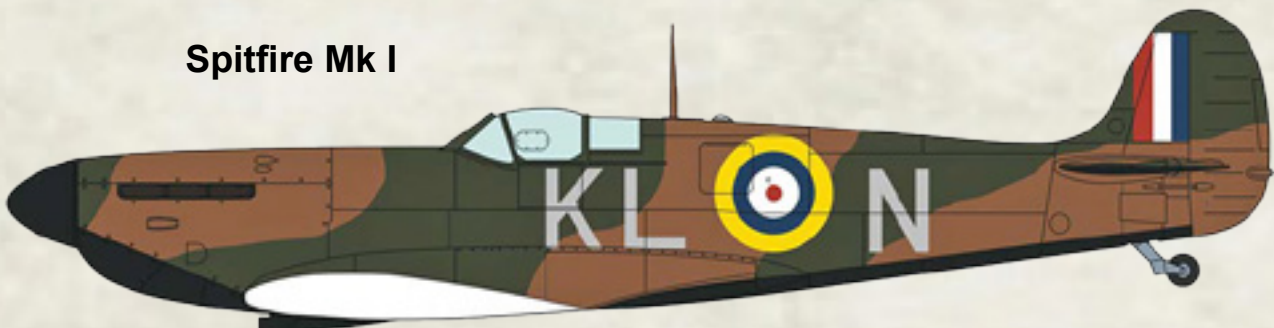
- George 'Buzz' Beurling (31 kills). He was known as 'The Falcon of Malta' and the 'Knight of Malta' after shooting down 27 Axis aircraft in just 14 days over the besieged Mediterranean island. In 1948, he was recruited to fly P-51 Mustangs for the Israeli Air Force. On 20 May 1948, while en route to Israel, he was killed in an aircraft crash in Rome.
- Edward F. Charles (22 kills). He was awarded the DSO, DFC and Bar, and the American Silver Star. After the war he returned to Canada and stayed in the RCAF. He

had a mental breakdown in 1949 and was diagnosed with acute schizophrenia that was later pronounced incurable.

- Henry Wallace McLeod (21 kills). Like Beurling, he flew at Malta where he scored 13 kills. It earned him the nickname 'The Eagle of Malta'. He won the DSO, DFC and Bar. He was shot down and killed on 27 September 1944.
- Vernon Crompton Woodward (20 kills). He flew for the RAF in North Africa, winning the DFC and Bar. He retired in January 1963 and settled in Australia, where he formed an air charter company.



Brendan Finucane



Spitfire Mk I

New Zealand

Pilots from New Zealand flew for the Royal Air Force or the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Five of their pilots would score more than 20 kills.

- Colin Falkland Gray (27 kills). It was only on his third attempt that he managed to pass the medical. He was awarded the DSO, DFC and two Bars. After the war he returned to New Zealand on secondment to the Royal New Zealand Air Force from July 1945 to March 1946. He retired from the RAF in March 1961 with the rank of group captain.
- Alan Deere (22 kills). He took part in the Battle of France, Battle of Britain, and the Invasion of Normandy. He was awarded the DSO, DFC and Bar, the American DFC and the Order of the British Empire.

After the war he remained in the RAF and retired in December 1967 with the rank of air commodore.

- William Crawford-Crompton (21 kills). Among his awards were Companion of the Order of Bath, Commander of the British Empire, DSO and Bar, DFC and Bar, and the American Silver Star. He retired from the RAF in 1968 with the rank of air vice marshal.
- Raymond Hesselyn (21 kills). He flew for the Royal New Zealand Air Force and took part in the Siege of Malta. On 3 October 1943 he was shot down and spent the remainder of the war as a POW. After the war he joined the RAF and held the rank of squadron leader when he died in hospital on 14 November 1963, aged



Colin Gray

just 42.

- Evan Mackie (20 kills). A pilot with the Royal New Zealand Air Force, he took part in the Italian Campaign. After the war he returned to New Zealand and continued his career as an electrician

Italy



Teresio Martinoli

Part of the Axis power, Italian pilots flew for the *Regia Aeronautica Italiana* (Italian Air Force).

Three Italian pilots achieved 20 or more kills. None of them survived the war, with two of them killed in action.

- Teresio Vittoria Martinoli (22 kills). One of the few pilots that fought both for and against the Germans. After the armistice of 8 September 1943, he joined the *Aeronautica Co-Belligerente* (Co-Belligerent Air Force), fighting alongside the Allies. He lost his life in a flying accident on 25 August 1944, while converting from

the C.205 to the P-39 Airacobra.

- Leonardo Ferrulli (22 kills). His first exposure to combat was during the Spanish Civil War where he achieved a single kill. He was killed on 5 July 1943 when he bailed out from his damaged Macchi C.205. He was too low and his parachute did not open.
- Franco Lucchini (21 kills). He became an ace during the Spanish Civil War, claiming five kills. He was killed in action on 5 July 1943.

Top Aces of World War II

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Erich Hartmann - 352 | 6. Wilhelm Batz - 237 |
| 2. Gerhard Barkhorn - 301 | 7. Erich Rudorffer - 222 |
| 3. Günther Rall - 275 | 8. Heinz Bär - 220 |
| 4. Otto Kittel * - 267 | 9. Hermann Graf - 212 |
| 5. Walter Nowotny * - 258 | 10. Heinrich Ehrler * - 208 |

All were from the German *Luftwaffe*.
* denotes killed in action.

Ace in a day

A number of pilots would go on to become an ‘Ace in a Day’. This meant that they shot down five or more aircraft in a single day.

Three *Luftwaffe* pilots became an Ace in a Day. They were Hans Waldmann, Heinz-Wolfgang Schnauffer and Max Bucholz.

Eight American pilots achieved the same. David McCampbell (who achieved it twice), George E. Preddy, Jr., Donald S. Bryan and Oscar F. Perdomo were from the US Army Air Force. James E. Swett and Jefferson J. DeBlanc were from the US Marine Corps.

Stanley W. Vejtasa, Edward Cobb Outlaw and Vernon E. Graham were in the US Navy.

British pilots that became an Ace in a Day were Archie McKellar, Nicholas Gresham Cooke, Albert Lippett, Ronald Hamlyn, Charles H. Dyson (all RAF), and Richard John Cork from the Fleet Air Arm.

Others that achieved this were Ilmari Juutilainen and Yrjö Turkka (both from Finland), Clive Caldwell (Australia), Albert Gerald Lewis (South Africa), Pierre Le Gloan (France), Brian Carbury (New Zealand), Richard Joseph Audet (Canada) and Antoni Glowacki (Polish

Air Force).

Three pilots would become Double Aces in a Day, shooting down 10 or more enemies in a single day. They were Erich Hartmann and Heinz Bär (both German) and Hans Wind (Finland).

Even more remarkable were the four pilots that became Triple Aces in a Day. They shot down 15 or more aircraft in a single day.

They were Emil Lang, Hans-Joachim Marseille, August Lambert and Hubert Strassl. All were from the *Luftwaffe*.

Interesting trivia

- Hermann Graf of the *Luftwaffe* was the first ever pilot with 200 victories.
- Heinz-Wolfgang Schnauffer (*Luftwaffe*) was the top night fighter ace of the war.
- Werner Mölders (*Luftwaffe*) was the first pilot to score 100 victories.
- Ivan Kozhedub of the Soviet Union was the top Allied Ace of the war. Two of his 66 kills were American planes that attacked him by mistake.
- Kurt Welter of the *Luftwaffe* scored 63 kills. Fifty-six of his kills were as a night fighter. Twenty of these kills were achieved while flying
- an Me 262, making him possibly the all time jet ace.
- Included in Russell Bannock’s (Canada) 25 kills were 19 V-1 flying bombs.
- Jorma Sarvanto of Finland became an Ace in a Day by shooting down five Russian planes. It took him just four minutes to do so.
- James MacLachlan of the RAF achieved 16 kills during the war. Seven of these were after the amputation of his left arm.
- Albert Lippett of the RAF had 12 kills when he was killed in action. He also became an Ace in a Day. Al-

though he was a pilot, his kills were as a turret gunner in a two-man fighter plane.

- With 12 kills Lydia Litvyak of the Soviet Union was the top female ace of the war.
- Hans-Ulrich Rudel of the *Luftwaffe* had nine kills. He also had more than 2,000 ground kills, destroying tanks, vehicles, artillery and even trains.
- Norman Williams (Australia) had eight kills - all as a rear gunner in a Halifax bomber. This made him the only non-fighter ace of the war

Alvin York

The most decorated pacifist of World War I.

A devoted Christian and a pacifist, he initially claimed conscientious objector status on the grounds that his denomination forbade violence. Yet Alvin York would go on to win the Medal of Honour and become one of the most decorated United States Army soldiers of World War I.

Alvin Cullum York was born on 13 December 1887 in Pall Mall, Tennessee. He was the third oldest of 11 children.

The York family was dirt poor. The family farmed and harvested their own food, while the mother made all of the family's clothing.

Each of the boys, including Alvin, attended school for only nine months. They received no further education because William York, the father of the family, needed his sons to help him work the family farm and hunt and fish in order to feed the family.

When William York died in November 1911 at the age of 49, it was left to Alvin to help his mother raise his younger siblings.

His two elder brothers, Henry and Joseph,

had already married and relocated. To supplement the family's income, York worked in railroad construction and then as a logger.

Although he was devoted to the welfare of his family, York was also a violent alcoholic. He would often be involved in bar room brawls and had been arrested on a number of occasions.

His mother was a member of a pacifist Protestant denomination and she was forever trying

to get him to change his ways.

York would regularly attend church and often led the hymn singing, despite his history of drinking and fighting.

It was a revival meeting at the end of 1914 that changed his life. On 1 January 1915 he underwent a conversion experience and he became a devoted born-again Christian.

His congregation was the Church of Christ in Christian Union, a Protestant denomination that shunned secular politics.

Although the church had no specific doctrine of pacifism, York was a firm believer in the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill".

With the outbreak of World War I, he was worried that at some stage America may become involved. "I was worried clean through. I didn't want to go and kill. I believed in my Bible," he said.

In June 1917 all American men between the ages of 21 and 31 years of age were required to register for the draft. York was 29 years old at the time.

When he registered for



the draft, he answered the question "Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)?" by writing "Yes. Don't Want To Fight."

His request for conscientious objector status was denied and he appealed.

In World War I those with conscientious objector status were not exempt from military duties. They could still be drafted and were given assignments that did not conflict with their anti-war principles.

In November 1917, while his application was considered, York was drafted and began his army service at Camp Gordon in Georgia.

He served in Company G, 328th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Infantry Division. York was deeply troubled by the conflict between his pacifism and his training for war.

He spoke at length with his company commander, Captain Edward Courtney Bullcock Danforth, and his battalion commander, Major G. Edward Buxton.

Buxton, a devout Christian himself, cited three biblical verses for York to think about.

- "He that hath no sword, let him sell his cloak and buy one." - Luke 22:36.
- "Render unto to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." - Mark 12:17.
- "... if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight..." - John 18:36.

It caused York to reconsider the morality of his participation in the war.

He was given 10 days leave to visit home, and it was a very different Alvin York that returned. He was now convinced that God meant for him to fight and would keep him safe. He was now as committed to his new mission as he had been to pacifism.

His Division was sent to France and in October 1918 took part in the St. Mihiel Offensive.

During an attack by his battalion to capture German positions near Hill 223 along the Decaerville rail-line north of Chatel-Chéhéry, France, on October 8, 1918, York's actions earned him the Medal of Honour.

He recalled:

The Germans got us, and they got us right smart. They just stopped us dead in our tracks. Their machine guns were up there on the heights overlooking us and well hidden, and we couldn't tell for certain where the terrible heavy fire was coming from ... And I'm telling you they were shooting straight. Our boys just went down like the long grass before the mow-

ing machine at home. Our attack just faded out ... And there we were, lying down, about halfway across [the valley] and those German machine guns and big shells getting us hard.

With Sergeant Bernard Early in command, four non-commissioned officers, including the recently promoted Corporal York, and 13 privates were ordered to infiltrate behind the German lines and silence the machine guns.

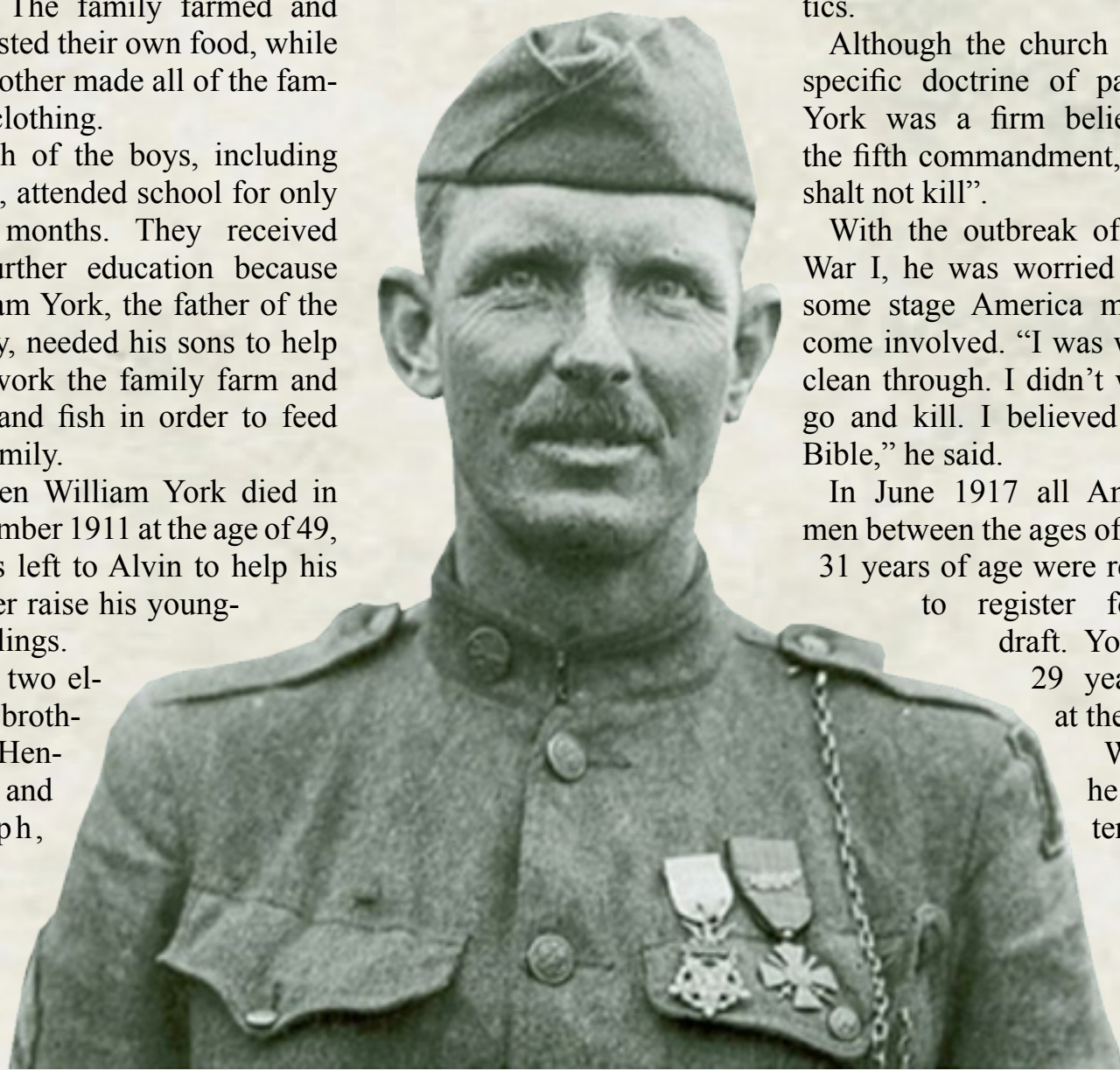
The Germans were preparing for a counter-attack when their headquarters were overrun by Early's group and taken prisoner.

While they were dealing with the prisoners the area was hit by machine gun fire, killing six Americans and wounding three others. The fire came from German machine guns on the ridge.

With the loss of the nine men, York found himself in charge of the remaining seven US soldiers.

York told his men to remain under cover and guard the prisoners. He then worked his way into position to silence the German machine guns. He recalled:

And those machine guns were spitting fire and cutting down the undergrowth all around me something awful. And the Germans were yelling orders. You never heard such a racket in all of your life. I didn't have time to dodge behind a tree or dive into the brush... As soon as the machine guns opened fire on me, I began to exchange shots with them. There were over thirty of them in continuous action, and all I could do was touch the Germans off just as fast as I could. I was sharp shoot-

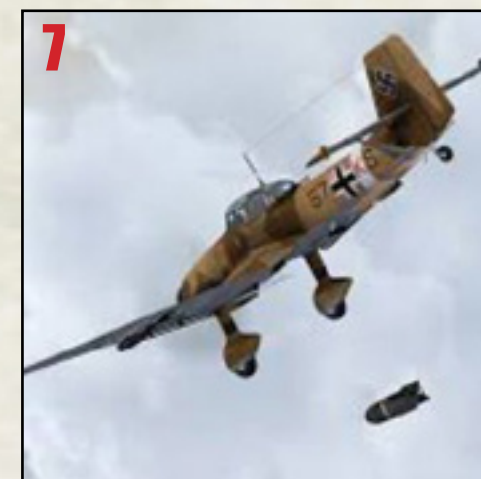


Nicknames

The military loves nicknames and slang. Here are a few questions about nicknames. See if you know the answers.

Answers on page 67.

1. What nickname was given to the M3 Stuart tank?
2. Which World War II German fighter ace had the nickname 'Dolfo'?
3. By what nickname was US Civil War General Thomas J. Jackson better known?
4. Which World War II American tank was known as the 'Ronson' by the British and the 'Tommycooker' by the Germans?
5. Who earned the nickname 'Butcher of the Somme'?
6. Which German weapon did American GI's nickname 'Screaming Mimi'?
7. What aircraft was better known as the 'Stuka'?
8. Who was known as 'Blood-n-Guts'?
9. Which American unit is nickname 'Screaming Eagles'?
10. What was the nickname given to the leading fighter ace of World War II, Erich Hartmann?
11. What was the BM-13 Katyusha better known as?
12. What was the nickname given to the America M3 sub-machine gun?
13. Which former British officer and mercenary leader was nicknamed 'Mad Mike'?
14. Which South African fighter ace was nicknamed 'Sailor'?
15. What was the nickname given to members of the South African Corps of Signals?
16. What nickname did the Russians give to Finnish sniper Simo Häyhä?
17. What did the Allies call the German Stielhandgranate.
18. What was a 'Chicago Typewriter'?
19. What was the nickname given to the Royal Air Force 617 Squadron?
20. What nickname was given to the South African Vali-kri 127 mm multiple rocket launcher?
21. To Allies he was known as the 'Red Baron'. But what nickname did the Germans give Manfred von Richthofen?
22. By what name were the British Home Guard known during World War II?
23. What was the nickname given to the British Parachute Regiment?
24. Who or what was a 'Noddy Car'?
25. What derogatory nickname did German General Erich von Manstein give to Adolf Hitler?



ing... All the time I kept yelling at them to come down. I didn't want to kill any more than I had to. But it was they or I. And I was giving them the best I had.

It must be remembered that York had spent much of his youth hunting, so he was an excellent shot.

During the assault, six German soldiers in a nearby trench rushed at York with fixed bayonets. He had already fired all the round in his M1917 Enfield rifle. He drew his M1911 semi-automatic pistol and shot all six soldiers before they could reach him.

While York was contending with the German machine guns, German First Lieutenant Paul Jürgen Vollmer, commander of the First Battalion, 120th Landwehr Infantry, emptied his pistol trying to kill York.

After failing to hit York with even a single shot and seeing his losses mounting, Vollmer called out in English, offering to surrender his unit to York. The offer was accepted by York.

By the end of the engagement York and his seven men marched 132 German prisoners back to the American lines.

When York reported back, his brigade commander, Brigadier General Julian Robert Lindsey, remarked, "Well York, I hear you have captured the whole damn German army."

"No sir. I got only 132," was York's reply.

His actions silenced the German machine guns and were responsible for enabling the 328th Infantry to renew its attack to capture the Decauville Railroad.

York's actions had silenced

or captured 35 machine guns, killed at least 25 enemy soldiers, and taken 132 prisoners.

York was promptly promoted to Sergeant and received the Distinguished Service Cross. A few months later, an investigation by York's chain of command resulted in an upgrade of his Distinguished Service Cross to the Medal of Honour, which was presented by the commanding general of the American Expeditionary Forces, General John J. Pershing.

The French Republic awarded him the *Croix de Guerre*, the *Medaille Militaire* and the Legion of Honour. When decorating York with the *Croix de Guerre*, Marshal Ferdinand Foch told York "What you did was the greatest thing accomplished by any soldier of all the armies of Europe."

In addition to his French medals, Italy awarded York the *Croce al Merito di Guerra* and Montenegro decorated him with its War Medal. He eventually received nearly 50 decorations.

York's Medal of Honour citation reads: *After his platoon suffered heavy casualties and 3 other noncommissioned officers had become casualties, Cpl. York assumed command. Fearlessly leading seven men, he charged with great daring a machine gun nest which was pouring deadly and incessant fire upon his platoon. In this heroic feat the machine gun nest was taken, together with 4 officers and 128 men and several guns.*

In attempting to explain his actions during the 1919 investigation that resulted in the Med-

al of Honor, York told General Lindsey "A higher power than man guided and watched over me and told me what to do." Lindsey replied "York, you are right."

When America entered World War II, York attempted to reenlist in the army. However at fifty-four years of age, overweight, near-diabetic, and with evidence of arthritis, he was denied enlistment as a combat soldier. Instead, he was commissioned as a major in the Army Signal Corps and he toured training camps and participated in bond drives in support of the war effort, usually paying his own travel expenses.

Although York served during the war with the rank of major in the Army Signal Corps and as a Colonel with the 7th Regiment of the Tennessee State Guard, newspapers continued to refer to him as "Sgt. York."

York died at the Veterans Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, on 2 September 1964, of a cerebral hemorrhage. After a funeral service in his Jamestown church, with Gen. Matthew Ridgway representing President Lyndon Johnson, York was buried at the Wolf River Cemetery in Pall Mall.

He left behind his wife Grace and eight children, six sons and two daughters.

Seven public buildings have been named for Alvin York, including the Alvin C. York Veterans Hospital located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Boer Commandos

The Boer Commandos, or Kommandos, were fiercely independent farmers who had spent most of their working lives in the saddle, they were skilled hunters and expert marksmen. Something that the British were to learn the hard way.

In 1658, war broke out between the Dutch settlers at the Cape Colony and the Khoi-khoi. All able bodied men were conscripted into military service in order to protect the settlement.

By 1700 the colony had grown and was now divided up into districts. While there was a small military garrison stationed at the *Castle de Goede Hoop* (Castle of Good Hope), it could not react swiftly to incidents in the border districts.

The process of conscripting able bodied men, known as the commando system, was expanded and formalised. Each district had a *kommandant* (commandant) who was responsible for calling up all *burghers* (citizens) when required.

With the First British Occupation in 1795 and the Second British Occupation in 1806, the commandos were called up to defend the Cape Colony.

At the Battle of Blaauwberg on 6 January 1806, the Swellendam Commando held the British at bay long enough for the rest of the Batavian Army to retreat to safety.

The Boer Republics

From 1836 onwards, many Dutch-speaking settlers had become weary of living under British rule. They began an

eastward, traveling by wagon into the interior of what is today modern South Africa. They sought to live beyond the Cape's British colonial administration. They became known as *voortrekkers* (literally "fore-pullers") and their migration became known as 'The Great Trek'.

This led directly to the founding of several autonomous Boer republics. Between 1795 and 1915 there were no fewer than 18 Boer republics.

- Republic of Swellendam (1795)
- Republic of Graaff-Reinet (1795–1796)
- Zoutpansberg (1835–1864)
- Winburg (1836–1844)
- Potchefstroom (1837–1844)
- Natalia Republic (1839–1843)
- Winburg-Potchefstroom (1844–1848)
- Republic of Klip River (1847–1848)
- Lydenburg Republic (1849–1860)
- Utrecht Republic (1852–1858)
- South African Republic (1852–1877, 1881–1902, 1914–1915) often informally known as the Transvaal Republic
- Orange Free State (1854–1902)
- Klein Vrystaat (1876–1891),

- literally Little Free State
- State of Goshen (1882–1883)
- Republic of Stellaland (1882–1883)
- United States of Stellaland (1883–1885)
- New Republic (1884–1888)
- Republic of Upingtonia/Lijdensrust (1885–1887)

The most well known and strongest of the Boer republics was the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free state.

During the Great Trek the commando system was used and remained in use in most of the Boer republics.

Republics issued commando laws, making commando service mandatory in times of need for all male citizens between the ages of 16 and 60.

Commando structure

Each commando was attached to a town, and named after the town. For example, the Bloemfontein Commando.

Each town was responsible for a district, divided up into a number of wards. A *kommandant* was in command of each commando, a each ward had a *veldkornet* (field cornet - equivalent in rank to a senior NCO).

The veldkornet had a number of duties. He was responsible for calling up the burghers, but was also responsible for polic-



READY TO FIGHT: Members of a Boer commando pose for a photograph.

ing his ward, collecting taxes, issuing firearms and other materials in times of war.

In theory, a ward was divided up into corporalships. This was usually made up of about 20 burghers. It was not uncommon to find an entire family - fathers, sons, uncles and cousins - make up an entire corporalship.

The veldkornet reported to the kommandant, who in turn reported to a general. In theory a general was responsible for four commandos. He would report to the commander-in-chief of the republic.

In the Transvaal the C-in-C was called the Commandant-General and in the Free State he was the *Hoofdkommandant* (Chief Commandant). The C-in-C would report directly to the president of the republic.

The commando was made up of volunteers. It was the members of a commando, and not the government, that appointed the officers. This led to the appearance of men such as General Koos de la Rey and General

CR de Wet. The disadvantage was that sometimes inept commanders were put in charge.

Discipline was often a problem because there was no way of enforcing it.

Equipment & Tactics

The commandos were a civilian militia and, as such, did not have a standard uniform. Each man wore pretty much what he wished.

Most of them would wear everyday farming clothes that were dark-grey, earthtone khaki, or of a neutral colour. This would usually consist of a jacket, trousers and a slouch hat.

Each man brought his own weapon, usually a hunting rifle, and his own horses.

Most of the Boers that made up the commandos were farmers who had spent most of their working lives in the saddle. They had to depend on both their horses and their rifles for almost all of their meat. They were skilled hunters and expert marksmen. Most of them had

single-shot breech-loading rifles.

As hunters they had learned to fire from cover, from a prone position and to make the first shot count, knowing that if they missed, in the time it took to reload, the game would be long gone. At community gatherings, they often held target shooting competitions using targets such as hens' eggs perched on posts over 90 metres away.

The Boer commandos made for expert light cavalry, able to use every scrap of cover from which they could pour accurate and destructive fire at their enemies.

Before the Boer War, the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State had permanent artillery units, such as the Transvaalse Staatsartillerie. They were equipped with the German Krupp or French Creusot artillery.

Boer Wars

The First Boer War, known in Afrikaans as *Eerste Vryheidsoorlog* (First Freedom War), was fought from 16 December 1880 until 23 March 1881 between the United Kingdom and the South African Republic (also known as Transvaal Republic).

The war resulted in defeat for the British and the second independence of the South African Republic.

The British infantry uniforms at that date were red jackets, dark blue trousers with red piping on the side, white pith helmets and pipe clayed equipment, a stark contrast to the African landscape. The Highlanders wore the kilt.

The standard infantry weapon was the Martini-Henry single-shot breech-loading rifle with a long sword bayonet.

Gunners of the Royal Artillery wore blue jackets. The Boer marksmen could easily snipe at British troops from a distance. The Boers carried no bayonets, leaving them at a substantial disadvantage in close combat, which they avoided as often as possible.

Drawing on years of experience of fighting frontier skirmishes with numerous and indigenous African tribes, they relied more on mobility, stealth, marksmanship and initiative while the British emphasised the traditional military values of command, discipline, formation and synchronised firepower.

The average British soldier was not trained to be a marksman and got little target practice. What shooting training British soldiers had was mainly as a unit firing in volleys on command.

The First Boer War was the first conflict since the American War of Independence in which the British had been decisively defeated and forced to sign a peace treaty under unfavourable terms. It would see the introduction of the khaki uniform, marking the beginning of the end of the famous Redcoat. The Battle of Laing's Nek would be the last occasion where a British regiment carried its official regimental colours into battle.

In 1899, when tensions erupted into the Second Boer War, the lure of gold made it worth committing the vast resources of the British Empire and incur-



REDCOATS: In their distinctive red jackets and white helmets, the British made easy targets for the Boers.

ring the huge costs required to win that war.

However, the sharp lessons the British had learned during the First Boer War - which included Boer marksmanship, tactical flexibility and good use of ground - had largely been forgotten when the second war broke out 18 years later. Heavy casualties, as well as many setbacks, were incurred before the British were ultimately victorious.

When the war began the British were overconfident. They soon paid for this when the Boers struck first, besieging Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking in early 1900, and winning important battles at Colenso, Magersfontein and Stormberg.

The British brought in a large number of reinforcements and General Redvers Buller was replaced by Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener. They relieved the three besieged cities, and invaded the two Boer republics in late 1900.

The onward marches of the British Army were so overwhelming that the Boers did not fight staged battles in defence of their homeland. The British quickly seized control of all

of the Orange Free State and Transvaal, as the civilian leadership went into hiding or exile. In conventional terms, the war was over.

To the bitter end

The Boers, however, refused to surrender. They reverted to guerrilla warfare under new generals Louis Botha, Jan Smuts, Christiaan de Wet and Koos de la Rey. Two more years of surprise attacks and quick escapes followed. As guerrillas without uniforms, the Boer fighters easily blended into the farmlands, which provided hiding places, supplies, and horses.

The UK's solution was to set up complex nets of block houses, strong points, and barbed wire fences, partitioning off the entire conquered territory. The civilian farmers were relocated into concentration camps, where very large proportions died of disease, especially the children, who mostly lacked immunities. Then British mounted infantry units systematically tracked down the highly mobile Boer guerrilla units. The battles at this stage were small operations with few combat casualties (most of the

dead were victims of disease). The war ended in surrender and British terms with the Treaty of Vereeniging in May 1902. The British successfully won over the Boer leaders, who now gave full support to the new political system. Both former republics were incorporated into the Union of South Africa in 1910, as part of the British Empire.

The Boer commandos were a force forged in battle. Despite their relatively small numbers,

they held off the mighty British Empire for nearly three years.

There were 25,000 Transvaal Boers, 15,000 Free State Boers, 10,000 Black Boer auxiliaries and 5,400 foreign volunteers.

The British had 347,000 regular troops, between 103,000 and 153,000 colonial forces, and 100,000 Black South African auxiliaries.

The Boers suffered 6,186 dead and 24,000 Boer prisoners were sent overseas. There

were 46,370 civilian casualties, of whom 26,370 were Boer women and children who died in concentration camps. More than 20,000 Black Africans also died in concentration camps.

British casualties were even higher. 22,092 were killed and 75,430 returned home sick or wounded. 934 were reported missing and 22,828 were wounded.

Kimberley here we come

Details of Military Despatches planned trip to Kimberley in June.

Okay, here it is! The details of our planned trip to Kimberley in June.

We will be leaving on the Transkaroo train on Thursday 7 June at 10h00. The scheduled arrival time in Kimberley is at 03h32 on Friday 8 June.

The good news is that the train is always late. So we can plan on getting there between 06h00 and 07h00.

We will be staying at Gumtree Lodge in Kimberley. There will be four to a room. There is a fridge and kettle provided, so you will get woken with a cup of coffee every morning.

We will also have breakfast at Gumtree Lodge before leaving on each days planned activities.

Some of the excursions we are planning will include a trip to the site of the Battle of Magersfontein, a visit to the Big Hole, and a visit to the McGregor Museum. We are also planning to get together with the Moths from Kimberley at the SA Legion Pub. There is also an ex-

cellent private museum there.

We will also visit the Star of the East Pub and Halfway House, both historic, for a drink or two.

On the Saturday night we will be having a braai at Gumtree Lodge.

We will board the train back to Cape Town on Sunday 10 June at 20h54 and should arrive back in Cape Town at 15h30 on Monday 11 June.

The cost for the entire trip will work out at R2,200 per per-

son. This will include train fare, accommodation, transport in Kimberley, entrance to the Big Hole, and the braai on Saturday night.

We can only take 12 people and it will be on a first-come-first served basis. We already have a few bookings, so let us know early if you want to make the trip.

If you are interested then send me an e-mail at editor@hipeco.za as soon as possible.



Battle of Spion Kop

During the Second Boer War campaign to relieve Ladysmith, the British managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

When the Second Boer War began on 11 October 1899, the British were confident that it would all be over very quickly.

The Boers, however, had other ideas and it was they who struck first.

By early 1900 Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking were besieged and the Boers had won important battles at Colenso, Magersfontein and Stormberg.

The commander of the British forces in Natal, General Sir Redvers Buller VC, was attempting to relieve Ladysmith. Facing him across the Tugela River were the Boers under General Louis Botha.

Although the Boers were outnumbered, they were equipped mostly with modern Mauser rifles and up to date field guns. They had also carefully entrenched their positions.

In late December 1899 Buller made a frontal assault on the Boer positions at the Battle of Colenso. It turned into a humiliating defeat for the British.

Buller makes his plans

Over the next few weeks Buller drew up his plans to relieve Ladysmith. His forces were bolstered by the arrival of reinforcements as well as sufficient carts and transport to operate away from the railway

line, which was his main supply line.

His army was to launch a two-pronged offensive designed to cross the Tugela River at two points and create a bridgehead. They would then attack the defensive line that blocked Buller's advance to Ladysmith, which was only 32 kilometres away.

Buller delegated control of his main force to General Sir Charles Warren, to cross at Trichardt's Drift. Buller would then send a second smaller force, under Major General Neville Lyttelton to attack east of Warren's force as a diversion at Potgieter's Drift. Once across the Tugela the British would attack the Boer defensive positions and then cross the open plains to relieve Ladysmith.

Warren had a large force that numbered 11,000 infantry, 2,200 cavalry and 36 field guns. On 11 January they marched westward to cross the Little Tugela and take up position in front of Potgieter's Ferry.

Their march, however, was easily visible to the Boers, and it was very slow. This was in part due to the massive baggage trains that British officer felt necessary to accompany them. Warren's included a cast iron bathroom and well equipped kitchen.

By the time they arrived at the Tugela, the Boers had entrenched a new position covering it.

On the 18th British mounted troops under the Earl of Dundonald enterprisingly reached the extreme Boer right flank, from where there was little to stop them riding to Ladysmith, but Warren recalled them to guard the force's baggage.

Once all his force had crossed the river, Warren sent part of an infantry division under Lieutenant General Francis Clery against the Boer right flank positions on a plateau named Tabanyama.

The Boers had once again entrenched a new position on the reverse slopes of the plateau, and Clery's attack made no progress. Meanwhile, the secondary British attack by Lyttelton at Potgieter's Drift had yet to commence in full.

Battle commences

The largest hill in the area, Spion Kop, lay just northeast of Warren's force. It was just over 430 metres high and lay almost exactly at the centre of the Boer line.

If the British could take the hill and bring artillery to the top, they would command the flanks of the surrounding Boer positions.



BATTLEFIELD: A group of Boers pose for a photograph. Spion Kop is in the background.

On 23 January Warren sent the larger part of his force under Major General Edward Woodgate to secure Spion Kop. Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Thorneycroft was selected to lead the initial assault. With Thorneycroft were Herbert Plumer and Robert Baden-Powell (later to found the Boy Scouts movement).

Under the cover of night and a thick mist, the British climbed the hill. The small Boer guard were surprised and driven from the kop at bayonet point.

The surviving Boers retreated down the hill to their camp, waking up their fellow Boers by screaming, "Die Engelse is op die kop" (The English are on the hill).

A half company of British sappers began to entrench the position. The problem was that they had only 20 picks and 20 shovels with them. So while they dug, almost 1,000 soldiers stood and watched. Woodgate notified Warren of the successful capture of the hilltop.

As the sun rose the British

made a horrifying discovery. They had no direct knowledge of the topography of the summit and the darkness and mist had compounded their mistake. They had captured the smaller and lower part of the hilltop of Spion Kop. The Boers occupied higher ground on three sides of the British position.

The summit of the kop was mostly hard rock and the British trenches were at most 40 centimetres deep. They did not provide much protection.

The British infantry in the trenches could not see over the crest of the plateau and the Boers were able to fire down the length of the crescent-shaped trench from the adjacent peaks.

The Boers react

The fact that the British had taken the kop did not worry the Boer generals that much. They knew that their artillery on Tabanyama could be turned on the British positions and that rifle fire from the parts of the kop not yet occupied by the British could be brought to bear.

Yet they also realised that artillery and sniping alone would not be enough to dislodge the British.

If the British immediately established positions on Conical Hill and Aloe Knoll (the two unoccupied kopjes on the kop itself) they could bring their artillery to bear on Tabanyama, threatening the key Boer positions there.

There was a risk that the British would storm Twin Peaks to the eastern end of Spion Kop. If Twin Peaks fell, the British would be able to turn the Boers' left flank and annihilate the main Boer encampment.

It became apparent to the Boer generals that they would have to storm Spion Kop, and quickly, if certain defeat was to be averted.

They began to bombard the British position from the adjacent plateau of Tabanyama, dropping shells at a rate of ten a minute.

At the same time Commandant Hendrik Prinsloo of the Carolina Commando captured Aloe Knoll and Conical Hill with 88 men. Another 300 men, mainly from the Pretoria Commando, climbed the kop to launch a frontal assault on the British positions.

Prinsloo told his men: "Burghers, we're now going in to attack the enemy and we shan't all be coming back. Do your duty and trust in the Lord."

Minutes later they launched their attack. It was very unusual for the Boers to launch a daytime massed attack as it was not their style of warfare. It took the British by surprise and vicious, close-quarter combat ensued.

Both sides exchanged fire at close range and engaged in hand-to-hand combat, with the British wielding fixed bayonets and the Boers wielding hunting knives and their own rifles used as bludgeons.

After suffering serious losses, the Boer assault carried the crest line after several minutes of brutal fighting, but they could advance no further.

Stalemate

A stalemate now settled over the kop. The Boers had failed to drive the British off the kop, but the surviving men of the Pretoria and Carolina commando now held a firing line on Aloe Knoll from where they could enfilade the British position and the British were now under sustained bombardment from the Boer artillery. The British had failed to exploit their initial success, and the initiative now passed to the Boers.

The extreme heat, exhaustion and thirst began to take hold, sapping morale on both sides.

On one hand the Boers on the kop could see large numbers of burghers on the plains below them who refused to join the fight. The sense of betrayal, the bloody failure of the frontal assault, the indiscipline inherent in a civilian army and the apparent security of the British position proved too much for some Boers, who began to abandon their hard-won positions.

Things were not going well for the British either. The bombardment began taking its toll. Woodgate fell at about 08h30, mortally wounded by a shell splinter. In quick succession, Colonel Blomfield of the Lan-

cashire Fusiliers took command but was wounded soon after Woodgate's death, while the sappers' officer, Major HH.Massy, and Woodgate's brigade major, Captain NH. Vertue, were killed.

The British were leaderless, confused and pinned down by heavy Boer artillery and rifle fire. Officers and men from different units were intermingled.

The British artillery were unable to hit back at the Boer guns as they were positioned lower down the slopes of Spion Kop. One British soldier wrote in his diary "our gunners, by the inaccuracy of their fire did far more damage to our front line of infantry than to the Boers!"

Colonel Malby Crofton of the Royal Lancasters took charge and semaphored a plea for help, "Reinforce at once or all is lost. General dead." After that the stunned colonel failed to exercise any leadership. Thorneycroft seems to have taken charge, leading a spirited counterattack that was cut down by withering fire.

Warren had already dispatched Major General John Talbot Coke's brigade of two regular battalions and the Imperial Light Infantry to reinforce the summit. However, he refused to launch an attack on Tabanyama and barred his guns from firing on Aloe Knoll, believing this to be part of the British position.

At 11h40 Buller could see that things were not going well. He suggested to Warren that Thorneycroft be appointed commander on the kop. The first runner to Thorneycroft was shot dead before he could utter

a word. Finally, a second runner brought the news, "You are a general."

At about 13h00 some men of the Lancashire Fusiliers attempted to surrender. Thorneycroft was not having that and he personally intervened.

"I'm the commandant here; take your men back to hell sir. I allow no surrenders," he shouted at the Boers who advanced to round up prisoners.

It was fortunate for Thorneycroft that the first British reinforcements arrived at that moment. A vicious point-blank firefight ensued but the British line had been saved.

At 14h30, Thorneycroft sent Warren a plea for reinforcements and water. Meanwhile, Coke never reached the summit. He saw Thorneycroft's message for help but then did nothing to assure the lieutenant colonel of his nearby presence or support.

The Middlesex Regiment and the Imperial Light Infantry, under Colonel Hill, who was senior to Thorneycroft in the army list and who also believed he was overall commander on the kop, held the British right for two and a half hours until a second crisis occurred when they too began to give way. The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) arrived at this point, and drove the Boers back with a bayonet charge. The fighting on the British right now became a stalemate.

In the morning, Warren had asked for reinforcements from Lyttelton's division, even though he had eleven battalions of his own to draw upon. Without asking Buller, Lyttelton sent



THE FALLEN: Cut down by accurate Boer fire, many of the British were buried in the trench where they had been killed.

two battalions toward Spion Kop. One battalion, the King's Royal Rifle Corps turned aside to attack Twin Peaks.

After losing Lieutenant Colonel Riddell killed and 100 other casualties, the rifles cracked the thin Boer line and carried the double summit at 17h00.

The aftermath

Devastated by the loss of Twin Peaks, General Schalk Willem Burger took his commando out of the battle line that night. On Spion Kop, the Boers who had fought bravely since morning abandoned their positions as darkness fell. They were about to retreat, when Botha appeared and persuaded them to stay.

The Boers, however, did not reclaim their positions, and unknown to Thorneycroft, the battle was as good as won.

But Thorneycroft's nerve was also shattered. After sixteen hours on the kop doing the job of a brigadier general in total absence of instructions from

Warren, he ordered an unauthorised withdrawal from Spion Kop after reporting that the soldiers had no water and ammunition was running short.

His reasons for withdrawing were that without artillery support to counter the heavy Boer artillery fire, there was no possibility of defending the position and the extreme difficulty of digging trenches on the summit of Spion Kop left the British soldiers completely exposed.

Winston Churchill was a journalist stationed in South Africa and he had also been commissioned as a lieutenant in the South African Light Horse by General Buller after his well-publicised escape from Boer captivity. Churchill acted as a courier to and from Spion Kop and Buller's headquarters.

Churchill brought the first orders from Warren since he elevated Thorneycroft to brigadier. Churchill told him that 1,400 men were on the way with two large naval guns. Thorneycroft

replied, "better six good battalions safely down the hill than a bloody mop-up in the morning." He ordered the brigade to retreat.

At the same time, Buller sent Lyttelton strict orders to recall his troops from Twin Peaks.

When morning came, the Boer generals were astonished to see two burghers on the top of Spion Kop, waving their slouch-hats in triumph. The only British on the kop were the dead and the dying.

The British suffered 243 fatalities during the battle; many were buried in the trenches where they fell. Approximately 1,250 British were either wounded or captured. Mohandas Gandhi was a stretcher-bearer at the battle, in the Indian Ambulance Corps he had organised, and was decorated. The Boers suffered 335 casualties of which 68 were dead, including Commandant Prinsloo's commando casualties of 55 killed and wounded out of 88 men.

The British retreated back over the Tugela, but the Boers were too exhausted to pursue and follow up their success. Once across the river, Buller managed to rally his troops. Ladysmith would be relieved by the British four weeks later.

Legacy of Spion Kop

Many football grounds in England have one terrace or stand in their stadium named "Kop" or "Spion Kop" because of the steep nature of the terracing.

The South African Navy Valour-class frigate SAS Spioenkop (F147) is named after the battle.

THIS WAR OF MINE

During war, there are no good or bad decisions; there is only survival. **Matt O'Brien** tries to keep a group survivors alive in his own inept way.

In *This War Of Mine* you do not play as an elite soldier, rather a group of civilians trying to survive in a besieged city; struggling with lack of food, medicine and constant danger from snipers and hostile scavengers. The game provides an experience of war seen from an entirely new angle.

The game, inspired by the 1992–95 Siege of Sarajevo during the Bosnian War, differs from anything I've ever played before. And I like it.

This War of Mine is a survival-themed strategy game where the player controls a group of civilian survivors in a makeshift shelter in the besieged, war-torn fictional city of Pogoren, Graznavia.

The main goal of the game is to survive the war with the tools and materials the player can gather with the characters you control.

Most of the characters under the player's control have no military background or any kind of survival experience, and will require constant intervention by the player in order to stay alive. It is the player's responsibility to maintain their characters' health, hunger and mood levels until the declaration of a ceasefire, which occurs after a randomized duration.

Make life-and-death decisions driven by your conscience. Try to protect everybody from your shelter or sacrifice some of them for longer-term survival. During war, there are no good or bad decisions; there is only survival. The sooner you realize that, the better.

The pace of *This War of Mine* is imposed by the day and night cycle. During the day snipers outside stop you from leaving your refuge, so you need to focus on maintaining your hideout: crafting, trading and taking care of your survivors. At night, take one of your civilians on a mission to scavenge through a set of unique locations for items that will help you stay alive.

You start off with one to four survivors whose actions you can affect. The actions you make will change the type of endings each survivor has. Each character has one or two traits that helps/hinders you, besides hidden, varying stats that affect combat, movement speed, and so on. Some traits are useful during certain days while others are useful all the time. For example, one character named Bruno has a trait called "Good Cook", which helps you use less fuel and water when cooking meals. There are a total of 12 playable characters.

There are four key ingredients to survival - shelter, water, food and security.

When it comes to food and water, you can either craft items or scavenge for them.

For instance you can craft a 'rainwater collector' if you have the right material and tools for the job.

This collector is essential for self-sufficiency when it comes to clean water, which is mainly used for cooking, and also for the making of moonshine and for growing vegetables. When lots of water is needed, having more than one collector can be useful.

You will need tools for building, scavenging, or even for defending yourself.

A crowbar, for example, is useful when scavenging to open locked doors and containers. An axe is vital for chopping wood. Of course wood is essential for building certain items, cooking, and warmth for your shelter.

Remember that you are not the only survivors. There are others out there that will also do all that it takes to survive. Some of them will not necessarily be hostile and will in fact try and trade with you. This is often a good way to lay your hand on needed resources.

Other survivors, however,



are scavengers and can be very hostile. They will often attack you on sight or will raid your shelter. This not only means that you stand to lose valuable resources, they could even kill some of your survivors.

And let's not for one minute forget about the military. They patrol both day and night. If they spot you looting they will normally shoot on sight. If they spot you wandering around at night they will attempt to capture you.

You can build certain workshops such as the Metal Workshop which allows your characters to craft tools and weapons, like the crowbar and the knife.

Certain items can be upgraded, including your workshops. You can then block all three holes in your shelter walls and reinforce the door. This will increase the chance of your survivors repelling raids, and reduce the chance that they will become wounded while defending. The reinforced door will

also allow you to get by with fewer guards, as its alarm will awaken any sleeping survivors.

There are certain 'must have' items in the game, and others which are very helpful.

Beds, for example, are vital for survival; they allow survivors to rest during the day to recover from being Tired. During daytime, a single bed can remove Tired status from two characters. Sleeping in bed at night allow survivors to recover from wounds and illnesses, though the chance of recovery is remarkably low. When the amount of characters gets higher, more beds will have to be built.

A radio allows you to prepare for crisis and inflation: cold weather, military fighting, armed raids, item scarcity, etc. It will even inform you when ceasefires (i.e. the end of the game) are imminent.

The Stove is also an important addition to your shelter. Cooked Meals are much more filling

than raw food and can (presumably) reduce risk of getting sick that would normally result from eating raw food. Unlike ingredients, Cooked Meals cannot be stolen in raids.

This is a really good game and well worth the price.



Publisher - 11 Bit Studios

Genre - Survival

Score - 8/10

Price - R139 (on Steam)

Blackadder Goes Forth

Let me confess a little secret - I'm not a big fan of *Mr. Bean*. But I love some of Rowan Atkinson's other work.

I found the series *The Thin Blue Line* a delight. But my favourite series has always been *Blackadder* and the fourth and final series, *Blackadder Goes Forth*, is the best.

The series, consisting of six episodes, is set in 1917 on the Western Front. Captain Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) is a professional soldier who, until the outbreak of the Great War, had a relatively danger-free existence fighting natives who were usually "two feet tall and armed with dried grass".

Blackadder's main concern is to avoid going over the top to certain death and finding a way to get out of the trenches and be sent back home.

His attempts fail most due to bad fortune, misunderstandings and the general incompetence of his comrades.

His comrades include his second-in-command, idealistic upper-class Edwardian twit Lieutenant The Honourable George St Barleigh (Hugh Laurie) and their profoundly stupid but dogged batman Private S. Baldrick (Tony Robinson).

His main enemies are not the Germans, but rather his superior General Sir Anthony Cecil Hogmanay Melchett (Stephen

Fry) and his bureaucratic assistant, Captain Kevin Darling (Tim McInnerny).

Blackadder is sarcastic humour at its best. The dialogue is marked throughout by satirical musings about the nature of the war, its origins and the effects on the soldiers who suffered over its course. The idea that the soldiers suffered whilst their commanders remained safely distant from the action was also referenced on many occasions, such as when Melchett says to Baldrick, "Don't you worry my boy, if you should falter, remember that Captain Darling and I are behind you!", to which Blackadder responds, "About 35 miles behind you!".

Blackadder describes the Great War as: "a war which would be a damn sight simpler if we just stayed in England and shot fifty thousand of our men a week."

Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, whose orders are alleged to have resulted in hundreds of thousands of British deaths at Passchendaele and the Somme, is continually referenced. Blackadder himself describes Haig's attempts at an advance as no more than "another gargantuan effort to move his drinks cabinet six inches closer to Berlin".

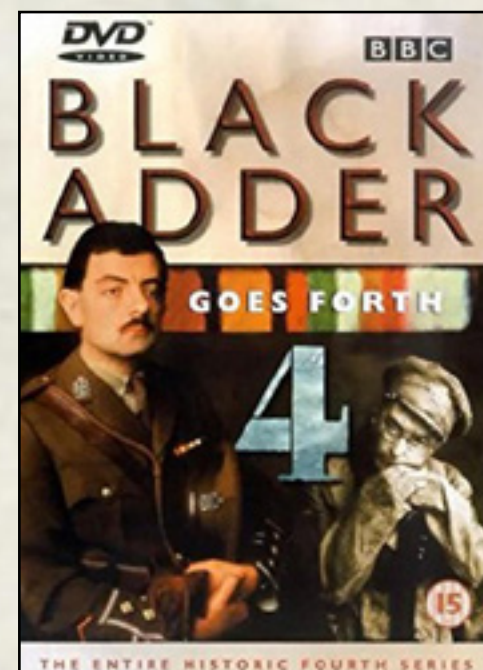
The series recalls a number of famous historical events of the war, such as the Christmas truce of 1914. Blackadder recalls the

event: "Both sides advanced further during one Christmas piss-up than they did in the next two and a half years of war."

I found the final episode in the series, *Goodbye*, touching. The main characters (except General Melchett himself) are finally sent over the top. To the sound of a slow, minimal and downbeat piano version of the title theme, the four are seen in slow-motion, charging into the fog and smoke of no man's land, with gunfire and explosions all around, before the scene fades into footage of a sunny poppy field and the sound of birdsong.

If you've never had the chance to watch *Blackadder Goes Forth*, do so. It is a brilliant series.

Check online and you're sure to find somewhere that you can get the DVD containing all six episodes.



Operation Askari 1983/84 War Journal

Having previously read and reviewed the author's book, *Spine of Delta*, it is with some pleasure that this reviewer has now had the opportunity to read this latest follow up account,

Operation Askari 1983/84 War Journal. This latest offering by Lt Col Dawid Lotter, who was involved first-hand in some of the bloody fighting that encompassed that wide-ranging offensive, takes in a much broader sweep of operations all across southern Angola by the South African Defence Force on one side and the Angolan FAPLA supported by Cubans and Russian advisers, as well as PLAN.

It is not just a history book though, although the basic planning and execution of the various strikes are discussed by him to give the reader an overall idea of how these evolved and, in more than a few cases, did not go according to plan and had to be adapted in the field. Divided into 17 chapters, this is primarily the story of, and more importantly by, the men who took part in Operation Askari, in their own words, the author giving acknowledgement to contributing individuals.

The experiences are thus coloured by each individuals' experience and it is both fascinating and insightful to see just how differently any two soldiers, who may well have been no more

than yards from one another, can recall the same event, especially in the heat of battle. This is touched on in some detail by the author and he cites examples of even commanders not agreeing in hindsight on just who did or achieved what in the battles.

However, throughout there is credit for all, from lowest to highest, with perhaps the contempt and distrust being reserved for seniors involved in the planning but not execution of the operations. The troops' mistrust of their commanders is evident in many of the first-hand accounts, and given the confusing and contradictory orders received at times, it is easy for the reader to see why many still hold this grudge today. The first four chapters of the book set the scene for the operations at Cuvelai, Cahama, Mulondo, Techumatete and Caiundo – the latter never intended to be a target for attack in the initial plan. Each is dealt with on its own in a few chapters, rather than the entire operation chronologically, which pulls the reader into that same confused process that prevailed for each individual at the time, something one does not see too often in dry and dusty academic accounts of a military operation in the cold light of hindsight. Personally I found this refreshing, although it does lead me to add that the book cannot be viewed as a history of Operation Askari because of

this. For a first-hand account of what it was like to serve in that series of battles, it is first class. What does come through loud and clear in each person's story is the boredom experienced, interspersed with moments of confusion and sheer terror in the face of stiff opposition by an Angolan army equally determined to hold on to positions under attack. There are also accounts of great gallantry, unrewarded in many cases by higher honours, like that of a young 202 Battalion Lieutenant whose initial mistake placed him and his men too close to a FAPLA base in an ill-prepared TB, but who stood his ground and fought to the death with his platoon sergeant when they were subsequently overrun by FAPLA in a night ambush. As reviewer I feel it churlish to quibble about a book I genuinely enjoyed, but if I have one criticism it is that the author has been somewhat let down by his proof readers, and the book could have been so much more polished than it is, with many easily corrected mistakes not being picked up in that proof reading process. This criticism aside, *Operation Askari 1984/84 War Journal* is another excellent addition to the Border War narrative, and especially given its personal experience tone, is one I have no hesitation in recommending highly.

Reviewed by Peter Chapman. Click [here](#) for price and details.

Private Plane

Here is the full script from the Private Plane episode from Black Adder Goes Forth

Here is the full script for Episode IV - Private Plane of the television series, Black Adder Goes Forth.

Cast:

Captain Edmund Blackadder
Rowan Atkinson
Private S. Baldrick
Tony Robinson
General Sir Anthony Cecil Hogmanay Melchett
Steven Fry
Lieutenant the Honourable George Colhurst St. Barleigh
Hugh Laurie
Captain Kevin Darling
Tim McInnerny
Squadron Commander Lord Flashheart
Rik Mayall
Baron von Richthoven
Adrian Edmondson
Lieutenant von Gerhardt
Hugo E. Black
Driver Parkhurst
Gabrielle Glaister

Scene 1: Black Adder's Dug-out

Black Adder is listening to his phonograph. Artillery firing outside is causing the record to skip frequently. Annoyed, BA storms outside.

Scene 2: In The Trench

Lt. George is in the trench, peering through a pair of binoculars across No Man's Land.

Black Adder: Oh, God, why do they bother?

George: Well, it's to kill Jerry, isn't it, Sir?

Black Adder: Yes, but Jerry is safe underground in concrete bunkers. We've shot off over a million cannon shells and what's the result? One dachshund with a slight limp!

BA yells at the artillery.

Black Adder: Shut up!

Artillery ceases. George looks bemused.

Black Adder: Thank you! Right, I'm off to bed where I intend to sleep until my name changes to Rip Van Adder.

Black Adder goes into his dug-out.

Scene 3: Black Adder's Dug-out

The phonograph is still playing. BA stops it and lies down on his cot. An instant after his head touches the pillow there is the sound of aircraft and gunfire from outside. BA rises from his cot.

Black Adder: Oh, God! Bloody Germans! They can't take a joke, can they? Just because

we take a few pot-shots at them, they have to have an air-raid to get their own back. Where are our airforce?

Black Adder moves over to the table. A field-telephone sits on the table

Black Adder: They're meant to defend us against this sort of thing.

Noise outside continues. Black Adder puts on steel helmet, picks up telephone and dives under the table.

Black Adder: Right, that's it!

Picks up receiver.

Black Adder: Hello? Yes, yes, I'd like to leave a message for the head of the Flying Corps, please. That's Air Chief Marshall Sir Hugh Massingburg-Massingburg, VC, DFC and bar. Message reads "Where are you, you bastard?"

Private Baldrick enters the dugout.

Baldrick: Here I am, Sir.

Black Adder puts down the receiver.

Black Adder: For God's sake, Baldrick, take cover.

Baldrick: Why's that, Sir?

Black Adder: Because there's an air-raid going on and I don't want to have to write to your mother at London Zoo and tell her that her only human child is dead.

Baldrick moves under the table with Black Adder.

Baldrick: All right, Sir. It's just that I didn't know there was an air-raid on. I couldn't hear anything over the noise of the terrific display by our wonderful boys of the Royal Flying Corps, Sir.

Black Adder: What?

George enters the dugout.

George: I say, those chaps can't half thunder in their airborne steeds, can't they just?

George notices Black Adder and Baldrick cowering under the table.

George: Oh, hello, what's going on here? Game of hide and seek? Excellent! Right now, I'll go and count to a hundred. Er, no. Better make it five, actually . . .

Black Adder: George . . .

George: Er. Oh, it's sardines. Oh, excellent! That's my favourite one, that.

Black Adder rises from under the table.

Black Adder: George . . .

George: Yes, Sir?

Black Adder: Shut up, and never say anything again as long as you live.

George: Right you are, Sir.

Black Adder removes helmet. George is quiet for a few seconds.

George: Crikey, but what a show it was, Sir. Lord Flasheart's Flying Aces. How we cheered when they spun. How we shouted when they dived. How we applauded when one chap got sliced in half by his own propeller. Well, it's all part of the joke for those magnificent men in their flying machines.

Sound of plane plummeting, then crashing outside.

Black Adder: For 'magnificent men', read 'biggest showoffs since Lady Godiva entered the Royal Enclosure at Ascot claiming she had literally nothing to wear'. I don't care how many times they go up-diddly-up-up, they're still gits!

Baldrick: Oh, come on, Sir! I'd love to be a flier. Up there where the air is clear.

Black Adder: The chances of the air being clear anywhere near you, Baldrick, are zero!

Baldrick: Oh, Sir. It'd be great, swooping and diving.

Baldrick starts his impression of a Sopwith Camel.

Black Adder: Baldrick . . .

Baldrick drones on . . .

Black Adder: Baldrick . . .

Baldrick stops droning on as BA interjects a third time.

Black Adder: Baldrick, what are you doing?

Baldrick: I'm a Sopwith Camel, Sir.

Black Adder: Oh, it is a Sopwith Camel. Ah, right, I always get confused between the sound of a Sopwith Camel and the sound of a malodourous runt wasting everybody's time. Now if you can do without me in the nursery for a while, I'm going to get some fresh air.

Black Adder leaves the dugout, picking up his pipe on the way out.

Scene 4: In The Trench

As he emerges from the dugout Black Adder sighs and prepares to light his pipe. Squadron Commander Lord Flasheart jumps down from his crashed plane.

Flasheart: Ha! Eat knuckle, Fritz!

Flasheart knocks Black Adder to the ground with his pistol, then puts a foot on Black Adder's chest.

Flasheart: Aha! How disgusting. A Boche on the sole of my boot. I shall have to find a patch of grass to wipe it on. Probably get shunned in the Officers' Mess. Sorry about the pong you fellows, trod in a Boche

and can't get rid of the whiff. else?

Black Adder rises.

Black Adder: Do you think we could dispense with the hilarious doggy-do metaphor for a moment? I'm not a Boche. This is a British trench.

Flasheart puts his pistol away.

Flasheart: Is it? Oh, that's a piece of luck. Thought I'd landed sausage-side! Ha!

Flasheart picks up the receiver of a field-telephone lying by the dugout entrance.

Flasheart: Mind if I use your phone? If word gets out that I'm missing, five hundred girls will kill themselves. I wouldn't want them on my conscience, not when they ought to be on my face! Huh!

Flasheart kicks the phone into action.

Flasheart: Hi, Flasheart here. Yeah, cancel the state funeral, tell the King to stop blubbing. Flash is not dead. I simply ran out of juice! Yeah, and before all the girls start saying "Oh, what's the point of living anymore", I'm talking about petrol! Woof, woof! Yeah, I dumped the kite on the poles, so send a car. Er, General Melchett's driver should do. She hangs around with the big nobs, so she'll be used to a fellow like me! Woof, woof!

Black Adder: Look, do you think you could make your obscene phone call somewhere

Flasheart is still on the phone and ignores Black Adder.

Flasheart: No, not in half an hour, you rubber-desk johnny. Send the bitch with the wheels right now or I'll fly back to England and give your wife something to hang her towels on.

Flasheart throws down the receiver.

Flasheart: Okay, dig out your best booze and let's talk about me 'til the car comes. You must be pretty impressed having Squadron Commander the Lord Flasheart drop in on your squalid bit of line.

Black Adder: Actually, no. I was more impressed by the contents of my handkerchief the last time I blew my nose.

Flasheart: Yeah, like hell. Huh, huh. You've probably got little piccies of me on the walls of your dugout, haven't you?

Flasheart tickles the front of BA's trousers.

Flasheart: I bet you go all girly and giggly every time you look at me.

Flasheart twists Black Adder's John Thomas. Black Adder lets out a yell.

Black Adder: I'm afraid not. Unfortunately, most of the infantry think you're a prat. Ask them who they'd prefer to meet: Squadron Commander Flasheart and the man who

cleans out the public toilets in Aberdeen, and they'd go for Wee Jock "Poo-Pong" McPlop, every time.

Flasheart laughs, then punches Black Adder, knocking him to the floor. Flasheart goes into the dugout.

Scene 5: Black Adder's Dug-out

George and Baldrick are discussing the Flying Aces.

George: . . . so when that fellow looped-the-loop, I honestly thought that, that, that . . .

Flasheart enters, saluting. George sees him. Black Adder enters behind Flasheart.

George: My God!

Flasheart: Yes, I suppose I am.

George: Lord Flasheart, this is the greatest honour of my life. I hope I snuff it right now to preserve this moment forever.

Black Adder: It can be arranged.

Baldrick: Lord Flasheart, I want to learn to write so I can send a letter home about this golden moment.

Flasheart: So all the fellows hate me, eh? Not a bit of it. I'm your bloody hero, eh, old scout?

Flasheart playfully scuffs up Baldrick's hair, then notices that this action has left something unpleasant on his glove.

Flasheart: Jesus!



THE CAST: From left to right: Captain Darling, General Melchett, Private Baldrick, Captain Blackadder, Lieutenant George.

Flasheart wipes his glove on Black Adder's shirt.

Baldrick: My Lord, I've got every cigarette card they ever printed of you. My whole family took up smoking just so that we could get the whole set. My grandmother smoked herself to death so we could afford the album.

Flasheart: Of course she did, of course she did, the poor love-crazed old octogenarian.

Flasheart moves to hug and kiss Baldrick, then thinks better of it.

Flasheart: Well, all right, you fellows. Let's sit us down and yarn about how amazingly attractive I am.

Black Adder: Yes, would you excuse me for a moment? I've got some urgent business. There's a bucket outside I've got to be sick into.

Flasheart takes the mickey out of Black Adder's holier-than-thou attitude.

Flasheart: All right, you chaps, let's get comfy.

Flasheart sits down in chair. George sits down on Black Adder's cot. Flasheart turns to Baldrick.

Flasheart: You look like a decent British bloke. I'll park the old booties on you if that's okay.

Baldrick: It would be an honour, my Lord.

Baldrick kneels down on all fours in front of Flasheart.

Flasheart: Of course it would! Ha!

Flasheart rests his feet on Baldrick's back and sighs.

Flasheart: Have you any idea what it's like to have the wind rushing through your hair?

George: No, Sir.

Flasheart breaks wind loudly in Baldrick's face.

Flasheart: He has!

Scene 6: Black Adder's Dug-out

Some time has elapsed. Flasheart is regaling an enthralled George with stories. Black Adder is reading a copy of 'King and Country' at the table, uninterested in what Flasheart has to say.

Flasheart: . . . so I flew straight through her bedroom window, popped a box of chocs on the dressing table, machine-gunned my telephone number into the wall, and then shot off and shagged her sister.

As George creases up with laughter, Bobby Parkhurst, an attractive girl trying to pass herself off as a man, enters the dugout.

Bobby: Ahem. Driver Parkhurst reporting for duty, my Lord . . .

Flasheart: Well, well, well. If it isn't little Bobby Parkhurst - saucier than a direct hit on a Heinz factory.

Bobby: I've come to pick you up.

Flasheart: Well, that's how I like my girls--direct and to my point. Woof!

Bobby: Woof!

Flasheart removes his feet from Baldrick, grabs Bobby and puts her across his lap and begins to kiss her. During the kiss Black Adder sarcastically checks his watch.

Flasheart: Ah! Tally ho, then! Back to the bar. You should

join the Flying Corps, George. That's the way to fight a war. Tasty tuck, soft beds and a uniform so smart it's got a PhD from Cambridge.	<i>George moves across the dug-out to get his card album.</i>	twenty minutes work, and then spend the rest of the day loafing about in Paris drinking gallons of champagne and having dozens of moist, pink, highly-experienced young French peasant girls galloping up and down my . . . Hang on!	Darling: Oh, you want to join the Royal Flying Corps?	Darling: There's nothing cushy about life in the Women's Auxiliary Balloon Corps.	<i>Melchett looks up from his map.</i>
<i>Flasheart gestures at Baldrick.</i>					
Flasheart: You could even bring the breath monster here. Anyone can be a navigator if he can tell his arse from his elbow.	<i>George returns to the cot and sits down.</i>		Black Adder: Oh, that's a thought. Could I?	<i>Black Adder raises his eyebrows at this.</i>	Melchett: Hello, Blackadder. What are you doing here?
Black Adder: Well, that's Baldrick out, I fear . . .	George: Now, you have to collect all the cards and then stick them into this wonderful presentation booklet. Er . . .	Scene 7: Captain Darling's Office <i>Captain Darling is writing at his desk. There is a knock at the office door.</i>	Darling: No, you couldn't! Goodbye!	Darling: Ah . . .	Black Adder: Me, Sir? I just popped in to join the Royal Flying Corps.
	<i>Baldrick sits down next to George.</i>	Darling: Come!	<i>Darling sits back down.</i>	<i>The door to General Melchett's office opens and the General and George enter. BA and Darling snap to attention. Black Adder salutes.</i>	Darling: And, of course, I said . . .
Flasheart: We're always looking for talented types to join the Twenty Minuters.	George: Ah, here we are: Twenty Minuters. Oh, damn! Haven't got the card yet. Ah, but the caption says 'Twenty minutes is the average amount of time new pilots spend in the air.'	<i>Black Adder enters the office.</i>	Black Adder: Look, come on, Darling, just give me an application form.	George: . . . and then the bishop said "I'm awfully sorry, I didn't realise you meant organist."	Melchett: Bravo, I hope, Darling. Because, you know, I've always had my doubts about you trenchy-type fellows. Always suspected there might be a bit too much of the battle-dodging, nappy-wearing, I'd-rather-have-a-cup-of-tea-than-charge-stark-naked-at-Jerry about you. But if you're willing to join the Twenty Minuters then you're all right by me and welcome to marry my sister any day.
Black Adder . . . and there goes George.		Darling: Ah, Captain Blackadder.	Darling: It's out of the question. This is simply a ruse to waste five months of training after which you'll claim you can't fly after all because it makes your ears go 'pop'. Come on, I wasn't born yesterday, Blackadder.	<i>Melchett chortles.</i>	
<i>Flasheart rises from the chair, lifting Bobby in his arms.</i>		Black Adder: Good morning, Captain Darling.		Melchett: Thank you, George. At ease, everyone. Now, where's my map? Come on.	
Flasheart: Tally ho, then, Bobby. Hush, here comes a whizzbang and I think you know what I'm talking about! Woof!	Black Adder: Twenty minutes.	Darling: What do you want?	Black Adder: More's the pity, we could have started your personality from scratch. So, the training period is five months, is it?	Darling: Sir!	
Bobby: Woof!	George: That's right, Sir.	Black Adder: You're looking so well.		<i>Darling hands Melchett his map.</i>	Darling: Are you sure about this, Sir?
<i>Flasheart and Bobby leave.</i>	Black Adder: I had a twenty hour watch yesterday, with four hours overtime, in two feet of water.	Darling: I'm a busy man, Blackadder. Let's hear it, whatever it is.	Darling: It's no concern of yours if it's five years and comes with a free holiday in Tunisia, contraceptives supplied. Besides, they wouldn't admit you. It's not easy getting transfers, you know.	Melchett: Thank you.	Melchett: Certainly, you should hear the noise she makes when she eats a boiled egg. Be glad to get her out of the house. So, report back here 09:00 hours for your basic training.
Black Adder: God, it's like Crufts in here!	<i>George, then Baldrick, rise from the cot and move to the table.</i>	Black Adder: Well, you know, Darling, every . . . every man has a dream . . .	<i>Darling returns to his work.</i>	<i>Melchett unfurls the map the wrong way up.</i>	
<i>Baldrick and George stand.</i>		Darling: Hmmm . . .	Black Adder: Oh, you've tried it yourself, have you?	Melchett: God, it's a barren, featureless desert out there, isn't it.	Scene 8: Captain Darling's Office <i>It is the next morning. Darling's office has been set out with chairs and there is a blackboard with a chalk picture of a Sopwith Camel on it. Black Adder and George are in the front row of seats. There are three other trainees. Darling is at his desk at the back.</i>
George: I say, Sir. What a splendid notion. The Twenty Minuters. Soft tucker, tasty beds, fluffy uniforms.	George: Well then, for goodness sake, Sir, why don't we join?	Black Adder: . . . and when I was a small boy, I used to watch the marsh warblers swooping in my mothers undercroft, and I remember thinking 'Will men ever dare do the same?' And you know . . .	<i>Darling breaks his pencil.</i>	Darling: The other side, Sir!	
Baldrick: Begging your permission, Sir, but why do they call them the Twenty Minuters?	Baldrick: Yeah, be better than just sitting around here all day on our elbows.		Darling: No, I haven't.	<i>Melchett turns the map over. Black Adder turns to George.</i>	
George: Ah, now, yes, . . .	Black Adder: No thank you. No thank you. I have no desire to hang around with a bunch of upper-class delinquents, do	<i>Darling rises from his desk.</i>	Black Adder: Trust you to try and skive off to some cushy option.	Black Adder: Hello, George. What are you doing here?	George: Me, Sir? I just popped in to join the Royal Flying Corps.

ing forward to today. Up-did-
dly-up, down-diddly-down,
whoops-poop, twiddly-dee, a
decent scrap with the fiendish
Red Baron, a bit of a jolly old
crash landing behind enemy
lines, capture, torture, escape
and then back home in time for
tea and medals.

Black Adder: George, who's
using the family brain-cell at
the moment? This is just the
beginning of the training. The
beginning of five long months
of very clever, very dull men
looking at machinery.

*Flasheart is heard in the corri-
dor.*

Flasheart: Hey, girls! Look at
my machinery!

*The sound of screaming wom-
en is heard from the corridor.
Flasheart enters Darling's of-
fice, zipping up his fly. He is
carrying a stick. All present
rise to attention.*

Flasheart: Enter a man who has
no underwear. Ask me why.

All except Black Adder: Why
do you have no underwear,
Lord Flash?

Flasheart: Because the pants
haven't been built yet that'll
take the job on.

*Flasheart performs a pelvic
thrust.*

Flasheart: And that's the type
of guy who's doing the training
around here. Sit down!

All sit. Flasheart notices Black

Adder.

Flasheart: Well, well, well,
well, well. If it isn't old Cap-
tain Slack Bladder.

Black Adder: Blackadder.

Flasheart: Couldn't resist it, eh,
Slack Bladder? Told you you
thought I was great. All right
men, let's do-oo-oo it! The first
thing to remember is: always
treat your kite . . .

*Flasheart taps the picture of the
Sopwith Camel with his stick.*

Flasheart: . . . like you treat your
woman!

*Flasheart whips the air with
his cane.*

George: How, how do you
mean, Sir? Do you mean, do
you mean take her home at
weekends to meet your mother?

Flasheart: No, I mean get inside
her five times a day and take her
to heaven and back.

George looks confused.

Black Adder: I'm beginning to
see why the Suffragette Move-
ment want the vote.

Flasheart: Hey, hey! Any bird
who wants to chain herself
to my railings and suffer a jet
movement gets my vote. Er,
right. Well, I'll see you in ten
minutes for take-off.

Flasheart begins to leave.

Black Adder: Hang on, hang
on! What about the months of

training?

Flasheart: Hey, wet-pants! This
isn't the Women's Auxiliary
Balloon Corps. You're in the
Twenty Minuters now.

Darling stands up.

Darling: Er, Sir . . .

Flasheart: Yes . . .

Darling: . . . Sir!

Flasheart: . . . Prat at the back!

Darling: I think we'd all be in-
trigued to know why you're
called the Twenty Minuters.

George: Oh, Mister Thicko.
Imagine not knowing that.

Flasheart: Well, it's simple!
The average life expectancy for
a new pilot is twenty minutes.
Darling: Ah . . .

Darling sits.

Black Adder: Life expectancy .
. . of twenty minutes . . .

Flasheart: That's right. Gog-
gles on, chocks away, last one
back's a homo! Hurray!

Flasheart runs out of the room.

Trainee Pilots: Hurray!

*Trainee Pilots run after
Flasheart.*

Black Adder: So, we take off in
ten minutes, we're in the air for
twenty minutes, which means
we should be dead by twenty
five to ten.



RECUE: Li George and Lord Flasheart arrived to rescue Bal-
drick and Blackadder from the Germans. Click on the photo to
watch a video clip from this episode.

George: Hairy blighters, Sir.
This is a bit of a turn-up for the
plus fours.

*Darling rises and moves to the
door.*

Darling: I shouldn't worry
about it too much, Blackadder.
Flying's all about navigation.
As long as you've got a good
navigator I'm sure you'll be
fine.

*Darling sniggers as he opens
the door to reveal Baldrick in
flying gear. Baldrick enters.
Darling leaves.*

Scene 9: In The Air
*Black Adder and Baldrick are
flying in a Sopwith Camel.
George is another Camel.*

Black Adder: Actually, they're
right. This is a doddle.
Baldrick: Careful, Sir!

Black Adder: Whoops, whoops,

a little wobble there. I'll get
the hang of it, don't worry.
All right, Baldrick, how many
rounds have we got?

Baldrick: Er, five hundred, Sir.
Cheese and tomato for you, rat
for me.

George: Tally-bally ho!

Baldrick: What's this?

Baldrick climbs out of his seat.

Black Adder: Baldrick! Bal-
drick! Will you stop arsing
about and get back in the plane!

Baldrick: Ooh, ooh, ooh! Hey,
Sir, I can see a pretty red plane
from up here. Ha ha! Woo
woo!

Von Richthoven: Schnell! Da
unten! Ha ha ha!

*Von Richthoven shoots out one
of the wing-supports on Black-*

adder's aircraft.

Black Adder: Oh no! Watch
out, Baldrick, it's stood right on
our tail. Yes, now this is devel-
oping into a distinctly boring
situation, but we're still on our
side of the line so I'll crash-land
and claim my ears went 'pop'
first time out.

Baldrick: Ooh, let's hope we
fall on something soft!

Black Adder: Fine. I'll try and
aim between General Melchett's
ears!

**Scene 10: A German Prison
Cell**

*Black Adder is pacing about the
cell. Baldrick is seated.*

Black Adder: I don't believe
it. A German prison cell. For
two and a half years the West-
ern Front has been as likely to
move as a Frenchman who lives
next door to a brothel, and last
night the Germans advance a
mile and we land on the wrong
side.

Baldrick: Ooh, dear, Captain B,
my tummy's gone all squirty.

Black Adder: That means you're
scared, Baldrick, and you're
not the only one. I couldn't be
more petrified if a wild rhinoc-
eros had just come home from
a hard day at the swamp and
found me wearing his pyjamas,
smoking his cigars and in bed
with his wife.

Baldrick: I've heard what these
Germans will do, Sir. They'll
have their wicked way with
anything of woman-born.

Black Adder: Well, in that case, Baldrick, you're quite safe. However, the Teutonic reputation for brutality is well-founded: their operas last three or four days; and they have no word for 'fluffy'.	<i>against the wall.</i>	Melchett: Now, then, now then, now, now, then, now then, now then, then now, now, now then. What's going on here?	George: Your dog, Sir.	Melchett: Erm, what is the actual scale of this map, Darling?	<i>Von Richthoven kisses Black Adder on both cheeks.</i>
Baldrick: I want my mum!				Darling: Erm, one-to-one, Sir.	Black Adder: You may have been right, Balders. Looks like we're going to get rogered to death after all.
Black Adder: Yes, it'd be good to see her. I should imagine a maternally-outraged gorilla could be a useful ally when it comes to the final scrap.	Von Gerhardt: It is: Prepare for a fate worse than death, English flying fellow.	Darling: That damn fool Black-adder has crashed his plane behind enemy lines, Sir. This young idiot wants to go and try rescue him. It's a total waste of men and equipment.	Melchett: Yes, yes, my dog. But what I'm trying to say, George, is that the state young Flossy was in after we'd scraped him off my front tyre is very much the state that young Blackadder will be in now. If not very nearly dead, then very actually dead.	Melchett: Come again?	
	Black Adder: Oh. So, it's the traditional warm German welcome.	George: He's not a damn fool, Sir, he's a bally hero.	George: Permission for lip to wobble, Sir?	Darling: Er, the map is actually life-size, Sir. It's superbly detailed. Look, look, there's a little worm.	Baldrick: Do you want me to go first, Sir?
<i>Footsteps are heard outside the cell.</i>	Von Gerhardt: Correct. Also, he is saying: Do not try to escape or you will suffer even worse.	Melchett: All right. All right, all right, all right. I'll deal with this, Darling. Delicate touch needed, I fancy.	Melchett: Permission granted.	Melchett: Oh, yes. So the actual amount of land retaken is?	<i>Von Richthoven laughs.</i>
Black Adder: Prepare to die like a man, Baldrick.	Black Adder: A fate worse than a fate worse than death? Sounds pretty bad.	<i>Melchett takes George over to the fireplace.</i>	<i>George's lips wobble.</i>	<i>Darling whips out a tape measure and measures the table.</i>	Von Richthoven: You English and your sense of humour. During your brief stay I look forward to learning more of your wit, your punning and your amusing jokes about the breaking of the wind.
<i>Baldrick stands.</i>	Scene 11: Captain Darling's Office		Melchett: Stout fellow.	Darling: Excuse me, Sir. Seventeen square feet, Sir.	Black Adder: Well, Baldrick's the expert there.
Black Adder: Or as close as you can come to a man without actually shaving the palms of your hands.	<i>George and Darling are arguing loudly, there is confused chatter.</i>	Melchett: Now, George. Do you remember when I came down to visit you when you were a nipper for your sixth birthday? You used to have a lovely little rabbit. Beautiful little thing. Do you remember?	George: But surely, Sir, you must allow me to at least try and save him.	Melchett: Excellent. So you see, young Blackadder didn't die horribly in vain after all.	Baldrick: I certainly am, Sir.
<i>The door opens and Oberleutnant von Gerhardt enters.</i>	George: Yes well, you see, it's all very well for you, isn't it, sitting here behind your, behind your, behind your comfy desk.	George: Flossy.	Melchett: No, George. It would be as pointless as trying to teach a woman the value of a good, forward defensive stroke. Besides, it would take a superman to get him out of there, not the kind of weed who blubs just because somebody gives him a slice of rabbit pie instead of birthday cake.	George: If he did die, Sir.	<i>Von Richthoven laughs.</i>
Von Gerhardt: Good evening. I am Oberleutnant von Gerhardt. I have a message from the Baron von Richthoven, the greatest living German.	Darling: Don't you take that tone with me, Lieutenant, or I'll have you on a charge for insubordination.	Melchett: That's right. Flossy. Do you remember what happened to Flossy?		Darling: Tch!	Von Richthoven: How lucky you English are to find the toilet so amusing. For us, it is a mundane and functional item. For you, the basis of an entire culture.
Black Adder: Which, considering that his competition consists entirely of very fat men in leather shorts burping to the tune of 'She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain', is no great achievement.	George: Well, I'd rather be on a charge for insubordination than on a charge of deserting a friend.	George: You shot him.	George: Well, I suppose you're right, Sir.	Melchett: That's the spirit, George. If nothing else works, then a total pig-headed unwillingness to look facts in the face will see us through.	<i>Baldrick laughs, von Richthoven slaps him in the face.</i>
Von Gerhardt: Quiet!	Darling: How dare you talk to me like that!	Melchett: That's right. It was the kindest thing to do after he'd been run over by that car.	Melchett: Course I am. Now let's talk about something more jolly, shall we? Look, this is the amount of land we've recaptured since yesterday.	Scene 12: A German Prison Cell	Von Richthoven: I must now tell you of the full horror of what awaits you.
<i>Von Gerhardt slaps Baldrick across the face. Baldrick falls</i>	George: How dare I . . . ?	George: By your car, Sir.	<i>Melchett and George move over to the map table.</i>	<i>Black Adder is seated. Baldrick is sitting on the floor. There is a jangling of keys, the cell door opens and the Red Baron enters.</i>	Black Adder: Ah, you see, Balders. Dress it up in any amount of pompous verbal diarrhoea, and the message is 'Squareheads down for the big Boche gang-bang'.
	<i>General Melchett, attracted by the noise, enters from his office.</i>	Melchett: Yes, by my car. But that too was an act of mercy when you would remember that that dog had been set on him.	George: Oh, excellent.	Von Richthoven: So! I am the Red Baron von Richthoven and you are the two English flying aces responsible for the spilling of the precious German blood of many of my finest and my blondest friends. I have waited many months to do this.	Von Richthoven: As an officer

and a gentleman, you will be looking forward to a quick and noble death.	. . . impotent, they say.	<i>Black Adder notices that the cell door has been left ajar.</i>	<i>Flasheart smashes through the cell door, swinging on a rope. As he lands, he trumpets his own arrival.</i>	Flasheart: Come on.	'hint of brain'.
Black Adder: Well, obviously.	Von Richthoven: Sexual innu-endo.	Black Adder: Oh, damn! He's, he's left the door open.	Flasheart: It's me. Hurray!	Black Adder: Yes, yes. Look, I'm sorry, chaps, but I've splintered my pancreas. Erm, and I seem to have this terrible cough.	Black Adder: Excellent. Well, that's clear. Let's get back to that lovely war, then!
Von Richthoven: But, instead, an even worse fate awaits you. Tomorrow, you will be taken back to Germany . . .	<i>Von Richthoven laughs.</i>	Baldrick: Oh, good! We can escape, Sir.	George and Baldrick: Hurray!	<i>Black Adder fakes a couple of coughs.</i>	Flasheart: Woof! George: Woof!
Black Adder: Here it comes!	Von Richthoven: But enough of this. As you say in England, I must fly.	Black Adder: Are you mad, Baldrick? I'll find someone to lock it for us.	<i>Flasheart smashes Baldrick in the face. Baldrick falls to the floor.</i>	Black Adder: Coff-guards! Coff-guards!	Baldrick: Bark!
Von Richthoven: . . . to a convent school, outside Heidelberg, where you will spend the rest of the war teaching the young girls home economics.	<i>Von Richthoven laughs.</i>	<i>Black Adder opens the door to find George standing there.</i>	Flasheart: God's potatoes, George. You said noble brother flyers were in the lurch. If I'd known you meant old Slack Bladder and the mound of the hound of the Baskervilles, I'd probably have let them stew in their own juice.	Flasheart: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait a minute. Now I may be packing the kind of tackle that you'd normally expect to find swinging about between the hindlegs of a Grand National winner, but I'm not totally stupid, and I've got the kind of feeling you'd rather we hadn't come.	<i>As the group moves to leave, von Richthoven appears at the cell door.</i>
Black Adder: Er . . .	Von Richthoven: Perhaps I will master this humour after all, ja?	George: Ssh! Keep-ee! Mum's the word! Not 'arf, or what?	<i>Baldrick rises.</i>	Black Adder: Coff-guards!	Von Richthoven: Not so fast, Blackadder.
Von Richthoven: For you, as a man of honour, the humiliation will be unbearable.	Black Adder: I wouldn't be too optimistic.	<i>Black Adder shuts the door in George's face.</i>	Flasheart: And let me tell you, if I ever tried that, I'd probably drown.	Black Adder: No, no, no, I'm very grateful. It's just that I'd slow you up.	Black Adder: Oh, damn! Foiled again! What bad luck!
Black Adder: Oh, I think you'll find we're tougher than you imagine.	Von Richthoven: Oh, and the little fellow, if you get lonely in the night, I'm in the old cha-teau. There's no pressure.	Baldrick: Sir, why did you just slam the door on Lieutenant George?	<i>Baldrick laughs. Flasheart laughs and smacks Baldrick in the face, knocking him to the floor once more.</i>	Black Adder: No, no, no, I'm very grateful. It's just that I'd slow you up.	<i>Von Richthoven enters the cell.</i>
Von Richthoven: Ha! I can tell how much you are suffering by your long faeces.	<i>Von Richthoven starts to leave. As he moves up the steps to the cell door he prat-falls and laughs.</i>	Black Adder: I can't believe it. Go away!	Flasheart: Still, since I'm here, I may as well do-oo it, as the Bishop said to the netball team. Come on, chums!	Flasheart: I think I'm beginning to understand.	Von Richthoven: Ah, and the Lord Flasheart. This is indeed an honour. Finally, the two greatest gentleman fliers in the world meet. Two men of honour, who have joustured together in the cloud-strewn glory of the skies, face to face at last. How often I have rehearsed this moment of destiny in my dreams.
Black Adder: We're not suffering too much to say 'thank you'. Thank you. Say 'thank you', Baldrick.	Von Richthoven: Prat-fall!	<i>George pushes the door open and enters the cell.</i>	<i>Flasheart runs out of the cell, followed by George and Baldrick. Black Adder sits down and begins to moan, faking an injury.</i>	Black Adder: Are . . . are you?	The panoply to encapsulate the unspoken nobility of a comradeship.
Baldrick: Thank you, Baldrick.	<i>Von Richthoven leaves the cell, laughing as he goes.</i>	George: It's me. It's me.	Black Adder: But what the hell are you doing here?	Flasheart: Just because I can give multiple orgasms to the furniture just by sitting on it, doesn't mean that I'm not sick of this damn war: the blood, the noise, the endless poetry.	<i>Flasheart shoots von Richthoven.</i>
<i>Von Richthoven laughs.</i>	Black Adder: Yup! Out of the war and teaching nuns how to boil eggs. For us, the Great War is finito. A war that would be a damn sight simpler if we'd just stayed in England and shot fifty thousand of our men a week. No more mud, death, rats, bombs, shrapnel, whizz-bangs, barbed wire and those bloody awful songs that have the word 'whoops' in the title.	George: Oh, never mind the hows, and the whys and the do-you-mind-if-I-don'ts.	Black Adder: Aah! Ow! Aah!	Black Adder: Is that really what you think, Flasheart?	Flasheart: What a poof! Come on!
Von Richthoven: How amusing. But now, forgive me. I must take to the skies once again. Very funny. The noble Lord Flasheart still eludes me.	Black Adder: I think you'll find he's overrated. Bad breath and	Black Adder: But it would have taken a superman to get in here.	<i>Flasheart runs back into the cell, followed by George and Baldrick.</i>	<i>Flasheart whips out his pistol and threatens Black Adder.</i>	<i>All exit the cell, cheering.</i>
		George: Well, it's funny you should say that, because as it happens I did have some help from a rather spiffing bloke. He's taken a break from some crucial top-level shagging.		Flasheart: Course it's not what I think. Now get out that door before I redecorate that wall an interesting new colour called	Scene 13: Captain Darling's Office <i>Darling is dusting the office door. Black Adder opens the door in Darling's face.</i>

Black Adder: Hello, Darling.

Darling retreats backwards towards his desk as Black Adder enters.

Darling: Good Lord. Captain Blackadder. I thought, I thought you were . . .

Black Adder: Playing tennis?

Darling: No.

Black Adder: Dead?

Darling: Well, yes, unfortunately.

Black Adder: Well, I had a lucky escape. No thanks to you. This is a friend of mine.

Flasheart is standing on Darling's desk. Darling turns around and finds himself staring at Flasheart's crotch.

Darling: Argh!

Flasheart: Hi, creep.

Black Adder: Flasheart, this is Captain Darling.

Flasheart: Captain Darling? Funny name for a guy, isn't it?

Flasheart jumps down from the desk.

Flasheart: Last person I called 'Darling' was pregnant twenty seconds later. Hear you couldn't be bothered to help old Slacky here.

Darling: Er, well, it . . . it wasn't quite that, Sir. It's just that we weighed up the pros and cons, and decided it wasn't a reasonable use of our time and resources.

Flasheart: Well, this isn't a reasonable use of my time and resources, but I'm going to do it anyway.

Darling: What?

Flasheart: This!

Flasheart head-butts Darling. Darling groans and falls backwards across his desk.

Flasheart: All right, Slacky! All right, Slacky! I've got to fly. Two million chicks, only one Flasheart. And remember, if you want something, take it. Bobby!

Bobby enters the office and salutes.

Bobby: My Lord!

Flasheart: I want something!

Bobby: Take it!

Flasheart: Woof!

Bobby starts to unbutton her top as she leaves the office, followed by Flasheart.

Black Adder: Git!

General Melchett enters from his office.

Melchett: Ah, Blackadder. So you escaped.

Black Adder: Yes, Sir.

Melchett: Bravo!

Melchett notices the unconscious Darling.

Melchett: Don't slouch, Darling.

Black Adder: I was wondering whether, having been tortured by the most vicious sadist in the German army, I might be allowed a week's leave to recuperate, Sir.

Melchett: Excellent idea. Your commanding officer would have to be stark raving mad to refuse you.

Black Adder: Well, you are my commanding officer.

Melchett: Well?

Black Adder: Can I have a week's leave to recuperate, Sir?

Melchett: Certainly not!

Black Adder: Thank you, Sir.

Melchett: Baaaaaa!



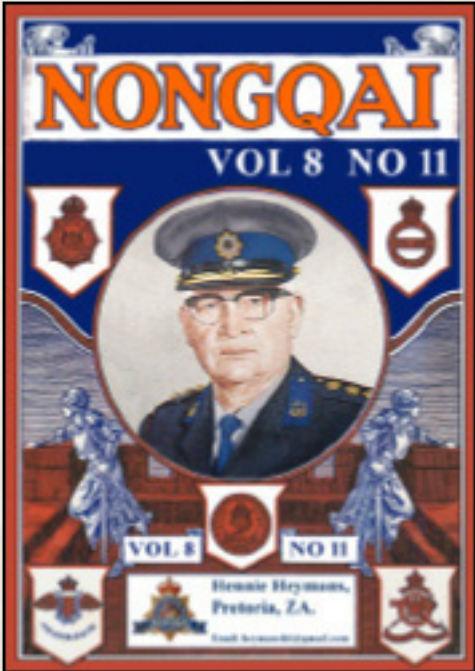
- # Quiz Answers
- So how did you do with this months quiz? Here are the answers.
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Honey tank. | 12.Grease Gun. |
| 2. Adolf Galland. | 13.Mike Hoare. |
| 3. Stonewall. | 14.Adolph Malan. |
| 4. M4 Sherman. The British named it the 'Ronson' after a cigarette lighter because they said it "lights up first time, every time" when hit. | 15.Jimmy. |
| 5. British Field Marshall Douglas Haig. | 16.White Death. |
| 6. The Nebelwerfer Rocket Launcher. | 17.The potato masher or the stick grenade. |
| 7. Junkers Ju 87. | 18.Thompson submachine gun or Tommy Gun. |
| 8. General George S. Patton Jr. | 19.The Dam Busters. |
| 9. 101st Airborne Division. | 20.Vorster Orrel. |
| 10.Bubi (A German word meaning "young boy" or "kid".) | 21.Der rote Kampfflieger - the Red Battle-Flyer. |
| 11.Stalin Organ. | 22.Dad's Army. |
| | 23.The Red Devils. |
| | 24.Eland 60 armoured car. |
| | 25.Bohemian Corporal. |



Useful links

Every month we will be featuring a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and on-line magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



Hipe!

media

E-mail
editor@hipe.co.za



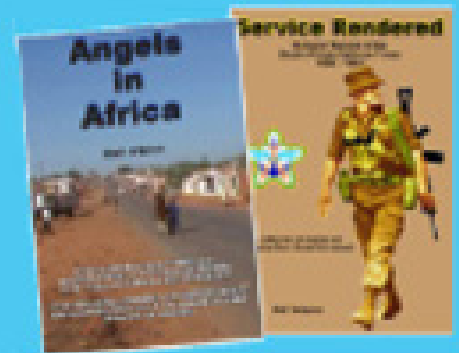
Online Magazines

Flip book magazines with pages that can be turned.



E-books

Produced in any electronic format required.



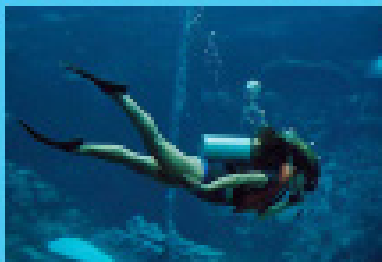
2D & 3D Animation

Produced in any video format.



Video Production

Scripting, storyboard, filming and editing done to any video format required. We also do aerial and underwater video and stills.



Still Photography

If you're thinking digital media then think Hipe Media.