



Military Despatches

Vol 43 January 2021

Not a military genius

Ten of Hitler's biggest mistakes

Feared and respected

Three World War II British legends

You are what you eat

Military ration packs from around the world

Operation Babylon

Iraq's nuclear reactor - now you see it, now you don't

For the military enthusiast



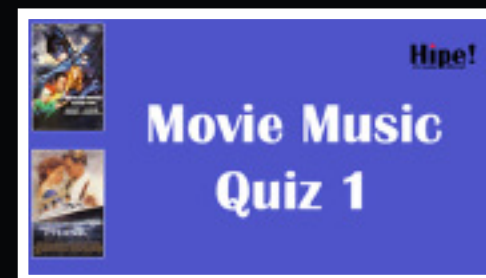
Click on any video below to view



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



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



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.



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.



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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Editor's Sitrep

First of all, may I take this opportunity to wish all of our readers a peaceful, prosperous, and safe New Year. May 2021 be a damn side better than 2020.

Like many of you, I lost far too many friends and fellow military veterans this past year. Many of them to Covid-19. And with a second wave arriving and a new strain of the virus, it doesn't look as if we're going to be in the clear for a while yet.

So, with this in mind, please remember to wear a mask, sanitise and maintain social distancing.

2020 was a challenging year for many of us, especially on the financial front. I know of many veterans that are in serious financial situations because they have lost the jobs they had or have not been paid.

I am often reminded of a verse from the song "Streets Of London". It is a haunting song that was originally written and recorded by Ralph McTell in 1969. It was not released as a single until 1974 and since then has been covered by over 200 artists.

The verse that always gets me goes:

"Have you seen the old man outside the seaman's mission

Memory fading with the med-

al ribbons that he wears

And in the winter city, the rain cries a little pity

For one more forgotten hero, and a World that doesn't care."

Personally I think that it's a crime that so many military veterans are not treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve. I know of many of them, some of them among the few remaining veterans of World War II, that cannot afford medical treatment or cannot afford to eat a decent meal once a day.

We need to do more than just pay them lip service. Many of them did not choose to become soldiers. Yet when the call went out to serve their country, they answered that call.

In closing off my editorial I would like to thank all the readers that give me feedback on the magazine. I really appreciate it.

And a special thanks to two special stars - Robbie Roberts and Regine Lord. Thank you for all that you do, and just for being who you are.

Until next time.

Matt

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Front Cover

Brendan O'Carroll, who stars as Agnes Brown in the hit TV comedy "Mrs Brown's Boys", is making a TV pilot about Irish peacekeepers in Lebanon during the 1980s.



10 of Hitler's biggest mistakes

While many still regard Adolf Hitler as a military genius, the facts show that while he may have been a charismatic leader and great orator, when it came to military matters he was a bumbling amateur.

Born in Austria on 20 April 1889, Adolf Hitler moved to Germany in 1913 and fought as a member of the German Army during World War I.

During the war he rose to the rank of *Gefreiter* (Corporal) and was decorated twice for bravery, winning the Iron Cross 2nd class and 1st class.

In 1919, he joined the German Workers' Party (DAP), the precursor of the Nazi Party, and was appointed leader of the Nazi Party in 1921.

In 1923 he attempted to seize governmental power in a failed coup in Munich and was imprisoned with a sentence of five years.

After his early release in 1924, Hitler gained popular support by attacking the Treaty of Versailles and promoting Pan-Germanism, anti-semitism and anti-communism with charismatic oratory and Nazi propaganda. He frequently denounced international capitalism and communism as part of a Jewish conspiracy.

A brilliant orator, Hitler would go on to become chancellor and later *Führer* (leader) of Germany.

Much of Germany at the time regarded him as a saviour and a man that would lead the nation to greatness. Even those outside

of Germany thought that he was a good thing for Germany. Time Magazine even voted him as 'Time Person of the Year' in 1938.

Yet on 1 September 1939 he would order an invasion of Poland that would go on to start World War II.

While a lot of people treat Adolf Hitler as if he was a military genius who was only done in by his own visions of unattainable excess, this is not the case.

He made many mistakes and bad decisions that would end up costing Germany the war.

Here are ten of his biggest mistakes.

10. He Cancelled the Worlds' First Assault Rifle

Hitler contravened the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 when, on 22 June 1941, he ordered the invasion of the Soviet Union.

A new weapon was needed to help German troops deal with the vast expanses of the Russian tundra, and the millions of Russian soldier defending it.

This weapon would have to take the range, penetration and accuracy of a rifle and combine it with the rate of fire, quick reload time and manoeuvrability of a submachine gun.

Developers went off and created just such a weapon - the

Mkb 42, the world's first assault rifle.

Early tests in the field showed that it was a devastating weapon with vast potential.

Then, during a political fight in Berlin, Hitler lost his temper (something which happened often) and cancelled production of the weapon.

Army commanders were so impressed with the weapon that they renamed it the MP 43 (*Maschinenpistole 43*) and continued to produce it behind Hitler's back.

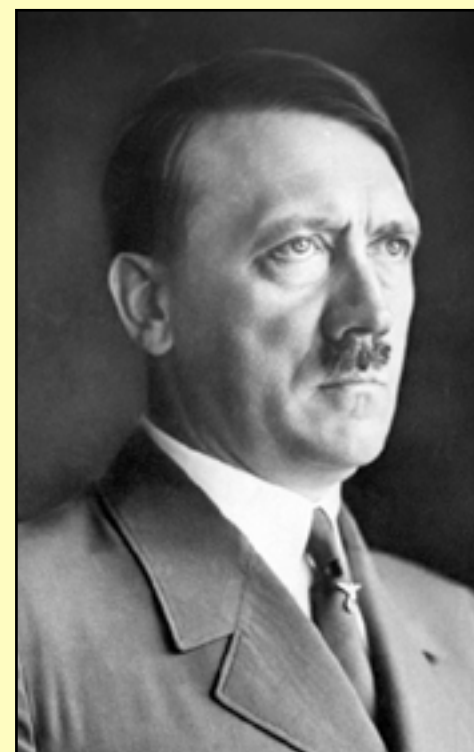
When Hitler heard about it, he cancelled the project once again. By the time he listened to reason it was mid-1943 and the Russians were smashing the Germans back all along the front line. It was a case of 'too little, too late'.

9. He Cancelled the Me-262 Jets

While aviation had made vast leaps from the biplanes of World War I, aircraft were still propeller driven. Yet that need not have been the case.

Nicknamed the *Schwalbe* (Swallow), the Messerschmitt Me 262 was the world's first operational jet-powered fighter aircraft. And it made its first test flight on 18 July 1942.

They could have had it fully operational by mid-1943.



Adolf Hitler

There was, however, one small problem. The plane had been designed and designated as an interceptor.

This made sense because its main advantage was its incredible speed - faster than anything the allies could put into the air.

The thing is that Hitler wasn't in the least bit interested in an interceptor. He wanted a fighter-bomber. True to form, Hitler scrapped the entire project until he could get his fighter-bombers.

Once again, by the time Hitler relented it was way too late.

8. No retreat

Hitler was not a military strategist, which is probably why he fanatically enforced his ridiculous "No retreat. Fight to the last man and the last bullet" to absurd ends.

Then again, you don't have to be a military genius to realise that sheer will power is not

match for superior numbers and firepower.

Hitler was often living in a fantasy world where he truly believed that his will alone could overcome any odds and that German troops would never allow themselves to be defeated.

He was still sprouting this propaganda while Russian forces were smashing Germany.

He first issued his 'no retreat' order at Stalingrad when he denied General Friedrich Paulus permission to fight his way out of a Soviet encirclement while Russian lines were still relatively weak.

The result was the loss of the entire German 6th Army, as well as any hopes of a German victory.

Yet even that didn't teach Hitler a lesson. He denied permission to German commanders that wanted to pull back and fortify position on the eastern bank of the Rhine River in 1945. They would then blow the bridges and dare western allies to cross.

This would have been the smart choice, but Hitler sent them the same old message - 'no retreat'.

The allies gleefully used this opportunity to mop up a large chunk of German troops in the west.

The Germans that did manage to retreat had no strategy in mind but to flee as quickly as possible and avoid being killed or captured.

Not to much later Hitler screwed himself over directly

by forcing his troops to hold a helpless line against the Russians on the Oder River rather than pulling them back and using them to tighten the defences of Berlin itself.

When the Russians reached the city mere days later there were only about 80,000 Germans left to defend it, half of which were civilians.

This wasn't good news for Hitler as there were 1.6 million Russian troops outside the city. And they were not in a good mood.

7. The German army was unprepared for winter war in Russia

During winter, Russia is not the best place to fight a war. Napoleon Bonaparte found this out the hard way when he invaded Russia back in 1812.

Needless to say, if you're planning on invading the place at least bring a jacket or something warm.

Hitler could have used this information when he launched Operation Barbarossa on 22 June 1941.

Hitler was convinced that the German *Wehrmacht* did not need winter gear because it was unstoppable and the campaign would be over before the Russian winter arrived.

As he said at the time, all he needed to do was kick in the door and watch the whole rotten structure come tumbling down.

Six months later the Germans had made some incredible gains, but in no means had defeated the Red Army.

The problem was that Russia was a vast territory and the Russians used the same 'scorched earth' tactics they had once used against Napoleon.

The Germans were close to Moscow and advance units could actually see the spires of the Kremlin through their binoculars. If Moscow fell then surely Russia would fall.

Then the advance stopped. The reason why? The Russian winter had arrived early. The Germans were inexcusably unprepared for the harsh cold of the Russian north.

Tanks froze in their tracks. Men froze in their sleep. Supply lines bogged down, and the entire *Wehrmacht* came to a screeching halt.

While it was no easier for the Russians, their supply lines were much shorter. They used the lull in the fighting to recover and regroup as much as possible.

By the spring of 1942 when the Germans renewed their offensive it was too late. The Russians had recovered just enough to hold the Germans for the next year after which the tide had turned and the Germans would never regain the initiative in the east.

All because they had not been prepared for the winter which had stopped them outside of Moscow.

6. Hitler misused the V1 and V2 rockets

The Germans developed and designed some incredible technology during World War II.



GEFOREN: Hitler's refusal to issue winter gear to his troops meant that many of them would freeze to death in the harsh Russian winter.

Stuff such as the assault rifle, jet aircraft and even the ballistic missile. Technology that we are still using 80 years later.

If it had been placed in the right hands it could have changed the outcome of the war. Unfortunately for the Germans, they were placed in Hitler's hands.

We've already seen how Hitler undermined the potential of the Mkb 42 assault rifle and the Me-262 jet fighter, but how could he take something as incredible as ballistic missile technology and totally waste it?

How can you not take advantage of the ability to rain high explosives down on your enemies from a control tower more than 160 kilometres away.

Well for starters you could not use them against enemy troop formations, supply lines or other military targets.

Instead you could use them against civilian cities and towns

far enough away to make the missile's primitive targeting system mute. Which is exactly what Hitler did.

Rather than striking at the American or Russian troops massing on Germany's borders, Hitler thought it was a better idea to launch them against London.

About 1,400 V2 rockets were launched against London, with just over 500 actually hitting the city.

5. He never listened to his generals

Hitler had some brilliant generals. Men such as Gerd von Rundstedt, Heinz Guderian, Walter Model, and Erwin Rommel.

Yet what's the good of having excellent generals if you don't trust them to lead the troops in the field.

Maybe, just maybe, they know just a bit more about

strategy and tactics than you do. After all, they did put in years of hard work and had the talent and intelligence to rise to the rank of general in the first place.

The thing is that Hitler did listen to his generals early on. France, for example, fell when the Germans devised the plan to go through the Ardennes forest and bypass the formidable French Maginot Line.

It was General von Rundstedt that came up with this plan and not, as often believed, Hitler.

Yet as the war drew on and Hitler grew less and less confident of Germany's ability to win, he began taking control of every decision on every front.

Keep in mind that Hitler was not a military strategist. Yet not only did Hitler try and micro-manage every aspect of the war, he also refused to listen to his generals when they begged him to do things that only an insane person would refuse to do.

Normandy is a classic example of this. Erwin Rommel was convinced that Normandy would be the target of the Allied invasion and not Calais as Hitler believed.

When it happened, Rommel wanted to move his troops north to counter the attack. Hitler refused permission, still believing that the real invasion was still to come. Even though the Allies were pouring men and equipment ashore at Normandy.

By the time he finally listened to the generals that he had hired it was too late, and France was lost.

Hitler also had a habit of firing any general that did not agree with him. Not only that, he also had a total of 84 generals executed, often because they had been proved right about something and Hitler had been proved wrong.

As the war drew on many of the generals lost all respect for Hitler. They gave him insulting nicknames such as 'the Bohemian Corporal' and 'Größfaz'. This was short for *größter Feldherr aller Zeiten* ("greatest commander-in-chief of all time").

There were no fewer than 28 attempts to assassinate Hitler, many of them carried out by generals and other high ranking members of the *Wehrmacht*.

4. He made Goering head of the Luftwaffe

Hermann Goering was a veteran World War I fighter pilot ace, and a recipient of the *Pour le Mérite* ("The Blue Max").

He ended the war with 22 kills and was the last commander of *Jagdgeschwader 1* (Jasta 1), the fighter wing once led by Manfred von Richthofen (The Red Baron).

An early member of the Nazi Party, Goering was among those wounded in Adolf Hitler's failed Beer Hall Putsch in 1923.

While receiving treatment for his injuries, he developed an addiction to morphine which persisted until the last year of his life.

In September 1939 Hitler designated him as his successor

and deputy in all his offices.

After the Fall of France in 1940, he was bestowed the specially created rank of *Reichsmarschall*, which gave him seniority over all officers in Germany's armed forces.

Hitler made the mistake of making Goering the head of the German Air Force, the *Luftwaffe*. Goering, like Hitler, had no command experience.

When Hitler planned Operation Sea Lion, the invasion of Britain, he wanted air superiority over the English Channel. The task was given to Goering and his *Luftwaffe*.

Of course we all know the outcome of the Battle of Britain. This was not only due to the skill and courage of the RAF (Royal Air Force), but also due to Goering's persistent mistakes.

He would switch targets and strategy at a moments notice. For example when the *Luftwaffe* targeted British radar installations Goering did not allow them to finish the job.

While many radar installations had been damaged the British were able to quickly repair them because Goering had shifted his focus to a different target.

The *Luftwaffe*'s initial strategy of targeting RAF airfields was highly successful. If it had continued for a few more days there was a good chance that the RAF would have been incapable of defending the skies over England and Operation Sea Lion could have gone ahead.

Yet on the night of 24 August

1940 an accident occurred that would change the course of history.

German aircraft heading for a military target flew off course and mistakenly dropped their bombs on central London.

British leader Winston Churchill demanded retaliation and the next day the RAF dropped bombs on Berlin.

While the bombs did not cause much damage, Goering was livid, as was Hitler.

Only days earlier Goering had said in a speech "If one enemy bomb falls on Berlin, you can call me Meyer."

Goering then gave orders that London and major British port cities become the prime target of the *Luftwaffe*. They would bomb England into submission.

Switching their target from shipping, RAF radar and airfields, and plane factories gave the RAF time to repair the airfields and gave them breathing space.

By switching targets yet again, Goering had effectively lost the Battle of Britain.

By 1941, Goering was at the peak of his power and influence. As the Second World War progressed, Goering's standing with Hitler and with the German public declined after the *Luftwaffe* proved incapable of preventing the Allied bombing of Germany's cities and resupplying surrounded Axis forces in Stalingrad.

3. He started a war on two fronts

One of the biggest factors in



UNBREAKABLE: Hitler's obsession with Stalingrad would see the city becoming the graveyard for the entire German 6th Army. Not only would it cost them an entire army, ultimately it would cost them the war.

Germany's defeat in World War I was that it became a war on two fronts.

This was something that Hitler swore he would never allow to happen. Yet he was also very determined to invade Russia.

The loss of the Battle of Britain meant that Hitler was forced to cancel Operation Sea Lion. However Britain wasn't a threat on mainland Europe and Hitler believed that he could turn his attention to the east.

The problem was that Britain was still very much in the war and when Hitler invaded Russia he had effectively started a war on two fronts.

If he had focused his attention on England, appointed competent people to lead the *Luftwaffe* and remove the RAF as a threat, he could have then invaded England.

This would have removed the

last Western Ally from the war and he could have focused all his attention to the east.

2. He declared war on the United States

When Japan attacked the United States in December 1941, Hitler followed through on his tripartite agreement and declared war on America as well.

This was an idiotic move. For one, he didn't have much of a reputation to uphold. He regularly signed contracts with countries and then stabbed them in the back.

So honouring a commitment he made to Japan didn't help anyone. Then again, Hitler had no idea that America could turn its weak army into a huge military juggernaut the likes of which the planet had never seen.

So you can't really blame him for not regarding America as

much of a threat. Much the same way he had done with Britain and Russia.

Actually you can kind of blame him. America wasn't exactly a third world country, even in the midst of the Great Depression.

It still had gigantic industrial strength and a resource pool to fuel it. Fair enough, its military was as small as it had ever been. But it should have come as no surprise to an economic genius like Hitler that America could turn on its war machine and combine it with masterful political propaganda to come out with a huge military advantage.

1. Obsession with Stalingrad

In October 1942 Hitler slightly changed the objectives for Army Group South in Russia.

The original destination was the Caucasus oilfields to the south of mainland Russia.

If captured the oilfields would

have transformed Germany's already formidable economy into an empire.

However the city of Stalingrad, a bastion of Russian troops, still stood not too far out of Army Group South's way.

For Hitler it was like waving a red flag at a bull. After all the city was named after his hated enemy, Josef Stalin.

Hitler decided to kill two birds with one stone. He would divert a large chunk of Army Group South to capture Stalingrad while the remainder would go on to capture the Caucasus' oilfields.

Unfortunately Hitler was up against a foe that was every bit as stubborn and possibly even a worse military strategist than he was.

Stalin ordered the troops at Stalingrad to defend the city at all costs. Russian troops had the choice of advancing against the Germans and being shot by

them, or retreating and being shot by their own side.

Rather than pulling his troops back and capturing the far more important Caucasus region and then return to the city once they had been reinforced, Hitler chose to strip troops away from their positions in the Caucasus and send them to Stalingrad. But it didn't help.

The Germans were unable to break the Russian army in and around the city.

Still, Hitler's obsession with Stalingrad cost him the Caucasus, which was the entire reason he had invaded Russia in the first place.

In conclusion it appears that Herr Hitler may not have been the great military leader that some people give him credit for.

If he had stuck to making speeches and left the war up to his generals, things may have turned out different.

Springbok
Journal of the South African Legion
Tydskrif van die Suid-Afrikaanse Legioen

The SA Legion is a national organisation, part of a worldwide family that addresses the needs of ex-service personnel and their dependents by way of housing, pensions, employment and general welfare. It is apolitical, non-sectarian, non-racial, non-sexist and non-partisan.

The Springbok is the official journal of the South African Legion. Read the December issue of Springbok by clicking on the cover to the left.

Special Forces - Irish Special Forces

Part twenty two of a series that takes a look at Special Forces units around the world. This month we look at the Irish Special Forces.

Many people are surprised to discover that the Republic of Ireland has a defence force, let alone a Special Forces unit.

After all, Ireland has never tried to invade anyone and remained neutral in both World Wars. It was a case of, "Oh, a world war you say. Sure we'd love to come but we've got nothing to wear."

The De-

fence Forces (*Óglaigh na hÉireann*) are the armed forces of Ireland. They encompass the Army, Air Corps, Naval Service and Reserve Defence Forces. It can trace its roots back to 1913.

The Army Ranger Wing (ARW) (*Sciathán Fiannóglagh an Airm*) is the special operations force of the Irish Defence Forces, the military of Ireland.

A branch of the Irish Army, it also selects personnel from the Naval Service and Air Corps.

It serves at the behest of the

Defence Forces and Government of Ireland, operating internally and overseas, and reports directly to the Chief of Staff.

The ARW was established in 1980 with the primary role of counter terrorism and evolved to both special operations and counter terrorism roles from 2000 after the end of conflict in



Northern Ireland.

The unit is based in the Curragh Camp, County Kildare. The 2015 White Paper on Defence announced that the strength of the ARW would be considerably increased.

The unit has served abroad in a number of international peace-keeping missions, including in Somalia, East Timor, Liberia, Chad and Mali.

The ARW trains with special forces units around the world, particularly in Europe. The ARW in its domestic counter terrorism role trains and deploys with the *Garda Síochána* (national police) specialist armed intervention unit, the Emergency Response Unit (ERU).

Role

The Army Ranger Wing roles are divided between war-time special operations (“Green Role”) and anti-terrorism (“Black Role”), the latter known formally as military Aid to the Civil Power (ATCP):

Military tasks (Green Role)

Offensive operations behind enemy lines

- securing of vital objectives
- long-range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP)
- raids
- ambushes
- sabotage
- capture of key personnel
- diversionary operations
- intelligence gathering

Defensive operations

- VIP protection
- counter-insurgency
- training in and conduct of specialist operations
- delay operations

Aid to the civil power tasks (Black Role)

- anti-hijack operations
- hostage rescue operations
- airborne and seaborne interventions
- search operations - specialist tasks on land or sea
- pursuit operations
- recapture of terrorist-held objectives
- VIP security operations/close protection of VIPs
- contingency planning to counter terrorist/subversive threats

History

In the late 1960s, the Defence Forces established Special Assault Groups (SAG) in the Army to meet security challenges on the border with Northern Ireland.

A number of Army officers attended the United States Army Ranger School in Fort Benning, Georgia who returned to conduct Army Ranger courses in Ireland with the first held in 1969.

Among its founding officers was later-to-be Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Dermot Earley.

Special Assault Groups were formed comprising 40 Rangers trained in all arms, engineering and ordnance techniques. By the mid 1970s, the Defence Forces had over 300 Rangers who conducted support operations on the request of the *Garda Síochána*.

Students on these courses were selected from among all ranks and units of the Army, Naval Service and Air Corps. The courses improved standards of physical endurance, marksmanship, individual military skills and small unit tactics.

In December 1977, the *Gar-*



da Síochána formed a counter terrorist unit named the Special Task Force (STF) to operate in border regions that was later to become the Emergency Response Unit.

Following an assessment of the SAG, and Rangers receiving training from the M-Squadron, an elite counter-terrorism (CT) branch of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps, in 1978 it was decided to consolidate the Rangers into a new special forces unit with a counter terrorist capability following an increase in international and national terrorism, such as the 1972 Munich massacre in Germany (then West Germany) and a number of hostage-takings by the Provisional IRA (such as the Balcombe Street siege).

The Army Ranger Wing (ARW) was formally established, in accordance with the Defence Act, by Government order on 16 March 1980.

The ARW received its colours in 1981; Black, Red and Gold, signifying Secrecy, Risk and Excellence. In 1991, the ARW was granted permission to wear the Green beret.

In April 2017, it was reported

Weapons used by the Army Ranger Wing



FN P90



Steyr AUG A1



Accuracy International Arctic Warfare Magnum



Franchi SPAS-12



SIG Sauer P226

that there had been no increase in the strength of the ARW despite the 2015 White Paper aim to considerably increase the strength of the unit.

The motto of the Army Ranger Wing is taken from an old Fian-na poem, in Irish it is: “*Glaine ár gcroí, Neart ár ngéag, Agus beart de réir ár mbriathar*”, which translates as: “The purity of our hearts, the strength of our limbs and our commitment to our promise” in English.

Selection and training

Candidates must be serving members of the Permanent Defence Forces (PDF) from any of the three branches (Army, Air Corps or Naval Service).

The candidate must be medically fit and have attained the rank of at least 3 Star Private (or equivalent). There is no age limit to attempt selection.

Selection has been open to females since 1984, however, none have been successful. Usually 40 to 80 candidates attempt selection annually.

The ARW recently revised its selection and assessment procedures combining the previous Selection course & Basic Skills course into a new single course named the Special Operations Force Qualification Course (SOFQ).

The SOFQ is conducted over 10 months (40 weeks). The Selection Course had been conducted over three weeks after being reduced in 2006 from four weeks.

The Basic Skills course had been conducted over five months. The SOFQ is divided into 5 distinct modules:

1. Assessment & Evaluation

2. Skills & Leadership
3. SOF Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures TTPs
4. Counter-Terrorism Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures TTPs
5. Continuation training

Module 1 assesses a candidate's level of physical fitness, motivation and suitability to progress on towards further modules (2-5) of the SOFQ course similar to the previous selection course.

Candidates must pass a series of fitness assessments, map reading and individual navigation assessments, claustrophobia, water confidence, and psychometric testing.

The final phase of Module 1 includes individual navigation exercises with set weights over unknown distances and completion times which can be over 250 km, culminating in an additional 65 km cross-country march carrying a 30 kg combat load in the Dublin & Wicklow mountain range.

On average candidates get between four and five hours sleep per a night. Officer and senior NCO candidates are subjected to separate, rigorous scrutiny of their planning and decision-making skills to determine the suitability.

The length of Module 1 is 3 weeks similar to the previous selection course length. Typically 85% of candidates fail Module 1. Between 2000 and 2005, approximately 240 attempted selection, including a female, with 50 successful.

Modules 2 to 4 consist of assessment and training in weapons and marksmanship, live-fire tactical training, special operations tactics, techniques, and pro-



cedures (green role) and counter terrorism tactics, techniques, and procedures (black role), combat water survival, Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Extraction (SERE), communications and medical training.

Upon successful completion of Module 3, candidates are awarded the Fianóglach shoulder tab and are provisionally assigned to the unit. Upon successful completion of Module 4, candidates are awarded the distinctive ARW green beret.

Module 5 Continuation training is the conclusion of the SOFQ course, and candidates are posted to an operational ARW task unit as an assault team operator.

3 Star Privates (and equivalents) who are successful in completing the SOFQ course pass out at the rank of Acting Corporal, and the lowest commissioned rank in the unit is that of Captain.

All candidates must successfully complete the basic parachute course of five static line jumps from 900 metres using T10 round canopies.

As of 2012, it was reported that since the units inception less than 400 had completed training

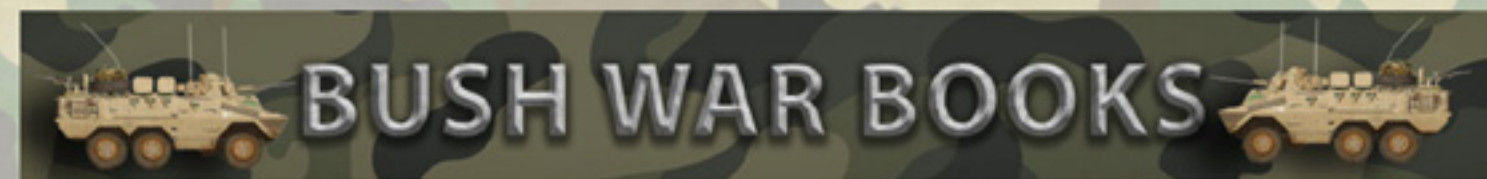
to become a Ranger.

Further specialist training courses for Rangers include advanced combat medical skills, military freefall, combat diving (taught by the specialist Naval Service Diving Section) and boat handling, close protection and handling of advanced weapons.

Prior to 2000 with The Troubles, approximately 85% of Ranger training had been dedicated to counter-terrorism. The average age of a Ranger is 31 years old with the eldest 44 years old.

On average, a member of the ARW spends between five and 10 years serving with the unit before being returned to their home unit bringing their skills with them, but it is not uncommon for some to spend 15 years in the unit.

The ARW has its own purpose built tactical training facilities, including shooting ranges, kill houses and various urban and rural settings. The main facility is known as "Tac Town", based in the Curragh. Other ranges are located in County Wicklow. These facilities are also made available to the ERU.



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"War does not determine who is right - only who is left"

A sign of the times

During the Vietnam War graffiti scrawled onto helmet covers by American troops became almost an art form of its own. Even the North Vietnamese Army began to copy the practice.

In Stanley Kubrick's 1987 movie *Full Metal Jacket* there is an iconic scene featuring Private JT 'Joker' Davis (Matthew Modine) photographing the bodies of locals that have been murdered by the Viet Cong.

Private Joker is a member of the United States Marine Corps and has been sent to Vietnam as a reporter for 'Stars and Stripes', the U.S. military's independent newspaper.

On his helmet cover he has written the words "Born to kill". He is also wearing a peace sign on his helmet.

A colonel sees this and says to Joker, "You write 'Born to Kill' on your helmet and you wear a peace button. What's that supposed to be, some kind of sick joke?"

Joker replies: "I was trying to suggest something about the duality of man, sir, the Jungian thing, sir." To which, the colonel replies: "Whose side are you on, son?"

Officially it was known as the M-1 helmet. US troops called it a 'steel pot'. In 1941, some GI or Marine scribbled "Kilroy was here" or some other oddball or ironic saying on his helmet. Until the Vietnam War, though, what you most commonly saw on helmets were rank insignia and unit designations.

The Vietnam War, however, was unique in many ways. The vast majority of the troops fighting in the war were conscripts.

Many of them would be sent to Vietnam on a 12 month tour of duty.

The Vietnam War was not a popular one. In 1966, anti-war protests and other forms of political protest were rampant in the United States, and the nation's youths were struggling to assert their individuality.

Although the soldiers in Vietnam were a long way from home, they were products of the times, and just like their friends back in the states, they struggled to assert their individuality. One way they did this was by writing graffiti on their helmets.

Such artwork drew media attention as early as 18 June 1965. Appearing in an Associated Press article by Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Horst Faas, the photo caption noted Larry Wayne Chaffin of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, sporting a simple line across the bridge of his helmet: "War is hell."

As one might imagine, it was considered counter to good order and discipline to write on one's helmet cover. The helmet was for the soldier, after all, a uniform item provided by the government.

To deface it meant defacing government property while at the same time violating the rules of wearing the uniform properly. Yet this never prevented the troops from doing it.

As one troop so aptly put it,

"What are they doing to do to punish me? Send me to Vietnam?"

All sorts of different graffiti adorned helmet covers. Peace signs (Fig. 1) were very popular. Then there were phrases such as "Born to kill" (Fig. 2), "Teenage Killer", "Don't tread on me" (Fig 3), "Make war not love" (Fig. 4), and many more.

Some troops would have a "short timer" calendar on their helmets (Fig. 5). This had every month of the 12 months they had to serve written on it. When a month had passed it was crossed off. Many troops would also have their blood group market on their helmet covers.

Some troops would tuck an Ace of Spades (known as the Death Card) into the elastic of their helmet cover (Fig. 6). This would be placed in a dead Viet Cong's mouth. The troops believed that the Viet Cong were superstitious and that this would scare them. It didn't.

Other troops would tuck a packet of cigarettes, insect repellent (known as bug juice) or a small bottle of rifle oil into the elastic (Fig. 7).

Even the regular North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops began to write graffiti on their helmets.

The most popular phrase was "*Sinh ra ở phương bắc chết ở phương nam*" (Fig. 8). This translated as "Born in the North, died in the South."

1



2



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6



7



8



The Perks and perils of being a German general

While being a general has its perks, being a general in Adolf Hitler's Wehrmacht could be hazardous to your health. After all, he had 84 of his generals executed during the war.

One of the ambitions of anyone serving in the military is probably to rise to the rank of general or admiral.

Yet if you were a member of the German *Wehrmacht* (Defence Force) during World War II, the position did have its drawbacks.

While the rank did come with perks for members of the *Heer* (Army), *Luftwaffe* (Air Force), *Kriegsmarine* (Navy), or even the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), it also came with certain perils.

Get on the wrong side of the Führer, Adolf Hitler, and you'd find yourself executed quicker than you can say "ready, aim, fire!"

And it was far easier than you might imagine to get on the wrong side of Hitler or any of his acolytes.

The *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Secret State Police), more commonly known as the Gestapo, were always on the lookout for anyone that had anything bad to say about Hitler or the Nazi Party.

This was regarded as a 'crime against the state'. If there was even the slightest suspicion that someone had committed a crime against the state they would be hauled up in front of the *Volksgerichtshof* (People's Court).

Between 1943 and 1945, the

People's Courts under jurist Roland Freisler sentenced around 7,000 German citizens to death.

It was far worse if you were a member of the *Wehrmacht*. Discipline was often harsh and even a minor offence could see you being sentenced to death. And rank was no protection.

During World War II, no fewer than 84 senior German generals and admirals were executed on the personal orders of Hitler.

Wilhelm Canaris

Take Wilhelm Canaris for instance. Not only was he an admiral, he was also chief of the *Abwehr*, the German military intelligence service, from 1935 to 1944.

Initially a supporter of Adolf Hitler, by 1939 Canaris had turned against the Nazis as he felt Germany would lose another major war. During World War II he was among the military officers involved in the clandestine opposition to Nazi Germany leadership. He was executed in Flossenbürg concentration camp for high treason. His execution took place on 9 April 1945, less than a month before Germany surrendered and 21 days before Hitler committed suicide.

Erwin Rommel

One of Germany's great he-

roes of World War II was Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. Nicknamed "The Desert Fox", he was respected by both friend and foe alike.

During World War I he was awarded the Iron Cross First Class and the *Pour le Mérite*. In World War II he was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds.

Rommel was popular with both the troops and the German public. So it came as a shock to Hitler to learn that Rommel had been involved in the 20 July Plot to assassinate Hitler.

By normal procedure Rommel would have been brought to Roland Freisler's People's Court, a kangaroo court that always decided in favour of the prosecution.

However, Hitler knew that having Rommel branded and executed as a traitor would severely damage morale on the home front. He thus decided to offer Rommel the chance to take his own life.

Two generals from Hitler's headquarters, Wilhelm Burgdorf and Ernst Maisel, visited Rommel at his home on 14 October 1944.

Burgdorf informed him of the charges and offered him three options: he could choose to defend himself personally to Hitler in Berlin, or if he refused to



DESERT FOX: Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was ordered by Hitler to commit suicide or face a public trial and execution.

do so (which would be taken as an admission of guilt), he could either face the People's Court - which would have been tantamount to a death sentence - or choose a quiet suicide. In the former case, his family would have suffered even before the all-but-certain conviction and execution, and his staff would have been arrested and executed as well.

In the latter case, the government would claim that he died a hero and bury him with full military honours, and his family would receive full pension payments. Burgdorf had brought a cyanide capsule.

On 14 October 1944, at the age of 52, Rommel committed suicide. He was given a full state funeral and it was announced that Rommel had succumbed to his injuries from an earlier strafing of his staff car in Normandy.

Yet not many were as fortunate as Rommel and given the option to commit suicide.

Friedrich Fromm

Generaloberst (Colonel General) Friedrich Fromm was Commander in Chief of the *Ersatzheer* (Reserve Army), in charge of training and personnel replacement for combat divisions of the German Army, a position he occupied for most of the war.

While Fromm did not have any direct involvement in the conspiracy, he was aware that some of his subordinates - most notably Claus von Stauffenberg, his Chief of Staff - were planning an assassination attempt against Hitler, followed by a mutiny of the Army. He agreed to remain quiet if he became a top official of the new government after the mutiny.

On the morning of 22 July 1944, Fromm was arrested by Nazi officials and locked in jail to await trial. Fromm was discharged from the German Army on 14 September 1944.

The civilian Fromm was sentenced to death and considered

unworthy for military duty by the People's Court on 7 March 1945. Since the court failed to prove a direct association with the 20 July plotters, he had been charged and convicted for cowardice before the enemy, and sentenced to a military execution.

On 12 March 1945, Fromm was executed at the Brandenburg-Görden Prison by firing squad.

Ludwig Beck

Generaloberst Ludwig Beck was Chief of the German General Staff during the early years of the Nazi regime in Germany before World War II. He never became a member of the Nazi Party.

In 1943, Beck planned two abortive attempts to kill Hitler by means of a bomb. In 1944, he was one of the driving forces of the 20 July plot with Carl Goerdeler and Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg.

The plot failed and Beck was taken into custody the following morning by General Friedrich Fromm.

Beck offered to commit suicide ("accept the consequences"). His last words were "I am thinking of earlier times." Beck then shot himself. In severe distress, Beck succeeded only in severely wounding himself, and a sergeant was brought in to administer the *coup de grâce* by shooting Beck in the back of the neck.

Erwin von Witzleben

Generalfeldmarschall (Field Marshal) Erwin von Witzleben was the commander of *Armee*

OB West.

Von Witzleben was seen as a key man in the 20 July Plot and would have taken over supreme command of the whole *Wehrmacht* as the highest-ranking German officer.

Von Witzleben was arrested on 21 July and cast out of the *Wehrmacht* by the so-called *Ehrenhof der Wehrmacht* ("The Regular Army's Court of Honour"), a conclave of officers set up after the attempted assassination to remove officers from the *Wehrmacht* who had been involved in the plot, mainly so that they were no longer subject to German military law and could be arraigned to a show-trial before the People's Court"

On 7 August 1944, Witzleben was in the first group of accused conspirators to be brought before the People's Court.

Ravaged by the conditions of his Gestapo arrest, he surprisingly approached the bench giving the Nazi salute, for which he was rebuked by the presiding judge Roland Freisler.

Witzleben was sentenced to death on the same day. Witzleben's closing words in court, addressed to Freisler, were:

"You may hand us over to the executioner, but in three months' time, the disgusted and harried people will bring you to book and drag you alive through the dirt in the streets!"

Most of the People's Court trials, including scenes of Witzleben's show trial, was filmed for the German weekly newsreel *Die Deutsche Wochenschau* (The German Newsreel). However, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels decided

against releasing the footage, firstly because Freisler's vituperative, insulting verbiage in the courtroom might draw sympathy for the accused, and secondly because the regime wanted to quell public discussion of the event. The material was classified as *Geheime Reichssache* (Secret German Affairs).

Witzleben was put to death that same day at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin. By Hitler's direct orders, he was hanged with a thin hemp rope (which people who were not from the prison staff called a piano wire) wound around a meat hook, and the execution was filmed.

Erich Hoepner

Generaloberst Erich Hoepner was an early proponent of mechanisation and armoured warfare, he was a *Wehrmacht* army corps commander at the beginning of the war, leading his troops during the invasion of Poland and the Battle of France.

Hoepner commanded the 4th Panzer Group on the Eastern Front during Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

In January 1942, during the Battle of Moscow, Hoepner requested permission from the new commander of Army Group Centre, Günther von Kluge, to withdraw his over-extended forces.

Von Kluge said that he would discuss the matter with Hitler and ordered Hoepner to get ready. Assuming that Hitler's permission was on the way and not wanting to risk the matter any longer, Hoepner ordered his troops to withdraw on 8 Jan-

uary 1942.

Afraid of what Hitler might think, Kluge immediately reported Hoepner, causing Hitler's fury. Hoepner was dismissed from the *Wehrmacht* on the same day.

Hitler directed that Hoepner be deprived of his pension and denied the right to wear his uniform and medals, contravening the law and *Wehrmacht* regulations.

Hoepner filed a lawsuit against the Reich to reclaim his pension. Judges at the time could not be dismissed, even by Hitler, and Hoepner won his case.

Hoepner was implicated in the 20 July Plot and after the coup failed he was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo. He refused an opportunity to commit suicide and demanded a trial, though he would later come to regret it.

A summary trial was conducted by the People's Court and Hoepner was verbally attacked and sentenced to death.

Like other defendants, including Erwin von Witzleben, Hoepner was humiliated during the trial by being made to wear ill-fitting clothes, and not being allowed to have his false teeth.

Although judge Roland Freisler berated Hoepner, even he objected to him being made to dress in such a way.

Hoepner was hanged by a thin hemp rope mounted from meat hooks on 8 August, at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin.

Under the Nazi practice of *Sippenhaft* (collective punishment) Hoepner's wife, daughter, son (a major in the army), brother and sister were arrested.



JUDICIAL JOKE: The *Volksgerichtshof* (People's Court) under Roland Freisler (pictured in the centre) sentenced more than 7,000 German citizens to death. The trials were nothing more than a farce, with the verdict (always guilty) decided long before the trial even began. Freisler was killed on 3 February 1945 during an Allied bombing raid on Berlin.

The women were sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp. His sister was soon released but Frau Hoepner and her daughter were placed in the notorious *Strafblock* for four weeks' additional punishment.

Hoepner's son was first held at a specially created camp at Küstrin and then sent to Buchenwald concentration camp.

Erich Fellgiebel

General Erich Fellgiebel was head of the cipher bureau of the *Reichswehrministerium*.

He was a signals specialist and was instrumental in introducing the Enigma machine. As head of Hitler's signal services, Fellgiebel knew every military secret, including Wernher von Braun's rocketry work at the Peenemünde Army Research Centre.

Part of the 20 July Plot, Fellgiebel was arrested immediate-

ly at Wolf's Lair and tortured for three weeks, but did not reveal any names of his co-conspirators.

He was charged before the People's Court. On 10 August 1944, he was found guilty by Roland Freisler and sentenced to death. He was executed on 4 September 1944 at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin.

Friedrich von Rabenau

General der Artillerie Friedrich von Rabenau was a career-soldier, theologian, and opponent of National Socialism.

He was arrested in the aftermath of the 20 July Plot. On 15 April 1945, without having been charged or tried, General von Rabenau, one of the last inmates remaining in the Flossenbürg concentration camp, was shot on Himmler's specific orders.

The execution order was is-

sued by Gestapo Chief Heinrich Müller with additional orders to report his death as resulting from a low-flying allied air attack.

Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel

General der Infanterie Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel served as military commander of German-occupied France and as commander of the 17th Army in the Soviet Union during Operation Barbarossa,

Stülpnagel was implicated in war crimes, including authorising reprisal operations against civilian population and closely cooperating with the *Einsatzgruppen* in their mass executions of Jews.

When Stülpnagel was recalled from Paris, he stopped at Verdun and tried to kill himself by shooting himself in the head with a pistol on the banks of the Meuse River. He only succeeded in blinding himself.

Stülpnagel and his adviser were both arrested by the Gestapo, and Stülpnagel was brought before the People's Court on 30 August 1944. He was found guilty of high treason and hanged the same day at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin.

These were just a few of the senior officers executed on the orders of Adolf Hitler.

Many of their executions were as a direct result of the 20 July Plot.

As a matter of interest, from the time Hitler took power in 1933 to his death on 30 April 1945, there were no fewer than 28 assassination attempts on Hitler's life.

Feared and respected

In the third of five articles we look at members of the British military that were both feared and respected by their enemies during World War II.

On 1 September 1939 Germany invaded Poland. An act that marked the beginning of World War II.

Two Western powers, the United Kingdom and France, gave guarantees to Poland that they would declare war if Polish independence came under threat, as presented in a statement to the House of Commons by the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain on 31 March 1939.

On 3 September 1939 Neville Chamberlain declared war on Germany. France followed later the same day.

While it was all well and good declaring war on Germany, Britain was in no ways ready for a war.

First of all their intelligence was almost non-existent. The British military had fine examples of intelligence work to look back on. In the early 18th century, the Duke of Marlborough had used a network of agents to keep him informed and to trick the French about his intentions. A hundred years later, the Duke of Wellington had made effective use of intelligence against Napoleon.

The British military had fine examples of intelligence work to look back on. In the early 18th century, the Duke of Marlborough had used a network of agents to keep him informed and to trick the French about his intentions. A hundred years

later, the Duke of Wellington had made effective use of intelligence against Napoleon.

However these lessons were sadly forgotten over the following century and in the grinding, often thoughtless warfare of World War One. Following that war, Britain's intelligence services were neglected. The famous Field Marshal Haig said there was little need for military intelligence between wars.

As a result, the British were ill-informed about the German military at the start of the war. They were also poorly equipped to gather and analyse wartime intelligence, and much of the first year was spent hurriedly building a modern intelligence service.

Like any governmental service, the British military suffered from departmental divisions. The Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry, and Foreign Office all had separate intelligence gathering operations. They guarded their findings jealously. Information was seldom shared. Work was duplicated.

Intelligence was just one example of poor coordination across government and the military. Bad habits were built into procedures, rules, and practices. The pressure of the war showed the necessity of better inter-departmental cooperation, leading to innovations such as the centralisation of photographic reconnaissance.

Neville Chamberlain is infamous for leaving Britain unprepared and for his "Peace in our time" statement. The British Prime Minister from 1937 to 1940, Chamberlain firmly believed that war with Nazi Germany could and should be avoided. Encouraged by his advisors, he followed a policy of appeasement, making concessions to the Nazis rather than challenge their aggressive behaviour.

In the years before 1939, the far right was on the offensive internationally. Italy invaded Abyssinia in 1935. From 1936 to 1939, General Franco fought a war to overthrow the elected government of Spain. Chamberlain considered these events "a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing." In the 1938 Munich agreement, he agreed to Germany annexing a large part of Czechoslovakia.

No matter how hard Hitler pushed, Chamberlain remained in denial. Until the brink of Germany's invasion of Poland, he believed that war could be avoided and so did little to prepare for it.

While Chamberlain is often blamed for Britain's policy of appeasement, he was not a rogue politician running against the will of the people. He was an elected leader reflecting the hopes and desires of his voters.

British public opinion was strongly shaped by the hard-

ships of the First World War. The blood needlessly spilled by a generation of young men was remembered by their children and by the survivors. Everybody wanted to avoid war if they could.

Some Britons were aware of the danger. Young men went to fight Franco in Spain. Winston Churchill was loudly drawing attention to the threat of Hitler. For as long as they could, the British public pushed for peace.

Finally, there was the financial factor. The cost of the military affected both public opinion and government policy. After all, war can be an expensive game to play.

The war of 1914 to 1918 had been hugely expensive. This had left Britain struggling to rebuild financially. Then came the Great Depression in the 1920s, delivering a serious blow to the British economy. Money could not be spared to maintain a military ready for a possible European war.

The result was the Ten-Year Rule. Introduced in 1919, it stated the country would not take part in a major war for the next ten years and so had no need to prepare in the next year.

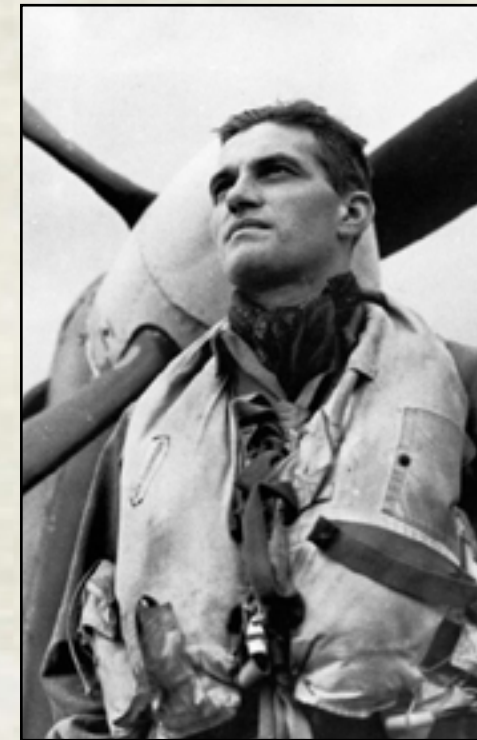
The policy, ironically created by Winston Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer, lasted until 1932. The long-term squeeze on military funding led to shortages in such vital areas as tanks, anti-aircraft guns, and cans to carry fuel.

Yet even though Britain lacked intelligence at the start of the war and much of their equipment was outdated, there was nothing wrong with the fighting spirit of the British and

Commonwealth soldiers.

In fact 181 British and Commonwealth soldiers were awarded the Victoria Cross during World War II. One man, Captain Charles Upham, was awarded the VC twice.

Here are three soldiers that were both feared and respected by their enemies.



Johnny Johnson

Air Vice Marshal James Edgar Johnson, CB, CBE, DSO & Two Bars, DFC & Bar, DL, nicknamed "Johnnie", was an English Royal Air Force (RAF) pilot and flying ace - defined as a pilot that has shot down five or more enemy aircraft in aerial combat - who flew and fought during the Second World War.

Johnson grew up and was educated in the East Midlands, where he qualified as an engineer. A sportsman, Johnson broke his collarbone while playing rugby, an injury that later complicated his ambitions of becoming a fighter pilot.

Johnson had been interested in aviation since his youth and

applied to join the RAF. He was initially rejected, first on social, and then on medical grounds; he was eventually accepted in August 1939. The injury problems, however, returned during his early training and flying career, resulting in him missing the Battle of France and the Battle of Britain between May and October 1940.

In 1940 Johnson had an operation to reset his collarbone, and began flying regularly. He took part in the offensive sweeps over German-occupied Europe from 1941 to 1944, almost without rest.

Johnson was involved in heavy aerial fighting during this period. His combat tour included participation in the Dieppe Raid, Combined Bomber Offensive, Battle of Normandy, Operation Market Garden, the Battle of the Bulge and the Western Allied invasion of Germany. Johnson progressed to the rank of group captain by the end of the war.

Johnson was credited with 34 individual victories over enemy aircraft, as well as seven shared victories, three shared probable, 10 damaged, three shared damaged and one destroyed on the ground.

Johnson flew 700 operational sorties and engaged enemy aircraft on 57 occasions. Included in his list of individual victories were 14 Messerschmitt Bf 109s and 20 Focke-Wulf Fw 190s destroyed making him the most successful RAF ace against the Fw 190. This score made him the highest scoring Western Allied fighter ace against the German Luftwaffe.

Johnson continued his career

in the RAF after the war, and served in the Korean War before retiring in 1966 with the rank of air vice marshal. He maintained an interest in aviation and did public speaking on the subject as well as entering into the business of aviation art. Johnnie Johnson remained active until his death from cancer in 2001.



Johnnie Walker

Captain Frederic John Walker, CB, DSO & Three Bars was a Royal Navy officer noted for his exploits during the Second World War. Walker was the most successful anti-submarine warfare commander during the Battle of the Atlantic and was known more popularly as Johnnie Walker (for the Johnnie Walker brand of whisky).

He joined the Royal Navy as a cadet in 1909 and was educated at the Royal Naval Colleges at Osborne and Dartmouth, where he excelled. First serving on the battleship Ajax as a midshipman, Walker as a sub-lieutenant

went on to join the destroyers Mermaid and Sarpedon in 1916 and 1917 respectively. Following the end of the First World War, Walker joined the Queen Elizabeth-class battleship Valiant.

During the inter-war period Walker entered the field of anti-submarine warfare. He took a course at the newly founded anti-submarine warfare training school of HMS Osprey, on the Isle of Portland, which was established in 1924.

Walker consequently became an expert in this particular type of warfare, and was appointed to a post specialising in this field, serving on a number of capital ships. In May 1933 he was promoted to commander and took charge of the First World War destroyer Shikari.

In December 1933 Walker took command of the Shoreham-class sloop Falmouth based on the China Station. In April 1937 Walker became the Experimental Commander at HMS Osprey.

When the Second World War began, in 1939, Walker's career seemed at an end. Still a commander, he had been passed over for promotion to captain and indeed had been scheduled for early retirement. He gained a reprieve, however, due to the commencement of war and in 1940 was appointed as Operations Staff Officer to Vice-Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay.

Even so, Walker still had not been given a command, despite expertise in antisubmarine warfare that would no doubt be indispensable in the Battle of the Atlantic. During Walker's time in that role the Operation Dyna-

mo evacuation took place from Dunkirk, in which the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was evacuated from France.

The evacuation was a success with over 330,000 British and French troops being rescued and brought back to England, or to Brittany. He was Mentioned in Despatches for his work during this operation.

Walker's first chance to test his innovative methods against the U-boat menace came in December when his group escorted Convoy HG 76 (32 ships). During the journey five U-boats were sunk, four by Walker's group, including U-574 which was depth-charged and rammed by Walker's own ship on 19 December.

The Royal Navy's loss during the Battle for HG 76 was one escort carrier, Audacity, formerly the German vessel Hannover; one destroyer, Stanley, and two merchant ships. This is sometimes described as the first true Allied convoy victory in the Battle of the Atlantic. He was given the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) on 6 January 1942, "For daring, skill and determination while escorting to this country a valuable Convoy in the face of relentless attacks from the Enemy, during which three of their Submarines were sunk and two aircraft destroyed by our forces".

Walker's group succeeded in sinking at least three more U-boats during his tenure as commander of the 36th Group. He was awarded the first Bar to his DSO in July 1942.

During 1942, Walker left the 36th Group and became Captain (D) Liverpool, granting

him some time to recuperate. He finally returned to a ship command when he became commander of the 2nd Support Group in 1943, consisting of six sloops. Walker led from Starling, a newly commissioned Black Swan-class sloop.

The group was intended to act as reinforcement to convoys under attack, with the capacity to actively hunt and destroy U-boats, rather than be restricted to escorting convoys.

Walker had suggested the innovative idea to the Commander-in-Chief Western Approaches Command, Sir Max Horton. The combination of an active hunting group and a charismatic, determined, and innovative anti-submarine specialist such as Walker proved to be a potent force. One eccentric aspect of his charismatic nature was the playing of the tune *A Hunting We Will Go* over the ship's Tannoy when returning to its base.

In March 1944 Walker's group provided the escort for the U.S. Navy light cruiser USS Milwaukee which was on its way to Russia as part of the Lend-Lease programme. Walker's group sank two U-boats on the outward trip, and a third on the return trip.

Walker's last duty was protecting the fleet from U-boats during the Normandy landings, the immense Allied invasion of France. This he did successfully for two weeks; no U-boats managed to get past Walker and his vessels, and many U-boats were sunk or damaged in the process.

One highly successful tactic employed by Walker was the creeping attack, in which

two ships would work together to keep contact with a U-boat while attacking. A refinement of this was the barrage attack, in which three or more sloops in line to launch depth charges to saturate the area with depth charges in a manner similar to a rolling barrage by artillery in advance of an infantry attack.

Walker was also adept at, once having contact with a U-boat, keeping it at depth below depth charge detonation range, until it needed to surface due to running out of air or battery, and then defeating it.

Walker suffered a cerebral thrombosis on 7 July 1944, and he died two days later at the Naval Hospital at Seaforth, Merseyside, at the age of 48. His death was attributed to overwork and exhaustion.



Paddy Mayne

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Blair "Paddy" Mayne, DSO & Three Bars was a British Army soldier from Newtownards, capped for Ireland and the British Lions at rugby union, law-

yer, amateur boxer and a founding member of the Special Air Service (SAS).

During the course of the Second World War he became one of the British Army's most highly decorated soldiers and, by destroying 47 aircraft in a single action, he may well have destroyed more German aircraft than the RAF's highest scoring ace. He was controversially denied a Victoria Cross.

Mayne was an early volunteer for the Special Air Service (SAS) which had been formed by Captain David Stirling.

From November 1941 through to the end of 1942, Mayne participated in many night raids deep behind enemy lines in the deserts of Egypt and Libya, where the SAS wrought havoc by destroying many enemy aircraft on the ground. Mayne pioneered the use of military jeeps to conduct surprise hit-and-run raids, particularly on Axis airfields. It was claimed that he had personally destroyed up to 100 aircraft.

When David Stirling was captured in January 1943, Mayne, then a major, became the commanding officer.

During the war, his men admired him in battle but were very wary of him during quiet times once he had consumed alcohol. After drinking for several hours, Mayne would challenge every man in the bar to a fight, which he would invariably win.

On the night of Tuesday 13 December 1955, after drinking long into the night with a friend, he was killed when he collided with a farmer's vehicle while driving home.

Surviving the Arctic Convoys (Part II)

Remembering the heroism of the Arctic Convoy veterans of the Great Patriotic War. Article and photographs by Regine Lord.

On 7 April 1944, mere days after their arrival, convoy RA 58, with 36 merchantmen, departed from the Kola Inlet and made its way back through the Arctic Sea, reaching Loch Ewe in Scotland a week later, on 14 April 1944.

Although they were attacked on the return journey, neither ships nor U-boats were sunk on either side, making this an extremely successful trip. At more or less the same time, a Fleet Air Arm attack was launched on the heavy German battleship, Tirpitz, which was stationed in Altafjord, northern Norway, incapacitating the just-repaired ship.

After its stint in the Arctic, the 2 EG returned to the Atlantic for several months, before being sent down to the South-Western Approaches, an area off the south coast of Ireland, in order to participate in Operation Neptune, the invasion of Normandy, on 6 June 1944. As Radio Operator and Leading Telegraphist on HMS Wild Goose, Mr Wilkinson was thus also involved in the historic D-Day landings.

After the end of World War II, HMS Wild Goose was assigned to the Persian Gulf Division of the East Indies Station; here she served until 1954. Mr Wilkinson was posted to an aircraft carrier that had been converted to a troop ship and travelled through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal many times, bringing back troops and equipment from the East, including Singapore

and Burma. After demobbing in 1947, he moved to South Africa, fell in love and married; he and his wife had four children. He became an active member of the Ex-Servicemen's Association, and worked for the Old Mutual Insurance Company for 38 years until his retirement.

Fellow Royal Navy veteran Mr Poland too made his way to South Africa, though he took a more round-about route. After World War II, Mr Poland spent two years on a destroyer in the Mediterranean, based on the island of Malta and operating in Palestine, Trieste and Greece. After two years in the East Indies Fleet, covering the area between Mauritius and Singapore and with a short visit to South Africa, he returned to the United Kingdom where he received minesweeping training and served on several other vessels, ultimately being promoted to Lieutenant Commander. He left the Navy in 1956, and worked in the family business in Lloyds' for 12 years until 1968. He spent around 18 years ocean racing in the United Kingdom, the Mediterranean, the South Atlantic, the Caribbean and America, and participated in three trans-Atlantic races from Cape to Rio. After 1989, he relocated to Cape Town, where he has since given many lectures at charitable events and continued researching and writing books.

The Arctic convoys being commemorated by the 75-year

Jubilee medals transported some four million tons of supplies and munitions to the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1945. Thousands of brave sailors, airmen and soldiers risked their lives under indescribably harsh and dangerous conditions, constantly under attack by the German Luftwaffe, Kriegsmarine and U-boats. More than 3,000 Allied seamen died, and 104 merchant ships and 16 Royal Navy vessels were destroyed. It is estimated that some 66,500 men sailed on these convoys.

Some 334,000 South Africans joined World War II as Volunteers (211,000 Whites, 77,000 Blacks, 46,000 Coloureds and Indians). The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has recorded 11,021 known South Africans who died during World War II. About 3,000 South Africans served in the Royal Navy during World War II, and many joined the Royal Navy directly.

It is important to remember that many of those who were so suddenly thrust into armed conflict were young men, some barely out of school. Both Mr Poland and Mr Wilkinson were just young lads, teenagers really, when they enlisted in the Royal Navy, and were immediately thrust into the middle of World War II. Like so many youngsters of their age, they had read and heard much about the thrill and excitement of military service, and specifically of an adventurous life

Mr Trevor Poland with his medal and certificate presented to him by Russian ambassador, his Excellency Ambassador Ilya Rogachev.



at sea. And like many of their compatriots, they felt compelled to enlist, and willing to risk their lives, to protect their homeland against the threat of Nazism and Fascism. Unfortunately, many thousands of these soldiers, sailors and airmen did not return home to their families and loved ones. By the end of World War II, the Royal Navy alone had lost 50,758 men killed in action, 820 were missing in action, and 14,663 had been wounded in action.

An especially poignant story from Mr Poland's compelling memoirs was his description of the aftermath of the Battle of the North Cape, during which the Scharnhorst was destroyed and sunk. This had left a lasting impression on then-Lieutenant Poland, just 20 years old at the time:

"Then I heard it. The eerie screaming of a large number of men in the water and in a state of fear if not of panic; the same terrible screams I had heard at Bougie over a year ago. ...

We could see the black holes of their mouths as they screamed. ... So we stopped, in the height of an Arctic gale, in pitch darkness and amid heavy snow flurries, and not least, the threat of U boats which would certainly be in the vicinity."

But, in the middle of their rescue operation, the Captain received orders to join up with the fleet, and they had to abandon the rest of the survivors to their inevitable death in the icy Arctic waters. The memory of this clearly haunted the young Lieutenant many years later:

"Now, as I write this many years later, I imagine that I can still hear those eerie and ghostly screams, still see the black holes of the open mouths."

Watching wartime footage from the various battles and actions that the sailors and soldiers of World War II participated in, as well as watching and reading interviews with numerous veterans, does not fully capture their experiences, but does give some glimpses and insight. The

powerful battleships with their huge guns firing thunderous salvos that rocked the boats on the heaving seas, the ear-splitting explosions of shells all around them, the sight of their shipmates and friends being injured and killed, and the realisation that their own shells, bombs and torpedoes were causing just as much damage to the enemy, would certainly have left a lasting impression on these young men. The fact that they survived, and emerged as kind, compassionate, humble human beings, despite having personally witnessed so many atrocities, is remarkable and testimony to the resilience of the human spirit.

But let their stories also be a cautionary tale of the horror, destructiveness and devastation caused by war and armed conflict. Let us instead do all we can to foster peace, harmony and cooperation around the world.

RIP Ian Yule

Soldier, veteran and film star - Ian Yule did it all. We pay tribute to his life and career.

British-born South African actor and military veteran Ian Yule passed away on 3 December 2020 at the age of 87.

Ian Yule was born in Britain in 1933. He was an orphan and was adopted. The couple who adopted him tragically perished in the London Blitz. He was then apparently raised by American military families before joining the British Army as a teenager in 1948.

He served in the Royal Artillery, Parachute Regiment, and Special Air Service (SAS).

He fought in the Korean War, taking part in the Battle of Incheon. He was later captured and spent two years in North Korea as a Prisoner of War.

He also served in the Rhodesian Armed Forces and the South African Defence Force.

In the 1960s he fought as a mercenary in the Congo under Colonel 'Mad Mike' Hoare.

Yule's first association with films goes back to the 1950s when he had a role as a stuntman in the 1959 film *Ben-Hur*.

He also did stunt work in *The*

Longest Day which was released in 1962. His early acting roles included playing the part of Andy Wilson in 1967 film *Wild Season* which was directed by Emil Nofal.

He would go on to act in no fewer than 55 movies. Many of the roles he played were as a soldier. He also appeared in a number of television series. He played the part of Trooper Dillon in the David Millin directed *Shangani Patrol* which was released in 1970.

His last film was *Der weiße Afrikaner* (The White African), a German made-for-television film released in 2004.

Probably his best remembered role was as Sergeant Tosh Donaldson in the 1978 film *The Wild Geese*.

The film was produced by Euan Lloyd and starred Richard Burton, Richard Harris and Roger Moore. Of

the actors playing mercenaries, four were born in Africa, two were former POWs, and most had received military training.

Yule introduced Lloyd to 'Mad Mike' Hoare and Lloyd was so impressed that he appointed Hoare as technical advisor to the film. The character "Colonel Alan Faulkner" (played by Richard Burton) was modelled on Hoare.

In 2015 Yule was forced to sell his medals in order to raise funds for a trip back to Britain. Seeking support as an impoverished veteran, he was taken in by concerned parties and hospitalized. He reportedly suffered from severe arthritis, with various war wounds contributing to his general state. Yule was almost blind and deaf by this stage.

Ian Yule passed away on Thursday 3 December in the United Kingdom.





Quiz

Modern Assault Rifles

This month we're looking at modern assault rifles. We show you 15 of them, you tell us what they are. Score yourself bonus points if you can tell us who the manufacturer is as well as the manufacturing company. Answers on page 94.

1 	2 	3 
4 	5 	6 
7 	8 	9 
10 	11 	12 
13 	14 	15 

You want how much?

When pirates kidnapped Julius Caesar he laughed at their ransom demands and told them that they should ask for a lot more.

A couple of years back, well actually over 2,000 years ago, give or take a year or two, a 25 year old Roman author, poet, priest and aristocrat was kidnapped by pirates. His name was Gaius Julius Caesar.

In the middle of the 1st century BC the Roman republic was not doing that well. Things were starting to fall apart at the seams.

Its volunteer militia had evolved into a permanent force of battle-scarred professional veterans who became a force to reckon with, allowing Rome to further increase its territory.

However, they were often more loyal to their Generals than the state – Generals such as Sulla; men who would often use the legions to further their own ambitions.

The city of Rome itself was no Shangri-La. Riots and violent political upheaval became the norm as rival gangs fought for dominance in the streets. Rome was plunging into a state of near anarchic chaos.

Aristocrats like Caesar vied for power, often using corrup-

tion and intimidation to get what they wanted.

Gaius Julius Caesar was born into this environment on 13 July 100 BC as a member of the Julia, an old clan of Roman aristocrats. Things changed for Caesar in 85 BC when his father suffered a sudden onset of death. This made the 16 year old Caesar the head of the family.

Civil war broke out between his uncle, Marius, and Lucius Cornelius Sulla (who twice held the rank of consul). Street battles and assassinations gripped the city until Marius finally won. Caesar was given the job of high priest of Jupiter and married off to Cornelia.

On January 13th 86 BC, however, Marius died (probably not from natural causes) and Sulla rose to power.

The latter purged the government and city of anyone associated with Marius, so Caesar lost his job, his inher-

itance and wife's dowry, and was ordered to divorce his wife. However, Caesar refused to let Cornelia go. His mother, Aurelia Cotta, used her family's influence (some of whom supported Sulla) to save his life.

By no means a fool, Caesar decided to play it safe by leaving Rome for Asia where he joined the army. In 81 BC, he participated in the Siege of Mytilene (now the Greek island of Lesbos), he was so effective that he received a Civic Crown – the second highest military award that a Roman could achieve.

Sulla finally died in 78 BC, making it safe for Caesar to return to Rome. Unable to reclaim his inheritance, he moved into a poor district and became a famous lawyer renowned for his successful prosecution of corrupt officials. This made him very popular among many lower-class Romans, despite his aristocratic heritage.

By 75 BC, he had moved up in the world and went off on a business trip to the island of

Rhodes accompanied by several servants and friends. Nothing like a summer vacation in the islands. There was, however, one small problem - they never made it there.

The Mediterranean Sea was full of pirates and they preyed on every ship that came their way. Pirates attacked Caesar's ship and he and his companions ended up becoming captives on an islet off Cilicia (now the southern coast of Turkey). All aboard were given two choices: pay a ransom or be sold into slavery.

Understandably Caesar was not too thrilled with the idea of becoming a slave, so he chose to pay a ransom.

His captors set a ransom of 20 talents of silver (about 620 kg in weight) which today would be worth around \$600,000.

Caesar was shocked and more than a little angry. The Julia family were direct descendants of Iulus, son of Aeneas, a Trojan prince. In his opinion someone with his bloodline was worth far more than the paltry sum they demanded.

He laughed at them and insisted that they set his ransom at 50 talents of silver instead.

Impressed, the pirates agreed and let some of his friends go to gather that amount, but Caesar wasn't finished. He swore that as soon as he was free, he'd have them all crucified.

Given the circumstances, the pirates roared with laughter. Caesar refused to play the role of a cowed hostage victim. He demanded that his servants be free to continue serving him, even ordering the pirates to shut up or lower their voices whenever he slept.

He spent his days writing poetry and composing speeches, then demanded that the pirates listen carefully while he read them aloud. If they didn't praise his work, he'd yell at them and call them illiterate savages.

Instead of becoming annoyed by Caesar's behaviour, they found him amusing and his attitude earned their respect.

He was allowed to move about freely and sometimes joined in their games. They probably thought he was a bit of a nut case.

Given the amount involved, it took 38 days to raise the money, after which Caesar and his men were finally allowed to leave.

As soon as he reached Mi-

letus (a long-abandoned port city south of present day Söke in Turkey) he began raising an armed fleet. With it, he returned to the islet, captured most of the pirates, and took their property as his own.

He sailed off to Pergamon (outside the modern Turkish city of Bakırçay) and chucked them all into prison.

Then he went to Marcus Junius, the governor of Asia, and demanded the right to mete out the pirates' punishment.

But Junius couldn't stop ogling all that money, so he told Caesar that he'd have to look into the matter more fully.

Yet Caesar wasn't prepared to wait, so he returned to Pergamon, took the pirates out of prison, and ordered them all to be crucified.

Some begged for mercy, reminding him of the fun times they had shared together, so Caesar's heart melted and he decided to relent. He had their throats slit instead.

Then he had them crucified because he prided himself on being a man of his word. With such a character, it's hardly surprising that he would go on to become Rome's first emperor.



Catch Military Despatches editor Matt Tennyson every Sunday morning from 09h00 to 12h00 on the 'Sunday Breakfast Zone' on Zone Radio. Bringing you the best music of the 60s, 70s and 80s.

Click here to listen live

A matter of survival - Fire

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. This month we look at fire.

The very first article we did on survival was back in issue 11 in May 2018. In that article we looked at putting together a survival tin.

Four of the items in the survival tin were all for the purpose of starting a fire.

It was also stated in that article that the four most important things in survival were water, food, fire and shelter. So in this article we are going to be taking a closer look at fire.

Fire can make the difference between living and dying. It will not only cook food but make it go further, for its warmth will save calories being used up in producing body heat.

It can dry clothes and provide comfort. It can scare away dangerous animals, while its smoke keeps insect pests at bay.

It can be used to heat metal to make tools, to sharpen sticks and to bake pots. Make the most of a fire. It can do all these things at the same time.

When lighting a fire, always ensure adequate ventilation, with enough fuel and a hot enough source to ignite the fuel.

To produce flame, this temperature must be maintained to keep air and fuel continuously reacting. The more oxygen introduced, the brighter the fire.

By using the wind or forcing a draught, the fire is fanned to a high temperature and rapidly burns fuel. By reducing the ventilation the fire burns less fiercely and embers are allowed to glow, needing less fuel.

If these principles are understood, smoky fires can be avoided. Smoke is the result of incomplete combustion - with care smoke can be virtually eliminated.

Practice Fire Lighting

Fire is essential to survival. It provides warmth, protection, a means of signalling, boils water and cooks and preserves food.

You must learn to light a fire anywhere under any conditions. It is not enough to know all the methods - you have to be expert at them.

It is well worth remembering the Fire Triangle. Its three sides represent **Air**, **Heat**, and **Fuel**. If any one of the sides is removed, the triangle collapses and the fire goes out.



Preparation

First make sure that you have sufficient qualities of tinder, kindling and fuel. Then prepare a fireplace so that you can control the fire. Used carelessly fire can get out of hand and cause a disaster. Remember, fire should be a solution, not a problem.

The fireplace

The fireplace needs to be prepared carefully. Choose a site that is sheltered as much as possible, especially during high winds.

Except for signal purposes, or to warm a temporary shelter, do not light a fire at the base of a tree or stump.

Clear away leaves, twigs, moss and dry grass from a circle at least two metres across and scrape everything away until you have a surface of bare earth.

If the ground is wet or covered in snow, the fire must be built on a platform. Make this from a layer of earth or a layer of stones.

If the land is swampy or the snow deep a raised platform is needed, known as a temple fire.



Temple fire

This hearth consists of a raised platform, built of green timber. Four uprights support cross-pieces in their forks.

Across them place a layer of green logs and cover this with several centimetres of earth.

Light the fire on top of this. A pole across upper forks on diagonally opposite uprights can support cooking pots.



In windy conditions

If the wind is particularly strong, dig a trench and light your fire in it.





WARNING

Avoid placing wet or porous rocks and stones near fires, especially rocks which have been submerged in water - they may explode when heated.

Avoid slates and softer rock, and test others by banging them together. Do not use any that crack, sound hollow or are flaky. If they contain moisture it will expand faster than the stone and this can make it explode, producing dangerous flying fragments which could easily take out an eye if you are close to the fire.

Tinder

Tinder is any kind of material that takes the minimum of heat to make it catch alight. Good tinder needs only a spark to ignite it.

Birch bark, dried grass, fine wood shavings, bird down, waxed paper and cotton fluff from clothing all makes good tinder.

So do pulverised fir cones, pine needles and the inner bark from cedar trees. Dried fungi are excellent, if finely powdered, and scorched or charred cotton or liner, especially ground fine, are among the best.

Where insects such as wood wasps have been boring into trees the fine dust they produce is good tinder and powdery birds and bat droppings can also be used.

The inside of birds nests are usually lined with down feathers and ignite easily - dry field mouse nests are also usable.

Whatever tinder you use must be dry. It is also a good idea to carry tinder with you in a waterproof container. Always keep and eye open for tinder to collect.

Kindling

Kindling is the wood used to raise the flames from the tinder so that larger and less combustible materials can be burned.

The best kindling consists of small, dry twigs and the softer wood are preferable because they flare up quickly.

Those that contain resins burn readily and make fire-lighting a breeze. The drawbacks of soft woods are that they tend to produce sparks and burn very fast.

You may need more to get the main fuel going and they are soon consumer if they form the main fuel themselves.

Don't collect kindling straight

from the earth, it is almost always damp. Take if from standing deadwood. If the outside is damp, shave until the dry middle is reached.

Make fire sticks

Shave sticks with shallow cuts to 'feather' them. Preparing kindling in this way makes it catch light more freely and establishes a fire quickly.

Next month we will look at various fuels that can be used with your fire.



Rank Structure - Irish Defence Forces

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 Irish Defence Forces.

The Defence Forces (*Óglaigh na hÉireann*) are the armed forces of Ireland. They encompass the Army, Air Corps, Naval Service and Reserve Defence Forces.

The Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces is the President of Ireland. All Defence Forces officers hold their commission from the President, but in practice the Minister for Defence acts on the President's behalf and reports to the Government of Ireland.

The Minister for Defence is advised by the Council of Defence on the business of the Department of Defence.

The Defence Forces trace their origins to the Irish Volunteers, founded in 1913.

Their official Irish-language title, *Óglaigh na hÉireann*, is taken from the equivalent Irish-language title of the Irish Volunteers, as are their cap badge and the buttons worn on ceremonial uniforms.



Army

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officers (WO)



Saighdiúr singil,
2 réalta
(Private, 2 star)



Saighdiúr singil, 3
réalta
(Private, 3 star)



Ceannaire
(Corporal)



Sáirsint
(Sergeant)



Ceathrúsháirsint
complacht
(Company Quartermaster Sergeant))



Sáirsint complachta
(Company Sergeant)



Ceathrúsháirsint
reisiminte
(Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant))



Maor-sáirsint reisiminte
(Regimental Sergeant Major)

Officers



Dalta sóisir
(Junior Cadet)



Dalta sinsir
(Senior Cadet)



Dara leifteanant
(Second Lieutenant)



Leifteanant
(Lieutenant)



Captaen
(Captain)



Ceannfort
(Commandant)



Leifteanant-
choirnéal
(Lieutenant Colonel)



Coirnéal
(Colonel)



Briogáidire-ghinearál
(Brigadier General)



Maor-ghinearál
(Major General)



Leifteanant-ghinearál
(Lieutenant General)

Irish Air Corps

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officers (WO)



Printíseach
(Apprentice)



Eitleoir, 2 réalta
(Airman 2 star)



Eitleoir, 3 réalta
(Airman 3 star)



Ceannaire
(Corporal)



Sáirsint
(Sergeant)



Ceathrúsháirsint
eitleoige
(Flight quarter-
master sergeant)



Sáirsint
eitleoige
(Flight Sergeant)



Ceathrúsháirsint
reisiminte
(Regimental quar-
termaster sergeant)

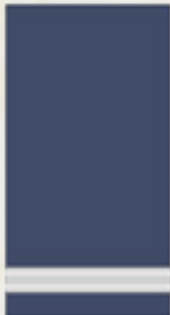


Maor-sáirsint
reisiminte
(Regimental
Sergeant Major)

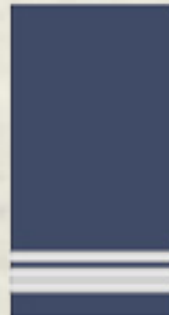
Officers



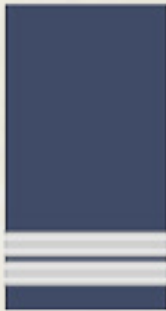
Dalta
(Officer Cadet)



Dara-leifteanantl
(Second Lieutenant)



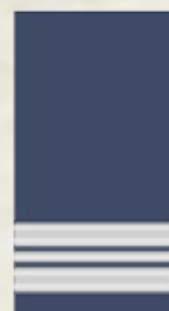
Leifteanant
(Lieutenant)



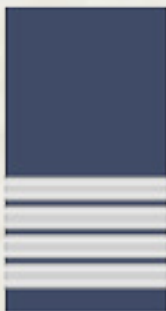
Captaen
(Captain)



Ceannfort
(Commandant)



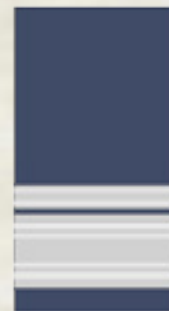
Leifteanantchoirnéal
(Lieutenant Colonel)



Coirnéal
(Colonel)



Briogáidire-ghinearál
(Brigadier General)



Maor-ghinearál
(Major General)

Irish Naval Service

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officers (WO)



Mairnéalach
(Ordinary Seaman)



Mairnéalach inniúil
(Able Seaman)



Mairnéalach ceannais
(Leading Seaman)



Mion-oifigeach
(Petty Officer)



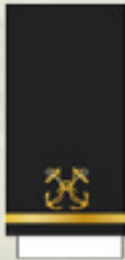
Mion-oifigeach sinsearach
(Senior Petty Officer)



Ard-mhion-oifigeachl
(Chief Petty Officer)



Ard-mhion-oifigeach sinsearach
(Senior Chief Petty Officer)



Oifigeach barántais
(Warrant Officer)

Officers



Dalta
(Officer Cadet)



Meirgire
(Ensign)



Fo-leifteanant
(Sub Lieutenant)



Leifteanant
(Lieutenant)



Leifteanant-cheannasaí
(Lieutenant Commander)



Ceannasaí
(Commander)



Captaen
(Captain)



Ceannasóir
(Commodore)



Seachaimiréal
(Rear Admiral)



Leas-aimiréal
(Vice Admiral)



Military Ration Packs

It has been said that you are what you eat. With this in mind, this month we take a look at military ration packs around the world.

Anyone that served in the old South African Defence Force and spent time on the border will surely remember the rat packs.

Rat Pack was short for Ration Pack and these were given to troops in the bush. A rat pack was supposed to feed a troop for a period of 24 hours. They were similar to the American Army C-Rats (Combat Rations).

If a troop, for instance, was going to spend four days out on patrol, he would be issued with four rat packs. They came in cardboard boxes and were numbered from one to five, the number on the box reflecting a particular combination of contents.

Up until the mid-1980s there were three tins per rat pack, however this was changed to two larger tins thereafter. This was because the vegetables were incorporated with the meat.

As soon as the rat packs had been distributed the trading would begin. Troops would have their individual preferences as to which rat pack they enjoyed most. It was not uncommon to hear comments such as, "Who wants to trade a number three for a number five?"

Troops would often add items to their rat packs and these included things such as curry powder, other spices, and a packet or two of instant soup.

Many would also discard items from their rat pack and the first to go was usually the much-hated 'Dog Biscuits'.

All food items were pre-cooked and they could be eaten cold, but it must be said that they tasted far better when heated. Also included were tea, coffee, and sugar. A tube of condensed milk was also to be found in the pack. Coffee or tea was mixed with sugar and mixed with water in your fire bucket, brought to the boil, and condensed milk was added.

A popular item in the rat pack was the cool drink and milkshake powder. These were mixed with water in plastic sachets that were nicknamed 'condoms' by the troops. The powder was poured into the sa-

chet, water was added, and it was shaken vigorously. Naturally these sachets would sometimes burst, leaving the poor troop covered in cool drink or milkshake.

Other food items would include instant porridge that was mixed with water, chewing gum, raisins, fruit bars, energy bars, glucose sweets, and a small tube of processed cheese. A box of matches and a strip of fuel tablets, known as Esbits, would complete the pack.

The Esbits were round tablets that, when lit, would burn for a considerable time. They were used to heat your food. I heard of at least one case where some dumb idiot thought that the Esbits were a type of sweet and he popped one into his mouth and



EATING IRONS: Not only were your dixies and fire bucket used to eat and drink from, they would also be used as pots for cooking.

began to suck on it. Needless to say he spent the next half an hour spitting and puking.

In the old rat packs, a small, flat tin opener was also included. One of the main problems with rat packs is that they would often have passed their expiry date. Not that this ever seemed to bother the SADF because they were issued anyway.

Troops didn't seem to complain too much because it was a case of 'eat what you're given or go hungry'.

Below is a list of the various items, including flavour and quantity, that were found in rat packs.



FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD: The contents of a typical SADF Rat Pack.

- Meat - Corned Beef Hash, Curried Fish, Steak & Onions, Vienna sausages & Baked Beans - 2 small tins.
- Vegetables - Diced Carrots, Mixed Vegetables, Peas - 1 small tin.
- Milkshake - Chocolate, Strawberry, Lime, Vanilla - 1 sachet
- Coffee - 2 sachets
- Tea - 1 sachet
- Cool drink powder - Cola, Lime, Naartjie, Orange - 2 sachets
- Porridge - Banana flavour - 1 sachet
- 'Dog' biscuits - 1 packet
- Processed Cheese - 1 tube
- Condensed Milk - 1 tube
- 'Super C' Glucose Sweets - Orange, Naartjie, Pineapple - 1 roll
- Fruit Bars - Various flavours - 2 bars
- Raisins - 1 packet
- Energy bar - Choc Nut,

- Mint, Rum & Raisin - 2 bars
- Chewing Gum - 3 pieces
- Sugar - 4 sachets
- Salt - 2 sachets
- Matches - 1 box
- 'Esbit Fuel Strips - 1 strip

Naturally the SADF were not the only military organisation that used ration packs. Almost every nation that has a military force uses them.

Let's take a look at what you could expect to find in the ration packs of some other countries.

Argentina

The *Ración de Combate* (Individual) was introduced in 2003, consisting of a gray plastic-foil laminate pouch containing a mix of canned and dehydrated foods, plus minimal supplements, for one soldier for one day. All products in the RC are domestically produced,

commercially available items.

Each ration contains: canned meat, small can of meat spread, crackers, instant soup, cereal bar with fruit, a chocolate bar with nuts or caramels, instant coffee, orange juice powder, sugar, salt, a heating kit with disposable stove and alcohol-based fuel tablets, disposable butane lighter, resealable plastic bag, cooked rice and a pack of paper tissues.

- Menu #1 contains: corned beef, meat pate, crisp water crackers, and instant soup with fideo pasta.
- Menu #2 contains: roasted beef in gravy, meat pate, whole wheat crackers, and quick-cooking polenta in cheese sauce.

United States

American ration packs consisted of MREs (Meals, Ready-

to-Eat).

Each sealed plastic bag contains one entire precooked meal, with a number of supplements and accessories.

The original 12 menus have been expanded to 24 and now contain a variety of ethnic and special request items as well. Kosher/Halal and Vegetarian menus are also provided.

Each meal bag contains an 226 gram main course (packaged in a four-layer plastic and foil laminate retort pouch), 8 hard-tack crackers, some form of spread (cheese, peanut butter, or jam), a fruit-based beverage powder, some form of dessert (cake, candy, cookies, or fruit), and an accessory packet containing coffee or tea, creamer, sugar, salt, matches, a plastic spoon, and toilet paper. A chemical heater is packed with every meal.

The First Strike Ration (FSR) is a compact, eat-on-the-move ration to be used for no more than three days during initial periods of highly intense, highly mobile combat assaults.

A single FSR (24 hours food) is about 50% of the size and weight of three MREs. Each FSR provides 2,900 kcal (12,000 kJ) (15% protein, 53% carbohydrates, 34% fat), versus the 3,800 kcal (16,000 kJ) in three MREs, and has a two-year shelf life when stored at 28 °C.

An FSR is packed in a single trilaminate bag and contains filled pocket sandwiches, a pouch of tuna or chicken, two packets of ERGO high-energy drink mix, two high-energy



PERFORMANCE ENHANCER: The First Strike Ration (FSR) substantially reduces weight and load and is intended to enhance a consumer's physical performance, mental acuity, and mobility.

cereal bars (First Strike Bars), a dairy-based calcium-enriched dessert bar, two packets of beef jerky (similar to biltong) in BBQ or Teriyaki flavour, fortified apple sauce, nut and fruit mix, caffeinated gum, and an accessory pack containing a beverage mix, salt, matches, tissues, plastic spoon, and cleansing moist towelettes. The FSR comes in three menus:

Menu #1 contains: Italian pocket sandwich, chicken chunks pouch, tortillas & hot sauce, Cinnamon & brown sugar toaster pastry, peanut butter and crackers, lemon tea mix.

Menu #2 contains: Honey BBQ beef pocket sandwich, Albacore tuna pouch, tortillas & mayonnaise, lemon poppy-seed pound cake, cheese spread and crackers, instant coffee, non-dairy creamer and sugar.

Menu #3 contains: Ba-

con-cheddar pocket sandwich, pepperoni pocket sandwich, filled French Toast pocket sandwich, jalapeño cheese spread & wheat snack bread, apple cider mix.

Finland

When (during peacetime) conscript soldiers are not provided with meals cooked either in garrisons or attached field kitchens, they are provided with rations (colloquially known as *sissi* rations) packed in a clear plastic bag.

Several different menus exist, however all include foil packed crispbread, coffee and tea, sugar, chocolate, small tins of beef or pork, chewing gum, dry porridge, energy drink powder etc.

Soups and porridges that are meant to be mixed with water and cooked are usually prepared in Trangia-type portable stoves



GERMAN GRUB: The *Einmannpackung* provides two substantial meals to each soldier. The food is not only substantial, it tastes damn good as well.

that are shared by the pair in a fire and manoeuvre team, or in individual mess kits.

France

The French 24-hour combat ration, the RCIR (*ration de combat individuelle réchauffable*) comes in 14 menus packed in a small cardboard box.

Inside are two pre-cooked, ready-to-eat meal main courses packed in thin metal cans somewhat like oversized sardine tins, and an hors d'oeuvre in a more conventional can or tin.

Current main courses include items such as beef salad, tuna and potatoes, salmon with rice and vegetables, shepherd's pie, rabbit casserole, chili con carne, paella, veau marengo (veal), navarin d'agneau (lamb), poultry and spring vegetables, etc. Hors d'oeuvres include: salmon terrine, chicken liver, tuna

in sauce, fish terrine, duck mousse, etc.

Each meal box also contains a package of instant soup, hard crackers, cheese spread, chocolate, caramels or boiled sweets, instant café-au-lait, sugar, cocoa powder, matches, a disposable folding ration heater and fuel tablets, and water purifying tablets.

Germany

Germany uses the *Einmannpackung* (EPA) to provide two substantial meals to each soldier. Practice is to provide one hot cooked meal for the other meal whenever possible.

A heater or oven is not included since an Esbit cooker is part of each soldier's personal equipment. Enough food items are contained within the EPA to sustain the soldier for 24 hours.

Currently there are three

menus; each includes two meals out of a selection of 19 meals, with several heavy-duty foil trays containing items such as lentils with sausages, Yugoslav Sausage, Goulash, beef patties in tomato sauce, Italian pasta, or Tofu stir-fry. There are also three smaller foil "cans" of bread spreads such as cheese spread, liver-sausage, dried-meat sausage, or cheese spread with green peppers.

The meal box also includes: thinly sliced rye bread (170 g), hard crackers (1100 kcal), a foil can of fruit salad, instant cream of wheat, instant fruit juice powder, instant coffee, instant tea, powdered cream, a chocolate bar, sugar, salt, gum, jam, water purifying tablets, two plastic bags, matches, paper towels and a user guide.

Ireland

Ireland fields a 24-hour ration pack somewhat similar to that used by the British. It is packed in a large ziplock plastic bag and contains two pre-cooked main meals and items to be eaten throughout the day.

Included are: instant soup, ramen noodles, an oatmeal block, a high-energy protein bar, both brown and fruit biscuits, sweets, and a selection of beverage mixes. Breakfast (bacon and beans or sausage and beans) is packaged in a retort pouch while dinner (Beef Casserole, Irish Stew, Chicken Curry, or a vegetarian main course) comes in either a flat tin or microwaveable plastic tray. Desserts consist of a retort-pouched dessert (choc-

olate pudding, syrup pudding, fruit dumplings), a Kendal mint cake, and a roll of fruit lozenges.

Beverages include tea bags, instant coffee, hot cocoa, and a powdered isotonic drink mix. Also included are a pack of tissues, a small scouring pad, matches, water purification tablets, salt and pepper packets, sugar, dry cream powder, moist towelettes, and individual packets of foot powder.

Italy

Italy uses the *Razione Vivere Speciali da Combattimento*, consisting of a heavy duty brownish-green plastic bag with three thin white cardboard cartons inside (one for breakfast, one for lunch and one for dinner), each containing meal items plus accessories.

There are seven menus, called “modules”, identified by colors: yellow, red, grey, green, white, pink and blue.

Typically, breakfast consists of: a chocolate bar, fruit candy, crackers or sweet bread, instant coffee, sugar, and a tube of sweetened condensed milk. A lunch will have: two pull-ring cans with precooked foods (Tortellini al Ragù, Pasta e Fagioli, Wurstel, Tacchino in Gelatina, Insalata di Riso, etc.), a small can of fruit cocktail, a multivitamin tablet, energy and fiber tablets, instant coffee, sugar, and a plastic spoon wrapped with a napkin.

Dinner will consist of two more meal cans plus crackers, an energy bar, instant coffee,



RUSSIAN RATIONS: An IRP-P Russian Navy combat ration, with main courses, meat spreads, crackers and drinks.

and sugar. Accessories are: a folding stove, fuel tablets, water purification tablets, toothpick, matches, and three small disposable toothbrushes with pre-applied tooth powder.

Russian Federation

Since the turn of the Millennium Russia issues the Individual Food Rations (*Individual'nyi Ratsion Pitaniya* (IRP), a new self-contained ration, containing the whole daily food intake for an individual soldier in the field.

However, in its most frequent form it isn't dietary complete, and is intended only as a stop-gap measure to be issued until the normal supply lines (with their field kitchens) are established and the hot food delivery started, to be issued for no more than six days straight. Russian Ministry of defence doesn't strictly prescribe the contents of the ration, only some basic

packaging and inventory requirements, so every producer issues their own version.

Most commonly it is packaged into a sturdy plastic blister box (nicknamed “The Frog” in the field for its olive-green colour), or plastic-sealed cardboard box that contains five to six entrées in laminated foil cans or retort pouches, four to six pack of crackers or preserved bread, two to three dessert items in form of a spread or fruit bar, four beverage concentrate pouches, some seasonings (salt, pepper, sugar, ketchup), and various sundry items like sanitizing wipes/paper towels, spoons, can opener, four hexamine fuel tablets, folding heater, matches and water purifier tablets.

The types of entrées vary with the producer and the issued menu (of which there are usually 7 to 12), but the common set is based on a tradition-

al Russian outdoors men fare, is largely formed out of the commercially available canned food, and usually includes one portion of stewed beef or pork, two meat-with-vegetables dishes, like various porridges, stews or canned fish, and one or two spreads, such as liver pate, sausage stuffing or processed cheese.

Desserts may include fruit jams, chocolate and/or walnut spreads, chocolate bars, sweetened condensed milk, etc., but baked goods are usually avoided out of concerns about their shelf life.

Other variants may add canned speck and/or dried fish or exchange the hexamine tablets for the flameless heater.

United Kingdom

The British have a number of different types of ration packs. These include the 12 hour operational ration pack, 24 hour operational ration pack, 24 hour multi climate ration box, 24 hour jungle ration, cold climate ration, 10 man operational ration pack, and emergency fly-ing rations.

12 hour operational ration pack

The 12 hour operational ration pack (ORP) is designed for patrolling for durations of 4–12 hours and for is suitable for remote guard posts, drivers and as a supplement to normal rations for where daily calorie expenditure is likely to exceed 6000 kcal (25,120 kJ)(for instance, troops undergoing arduous duties.)

The 12 hour ORP contains

a main meal packed in a retort pouch, a number of snack items, drink powders and a flameless ration heater (FRH). However it does not contain any hot beverage items.

There are 10 menu choices including one vegetarian.

14 hour operational ration pack

The 24 hour Operational Ration Pack, General Purpose is packed inside a small cardboard box, and each ration has enough retort-pouched and canned foods to feed one soldier for 24 hours.

Seven menus (plus vegetarian and religious variants) provide two precooked meals (Breakfast and Main Meal) plus a mid-day snack.

Example (Menu A) Breakfast: Hamburger and beans, Instant Porridge. All ration packs also contain Oatmeal Block, Fruit Biscuits, Biscuits Brown (a more compact alternative to bread), a sachet of instant soup and jam or yeast extract (a Marmite like spread) for a lunchtime snack, and chocolate (in the form of a specially made Yorkie bar which is flatter than civilian bars, or, more recently, a simple unbranded bar of milk chocolate), though this has been phased out with the introduction of the more recent multi-climate ration packs, and boiled sweets (hard candy) for snacking whilst on patrol, or in free time.

Main Meal: Instant soup, Chicken with Mushroom and Pasta, Treacle Pudding. Each pack also contains instant coffee, tea bags, creamer, sugar,

hot cocoa mix, beef/vegetable stock powder, lemon/orange powder or Lucozade electrolyte powder, matches, packet of tissues, chewing-gum, a small bottle of Tabasco sauce, and water purifying tablets. They sometimes also contain chicken and herb pâté. Also available are Kosher/Halal, Vegetarian, and Hindu/Sikh specific menus.

Regardless of their contents, these ration packs are referred to as Rat-Packs or Compo (short for Composite Rations) by the soldiers who eat them. In addition to containing the 24-hour ration, the outside of the cardboard box has a range card printed on its side for use by the soldier to record key features and their range from their position. Other variations designed for specific environments exist.

The rations are now being issued with a new folding cooker and fire-lighting fuel called FireDragon made in Wales by BCB International Ltd.\

24 hour jungle ration

The 24 Hour Jungle ration is based on the standard 24 Hour ration with additional supplements and a Flameless Ration Heater (FRH). The Jungle ration is designed for use by the special forces and other specialist units.

The 24 Hour Jungle Ration provides a minimum of 4500 kcals (18,840 kJ) a day.

Cold Climate Raion

The Cold Climate Ration (CCR) is a specialist and lightweight, high calorie 24 hour ration designed for use by troops

above the snow line or in the high Arctic. It comprises mainly dehydrated main meals with a range of snacks designed to be eaten on the go.

There are eight menu choices available. The cold climate ration provides a minimum of 5500 kcals (23,030 kJ) a day.

Israel

The Israeli “battle ration” (*Manat Krav*) is designed to be shared by four soldiers. It contains: 1 can of rice filled vine leaves, 8 small cans of tuna, canned olives, a can of sweet corn, a can of pickled cucumbers, 1 can of halva spread and 1 chocolate spread, a can of peanuts, fruit flavoured drink powder, and bread or matzoh crackers. There is also an “ambush pack” of candy and high-energy protein bars.

In 2008, Israel introduced a new field ration to supplement the traditional Manat Krav. Unlike previous rations, the new Battle Ration consists of individual, self-heating, ready-to-eat meals packed inside plastic-aluminium trays.

They are designed to be carried and used by infantry troops for up to 24 hours, until regular supply lines can be established. Ten menus are available, including chicken, turkey and kebab; each meal pack is supplemented with dry salami, dried fruit, tuna, halva, sweet roll, and preserved dinner rolls.

Australia

Australia currently supplies three different types of military

ration packs - Combat Ration One Man, Combat Ration Five Man and Patrol Ration One Man.

Combat Ration One Man is a complete 24-hour ration pack that provides two substantial meals per day and a wide variety of drinks and snacks for the remainder of the day.

Most items, such as Beef Kai Si Ming, Dutch-style Beef with Vegetables, Beef with Spaghetti, Baked Beans, Sausages with Vegetables, or Chicken with pasta and vegetables, are packed in 250 gram sized plastic-foil retort pouches. Included with every meal pack is a pouch of instant rice or instant mashed potatoes, a fruit and grain bar, two envelopes of instant drink powder, some biscuits, an “Anzac Biscuit,” a chocolate bar, M&M’s, coffee, tea, sugar, crackers, cheese spread, jam, sweetened condensed milk, hard sweets, and Vegemite.

It is packed in a tough clear polyethylene bag and weighs around 1.5 – 1.7 kg. In practical use, these packs are “stripped” by removing and trading with other soldiers, those components that are unlikely to be consumed by the person carrying the pack.

This also reduces the weight of the packs, allowing more to be carried. There are eight menu choices, one of which is vegetarian. None of them are allergen free since Defence Force members are typically selected, among many other attributes, for their no known allergy status.



LUNCH TIME: A female IDF soldier of the Nachshol Reconnaissance Company, eating from a battle ration.

Combat Ration Five Man contains a similar array of components as the Combat Ration One Man. However, it is provided in a tough fibreboard carton rather than in individual unitised polyethylene bags. It is a group feeding solution, and it is impractical to use on an individual basis for main meals. There are a multiple of group-sized retort pouches – 500 gram as opposed to 250 gram, several of which are required to be heated in order to provide a complete meal. Examples include Beef & Blackbean Sauce, Chicken Satay. Common elements include rice and vegetables such as corn, potatoes and carrots. The accessories such as snacks are consumable and can be carried individually. There are five menu choices, and each Combat Ration Five Man

weighs around 10 kg.

Patrol Ration One Man is a complete 24-hour ration pack that contains freeze dried main meals, meaning that the total weight of each pack is reduced, however a correspondingly higher quantity of water must be carried in order to reconstitute the main meal. Otherwise, it is similar to the Combat Ration One Man. It is packed in tough clear polyethylene bags and is available in five menu choices.

India

Indian Armed Forces have a host of Meals Ready To Eat (MRE) including the One Man Combo Pack Ration, Mini Combo Pack, Survival Ration, a ration for marine commandos and Main Battle Tank (MBT) Rations. The shelf-life of the ration is 12 months. India has adopted retort processing technology for combat rations.

The MREs use pre-cooked thermostabilized entrées in a plastic-foil laminate retort pouch. The ration does not require cooking and the contents may be eaten cold, though warming is preferred. An entire day’s worth of food, plus accessory items, is packed inside a heavy-duty olive green plastic bag with pasted on label. The menu consists of several different Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian products that cater to Indian tastes, such as sooji halwa, chapaties, tea mix, chicken biryani, chicken curry, mutton biryani, Mutton curry, Vegetable biryani, rajma curry,

dal fry, jeera rice, Dal makhani, vegetable pulav and mixed vegetable curry, alongside pickled hot seasoning, in small plastic pouches.

The One Man Combo Pack consists of early morning tea, breakfast, mid morning tea, lunch, evening tea, and dinner. The menus feature both dehydrated and ready-to-eat products, and include a folding stove and hexamine fuel tablets. The ration weighs 880 grams and provides 4,100 kcal (17,000 kJ). The Mini Combo Pack is a simplified version of the One Man Combo Pack, weighing 400 g and providing 1,520 kcal (6,400 kJ).

The survival ration consists of a soft bar and chikki. The daily survival ration per man consists of: Soft bar 100 g x 2, Chikki (sugar base) 50 g x 3, Chikki (Jaggery base) 50 g x 3. This provides around 2,400 kcal (10,000 kJ), which is 1,520 kcal (6,400 kJ) more than the normal survival ration used by most nations.

Japan

The Japan Self-Defense Forces utilize two types of combat rations, Type I combat ration and Type II combat ration.

The older Type I ration consists almost entirely of canned foods weighing a total of 780 g per meal; a normal three-day ration has up to 36 cans weighing more than 7 kilograms.

Eight menus are available, based around a 400 g can of rice and 2-3 smaller supplemental cans. Typical contents include:

rice (white rice, sekihan (rice with red beans), mixed rice with vegetables, or rice with mushrooms), a main meal can (chicken and vegetables, beef with vegetables, fish and vegetables, or hamburger patties), pickled vegetables (Takuan (yellow radish) or red cabbage) and sometimes a supplemental can (tuna in soy or beef in soy).

In the latest type I combat rations, cans have been replaced by retort pouches.

People’s Republic of China

The Chinese People’s Liberation Army has recently[when?] introduced a new set of rations consisting of pre-packaged single-person meals sealed in hard plastic retort pouches.

The Chinese military rations are of two types: Instant Meal Individual (three-item menu) and Self-Heating Individual (twelve-item menu). A typical Chinese breakfast ration contains roughly 1,000 kcal (4,200 kJ) and includes a compressed food packet, an energy bar, an egg roll with pork, pickled mustard tuber, and a powdered beverage pack.

Each Self-Heating package comes with an insulated flameless heater that is activated by water.



Adrian Carton de Wiart

He fought in no fewer than six wars and was probably one of the British army's most decorated and wounded soldiers. Yet nothing could keep this man out of the fight.

Lieutenant-General Sir Adrian Paul Ghislain Carton de Wiart, VC, KBE, CB, CMG, DSO was a British Army officer born of Belgian and Irish parents.

He was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest military decoration awarded for valour "in the face of the enemy" in various Commonwealth countries.

He fought in now fewer than six wars and was shot in the face, head, stomach, ankle, leg, hip, and ear; was blinded in his left eye; survived two plane crashes; tunnelled out of a pris-

oner-of-war camp; and tore off his own fingers when a doctor refused to amputate them. Describing his experiences in the First World War, he wrote, "Frankly I had enjoyed the war."

Early life

Carton de Wiart was born into an aristocratic family in Brussels, on 5 May 1880, eldest son of Léon Carton de Wiart.

The death of his Irish mother when he was six prompted his father to move the family to Cairo so his father could practise at Egypt's mixed courts.

His father was a lawyer and magistrate, as well as a director of the Cairo Electric Railways and Heliopolis Oases Company.

ny and was well connected in Egyptian governmental circles. Adrian Carton de Wiart learned to speak Arabic.

Carton de Wiart was a Roman Catholic. In 1891, his English stepmother sent him to a boarding school in England, the Roman Catholic Oratory School, founded by John Henry Newman. From there, he went to Balliol College, Oxford, but left to join the British Army at the time of the Second Boer War around 1899, where he entered under the false name of "Trooper Carton", claiming to be 25 years old. His real age was no more than 20.

2nd Boer War

On 11 October 1899 the Second Boer War broke out, pitting the British Empire against the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic in South Africa. This was a revelation for Adrian. In his autobiography "Happy Odyssey" he wrote, "At that moment, I knew once and for all that war was in my blood. If the British didn't fancy me I would offer myself to the Boers."

It appeared that the British did fancy him and he enrolled as a volunteer, faking his identity as well as his age. He was dispatched to South

Africa with his father still believing him to be studying law at Oxford. And this was the start of his real life.

Very early on, straight after training in South Africa, de Wiart and his unit were crossing a river in full view of some Boers when he was shot twice. Once in the stomach and once in the groin. When questioned by one of his superiors as to whether there were many Boers about, he answered, "No, only a few, but the few were very good shots."

In hospital his identity was discovered and he was forced to return to England and recover. He was also forced to face his father's wrath who, by now, had discovered his son was up to. Luckily his father consented and de Wiart pursued a military career.

He quit Oxford and returned to South Africa in 1901 for another round of fighting. This time, however, he did it in style, booking into first class and handing generous tips to the bar staff. When he landed in Cape Town he had exactly one pound in his pockets.

After joining a cavalry regiment de Wiart was promoted to corporal. This promotion lasted exactly 24 hours before he was demoted to trooper for threatening to hit a sergeant. But it was clear to de Wiart that he was destined to greater things and after a few months he had earned or probably bought a commission of 2nd Lieutenant.

During the rest of 1901 and until the end of the 2nd Boer

War in 1902 de Wiart became increasingly frustrated at the lack of action. His only opportunity to do anything of military value was to cut some barbed wire in a Boer camp, but even then he was ordered not to do it.

Looking for action he asked to be sent to British Somaliland to join the hunt for Mohammed bin Abdullah, also known as the "Mad Mullah". Bin Abdullah had started a guerrilla campaign against the British East African colony. He was fighting for independence and was considered by his followers as a Sunni holy man and almost a messiah. But to colonial authorities he wasn't a messiah but rather a threat and an irritation.

Yet again de Wiart's superiors curbed his fighting enthusiasm by sending him to a cavalry regiment in Muttra, India. While there he enjoyed sports, especially shooting and pig sticking. After his regiment was transferred to South Africa he was promoted to supernumerary lieutenant on 16 July 1904 and appointed an aide-de-camp to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Henry Hildyard, the following July.

By 1907, although Carton de Wiart had now served in the British Army for eight years, he had remained a Belgian subject. On 13 September of that year, he took the oath of allegiance to Edward VII and was formally naturalised as a British subject.

In 1908 he married Countess Friederike Maria Karoline Henriette Rosa Sabina Franziska Fugger von Babenhausen, eld-

est daughter of Karl, 5th Fürst (Prince) von Fugger-Babenhhausen and Princess Eleonora zu Hohenlohe-Bartenstein und Jagstberg of Klagenfurt, Austria. They had two daughters.

World War I

When the First World War broke out, Carton de Wiart was en route to British Somaliland where he was finally being allowed to take a crack at Mohammed bin Abdullah. de Wiart had been seconded to the Somaliland Camel Corps.

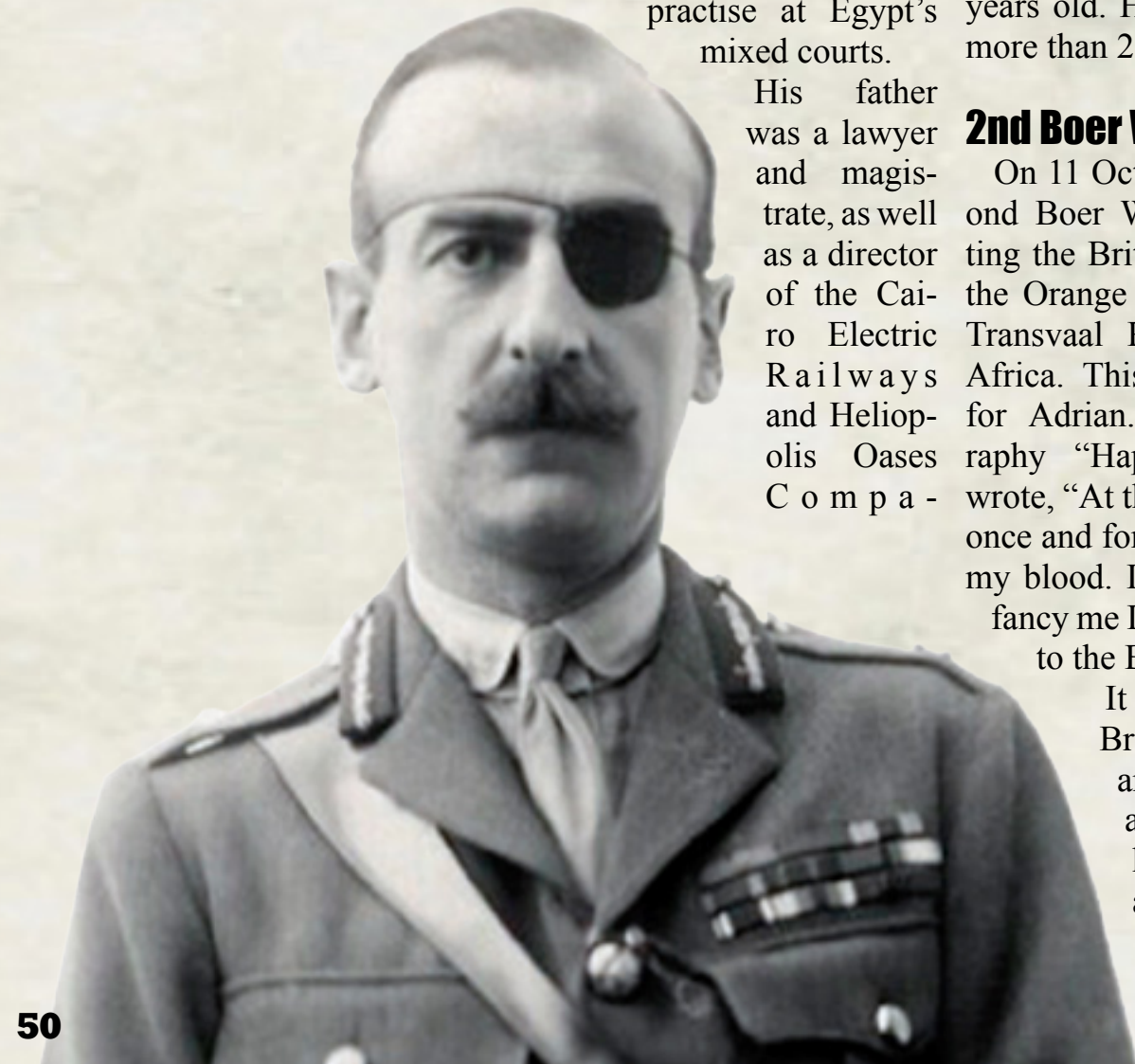
In an attack upon an enemy fort at Shimber Berris, Carton de Wiart was shot twice in the face, losing his eye and also a portion of his ear. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) on 15 May 1915.

In February 1915, he embarked on a steamer for France. Carton de Wiart took part in the fighting on the Western Front, commanding successively three infantry battalions and a brigade.

He was wounded seven more times in the war, losing his left hand in 1915 and pulling off his fingers when a doctor declined to remove them.

He was shot through the skull and ankle at the Battle of the Somme, through the hip at the Battle of Passchendaele, through the leg at Cambrai, and through the ear at Arras. He went to the Sir Douglas Shield's Nursing Home to recover from his injuries.

Three days before the end of the war, on 8 November, Carton



de Wiart was given command of a brigade with the rank of temporary brigadier general.

A S Bullock gives a vivid first-hand description of his arrival: "Cold shivers went down the back of everyone in the brigade, for he had an unsurpassed record as a fire eater, missing no chance of throwing the men under his command into whatever fighting happened to be going."

Bullock recalls how the battalion looked 'very much the worse for wear' when they paraded for the brigadier general's inspection.

He arrived 'on a lively cob with his cap tilted at a rakish angle, and a shade over the place where one of his eyes had been'. He was also missing two limbs and had eleven wound stripes.

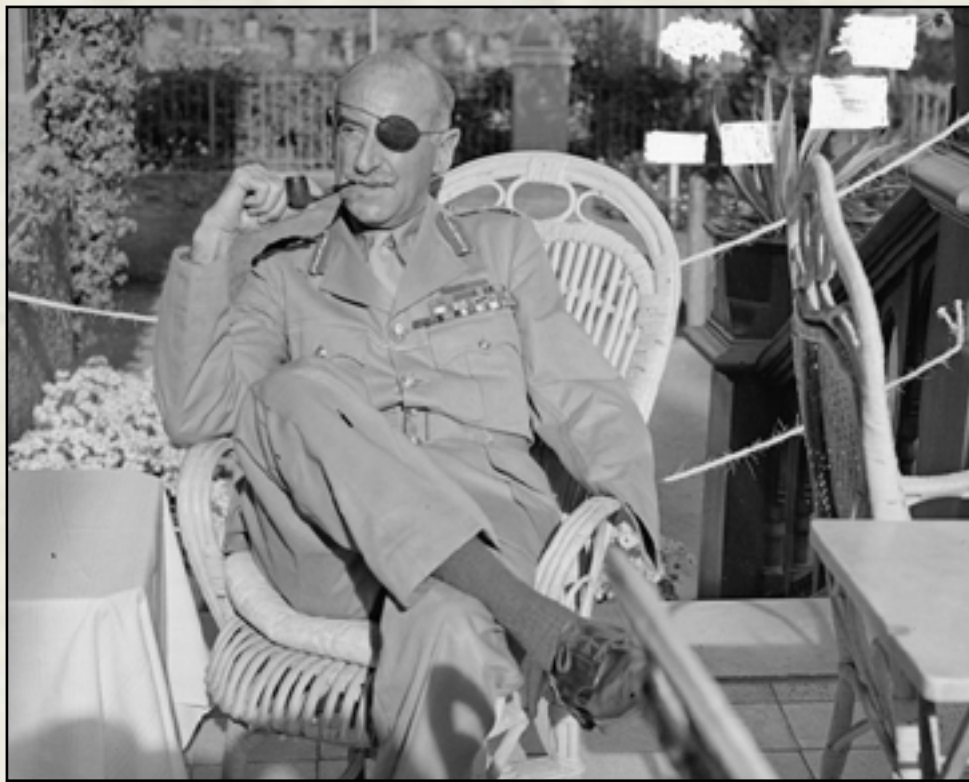
Bullock, the first man in line for the inspection, notes that Carton de Wiart, despite having only one eye, ordered him to get his bootlace changed.

Carton de Wiart received the Victoria Cross (VC), the highest award for gallantry in combat that can be awarded to British Empire forces, in 1916. He was 36 years old, and a temporary lieutenant-colonel in the 4th Dragoon Guards (Royal Irish), British Army, attached to the Gloucestershire Regiment, commanding the 8th Battalion.

The Polish Mission

At the end of the war Carton de Wiart was sent to Poland as second in command of the British-Poland Military Mission under General Louis Botha. After a brief period, he replaced General Botha in the mission to Poland.

Poland desperately needed



A RARE SIGHT: Adrian Carton de Wiart relaxed with his pipe. It was rare for him not to be in action somewhere. Note the eye patch and empty left sleeve.

support, as it was engaged with Bolshevik Russia in the Polish-Soviet War, the Ukrainians in the Polish-Ukrainian War, the Lithuanians in the Polish-Lithuanian War, and the Czechs in the Czech-Polish border conflicts.

One of his tasks soon after his arrival was to attempt to make peace between the Poles and the Ukrainian nationalists under Simon Petlyura. The Ukrainians were besieging the city of Lwów (Lvov; Lemberg). The discussions were unsuccessful.

Carton de Wiart developed a sympathy with the Poles and supported their claims to the eastern Galicia. This caused disagreement with British Prime Minister Lloyd George, but was appreciated by the Poles.

On 27 July 1920, Carton de Wiart was appointed an aide-de-camp to the king, and brevetted to colonel. He was active in August 1920, when the Red

Army were at the gates of Warsaw.

While out on his observation train, he was attacked by a group of Red cavalry, and fought them off with his revolver from the footplate of his train, at one point falling on the track and re-boarding quickly.

When the Poles won the war, the British Military Mission was wound up. Carton de Wiart was promoted to temporary brigadier general and also appointed to the local rank of major general on 1 January.

He was promoted to the substantive rank of colonel on 21 June 1922, with seniority from 27 July 1920 and relinquished his local rank of major general on 1 April 1923, going on half-pay as a colonel at the same time. Carton de Wiart officially retired from the army on 19 December, with the honorary rank of major general.

His last Polish aide de camp

was Prince Karol Mikołaj Radziwiłł, who inherited a large 500,000-acre (200,000 ha) estate in eastern Poland when the communists killed his uncle. They became friends and Carton de Wiart was given the use of a large estate called Prostyń, in the Pripet Marshes, a wetland area larger than Ireland and surrounded by water and forests.

After 15 years, Carton de Wiart's Polish peaceful life was interrupted by the looming war, when he was recalled in July 1939 and appointed to his old job, as head of the British Military Mission to Poland.

Poland was attacked by Nazi Germany on 1 September and on 17 September the Soviets allied with Germany attacked Poland from the east. Soon Soviet forces overran Prostyń and Carton de Wiart lost all his guns, fishing rods, clothing, and furniture. They were packed up by the Soviets and stored in the Minsk Museum, but destroyed by the Germans in later fighting.

World War II

Polish Campaign

Carton de Wiart met with the Polish commander-in-chief, Marshal of Poland Edward Rydz-Śmigły, in late August 1939 and formed a rather low opinion of his capabilities.

He strongly urged Rydz-Śmigły to pull Polish forces back beyond the Vistula River, but was unsuccessful. The other advice he offered, to have the seagoing units of the Polish fleet leave the Baltic Sea, was, after much argument, finally adopted. This fleet made a significant contribution to the Allied cause, especially the several modern

destroyers and submarines.

As Polish resistance weakened, Carton de Wiart evacuated his mission from Warsaw along with the Polish government. Together with the Polish commander Rydz-Śmigły, Carton de Wiart made his way with the rest of the British Mission to the Romanian border with both the Germans and the Soviets in pursuit. His car convoy was attacked by the Luftwaffe on the road, and the wife of one of his aides was killed.

He was in danger of arrest in Romania and got out by aircraft on 21 September with a false passport, just in time as the pro-Allied Romanian prime minister, Armand Calinescu, was assassinated that day.

Norwegian Campaign

Recalled to a special appointment in the army in the autumn of 1939, Carton de Wiart reverted to his former rank of colonel. He was granted the rank of acting major general on 28 November.

After a brief stint in command of the 61st Division in the English Midlands, Carton de Wiart was summoned in April 1940 to take charge of a hastily drawn together Anglo-French force to occupy Namsos, a small town in middle Norway.

His orders were to take the city of Trondheim, 200 km to the south, in conjunction with a naval attack and an advance from the south by troops landed at Åndalsnes.

He flew to Namsos to reconnoitre the location before the troops arrived. When his Short Sunderland flying boat landed, it was attacked by a German

fighter and his aide was wounded and had to be evacuated.

After the French Alpine troops landed (without their transport mules and missing straps for their skis), the Luftwaffe bombed and destroyed the town of Namsos.

Despite these handicaps, Carton de Wiart managed to move his forces over the mountains and down to Trondheimsfjord, where they were shelled by German destroyers. They had no artillery to challenge the German ships.

It soon became apparent that the whole Norwegian campaign was fast becoming a failure. The naval attack on Trondheim, the reason for the Namsos landing, did not happen and his troops were exposed without guns, transport, air cover, or skis in a foot and a half of snow.

They were being attacked by German ski troops, machine gunned and bombed from the air, and the German Navy was landing troops to his rear. He recommended withdrawal but was asked to hold his position for political reasons, which he did.

After orders and counter-orders from London, the decision to evacuate was made. However, on the date set to evacuate the troops, the ships did not appear. The next night a naval force finally arrived, led through the fog by Lord Louis Mountbatten.

The transports successfully evacuated the entire force amid heavy bombardment by the Germans, resulting in the sinking of two destroyers, the French Bison and British HMS Afridi. Carton de Wiart arrived back at the British naval base of

Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands on 5 May 1940, his 60th birthday.

Mission to Yugoslavia

Carton de Wiart was posted back to the command of the 61st Division, which was soon transferred to Northern Ireland as a defence against invasion. However, following the arrival of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Pownall as Commander-in-Chief in Northern Ireland, Carton de Wiart was told that he was too old to command a division on active duty.

Advanced to temporary major-general on 28 November 1940, he remained inactive very briefly, as he was appointed as head of the British-Yugoslavian Military Mission on 5 April 1941.

Hitler was preparing to invade the country and the Yugoslavs asked for British help. Carton de Wiart travelled in a Wellington Bomber to Belgrade, Serbia to negotiate with the Yugoslavian government.

After refuelling in Malta, the aircraft left for Cairo with enemy territory to the north and south. Both engines failed off the coast of Italian-controlled Libya, and the plane crash-landed in the sea about a mile from land.

Carton de Wiart was knocked unconscious, but the cold water made him regain consciousness. When the plane broke up and sank, he and the rest aboard were forced to swim to shore. They were captured by the Italian authorities.

Prisoner of War

Carton de Wiart was a high-profile prisoner. After four

months at the Villa Orsini at Sulmona, he was transferred to a special prison for senior officers at Castello di Vincigliata.

There were a number of senior officer prisoners here due to the successes achieved by Rommel in North Africa early in 1941. Carton de Wiart made friends, especially with General Sir Richard O'Connor, Daniel Knox, 6th Earl of Ranfurly and Lieutenant-General Philip Neame VC.

The four were committed to escaping. He made five attempts, including seven months tunnelling. Once Carton de Wiart evaded capture for eight days disguised as an Italian peasant (he was in northern Italy, could not speak Italian, and was 61 years old, with an eye patch, one empty sleeve and multiple injuries and scars).

Then, in a surprising development, Carton de Wiart was taken from prison in August 1943 and driven to Rome. The Italian government was secretly planning to leave the war and wanted Carton de Wiart to send the message to the British Army about a peace treaty with the UK.

Carton de Wiart was to accompany an Italian negotiator, General Giacomo Zanussi, to Lisbon to meet Allied contacts to negotiate the surrender. To keep the mission secret, Carton de Wiart was told he needed civilian clothes. Distrusting Italian tailors, he stated that “he had no objection provided he did not resemble a gigolo.”

When they reached Lisbon, Carton de Wiart was released and made his way to England, reaching there on 28 August 1943.

China Mission

Within a month of his arrival back in England, Carton de Wiart was summoned to spend a night at the prime minister’s country home at Chequers.

Churchill informed him that he was to be sent to China as his personal representative. He was granted the rank of acting lieutenant-general on 9 October, and left by air for India on 18 October 1943.

He arrived in the headquarters of the Nationalist Chinese Government, Chungking (Chongqing), in early December 1943. For the next three years, he was to be involved in a host of reporting, diplomatic and administrative duties in the remote wartime capital.

On 9 October 1944, Carton de Wiart was promoted to temporary lieutenant-general and to the war substantive rank of major-general.

Carton de Wiart returned home in December 1944 to report to the War Cabinet on the Chinese situation. He was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE) in the 1945 New Year Honours.

Clement Attlee, when he became head of the Labour Government in June 1945, asked Carton de Wiart to stay on in China.

South East Asia

Carton de Wiart was assigned to a tour of the Burma Front, and after meeting Admiral Sir James Somerville, Commander-in-Chief of the British Eastern Fleet, he was given a front seat on the bridge of the battleship HMS Queen Elizabeth for the bombardment of Sabang in the Netherlands East Indies

in 1945, including air battles between Japanese fighters and British carrier aircraft.

After the Japanese surrender in August 1945, Carton de Wiart flew to Singapore to participate in the formal surrender. After a visit to Peking, he moved to Nanking, the now-liberated Nationalist capital, accompanied by Julian Amery, the British Prime Minister’s Personal Representative to Chiang.

A visit to Tokyo to meet General Douglas MacArthur came at the end of his tenure. He was now 66 and ready to retire, despite the offer of a job by Chiang. Carton de Wiart retired in October 1947, with the honorary rank of lieutenant-general.

Retirement and Death

En route home via French Indochina, Carton de Wiart stopped in Rangoon as a guest of the army commander. Coming down stairs, he slipped on coconut matting, fell down, broke several vertebrae, and knocked himself unconscious. He was admitted to Rangoon Hospital where he was treated.

His wife died in 1949. In 1951, at the age of 71, he married Ruth Myrtle Muriel Joan McKechnie, a divorcee 23 years his junior (born in late 1903, she died 13 January 2006 at the age of 102.) They settled at Aghinagh House, Killinardish, County Cork, Ireland.

Carton de Wiart died at the age of 83 on 5 June 1963. He and his wife Joan are buried in Caum Churchyard just off the main Macroom road. The grave site is just outside the actual graveyard wall on the grounds of his own home Aghinagh House.

Awards and decorations

From top to bottom

- Victoria Cross (VC)
- Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE) (Military Division)
- Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) (Military Division) Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG)
- Companion of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO)
- Queen’s South Africa Medal Africa
- General Service Medal
- 1914 Star
- British War Medal Victory Medal (United Kingdom)
- 1939–45 Star
- Africa Star
- Burma Star
- Italy Star
- War Medal 1939-1945
- King George VI Coronation Medal Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal
- Officer of the Order of the Crown (Belgium)
- Croix de guerre 1914-1918 (Belgium)
- Silver Cross (Knight) of the Order of Military Virtue of Poland
- Cross of Valour (Poland)
- Commander of the Legion of Honour of France
- Croix de guerre 1939–1945 (France)



E-yih-sih yil-tas

The Code Talkers

Using a language that few could speak, Native Americans developed their own code words as a means of secret communication during wartime.

Communication has always been an integral part of human life. Communication is also vital during times of war. Orders, reports and messages need to be both transmitted and received.

The problem is that communications can often be intercepted by the enemy. This is why the military goes to great lengths to transmit secret and important communications in some form of code.

During World War II the Germans used Engima machines to code and decode communication. The machine used

electro-mechanical rotor ciphers, and the Germans believed the code to be unbreakable.

Unfortunately for them, the British did finally manage to break the code. This was unknown to the Germans and the information gleaned was vital to the Allied war effort.

The problem with codes is that most of them can eventually be broken. Another problem is

that messages often have to be sent and responded to quickly. There is not enough time to first encode them.

What was needed was for messages to be sent in plain language. Naturally, these messages could be intercepted by the enemy.

But what if the messages were in a language that the enemy could not understand. And, even if the enemy did manage to find someone

that could recognise and speak the language, it was in code.

It was during World War I that the Americans came up with a solution. Most Native Americans had their own language and dialects that few people could speak.

The first known use of Native Americans in the United States military to transmit messages under fire was a group of Cherokee troops used by the American 30th Infantry Division serving alongside the British during the Second Battle of the Somme in World War I. According to the Division Signal Officer, this took place in September 1918. Their unit was under British command at the time.

During World War I, company commander Captain Lawrence of the U.S. Army overheard Solomon Louis and Mitchell Bobb conversing in the

Choctaw language.

Upon further investigation, he found eight Choctaw men serving in the battalion. Eventually, 14 Choctaw men in the Army's 36th Infantry Division trained to use their language in code. They helped the American Expeditionary Forces in several key battles in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in France, during the final large German push of the war.

Within 24 hours of the Choctaw language being pressed into service, the tide of the battle had turned. In less than 72 hours, the Germans were retreating and the Allies were in full attack.

Before the outbreak of World War II the Germans knew about the use of code talkers during World War I. They sent a team of some

thirty anthropologists to the United States to learn Native American languages.

However, the task proved too difficult because of the array of languages and dialects. Nonetheless, the U.S. Army, learning of the Nazi effort, opted not to implement a large-scale code talker program in the European Theater.

14 Comanche code talkers did take part in the Invasion of Normandy, and continued to serve in the 4th Infantry Division in Europe. Comanche soldiers of the 4th Signal Company compiled a vocabulary of over 100 code terms using words or phrases in their own language. Using a substitution method similar to the Navajo, the Comanche code word for



tank was “turtle,” bomber was “pregnant airplane,” machine gun was “sewing machine,” and Adolf Hitler was referred to as “crazy white man.”

Two Comanche code talkers were assigned to each regiment while the rest were assigned to 4th Infantry Division headquarters. Shortly after landing on Utah Beach on 6 June 1944, the Comanche began transmitting messages. Some were wounded but none killed.

There were only 168 Meskwaki in Iowa and in January 1941, 27 of them enlisted together in the US Army. They used their language against the Germans during fighting in North Africa.

In World War II, native Cree speakers were used as code talkers for the Canadian Armed Forces. Due to oaths of secrecy, and official classification through 1963, the role of Cree speakers has gone unacknowledged by the Canadian government.

Navajo

Perhaps the most well known code talkers of all time were the Navajo Native Americans.

The US Marine Corps recruited between 400 and 500 hundred Navajo to serve in standard communications units in the Pacific Theatre.

Their primary job was to transmit secret tactical messages. Code talkers transmitted these messages over military telephone or radio communications nets using formal or informally developed codes built upon their native languages. Their service improved the speed of encryption of communications at both ends in front



CRYPTIC COMMS: A Navajo code talker in action somewhere in the Pacific during World War II.

line operations during World War II.

Philip Johnston, a civil engineer for the city of Los Angeles, proposed the use of Navajo to the United States Marine Corps at the beginning of World War II.

Johnston, a World War I veteran, was raised on the Navajo reservation as the son of a missionary to the Navajo and was one of the few non-Navajo who spoke the language fluently.

Some in authority wondered whether the Navajo, who had been treated poorly by the US government, would want to fight for the U.S., but many Navajo enlisted shortly after Pearl Harbour and eagerly contributed to the war effort.

“What happened to the Navajo were social conflicts”, said Navajo code talker Albert Smith. “But this conflict involved Mother Earth being dominated by foreign coun-

tries. It was our responsibility to defend her.”

Because Navajo has a complex grammar, it is not mutually intelligible enough with even its closest relatives within the Na-Dene family to provide meaningful information.

At the time, it was still an unwritten language, and Johnston believed Navajo could satisfy the military requirement for an undecipherable code due to it only being spoken on the Navajo lands of the American Southwest. Its syntax and tonal qualities, not to mention dialects, made it unintelligible to anyone without extensive exposure and training.

One estimate indicates that at the outbreak of World War II, fewer than 30 non-Navajo could understand the language.

Early in 1942, Johnston met with Major General Clayton B. Vogel, the commanding general of Amphibious Corps,

Pacific Fleet, and his staff. Johnston staged tests under simulated combat conditions which demonstrated that Navajo men could encode, transmit, and decode a three-line English message in 20 seconds, versus the 30 minutes required by machines at that time.

The idea was accepted, with Vogel recommending that the Marines recruit 200 Navajo. The first 29 Navajo recruits attended boot camp in May 1942. This first group created the Navajo code at Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California.

Talking the code

The Navajo code was formally developed and modelled on the Joint Army/Navy Phonetic Alphabet that uses agreed-upon English words to represent letters.

As it was determined that phonetically spelling out all military terms letter by letter into words – while in combat – would be too time-consuming, some terms, concepts, tactics, and instruments of modern warfare were given uniquely formal descriptive nomenclatures in Navajo.

For example, the word for “shark” referred to a destroyer, while “silver oak leaf” indicated the rank of lieutenant colonel.

A codebook was developed to teach the many relevant words and concepts to new initiates. The text was for classroom purposes only and was never to be taken into the field. The code talkers memorized all these variations and practiced their rapid use under stressful conditions during training.

Each letter of the alphabet had as many as three code words. For example be-la-sana was the word for apple, or the letter A.

Various organisations had their own code words. Din-neh-ih was the Navajo word for ‘clan’. This was also the code word for the Marine Corps. Has-clish-nij translated as ‘mud’, the code for ‘platoon’.

There were also code words for various officer ranks, countries, months of the year, aircraft, and ships.

There were also individual codes for 551 words that ranged from abandon to zone. This meant that the code talkers had to have exceptional powers of recall to memorise all 551 words.

Uninitiated Navajo speakers would have no idea what the code talkers’ messages meant; they would hear only truncated and disjointed strings of individual, unrelated nouns and verbs.

Non-speakers would find it extremely difficult to accurately distinguish unfamiliar sounds used in these languages. Additionally, a speaker who has acquired a language during their childhood sounds distinctly different from a person who acquired the same language in later life, thus reducing the chance of successful impostors sending false messages.

Navajo was an attractive choice for code use because few people outside the Navajo had learned to speak the language. Almost no books in Navajo had been published. Outside of the language, the Navajo spoken code was not very complex by cryptographic standards. It

would likely have been broken if a native speaker and trained cryptographers could have worked together effectively.

The Japanese had an opportunity to attempt this when they captured Joe Kieyoomia in the Philippines in 1942 during the Bataan Death March.

Kieyoomia, a Navajo sergeant in the US Army, but not a code talker, was ordered to interpret the radio messages later in the war. However, since Kieyoomia had not participated in the code training, the messages made no sense to him. When he reported that he could not understand the messages, his captors tortured him.

The Japanese Imperial Army and Navy never cracked the spoken code. In fact the Navajo code is the only spoken military code never to have been deciphered.

The Navajo code talkers were commended for the skill, speed, and accuracy they demonstrated throughout the war. At the Battle of Iwo Jima, Major Howard Connor, 5th Marine Division signal officer, had six Navajo code talkers working around the clock during the first two days of the battle. These six sent and received over 800 messages, all without error. Connor later stated, “Were it not for the Navajos, the Marines would never have taken Iwo Jima.”

To ensure a consistent use of code terminologies throughout the Pacific Theatre, representative code talkers of each of the U.S. Marine divisions met in Hawaii to discuss shortcomings in the code, incorporate new terms into the system, and update their codebooks.

These representatives, in turn, trained other code talkers who could not attend the meeting. As the war progressed, additional code words were added and incorporated program-wide. In other instances, informal short-cut code words were devised for a particular campaign and not disseminated beyond the area of operation.

Many code talkers would be accompanied by a Marine that acted as a body guard. The rumour that the body guard's job was to shoot and kill the code talker if there was a danger of them being captured was not true.

“With their skin tone and facial features, many Native Americans looked Japanese,” said an unofficial source. “The bodyguards were there to protect them from being shot by our own troops.”

The last of the original 29 Navajo code talkers who developed the code, Chester Nez, died on 4 June 2014.

According to CNN, one of the last of the Navajo code talkers used in the military, Alfred K. Newman, died on 13 January 2019, at the age of 94.

The deployment of the Navajo code talkers continued through the Korean War and after, until it was ended early in the Vietnam War.

Post- War Recognition

The Navajo code talkers received no recognition until the declassification of the operation in 1968.

In 1982, the code talkers were given a Certificate of Recognition by U.S. President Ronald Reagan, who also named 14



PAYING TRIBUTE: US President Donald Trump pays tribute to three Navajo code talkers at a ceremony in the Oval Office of the White House.

August 1982, as “Navajo Code Talkers Day”.

On 21 December 2000, President Bill Clinton signed Public Law 106-554, 114 Statute 2763, which awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the original 29 World War II Navajo code talkers and Silver Medals to each person who qualified as a Navajo code talker (approximately 300).

In July 2001, U.S. President George W. Bush personally presented the medals to four surviving original code talkers (the fifth living original code talker was unable to attend) at a ceremony held in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C. Gold medals were presented to the families of the deceased 24 original code talkers.

On 17 September 2007, 18 Choctaw code talkers were posthumously awarded the Texas Medal of Valour from the Adjutant General of the State of Texas for their World War II service.

On 15 November 2008, The Code Talkers Recognition Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-420), was signed into law by Presi-

dent George W. Bush, recognizing every Native American code talker who served in the United States military during World War I or World War II (with the exception of the already-awarded Navajo) with a Congressional Gold Medal. The act was designed to be distinct for each tribe, with silver duplicates awarded to the individual code talkers or their next-of-kin. As of 2013, 33 tribes have been identified and been honoured at a ceremony at Emancipation Hall at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Centre. One surviving code talker, Edmond Harjo, was present, .

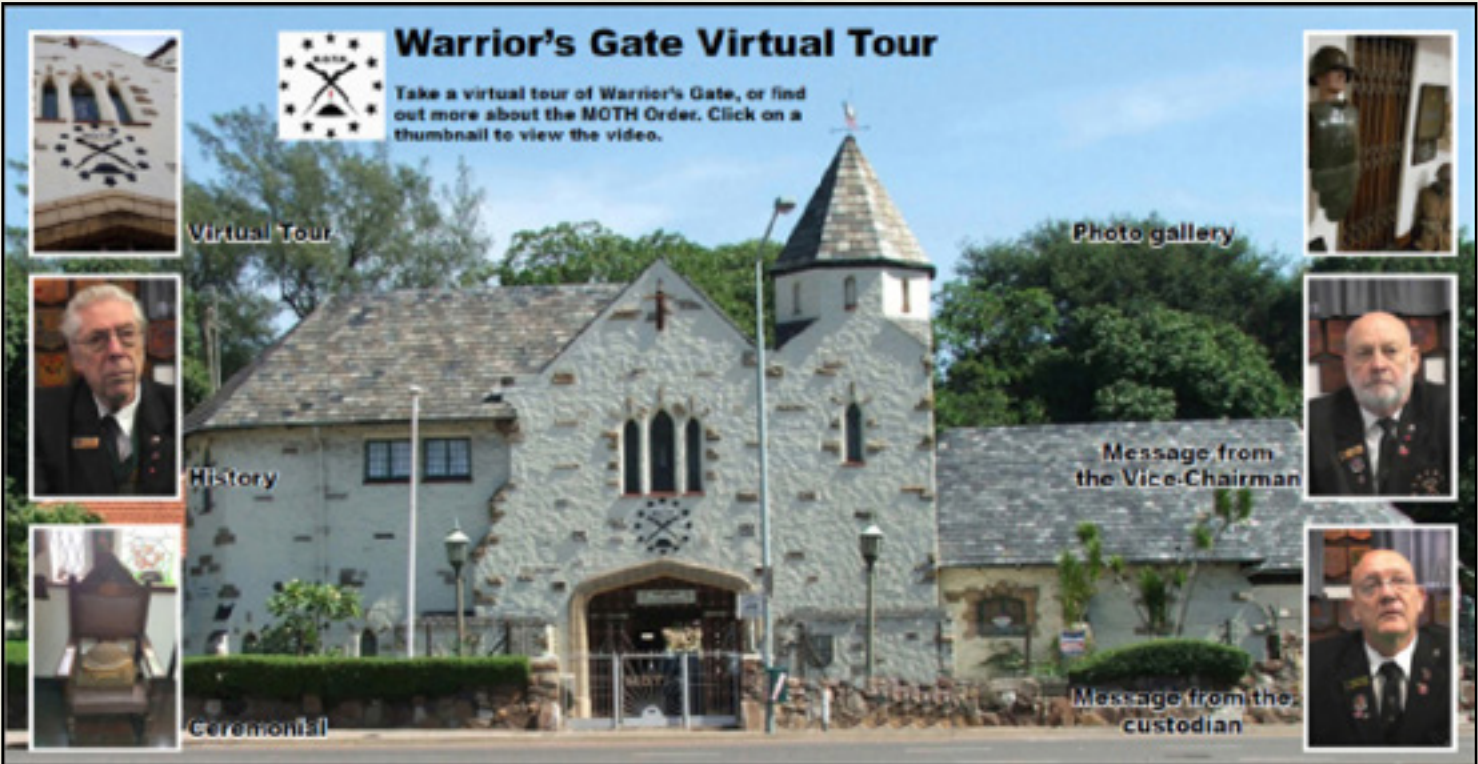
On 27 November 2017, three Navajo code talkers, along with the president of the Navajo Nation, Russell Begaye, appeared with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office in an official White House ceremony. They were there to “...pay tribute to the contributions of the young Native Americans recruited by the United States military to create top-secret coded messages used to communicate during [World War II] battles.”

Navajo Code

Here are some of the code words used by the Navajo during World War II. The actual word is given first, then the Navajo code word, followed by the literal translation.

- **Alternative** : Na-kee-gone-nan-dey-he : Second Position.
 - **Amphibious** : Chal : Frog.
 - **Armour** : Besh-ye-ha-da-di-teh : Iron protector.
 - **Artillery** : Be-al-doh-tso-lani - Many big guns.
 - **Bomb** : A-ye-shi : Eggs.
 - **Bunker** : Tsas-ka : Sandy hollow.
 - **Cable** : Besh-lkoh - Wire Rope.
 - **Casualty** : Bih-din-ne-dey : Put out of action.
 - **Cemetery** : Jish-cha : Among devils.
 - **Code** : Yil-tas : Peck.
- **Communication** : Ha-neh-al-enji : Making talk.
 - **Condition** : Ah-ho-tai : How it is.
 - **Demolition** : Ah-deel-tahi : Blow up.
 - **Desperate** : Ah-dah-dah-ho-szah - Down to last.
 - **Dispatch** : La-chai-en-seis-be-jay : Dog is patch.
 - **Flare** : Wo-chi : Light streak.
 - **Fragmentation** - Besh-yazzie : Small metal.
 - **Grenade** : Ni-ma-si : Pota-toes.
 - **Hospital** : A-zey-al-ih : Place of medicine.
 - **Intelligence** : Ho-ya : Smart.
 - **Machine gun** : A-knah-as-donih : Rapid fire gun.
 - **Minute** : Ah-khay-el-kit-yazzie.
 - **Mortar** : Be-al-doh-cid-ha-
- hi : Sitting gun.
 - **Negative** : Do-ya-sho-da : No good.
 - **Number** : Beh-bih-ke-as-chinigh : What's written.
 - **Pontoon** : Tkosh-jah-da-na-elt : Floating barrel.
 - **Problem** : Na-nish-tsoh : Big job.
 - **Pyrotechnic** : Coh-na-chanh : Fancy Fire.
 - **Reconnaissance** : Ha-a-cidi : Inspector.
 - **River** : Toh-yil-kal : Much water.
 - **Rocket** : Lesz-yil-beshi : Sand boil.
 - **Sailor** : Cha-le-gai : White caps.
 - **Scout** : Ha-a-sid-al-sizi-gih : Short raccoon.
 - **Sniper** : Oh-behi : Pick 'em off.
 - **Tank** : Chay-da-gahi - Tor-toise.

Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the Memorable Order of Tin Hats.



Well known for his expansionist ambitions, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was determined the Iraq would become a nuclear power. Israel, however, had other ideas.

Saddam Hussein had spent nearly two decades as a street fighter and assassin for the militant Ba'ath Party in Iraq. When the party seized power in 1968, Hussein began his ascendancy to the presidency.

In the late 1970s, it became clear to the international community that Iraq was attempting to acquire nuclear weapons through the guise of buying nuclear reactors for power generators.

Hussein, who was now president, was well known for his expansionist ambitions. He also bore an unyielding animosity towards Israel, which he referred to as "the Zionist entity".

If Israel had a supposed nuclear capacity, the Hussein was determined that Iraq would have one as well.

Hussein stepped up his efforts and used diplomatic and financial contacts he had made in France earlier in the decade.

In 1975 he completed a deal with France to sell Iraq the equipment necessary to construct a nuclear reactor at al-Tuwaitha, a research site located on banks of the Tigris River, a mere 20 kilometres from the centre of Baghdad.

The French also agreed to supply Iraq with 72 kilograms of enriched, weapons-grade uranium, which could easily be converted for use in an atomic bomb. Such a bomb, which experts calculated could be completed by the early 1980s, could easily kill at least 100,000 people if dropped on Tel Aviv, the capital of Israel.

The world reacted with alarm to news of the sale. The United States and Great Britain expressed measured diplomatic concern, and the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency increased monitoring efforts of Iraq's nuclear program. But it was little more than a slap on

the wrist.

In the immediate wake of the 1973-74 oil embargo, the West was reluctant to alienate the Arab world. So it was left to Israel to take more direct action.

It was Israel's intelligence agency, the Mossad, that made the first move in 1979. They intercepted a shipment of nuclear cores from France to Iraq at La Seyne-sur-Mer.

The Mossad agents blew up the warehouse where the shipment was stored, severely damaging the cores.

Terrified of Hussein's reaction to the news, Iraqi officials accepted the damaged goods and kept their mouths shut.

Unfortunate incidents

Over the next 15 months a number of key nuclear scientists from Iraq and other Arab countries met a series of unfortunate accidents while visiting western Europe.

These accidents included hit-and-run automobile accidents, sudden fatal flu-like illnesses, and virulent food poisoning. And a few of them had their throat slit. Mossad were hard at work slowing down the pace of Iraq's nuclear program. Undeterred, Hussein continued to press forward.

"How could a people who only know how to ride camels produce an atomic bomb?" he scoffed when asked about his plans.

Meanwhile, he threatened to suspend payments - and much-needed oil shipments - to France unless the French fulfilled their original contract calling for delivery of 72 pounds of 93% enriched uranium. Naturally the French agreed to honour their terms.

Iraq's nuclear efforts suffered their next blow nine days after the start of the Iran-



NUCLEAR AMBITIONS: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein wanted to develop a nuclear program, giving Iraq the ability to build an atomic bomb.

Iraq was on 30 September 1980. And it was Iran and not Israel that did the deed.

Iran sent two Phantom F-4-E jets to attack several Iraqi targets, among them the uncompleted nuclear reactors at al-Tuwaitha. The Phantoms fired two rockets. One did not explode, and the other hit the housing of one of the reactors, damaging the dome and cooling system, but causing no significant destruction. Hundreds of French and Italian technicians and engineers working at the facility were evacuated, however, and work at al-Tuwaitha ground to a standstill.

Israel was rightly worried over the Iraqi nuclear threat and over the course of the following year Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin considered various options. These options included an attack on Iraq's nuclear reactors.

Such an attack, however, came with major concerns. These including the probable adverse re-

action from the rest of the world, and concerns that even though Iraq was at war with Iran, they may still have attacked Israel. Another concern was the distance to the target. It was over 1770 kilometres to the target and back.

There was something else to consider - the reaction of Egypt. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat had brokered a peace treaty with Begin at Camp David in 1979. While an attack would not violate Israel's treaty with Egypt, which called for Israel to pull out of the Sinai in April 1982, Sadat's reaction was still unpredictable.

Operation Babylon

Begin had some hard decisions to make. He weighed the risks and came to the conclusion that a preemptive strike was worth any possible aftereffects. The thought of Iraq having nuclear capabilities was just too dangerous to contemplate.

The Israelis felt that a quick,

surgical air strike was the best option, and there were two things in their favour.

First of all Iraq was weakened by its ongoing ground war with Iran. The second consideration was even more important.

The reactor was not yet operational, so an attack would not result in any kind of nuclear fallout over Baghdad. This would have been a humanitarian and public-relations disaster.

By the end of March 1981, Mossad reported that foreign workers were returning to al-Tuwaitha, and that construction had resumed on the Osirak nuclear reactor. Begin and his advisors finalized plans for an air strike on the Iraqi facility in early May. It was codenamed Operation Babylon.

After a series of delays, Mossad reported that France had finally delivered all 72 kilograms of enriched uranium to Iraq. It was time for the Israelis to strike.

Just before sunset on Sunday 7 June 1981, Operation Babylon was launched. It had been carefully planned for a Sunday, on the assumption that the 100 to 150 foreign experts employed at the reactor would be absent on the Christian day of rest.

The raid was planned for late afternoon because it would give the Israeli Combat Search and Rescue Team, riding in CH-53 helicopters, all night to search for any downed pilots.

At 15h00 the CH-53s took up their position, hovering at only 30 metres just west of the Jordanian border. The CH-53 crews were not told what the mission was. Their instructions were that if a plane went down they had permission to violate any sover-

foreign airspace to pick up the pilots.

At 16h00 eight of Israel's American-built F-16 fighters took off from Etzion airbase in the Sinai desert. They were carrying extra 1,400 litre fuel tanks to increase their range.

Due to the distance to the target, weight was a serious consideration. The F-16s were stripped of two of their four air-to-air Sidewinder missiles. The jamming devices for protection against Iraqi MiGs and SAM-6 radars had also been removed.

Despite these attempts to reduce weight the F-16s took off at a weight that exceeded nearly twice the plane's design specifications.

Each F-16 was equipped with special racks that carried two 900 kilogram MK-84 'dumb' bombs. They were called 'dumb' bombs as opposed to 'smart' bombs because they had to be dropped directly on the target. They had no form of guidance system.

The F-16s were escorted by eight F-15 fighter interceptors. They would provide protection against Arab aircraft as well as jamming Iraqi radar over the target. Moreover they would act as communication relay stations to a Boeing 707 command post that would be orbiting over Israel.

The route to the target was anything but easy. They would have to fly over or circumvent seven separate Arab airfields.

There was a very real danger of interception from Jordanian F-5-Es and Iraqi Mirage-4000s, MIG-23, and MIG-25s. At al-Tuwaitha itself, the fighters would face anti-aircraft artillery

batteries and SAM-6 missiles.

The route of the attack from take off in the Sinai was east across the Gulf of Aqaba, then across the northern part of Saudi Arabia near the border of Jordan, where Israel believed it had discovered some radar blind spots. Additionally, the Israelis had intelligence that the Saudis would only have one of their American-supplied Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) intelligence aircraft in the air at the time of the attack and that it would be overlooking the Persian Gulf.

Radio communication, only to be made at five checkpoints, would be single words in English, the international language of aviation, so that if overheard the communication might be mistaken for a commercial flight.

The eight pilots were divided up into two teams. Each of them had been chosen for their experience in F-16s. Team one included Lt. Col. Zeev Raz, the wing commander, Amos Yadlin, Dobi Yaffi, and Hagai Katz. Team two, led by Lt. Col. Amir Nachumi, included Iftach Spector, Relik Shafir, and Ilan Ramon.

The formation flew low, about 30 metres, and fast, about 360 knots, to avoid detection. Once they were across Saudi Arabia they turned towards Baghdad.

Once they reached their target the attack was over in a matter of minutes. The F-16s swept across the sky in pairs, quickly climbing to 1,500 metres in four seconds, before diving and unleashing their bombs at the target. It was something that had practiced for months in the Sinai.



EXECUTIVE DECISION: Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin gave the go ahead for Operation Babylon.

The first bombs hit the side of the reactor, opening holes for the second set of bombs, which found and destroyed the reactor inside. In all, 14 out of 16 bombs hit the reactor with pin-point precision.

A French worker who witnessed the Israeli attack called the accuracy of the Israeli bombing "stupefying." Eight workers, including one French technician, were killed in the bombing.

Within two minutes the attack, which had been timed for sunset, was over and Iraq's nuclear ambitions came to an abrupt halt.

The larger Tammuz I (or Osirak) reactor was destroyed. The smaller Tammuz II reactor's sensitive equipment and foundation were ruined.

As it transpired, Iraqi anti-aircraft unit personnel were eating when the attack occurred, which was another reason for the timing of the bombing, and had turned off their radars. It was something that the Israelis had expected.

As a result, there was a fatal delay in their reaction time, and



SURGICAL STRIKE: Israeli F-16 jets on patrol. It was planes similar to these that carried out Operation Babylon.

no SAM-6s were fired at the Israeli planes. A number of Iraqi soldiers on the ground, however, were killed by errant anti-aircraft fire. As predicted, the Saudi AWACS aircraft was facing the Persian Gulf and did not detect the Israeli aircraft.

The attack squadron landed safely back at Etzion at 19h00 without so much as a scratch, having faced no enemy aircraft on the return flight.

Sadly, in a cruel twist of fate, pilot Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, would die in the Columbia space shuttle accident in February 2003.

The world reacts

While the raid had been brilliantly executed, the rest of the world was not amused. The raid was universally condemned, including by the United States.

The Reagan administration, normally sympathetic to Israel, chose to condemn the attack through a speech by American UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, who called the raid

"shocking" and compared it to the recent Soviet incursion into Afghanistan.

France, who were naturally upset, declared the Israeli actions "unacceptable," and made a brief national hero out of an unfortunate French nuclear technician, Damien Chaussepied, who was killed while working in a lab next to the reactor at the time of the raid.

Great Britain denounced it as "a grave breach of international law." A New York Times editorial thundered: "Israel's sneak attack on a French-built nuclear reactor near Baghdad was an act of inexcusable and short-sighted aggression."

A United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Israel's raid passed unanimously. But despite loud denunciations inside the Arab world, Israel was never attacked in reprisal, and no UN sanctions were ever put in place against it (the result of a threatened American veto). As for the president, Ronald Reagan shrugged off the

dramatic event with a characteristic shrug. "Boys will be boys," he said.

Saddam Hussein was besides himself and he played the victim to the hilt. He called on "all peace-loving nations of the world to help the Arabs in one way or another acquire atomic weapons" in order to offset Israel's obviously aggressive tendencies. At the same time, he sought to deflect blame for the attack away from his army's own less-than-stellar defensive performance at al-Tuwaitha by accusing the French of being complicit with Israel in the attack.

The Israelis stood firm against the adverse public opinion. It was not the first time that they had been condemned for defending themselves, nor would it be the last.

"Israel has nothing to apologize for," Begin told a news conference a few days after the raid.

Noting that Saddam Hussein had frequently butchered his closest colleagues, to say nothing of his opponents, Begin warned that Iraq would have had "no hesitation in dropping three or four or five of those bombs on Israel."

Three weeks later, Begin's hard-line Likud Party was given a thumping endorsement at the polls, and a few months later the United States quietly resumed the sale of F-16s to Israel.

When American forces invaded Iraq in 1991 and 2003, they did not have to confront the fear of an Iraqi nuclear response. The audacious Israeli raid on al-Tuwaitha had seen to that.



Normally Kapitänleutnant Matt O'Brien is all at sea. This time, however, he's under the sea as he takes command of U-96.

I actually did a review of this game back in the August 2019 issue of Military Despatches.

So why, you may ask yourself, am I doing another review of the game? Well the reason is quite simple really.

As I mentioned back in August 2019, U-Boat is an early access game. In other words the complete game was not finished yet. The advantages of buying a game in early access means that it is very affordable.

Basically you are testing the game and working with the developers to improve it.

Every time upgrades are made to the game, the price of the game goes up. You, however, get these upgrades free of charge as you already own the game.

Since my last review the game has undergone many upgrades and improvements as is almost ready to be released as a full game.

At the time of writing U-Boat is on special on Steam and you can pick up a copy for less than R100.

U-Boat is exactly what it says it is, a submarine simulator. In a nutshell, you are given command of a Type VII submarine during World War II.

Unlike other submarine games such as the Silent Hunter

series, you are not in charge of the submarine itself, but rather in charge of the men controlling the submarine. You act as the U-Boat captain.

Your job is to manage the morale, discipline and trauma of the crew and make sure all the crew come back alive at the end of a mission.

You look after the physical and mental health of the crew, because if the sailors are hungry, tired and their spirit is low, there's no chance of winning even a skirmish.

The crew are also made up of individuals who each have their own individual stories and personalities and this can make for interesting situations.

Before you leave port you will be given a briefing as to your mission. It may be simply to patrol a certain area, or to find and intercept a merchant convoy.

You will also have to take on supplies from the warehouse. This will include torpedoes, fuel, food, water and any other necessary rations and equipment. The last thing you want to do is run out of food or water.

The actual layout of the U-Boat is highly accurate. All the buttons, knobs and dials are there - and they work.

Each member of the crew has a specific job. Keep their mo-

rale high and they will perform well. You can get your radio operator to tune in to a nearby radio station so the crew can listen to some music.

As the captain of the boat you have to manage most things down to the finest detail. What will the crew have for meals? How long will the watches be? Should you disable unnecessary devices to keep your accumulators running for longer? If you are going to be submerged for a long time do you run on a skeleton crew, telling the others to stay in their bunks to preserve oxygen?

When running on the surface you need to keep your eyes out for enemy aircraft. If you come under attack, either by aircraft or surface ship, then the fun and games really start.

The game then goes from management to survival. The extensive damage system is a foundation of the game's survival elements. Unprecedented situations are bound to happen as the effect of received damage, testing player's creativity and ability to stay calm. You can try to save the whole crew or leave someone behind, to save the others.

You will often have to deal with some serious situations such as flooding, fire, or vital equipment being knocked out



or damaged.

During your mission you will receive assignments from the *Kriegsmarine* headquarters. They are never linear and you may receive additional orders during them or face unexpected problems.

Brave completion of assignments from the headquarters is rewarded with additional budget for the unit under your command and with acceptance of your growing reputation as a U-Boat's skipper. You will need that, to upgrade your ship and keep up with enemy's technological advances.

- Use the funds rewarded to you to upgrade your boat.
- Buy new equipment - new torpedo types, sonar decoys, CO2 absorbers and much more.
- Send your officers on special tasks in the headquarters to, among other things, speed up a research of new technologies.

Game's simulation elements

are very realistic, but that never comes at a cost of gameplay quality. Despite extensive simulation elements, UBOAT can be played like a regular game and complex matters can be learned later to become a better skipper for the commanded unit.

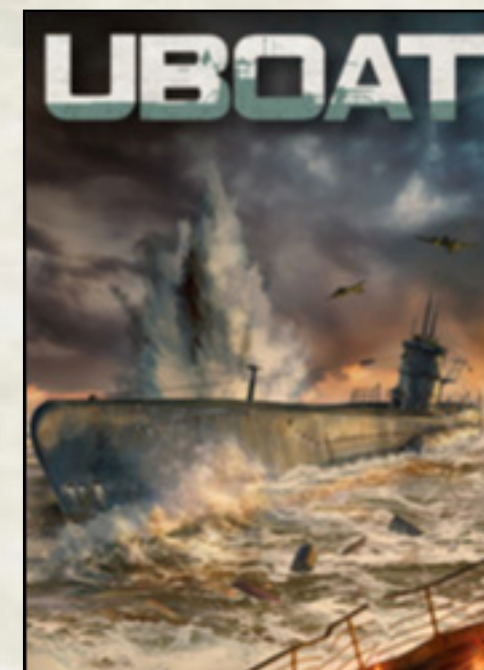
Even small things like the influence of ballast in each compartment on the ship's trim (tilt) or Earth's curvature are faithfully reproduced in the game.

Perfection can be achieved in many ways. Prove your management skills and swiftly assign work to your officers to speed things up. If, on the other hand, you think that if something needs to be done, it's better to do that on your own - sit behind the periscope, hydrophone or 88 mm deck gun and take matters in your own hands!

While the game is still in early access, it is almost ready to be released as a full game. Many improvements have been made to the game and the graphics are looking pretty good.

Managing your boat and its crew is challenging and selecting and training the right crew members is vital.

It's a fun and challenging game and well worth the price.



Publisher - PlayWay S.A.

Genre - RTS

Score - 7.5/10

Price - R92.75 (on Steam)



Movie Review

Downfall

Released: 2004
Running time: 155 minutes
Directed by: Oliver Hirschbiegel

Downfall (*Der Untergang*) is a 2004 German-language historical war drama film directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel from a screenplay by its producer, Bernd Eichinger.

It is set during the Battle of Berlin in World War II, when Nazi Germany is on the verge of defeat, and depicts the final days of Adolf Hitler. The movie is in German with English sub-titles.

In November 1942, at the Wolf's Lair in East Prussia, Leader of Nazi Germany Adolf Hitler selects Traudl Junge as his personal secretary. Three years later, the Red Army has pushed Germany's forces back and surrounded Berlin.

On Hitler's 56th birthday, the Red Army begins shelling Berlin's city centre. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler tries to persuade Hitler to leave Berlin, but Hitler refuses. Himmler leaves to negotiate terms with the Western Allies in secret.

Later, Himmler's adjutant Hermann Fegelein also attempts to persuade Hitler to flee, but Hitler insists that he will win or die in Berlin.

Dr. Ernst-Günther Schenck is ordered to leave Berlin per Operation Clausewitz, though he persuades an SS general to let him stay in Berlin to treat the injured.

At a meeting in the Führerbunker, Hitler forbids the

overwhelmed 9th Army to retreat, instead ordering SS commander Felix Steiner's units to mount a counter-attack. The generals find the orders impossible and irrational.

On the battlefield, General Helmuth Weidling is informed he will be executed for allegedly ordering a retreat. Weidling comes to the Führerbunker to clear himself of his charges. His action impresses Hitler, who promotes him to oversee all of Berlin's defences.

At another meeting, Hitler learns Steiner did not attack because his unit was too weak. Hitler becomes enraged at what he sees as an act of betrayal and launches into a furious tirade, stating that everyone has failed him and denouncing his generals as cowards and traitors, before finally acknowledging that the war is lost, but that he would rather commit suicide than leave Berlin.

Hitler receives a message from Luftwaffe chief Hermann Göring, requesting state leadership. Hitler declares Göring a traitor, ordering his dismissal from all posts, arrest and execution.

The Soviets continue their advance, Berlin's supplies run low, and German morale plummets. Hitler hopes that the 12th Army, led by Walther Wenck, will save Berlin.

After midnight, Hitler dic-

tates his last will and testament to Junge, before marrying Eva.

The following morning, Hitler learns that the 12th Army is stuck and cannot relieve Berlin. Refusing surrender, Hitler plans his death. He administers poison to his dog Blondi, bids farewell to the bunker staff, and commits suicide with Eva. The two are cremated in the Chancellery garden.

This is a movie well worth watching and Bruno Ganz does an excellent job in the role of Hitler.

The best thing is that you can download this entire movie for free on YouTube.

Click [here](#) to download Part 1 where you will also find Part 2 available.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

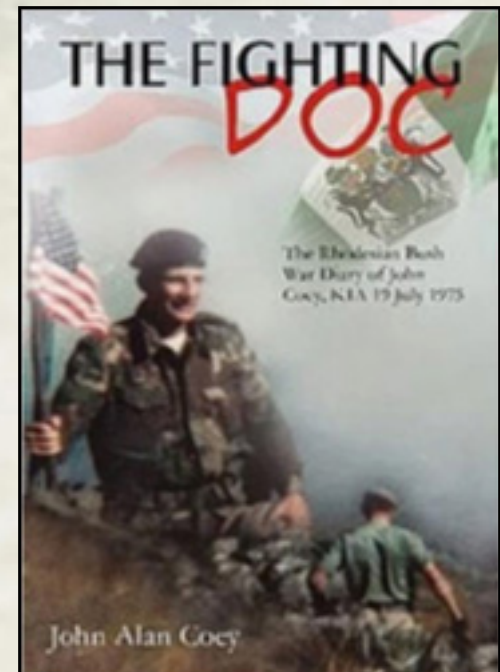
The Fighting Doc

It is Saturday afternoon, 19 July 1975, next to a dry riverbed in Rhodesia's north-eastern operational area, in a war against communist-backed guerrillas.

A Rhodesian combat medic receives an order to descend into the riverbed to attend to two critically wounded troopers, their figures seemingly lifeless on the sand. The whereabouts of the insurgents is not known. As the medic, displaying a red cross, moves in, shots ring out and he sustains a fatal head wound. That medic is 24-year-old American John Alan Coey.

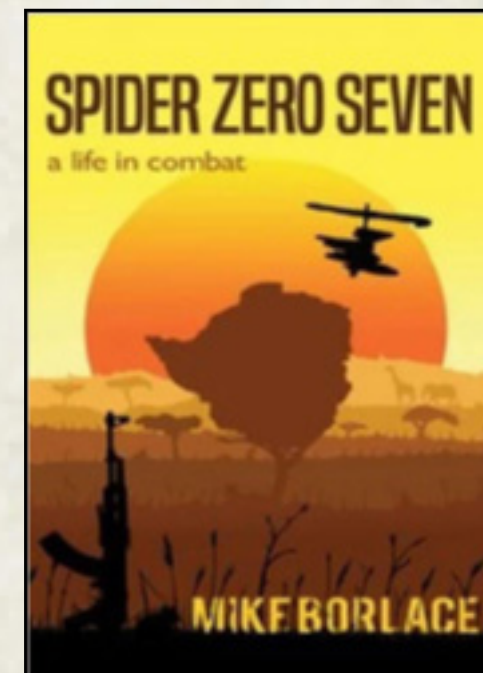
Driven by his Christian faith and an ardent belief in the threat of global communist hegemony, Coey had come to Rhodesia

to fulfil an overriding passion to help the beleaguered southern African country in its fight against what he perceived to be a communist bid to secure the sub-continent. John was a very complex individual who, right until his death, was in a permanent state of internal conflict as to his mission in life: he wishes he had a wife; he tells young American girls that they must produce strong sons who will fight the good fight; he is disillusioned by his failures; he admits he is a weak leader, virtually offering an apology for his own shortcomings; he vacillates endlessly; he admits to being unable to identify the path he needs to take to achieve his mission.

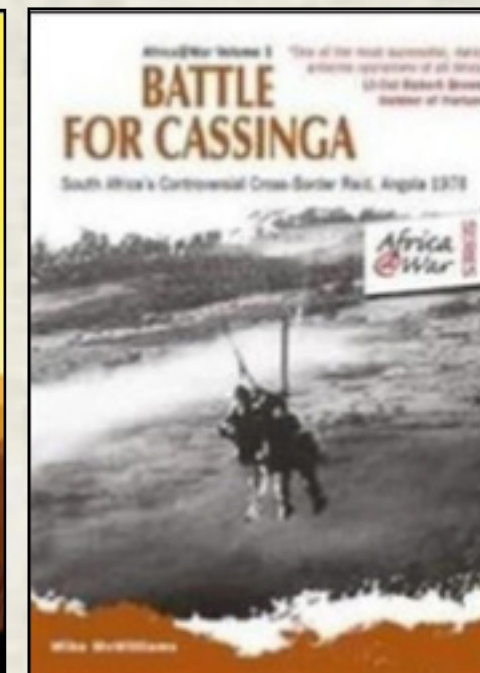


But, finally, as a combat medic - a pioneer in this concept - he finds his much sought-after destiny.

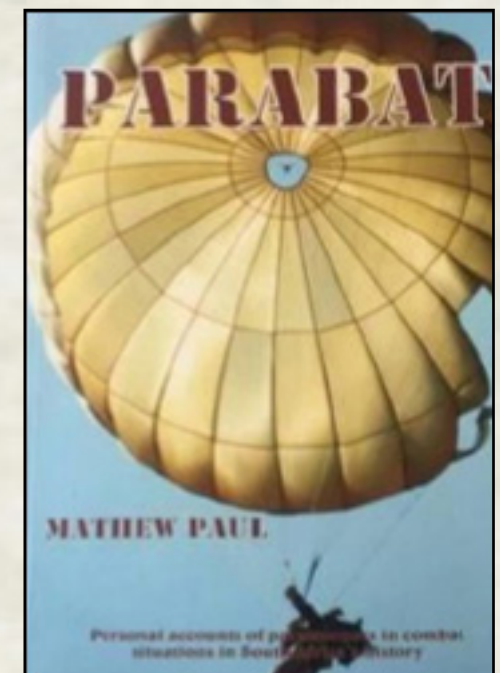
Paperback: 200 pages
Cost: R250



Spider Zero Seven
R370



Battle for Cassinga
R220



Parabat
R280

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

Some of the significant military events that happened in January. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of January.

1 January

- **1776** - During the American Revolution, George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America.
- **1776** - British seaborne raiders torch Norfolk, Virginia.
- **1887** - Wilhelm Canaris, German admiral and spy-master, who was executed by Hitler, 1945, was born on this day.
- **1915** - During World War I, the British Battleship Formidable was hit by a torpedo in the English Channel, killing 547 crewmen.
- **1915** - The first known act of German sabotage in the U.S.: The John A. Roebling Munitions Plant in Trenton is destroyed by fire.
- **1920** - Basil L. Plumley, Sgt Maj, US, veteran of three wars and five combat jumps, hero of the Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam, was born on this day.
- **1942** - Twenty six countries signed the Declaration of the United Nations, in Washington, D.C., reaffirming their opposition to the Axis powers and confirming that no single nation would make a separate peace.
- **1950** - Indo-China: Viet Minh open a major offensive against the French.
- **1951** - Massive Chinese/North Korean assault on UN-lines.
- **1959** - Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba after leading a revolution that drove out Dictator Fulgencio Batista. Castro then established a Communist dictatorship.
- **1962** - The US Navy SEALs were established on this day.
- **1964** - Lieutenant Johannes Stephanus Steenkamp Enslin from 28 Squadron was critically injured when he accidentally fell from the 2nd floor balcony of the Edward Hotel during New Year's Eve celebrations. He succumbed to his injuries in 1 Military Hospital later that evening. He was 41.
- **1969** - Ian Fleming, former Royal Navy Commander and creator of James Bond, died at the age of 56.
- **1977** - Rifleman Joao Joaquim from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during operations against enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 31.
- **1977** - Lance Corporal Geoffrey Allan Lawrie from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces near Omunduangilo, North of Beacon 28. He was 24.
- **1977** - Two members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. They were: Rifleman Thomas Amalati (26). Rifleman Joao Mathais (25).
- **1978** - Sergeant H. Daniel from 32 Battalion died from a gunshot wound apparently self-inflicted while he was stationed at Nkongo. He was 39.
- **1983** - Sapper David Batten from 97 Ammunition Depot collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack at the Unit. He was 27.
- **1984** - Airman Johannes Hendrik Kok from Air Logistics Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Ondangwa Town. He was 20.
- **1987** - Two members from 44 Parachute Regiment were killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Isingolweni when the Mamba vehicle in which they were passengers, overturned. The casualties were: Rifleman Abram Welile Zumane (24). Rifleman Matthew Damon Seekoei (23).
- **1990** - General Johan van der Merwe is appointed as new commissioner of police.
- **1991** - Sergeant Willie Kruger from Air Force Base Swartkop collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 26.
- **1991** - The Defence Special Tribunal Act, 1998, providing for the expeditious adjudication of disputes concerning military institutions

and the rationalisation process of the Department of Defence, becomes effective.

- **1992** - Rifleman Paulus Malesela Matlakala from 116 Battalion was Killed in Action when he shot dead by persons unknown while on guard duty at Messina. He was 24.
- **1994** - Rifleman Bernard Maditsi Lekalakala from 115 Battalion was Killed in Action when he was shot dead by persons unknown while manning a road block at Vosloorus. He was 20.
- **2008** - The last German veteran of WWI, Erich Kaestner, dies at the age of 107.

2 January

- **1776** - The four corner stones of the castle (Kasteel de Goede Hoop) at the Cape are laid by Zacharias Wagenaer, Johan van Arckel, Gabbema and Lacus.
- **1837** - Voortrekker leaders Andries Hendrik Potgieter and Gerrit (Gert) Maritz, each with his own men, leave for Western Transvaal to punish Mzilikazi for the Ndebele attack on the Voortrekkers at Vechtkop (Vegkop).
- **1883** - Battle of Boschberg during the Mapoch War takes place.
- **1896** - Sir Leander Starr Jameson and about 500 Rhodesian police surrender at Doornkop, near Krugersdorp, after the failure of the Jameson Raid.
- **1904** - Draft dodger and radical socialist Benito Mussolini reports for conscription into the Italian Army under an amnesty.
- **1905** - The Russians surrendered to the Japanese after the Battle of Port Arthur during the Russian-Japanese War.
- **1933** - US Marines withdraw from Nicaragua after a 20 year occupation.
- **1942** - During World War II in the Pacific, the Japanese captured the Philippines capital of Manila and the nearby air base at Cavite.
- **1942** - German troops in Bardia surrender.
- **1944** - New Guinea: Allies land on Saidor, isolating 12,000 Japanese troops.
- **1945** - US Navy convoys depart Leyte to invade Luzon, while beating off Kamikaze.
- **1945** - Admiral Sir Bertram Home Ramsay, mastermind of Dunkirk, dies at the age of 61.
- **1967** - Operation Bolo: In the largest air combat action of the Vietnam War, 28 F-4C Phantoms engage 9 MiG-21s; US aircraft down 7-9 MiGs with no loss.
- **1977** - Sergeant A.D.B. Bernardo from 31 Battalion SWATF was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge from a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 32.
- **1981** - Rifleman Jose Joao

from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during counter-insurgency operations in Southern Angola. He was 21.

- **1984** - Rifleman Petrus Daniel from 101 Battalion SWATF accidentally drowned during a river crossing in the Operational Area. He was 22.
- **1984** - Major-General Muhammadu Buhari is declared Head of State in Nigeria, following a military coup.
- **1988** - Major General Bantu Holomisa, who became head of a military state in Transkei after a coup in December 1987, lifts martial law and reinstates part of the constitution.
- **1988** - Right-wing guerrillas ambush a train near Mozambique's western border, killing at least twenty-two people and injuring seventy-one.
- **2001** - Richard Winters, who led "The Band of Brothers", Company E, 506th Parachute Infantry, 19 days short of his 93rd birthday.



Ian Fleming

3 January

- **1926** - Mussolini assumes the Ministries of War, Navy, & Air.
- **1931** - Joseph "Papa" Joffre, Marshal of France, dies aged 78.
- **1935** - Ethiopia asks League of Nations to guarantee peace with Italy.
- **1941** - World War 2: North Africa. Australian troops take 5,000 prisoners during a major assault on Italian forces at Bardia.
- **1946** - An Englishman known during World War II as "Lord Haw Haw" (William Joyce) was hanged for treason in London. Joyce had broadcast Nazi propaganda via radio from Germany to Britain during the war.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Daryl Quinton Brandon from 5 SAI Died of Wounds during Ops Savannah while leading a patrol in a contact against a numerically superior enemy force in Central Angola approximately 30km North of Cela. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Adelino Aurelio from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 29.
- **1989** - Lance Corporal Khazamula Obed Mathebula from 907 Special Services Company stationed at Arton Villa, Messina (Soutpanberg Military Area) was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during an armed patrol between Masisi and Mabelikwe just outside the Western border of the Kruger National Park. He was 28.
- **1990** - Manuel Noriega, the deposed leader of Panama, surrendered to American authorities on charges of drug trafficking after spending 10 days hiding in the Vatican embassy following the U.S. invasion of Panama.
- **1993** - President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed the Start-II (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) Treaty, eliminating about two-thirds of each country's long range nuclear weapons.

4 January

- **1943** - Japanese GHQ orders the evacuation of Guadalcanal.
- **1944** - Operation Carpetbagger begins, the Allied campaign to airdrop arms and supplies to the Resistance in Europe.
- **1945** - Luzon: 3rd Fleet hit by kamikaze, USS 'Ommaney Bay' (CVE-79) is lost.
- **1951** - Chinese and North Korean forces capture Seoul.
- **1966** - Lieutenant-Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana deposes President Maurice Yaméogo of Burkina Faso in a military coup.
- **1976** - Four members of the SADF were killed during Ops Savannah when an Aérospatiale SA 330C Puma Helicopter from 19 Squadron that was flying Staff Officers between Mussende & Carriango in Central Angola, was mistaken for a hostile enemy helicopter and shot down by friendly 20mm anti-aircraft gun fire. The casualties were: Brigadier Johan Diederik Potgieter SM (40). Captain Ferdinand Immelman (30). Captain Constant Daniel de Wit (26). Sergeant George William Kellet (26).
- **1976** - Rifleman Pieter Willem Marais Snyman from 5 SAI, part of Battle Group Orange, Died of wounds received when an enemy hand grenade exploded in his position near Dondo in Central Angola during an attack by MPLA and Cuban Forces. He was evacuated by helicopter with other wounded, to Silva Porta, but succumbed to his wounds en-route. He was 18.
- **1978** - Two members from 1 and 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during counter-insurgency operations in Mocambique as part of Operation Melon (SADF Name (Operation Acrobat). They were attached to "D" Squadron Rhodesian Special Air Service when their patrol walked into 30-man strong Frelimo ambush in the Gaza Province of Mozambique. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Cecil Ian Mennicke (24). Lance Corporal Christiaan Louis De Wilzem (20).
- **1984** - Six Members from

- 4 SAI were Killed in action when their Ratel 20, Call-sign 13B was knocked out near Cuvelai by a 100mm High Explosive Soviet T-55 tank projectile during Ops Askari. They were: Lance Corporal Wouter Theron Steenkamp (19). Rifleman George Alexander Lennox (19). Rifleman Brian Geen (18). Rifleman Hendrik Andre Heyns (22). Rifleman Daniel Abraham Louw (19). Rifleman Johannes Lodewicus Pretorius (18).
- **1981** - Corporal Gerald Christian Gildenhuys from the Technical Service Corps, was found gassed in his private motor vehicle in Bellville. No foul play was suspected. He was 27.
- **1984** - Two Members from 4 SAI, Ratel 12A (Platoon Two) were Killed in action during fierce close-quarter fighting while clearing enemy trenches near Cuvelai during Ops Askari.
- **1989** - Airman Johan Nel from the Test Flight Development Centre was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1989** - Second Gulf of Sidra Incident: two US Navy F-14s down two Libyan MiG-23s.
- **2010** - Tsutomu Yamaguchi, who survived both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, dies at the age of 93.

5 January

- **1919** - The German Workers' Party (Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) was founded by Anton Drexler in Munich.

- **1920** - Adolf Hitler became member No. 7 and changed the name in April of 1920 to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) commonly shortened to Nazi or Nazi Party.
- **1968** - Lt Clarence W. Cote becomes the first male officer in the Navy Nurse Corps.
- **1978** - Corporal Gert Jacobus Erasmus Goosen from 11 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident while on his way to Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. He was 27.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Pieter Swanepoel from the SWA SPES Bike Squad was Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland when his motorcycle detonated a boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine. He was 19.
- **1982** - Three members from 19 & 31 Squadron were Killed in Action when their Aérospatiale SA330H Puma was shot down by hostile small-arms fire not long after crossing the cut-line into Southern Angola en-route to Ongiva after dropping off troops. They were: Captain John Allen Robinson (27). Lieutenant Michael John Earp (26). Flight Sergeant Kenneth George Dalgleish

(26).

- **1982** - The forty-five mercenaries alleged to have commandeered an Air India Boeing and forced it to fly to Durban, after attempting a coup in the Seychelles in November 1981, appear in magistrates' courts in five South African cities. They are all to go on trial in South Africa.
- **1983** - WO 1 Leonard Philip Rodney from the 1 Military Town Management Fire Department in Voortrekkerhoogte collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 47.
- **1984** - Special Sergeant Benfried Markus from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1985** - Private Gregory Grant Swain from Northern Transvaal Medical Command was killed instant-



William Joyce

ly while on Guard Duty in Pretoria when he was shot through the heart as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 20.

- **1987** - Special Sergeant Uatuapeke Kandji from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 29
- **1988** - Lance Corporal John Adam Lotriet from 10 Armoured Car Squadron was killed in Northern Owamboland after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 19.
- **1989** - The ANC agrees to close its military training base in Angola and in return South Africa must stop aid to the rebel Angolan UNITA movement, the Angolan president, Jose Eduardo dos Santos says in an interview.

6 January

- **1412** - Joan of Arc is born in France on this day.
- **1900** - The Battle of Waggon Hill (Platrand), south of Ladysmith, takes place, in which the Boer forces make an unsuccessful attempt to bring about the fall of Ladysmith.
- **1842** - Afghanistan: Anglo-Indian forces begin a disastrous retreat from Kabul; all but one of 4,500

troops & 12,000 camp followers will be lost or captured.

- **1940** - Germans massacre Poles in Poznan.
- **1943** - Papua: US and Australian troops mass for a final assault on Sanananda.
- **1961** - Nikita Khrushchev declares that the Soviet Union will back Third World "wars of national liberation".
- **1973** - Captain Rudolf Albert Hammann from Air Force Headquarters died in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria. He was suffering from Cancer. He was 26.
- **1980** - Rifleman Jan Pieter Uys from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland, crushing him under the vehicle. He was 18.
- **1983** - Eight men from Group 34 were Killed in Action or later Died of Wounds when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted anti-tank mine near the Okangwati Military Base. The casualties were: Corporal Richard Alexander Ede (27). Rifleman Abraham Aboud (22). Rifleman Johannes Hermanus Diedericks (24). Rifleman Bartholomeus Jacobus Du Toit (26). Rifleman Floris Marthinus Griesel (27). Rifleman Johannes Lodewikus van der Merwe (26). Rifleman Gerald Pereira Da Silva (28) and Rifleman Peter Uzzel (26) succumbed to

wounds on the 7th and 8th January respectively.

- **1984** - Rifleman Raymond Frederick Hildebrandt from Special Forces Headquarters was killed instantly while on guard duty at the Headquarters when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge from an R4 assault rifle that a fellow soldier was in the process of making safe. He was 19.
- **1985** - Candidate Officer (Miss) Shirley Louise Mansfield from Air Force Base Pietersburg was accidentally killed in a civilian sky-diving incident in Pietersburg when her parachute failed to open during a Sunday practice jump. She was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Valentinus Sikerete from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 24.
- **1986** - Special Constable Simon Phillipus from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 34.
- **1988** - General Bantu Holomisa, who ousted Stella Sigcau in a coup, appoints himself as the Transkei's military and government chief.

7 January

- **1903** - The Boer generals re-

port back in Pretoria after a campaign in Europe to procure aid for the reconstruction of the country after the Second Anglo-Boer War.

- **1941** - Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto proposes a surprise attack on Pearl Harbour.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: US strength reaches 50,000, Japanese less than 25,000.
- **1945** - British Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery tells a press conference that he won the Battle of the Bulge.
- **1953** - US President Truman announces development of the hydrogen bomb.
- **1973** - Private Johannes Jacobus Potgieter from 86 Technical Stores Depot died from a sport injury received during training while at Nyamandhlovu. He was 20.
- **1979** - Vietnamese forces capture Phnom Penh from the Khmer Rouge.
- **1982** - Candidate Officer Derek William Evans from Central Flying School Dunottar was killed when his Harvard AT-6 crashed between Endicott and Delmas while on a solo general flying training flight. He was 18.
- **1983** - Rifleman Gerald Pereira Da Silva from the Sandriver Commando attached to Group 34 Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after being critically wounded in a landmine explosion near the Okangwati Military Base on 06 January

1983. He was 28.

- **1984** - Rifleman Josephat Johannes Levi from SWATF was killed in a shooting incident at Tsintsabis. He was 20.
- **1986** - Special Constable Abiud Kenahana from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 28.
- **1986** - The ANC in exile in Lusaka calls on its supporters to take the struggle into White areas.
- **1987** - The British army suggests that 600 troops returning from a tour in Kenya should take an AIDS test.
- **1989** - Emperor Hirohito of Japan, who ruled Japan during World War II died after a long illness. He had ruled for 62 years and was succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Akihito.
- **1994** - Rifleman Dario David Marco Vervev from Natal Command was killed when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving Buffel Troop Carrier in Durban. He was 19.
- **2015** - Islamist terrorists attack the office of the magazine 'Charlie Hebdo' in Paris, killing 12 and wounding several others.

8 January

- **794** - First Viking raid on Britain, Lindisfarne Abbey is destroyed.
- **1806** - The Battle of Blaauwberg takes place, and part of the defending force capitulates two days later. Cape Governor Janssens and the rest of the force capitulated on 18 January, after which the second British occupation of the Cape started.
- **1815** - The Battle of New Orleans occurred as General Andrew Jackson and American troops defended themselves against a British attack, inflicting over 2,000 casualties. Both sides in this battle were unaware that peace had been declared two weeks earlier with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent ending the War of 1812.
- **1918** - Amid the ongoing World War in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson proposed his Fourteen Points, calling for a reduction of arms, self determination for governments, and the creation of a League of Nations, all intended to serve as a ba-

Bernard Montgomery



sis for resolving the conflict and establishing a lasting peace in Europe.

- **1941** - Lord Robert Baden-Powell, British general during the siege of Mafeking during the Second Anglo-Boer War and founder of the Boy Scouts, dies in Nyeri, Kenya.
- **1943** - British turn control of Madagascar over to the Free French.
- **1966** - Two members from 17 Squadron together with a Portuguese Army Sergeant and two Portuguese Army Corporal's were killed when their Alouette III crashed east of Boane, near Lourenço Marques (Maputo), Mozambique while carrying out rescue operations at the Umbeluzi Pumping Station. The SADF casualties were: Captain Guillame Nel Shawe (43). Air Corporal Frederick Hermanus Moolman (23).
- **1973** - Two South African policemen are killed and five policemen (two South African and three Rhodesian) injured in an explosion near the Zambezi River in north-western Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).
- **1973** - Secret peace talks between US & North Vietnam resume near Paris.
- **1975** - Rifleman Adriaan Albertus Le Grange from 5 SAI was Reported Missing at Bagani while travelling as a passenger in a military vehicle that accidentally drove off the edge of the pont ferry and overturned into the

river. Despite an intensive search, his body was never recovered. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 18.

- **1983** - Private Gerald Jeffrey Pieters from Air Force Base Swartkop suffered severe head injuries sustained in a private motor vehicle accident near Estcourt on 7 January 1983. He was admitted to the Wentworth Hospital in Durban where he sadly succumbed to his injuries on 08 January 1983. He was 23.
- **1983** - Rifleman Peter Uzzel from the Goudveld Commando attached to Group 34, Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after being critically wounded in a landmine explosion near the Okangwati Military Base on 06 Jan 1983. He was 26.
- **1984** - South African security forces begin withdrawal from southern Angola.
- **1987** - Nine members from 101 Battalion Battalion Romeo Mike Team SWATF together with two attached personnel, were Killed in Action and 65 wounded during a contact with a numerically superior enemy force near Vinticet in Southern Angola. The eleven members Killed in Action were: Lieutenant Michael Cornelius Machiel Dreyer (24). Lance Corporal Emil Tamsen (18). Sapper Eugen Albert Meyer (19). Lance Corporal M. Fernando (24). Rifleman L. Alweendo (27). Rifleman P. Cerement (26). Rifleman E.

Leonard (24). Rifleman M. Ndjolonimu (23). Rifleman E. Nyawala (26). Rifleman S. Jacob (25). Rifleman J. Nangolo (23).

- **1989** - The ANC announces it will dismantle its guerrilla camps in Angola in support of peace.
- **1989** - Soviet Union promises to eliminate stockpiles of chemical weapons.
- **2007** - A United States military gunship launches air raids against hideouts of prominent members of the al-Qaeda network in southern Somalia.

9 January

- **1805** - Lord Nelson is entombed in the crypt of St. Paul's, London.
- **1861** - First Shot of the American Civil War: US steamer 'Star of the West' is fired on by South Carolina militia batteries off Charleston.
- **1916** - Gallipoli Campaign ends as the last allied troops evacuate the peninsula.
- **1936** - Garand M-1 semi-automatic rifle adopted by the US Army.
- **1941** - 6,000 Jews slaughtered in Bucharest, Romania.
- **1970** - France agrees to sell Mirage military jets to revolutionary regime in Libya.
- **1973** - Rhodesia closes its borders with Zambia to try to cut off Black liberation forces.
- **1978** - Lance Corporal Steven Leamy from Regiment

Piet Retief was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Eenhana. He was 26.

- **1978** - Rifleman Donald William Paterson from 1 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Bloemfontein. He was 21.
- **1979** - Two members from 24 Squadron were killed when their Hawker Siddeley Buccaneer S-50 crashed at Roedtan near Marble Hall during a night training exercise. The crew were: Captain Kenneth Brian Duncan (25). Lieutenant Pierre Paul Wahl (21).
- **1980** - Rifleman Pedro Komengo from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action when the vehicle in which he was travelling detonated a landmine in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1993** - Angolan government troops capture the headquarters of UNITA rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in central Angola. Savimbi, however, escapes.
- **1996** - The National Crime Information Management Centre releases figures confirming South Africa's designation as the most violent country in the world outside a war zone.
- **2005** - After nearly three years of negotiations, Sudan's government and main rebel group sign the final agreement to the Naivasha, Kenya, peace accord to end more than twenty-one years

of civil war.

10 January

- **1806** - Signing of the second and final surrender of the Cape to the British under Gen. David Baird at Papendorp (presently Woodstock) after the defeat of Gen. J.W. Janssens.
- **1879** - British troops enter Zululand and the Anglo-Zulu war starts.
- **1879** - The 22-year-old Prince Imperial of France, Eugene Louis Jean Joseph Napoleon, who studied in England at the Royal Military Academy and joined the British forces, was killed in the Anglo-Zulu War.
- **1900** - Lord Frederick S. Roberts arrives at the Cape, replacing Sir Redvers Buller as commander-in-chief of the British forces in South Africa. Herbert H. Kitchenier as his chief-of-staff accompanies him.
- **1942** - Heinz Hitler (19), nephew of Adolf Hitler, is captured on the Eastern Front while serving as an NCO in the 23rd Artillery; dies in a Soviet POW camp.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: U.S. forces begin a general offensive to eliminate Japanese.
- **1946** - The League of Nations dissolves after twenty-six years and is replaced by the United Nations, with its first meeting in London.

- **1965** - Sirr al-Khatim al-Khalifa, the Sudanese prime minister, admits to providing aid to Congolese rebels.
- **1972** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Daniel Burger from 6 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard, Serial No. 7034 crashed near George during a routine cross-country and tactical navigation flight. He was 22.
- **1976** - Rifleman Andries Jacobus Rautenbach from 8 SAI was killed when struck by a bullet as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while he was stationed at Rundu. He was 18.
- **1981** - Mozambique and Zimbabwe sign a defence and security agreement under which an attack by SA on either country will be taken as an assault on both.
- **1982** - Rifleman Abel Albertus van Wyk from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed instantly after being struck

Jonas Savimbi



in the head by a bullet that resulted from an accidental discharge of a MAG light machine-gun during a training exercise outside Oshivello.

11 January

- **1904** - The Herero of German Southwest Africa revolt against colonial domination.
- **1944** - Krakow-Plaszow Concentration Camp established.
- **1970** - The 32-month-old secessionist Biafran regime collapses under onslaughts by Nigerian military.
- **1976** - Military coup in Ecuador ousts Dictator/President Guillermo Rodriguez Lara.
- **1979** - Rifleman Nicolaas Johannes Myburgh from the Botha Regiment was critically injured in a private motor vehicle accident and admitted to the Hospital in Messina with bleeding on the brain. He succumbed to his injuries not long after admission. He was 25.
- **1980** - Lance Corporal Derick James Evans from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned while on patrol in the Etosha Pan Game Reserve. He was 18.
- **1984** - Two members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola during Ops Askari. They were: Rifleman Joao Dala (31). Rifleman Isaac

Malonga (35).

- **1989** - 140 nations agree to ban chemical weapons.
- **1991** - US Congress authorizes President G.H.W. Bush to undertake offensive operations against Iraq.

12 January

- **1893** - WW I flying ace and future Head of the Nazi Luftwaffe, Hermann Göring, is born on this day.
- **1915** - South African forces invade German South-West Africa at Ramansdrift.
- **1940** - Daniël Hermanus (Dan) Pienaar is appointed to command the First South African Infantry Brigade.
- **1944** - Churchill and de Gaulle confer in Marrakech.
- **1964** - One month after independence, a bloody uprising by the black majority ousts the Arab ruling minority of Zanzibar, installing a government that shortly unites with Tanganyika to form Tanzania.
- **1965** - Lieutenant Richard Johannes Oltman from 5 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Bulwer during a night cross country flight. He was 30.
- **1974** - Corporal Willem Jacobus Reynolds from 2 SAI was accidentally killed at Ondangwa when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 19.
- **1979** - Two members from 5 SAI, both attached to 54

Battalion were Killed in Action when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated two Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mines that were boosted with a Soviet TM-57 Anti-Tank Mine while they were traveling from Eenhana to Ondangwa. The casualties were: Rifleman Charles Deon Bekker (19). Rifleman Christo Gerhardus Krog (20).

- **1981** - Lance Corporal Benjamin Karl Steenkamp from the Personnel Service Corps attached to Southern Cape Command Headquarters was killed in a military vehicle accident near Peddie in the Eastern Cape. He was 18.
- **1987** - Prince Edward resigns from the Royal Marines.
- **1988** - Gunner Kevin Alan Roberts from the Artillery School in Potchefstroom was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident between Vereeniging and Johannesburg. He was 27.
- **1988** - Airman Stefan Oliver Jedlika from 3 Satellite Radar Station at Klippan, Mafeking, died after suffering a cerebral haemorrhage. He was 19.
- **1992** - Algerian government cancels second round of voting in parliamentary elections that an Islamic party looks set to win. The Islamists take to arms, and ten thousands of Algerians die in the next few years.
- **2008** - Bill Stone, Royal

Navy veteran, last surviving Briton to have served in both world wars, dies at 108.

13 January

- **1915** - South African troops occupy Swakopmund, German South-West Africa.
- **1935** - The population of the Saar region bordering France and Germany voted for incorporation into Hitler's Reich.
- **1943** - General Philippe Leclerc's Free French troops merge with the British army under the command of Montgomery.
- **1943** - Hitler declares Germany must wage "Total War".
- **1961** - Fighting erupts between UN troops and supporters of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo.
- **1963** - Sgt Gnassingbe Eyadema murders West African Republic of Togo's President Sylvanus Olympio in a military coup.
- **1964** - Two members from 8 Squadron were killed when their AT-6 Harvard crashed near Bloemfontein. They were: 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Theodorus Brits (19). Air Mechanic Louis Johannes Lodewyk Rothman (20).
- **1968** - Beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam.
- **1972** - A group of junior officers overthrows civilian government of Ghana in West Africa.
- **1979** - A clash between police and suspected guerrillas

is reported near the Botswana border. Botswana denies that it is being used as a springboard for attacks on his neighbours.

- **1982** - Corporal Daniel Jacobus Steenkamp from 400 Airfield Maintenance Unit (SAAF) was killed in a Military Vehicle accident in Pretoria. He was 25.
- **1986** - Thomas Chilunku was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.
- **1986** - Bloody coup overthrows government of South Yemen.
- **1987** - Airman Craig Anthony Lucarne from 508 SAAF Security Squadron, Air Force Base Durban, was killed when his Rhino Armoured Personnel Carrier overturned on the N3 near Louis Botha Airport in Durban. He was 19.

14 January

- **1867** - Alfred Nobel makes the first public demonstration of dynamite.
- **1942** - Malaya: Japanese capture Malacca.
- **1943** - President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met at Casablanca in Morocco to work on strategy during World War II.

Dan Pienaar

- **1967** - New York Times reports the Army is conducting secret germ warfare experiments on the public.
- **1969** - Fire aboard USS 'Enterprise' (CVN-65), off Vietnam, 28 die, 344 injured.
- **1971** - Britain proposes the sale of arms to South Africa.
- **1978** - Corporal Alan Gordon-Bennet from Northern Transvaal Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Nelspruit. He was 21.
- **1981** - Rifleman C. Cabonga from 32 Battalion who was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 25.

15 January

- **1926** - John Harling, the last known veteran of the "Charge of the Light Brigade", dies aged 93.
- **1942** - Japanese Southern Army invades Burma from



- Thailand.
- **1945** - Red Army liberates the Krakow-Plaszow concentration camp.
- **1949** - Mao's Red army captures Tientsin.
- **1966** - Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa is killed in Nigeria's first military coup.
- **1973** - US President Nixon suspends all US offensive action over North Vietnam.
- **1981** - Two members from 1 Parachute Battalion were Killed in Action during a fierce contact with a numerically superior FAPLA and PLAN force while supporting 32 Battalion elements during the Battle of Cuamato in Southern Angola. They were: Sergeant Louis Theodorus Hermanus Wesels (22). Rifleman Leonard Truter (22).
- **1982** - Rifleman Faustinus Mushanambango from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents. He was 25.
- **1984** - Gunner Gilderoy Kruger from 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment Died of Wounds accidentally sustained at Oshivello. He was 18.
- **1986** - A military coup deposes the Lesotho Government.
- **1987** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insur-

gents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable Mathais Fesango (27). Special Constable Shivelekeni Dhillimbulukweni (29).

16 January

- **1900** - British troops under General Neville Lyttelton and General Charles Warren cross the Tugela River.
- **1904** - Herero Revolt: Gobabis is besieged. A German company from Outjo is ambushed at Okanjande near present-day Otjiwarongo.
- **1941** - The US War Department forms a squadron for black aviation cadets.
- **1944** - General Eisenhower takes command of Operation Overlord.
- **1951** - Viet Minh offensive at Hanoi.
- **1963** - Khrushchev claims to have a 100-megaton nuclear bomb.
- **1966** - Nigerian Army chief, General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, briefly takes power in a military coup. Over fifty government officials are killed, including the existing prime minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.
- **1968** - 2nd Lieutenant Brian John Poorter from 5 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard, Serial No 7127 suffered engine failure while on a routine low level training flight and crashed into trees. He was 19.
- **1970** - Col Kadhaffi becomes premier of Libya.
- **1976** - Trooper Trevor Don-

ald Bodhill from 2 Special Service Battalion was killed while traveling along the Chitado road in Southern Angola to set up a vehicle ambush position. He was 19.

- **1977** - Mercenaries mount an unsuccessful military coup in Benin.
- **1983** - Signaler Joel Johanne Schutte from the South West Africa Command Signal Unit SWATF was killed in a private motorcycle accident in Windhoek. He was 19.
- **1986** - Sergeant John Christopher van Graan from the Far North Command Provost Unit was accidentally killed near Messina while attempting to recover a broken-down vehicle. He was 26.
- **1988** - Rifleman Manuel Thomas from 32 Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in the Caprivi Strip. He was 37.
- **1991** - The war against Iraq began as Allied aircraft conducted a major raid against Iraqi air defenses. The air raid on Baghdad was broadcast live to a global audience by CNN correspondents as operation Desert Shield became Desert Storm.
- **1992** - The twelve-year civil war in El Salvador ended with the signing of a peace treaty in Mexico City. The conflict had claimed over 75,000 lives.
- **2014** - Hiroo Onoda, Japanese Army officer who did not surrender until 1974, on his 52nd birthday. dies at the

age of 91.

17 January

- **1837** - The Voortrekkers under Hendrik Potgieter and Gerrit Maritz defeat the Ndebele under Mzilikazi at Mosega, near the present Zeerust. The Ndebele flee north and the majority cross the Limpopo River.
- **1879** - On the afternoon of 17 January 1879 the Zulu king Cetshwayo (Cetewayo) addresses 20,000 of his warriors at the great military kraal of Nodwengu: "I am sending you out against the Whites, who have invaded Zululand and driven away our cattle. You are to go against the column at Rorke's Drift and drive it back into Natal."
- **1885** - In the desperate hand to hand Battle of Abu Klea, the British under General Sir Herbert Stewart repulse the Sudanese Camel Corp of 10,000 under Command of Mohammed Ahmed.
- **1944** - HM Corvette 'Violet' sinks 'U-641' in Atlantic Ocean.
- **1945** - During World War II, Warsaw, Poland, was liberated by Soviet Russian troops.
- **1951** - China refuses cease fire in Korea.
- **1966** - A Hydrogen bomb accident occurred over Palomares, Spain, as an American B-52 jet collided with its refueling plane. Eight crewmen were killed and the bomber then released its

H-bomb into the Atlantic.

- **1977** - Rifleman Johannes Jesajus Botha from Springs Commando was critically wounded during July 1976 while stationed at Katima Mulilo when he was struck in the abdomen by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He succumbed to his wounds nearly six months later on 17 January 1977 after complications set in. He was 21.
- **1977** - Rifleman Edward Leslie Mayo from 5 SAI was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier while preparing an ambush east of the Kwando River. He was 19.
- **1985** - Special Constable Shopeke Hatutale from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Unit: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
- **1988** - Rifleman Dumisani Ngubani from 121 Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident in Durban. He was 24.
- **1990** - Rifleman Johan Bush from the 2nd Battalion South African Cape Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident between Bray

and Mosita. He was 17.

- **1991** - Operation Desert Storm: Coalition air offensive is unleashed over Iraq, US pilot Jeffrey Zahn is shot down and captured.

18 January

- **1900** - Mafeking siege: Two Black cattle-herds are captured and summarily executed at Mafeking by burghers, in accordance with a council of war decision on cattle-rustlers. President Kruger immediately repudiates this decision and orders this practice to cease forthwith.
- **1900** - The 104mm field-gun known as 'Long Cecil' is test fired for the first time.
- **1902** - Commandant Gideon Scheepers is executed by a firing squad near Graaff-Reinet after being found guilty by a British military court on charges of murder, arson and demolishing trains during the South African War.
- **1904** - The German bat-



Hiroo Onoda

bleship "Habicht" lands at Swakopmund, bringing fresh German troops who proceed into the interior under the command of Second Lieutenant Gygas.

- **1919** - Versailles Peace Conference begins.
- **1943** - Warsaw Ghetto uprising begins.
- **1960** - US & Japan sign joint defence treaty.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Andries Muller from the School of Armour Died of Wounds during a contact with enemy forces during Ops Savannah. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman Antonio Cassamano from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with the enemy forces when his patrol was ambushed at a waterhole near Omalapapa in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1979** - Corporal Fritz August Ferreira from 3 SAI was killed when he accidentally electrocuted himself while stationed at Ondangwa. He was 18.
- **1980** - Two members from the 2 SAI Support Company Platoon were Killed in Action or Died of Wounds when their patrol was ambushed by a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents just North of the Cut-line. They were: Lance Corporal Phillipus Rudolf Maritz (19). Rifleman Benjamin Arthur Froneman (19).
- **1984** - Corporal Jose Antonio from 32 Battalion suf-

fered a fatal heart attack and died while stationed at Buffalo Base. He was 32.

- **1991** - Iraq launches SCUD missiles against Israel.

19 January

- **1807** - US Civil War Confederate General Robert E. Lee was born on this day.
- **1900** - Mafeking siege: General J.P. Snyman sends a starving group of Black women, who have been encouraged by the British to attempt a breakout, back under a White flag. Colonel Baden-Powell objects and threatens to commence hostilities if they should advance further.
- **1915** - Germans begin Zeppelin raids on Great Britain, bombing Great Yarmouth & King's Lynn. 20 people are killed.
- **1940** - General J.B.M. Hertzog, as leader of the Opposition, announces he will introduce a motion calling on the Union of South Africa to make a separate peace treaty with Germany.
- **1941** - The 1st SA Division enters Abyssinia from the south.
- **1941** - Kassala, on the Sudan-Eritrean border, is retaken by the British as Major General William Platt begins an offensive against Italian troops in Eritrea.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: U.S. destroyers shell Japanese positions.
- **1964** - Major Jean de Wet

from 1 Squadron died as a result of a shooting incident at his home. He was 32.

- **1971** - Air Mechanic Jean le Roux from 35 Squadron was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Bellville. He was 20.
- **1979** - Private Martin Eugene Weideman from the Air Force Gymnasium died of natural causes in 1 Military Hospital. He was 19.
- **1982** - Rifleman Fernando José Gaspar De Sousa from 3 Parachute Battalion was critically injured on 5 January 1982 when he was accidentally driven over by a Buffel Troop Carrier at Ondangwa. Evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, he succumbed to his injuries on 19 January 1982. He was 28.
- **1982** - Two members from 4 SAI were Killed in Action near Etale Base. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Johannes Gerhardus Reyneke (19). Rifleman Dudley Nel (19).
- **1982** - Flight Sergeant John Williams from 15 Squadron was killed when his Alouette III helicopter crashed while conducting dagga operations in conjunction with the South African Police who were destroying dagga plantations in the Greytown and Tugela Ferry area. He was 29.
- **1983** - Former Gestapo official Klaus Barbie, known as the "Butcher of Lyon," was arrested in Bolivia, South America.

- **1988** - Rifleman Johannes Petrus Barnard from 1 SAI was killed in action during Ops Hooper. He was 18.

20 January

- **1835** - Xhosa warriors overrun the Eastern Cape frontier.
- **1879** - British troops under Lord Chelmsford pitch their camp on the slopes of Isandhlawana, where Zulu warriors attack them two days later.
- **1900** - In the Battle of Tabanyama, Natal front, a group of Indian stretcher bearers, among whom the young Durban attorney Mohandas Ghandi, becomes intermingled with fighting troops. Six of them are killed and twelve wounded in the crossfire. The battle continued two more days.
- **1942** - During the Holocaust, Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's second in command of the SS, convened the Wannsee Conference in Berlin with 15 top Nazi bureaucrats to coordinate the Final Solution (Endlösung) in which the Nazis would attempt to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe, an estimated 11 million persons.
- **1944** - Burma: Allies prepare major offensive to open the "Burma Road".
- **1944** - The Royal Air Force drops 2,500 tons of bombs on Berlin.
- **1951** - Fort Klapperkop and Fort Skanskop, Pretoria, are

opened to the public.

- **1964** - Army mutiny in Tanganyika over pay is put down with British assistance.
- **1965** - It is reported in London that the British government will not issue a permit for the export of the ground-to-air missiles South Africa requires.
- **1979** - Trooper Gregory Ernst Raaff from 1 Special Service Battalion died of injuries at Oshakati Hospital after being accidentally crushed between two vehicles at Ruacana. He was 20.
- **1981** - Corporal Donald Brooks from 3 SAI Died of Wounds received in action on 03 December 1980 when his company was based at Ondangwa. He was 19.
- **1982** - Three members from 1 Special Service Battalion, two of them twin brothers, were Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland during Ops Handsak while working with elements of 32 Battalion. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Ockert Petrus Kruger (18). Lance Corporal Pieter Kruger (18). Trooper Herman Fourie (19).
- **1983** - Two members from the Soutpansberg Military Area were Killed in a military vehicle accident on the Malala Drift Road about

46km from Messina. They were: Lance Corporal Japie Louis Nel (20). Rifleman Lovemore Phakati (22).

- **1986** - Rifleman R.M. Kröhne from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1987** - Rifleman P Rutjindo from 102 Battalion SWATF died in Hospital from Malaria contracted during operations in Southern Angola. He was 20.
- **1989** - Two members from Regiment Hillcrest were killed in a military vehicle accident. They were: Sergeant Anton Bela van der Merwe (23). Corporal Cornelius Johannes Stroebel (27).
- **1991** - During an Iraqi SCUD attack on Israel, US Patriot missiles are used for the first time, with mixed success.

21 January

- **1824** - American Civil War Confederate Army Gener-

Reinhard Heydrich



al "Stonewall" Jackson was born on this day.

- **1942** - Rommel begins a new offensive against the Allies in North Africa, hoping to push them back to the east.
- **1943** - Soviet forces recapture Worosjilowsk.
- **1945** - The Red Army destroys the German Tannenberg monument in East Prussia.
- **1954** - The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.
- **1968** - B-52 bomber with nuclear weapons crashes in Greenland.
- **1968** - Battle of Khe Sanh begins.
- **1977** - Two members from 3 SAI and one member from 13 Maintenance Unit were killed in a military vehicle accident at Tobias. They were: Lance Corporal Leon Steyn (19). Rifleman Jacobus Marais (19). Rifleman Ettienne Pieter van der Westhuizen (20).
- **1977** - Private Stephen Trevor Parvess from 1 Maintenance Unit Collapsed and died from heat exhaustion during Basic Training at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1978** - Corporal Andre van den Boogaard from the SADF Equestrian Centre was killed in a military vehicle accident on the Ventersdorp Road. He was 18,
- **1983** - Lieutenant Frederick Christiaan van Zyl from 8

SAI accidentally drowned in the Orange River while trying to assist three soldiers who had got into difficulties while swimming. He was 21.

- **1986** - Rifleman Joshua Isaac Kuvari from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.
- **1988** - According to Jane's Defence Weekly, Armscor, the South African armaments producer, is the country's largest single exporter. Armscor sales to twenty-three countries in 1987 amounted to R1,8-billion.
- **1988** - According to reports from Angola, the strategic town of Cuito Cuanavale is about to fall to an onslaught by South African and UNITA forces. The reports say South African and Cuban troops have clashed for the first time in twelve years.

22 January

- **1879** - Cetewayo's impis wipe out British troops at Isandhlwana in one of the worst disasters in British military history, stabbing 1272 soldiers to death. The impis of the Zulu king then descend on the trading post at Rorke's Drift. About 4000 Zulus attack the fortified buildings held by 130 men of the 24th regiment at about 4.30 p.m. At the end of the attack at about 4 a.m. early the next morning, more than 350 Zulus are killed,

while the defenders' casualties amount to seventeen dead and ten wounded. A record eleven Victoria Crosses were awarded to the defenders of Rorke's Drift.

- **1879** - The British (no 1) supply column moving up the North Coast towards Eshowe is attacked by about 5000 Zulus as they cross the Nyezane River. The attack is beaten off south of Eshowe, north of the Nyezane river.
- **1941** - The Australian 6th Division captures Tobruk from the Italians.
- **1943** - Axis forces pull out of Tripoli and head back towards Tunisia.
- **1943** - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.
- **1944** - Operation Shingle: Allies land at Anzio.
- **1957** - Israeli forces withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula.
- **1981** - Rifleman Marthinus Christoffel Barnard from Infantry School suffered a fatal heart attack and died at Oudtshoorn while lifting weights in the Infantry School gymnasium. He was 21.
- **1983** - Leading Marine Hendrik Jacobus Kemp from 111 Harbour Protection Unit, South African Marine Corps was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese

mine in Southern Angola near the Cut-line. He was 20.

- **1983** - Staff Sergeant Hermanus Jacobus Petrus Barkhuizen from the Technical Service Corps died in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria after suffering a fatal heart attack at his Unit. He was 33.
- **1984** - Corporal Terence van den Dool from 3 SAI was Reported Missing while swimming with his friends at Hippo Pools, Ruacana. For administrative purposes, he was officially declared dead in 1986. He was 19.
- **1987** - Two members from 1 SWA Engineer Regiment SWATF were Killed in Action when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine on the Eupupa Road in Southern Angola. They were: Corporal Jose Miguel Rodrigues Carreira (20). Lance Corporal Nicolaas Willem Barnard (20).
- **2005** - Carlo Orelli, last Italian combat veteran to have served throughout WW I, dies at the age of 110.

23 January

- **1900** - Battle of Spion Kop: Boers defeat the British; Winston Churchill & Mohandas Gandhi are both present, but do not meet.
- **1932** - El Salvador's army kills 4,000 protesting farmers
- **1935** - Abyssinian tribesmen in Somaliland massacre

French colonial troops.

- **1903** - Colonel Arthur Alfred Lynch is found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death for leading the "Irish Commando" against British forces in the South African War. The death sentence is commuted to life imprisonment on 24th January 1904.
- **1943** - In North Africa, British forces under General Bernard Montgomery captured Tripoli in Libya.
- **1943** - Casablanca Conference: FDR & Churchill agree on the "unconditional surrender" of the Axis.
- **1962** - Kim Philby, long-term spy in Britain, defects to the USSR.
- **1968** - The American ship USS Pueblo was seized by North Koreans in the Sea of Japan amid claims the Navy ship was spying. The ship was confiscated and its crew held in captivity until December, with one fatality.
- **1971** - After a compromise is reached at a Commonwealth Conference, Britain is allowed to sell weapons to South Africa, though African leaders oppose the step.
- **1981** - Rifleman Aubrey John Botha from 11 Commando Regiment died from gunshot wounds accidentally sustained while on special duty at Umtata. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Dieter Otto Haase from the South West

Africa Infantry Battalion SWATF was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.

- **1982** - Private (Miss) Karen Mona van Rensburg from the Administrative Service Corps was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Voortrekkerhoogte while on official duty. She was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Hendrik Roets from 4 SAI was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a landmine at Techamutete in Southern Angola during Ops Askari. He was 19.
- **1986** - Rifleman Deon Francis Du Toit from 3 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1987** - Corporal Marthinus Petrus van Loggerenberg from 4 SAI died from injuries received when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in the Kabokweni Township near Nelspruit during anti-riot patrol duties. He was 19.
- **1988** - Four members from

Kim Philby



54 Battalion were Killed in Action during a fierce engagement with a numerically superior force of FAPLA and SWAPO/PLAN troops in South Eastern Angola. The casualties were: Corporal Dawid Petersen (22). Rifleman Joseph Brian Harker (25). Rifleman Phillip Dawid Matroos (22). Rifleman Alfred Snyders (23).

- **1989** - Seaman (Marine) P. Thangavalu from the South African Marines was killed instantly as a result of a gunshot wound to the head, accidentally self-inflicted shortly after he returned to the Marine Base at Wenela after completing a Patrol. He was 19.
- **1991** - Rifleman Fanie Johan Jeneke from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Scottburgh. He was 18.

24 January

- **1891** - Capain. Kurt von Francois arrives as leader of a small German regiment in South West Africa to suppress the Herero rebellion.
- **1891** - Walter Model, German Field Marshal, is born on this day.
- **1900** - The British, under General Warren, surrenders to General Botha at Spioenkop. At least 1,000 British and sixty Boer soldiers die in this battle.
- **1901** - Emily Hobhouse, English nurse who visited

the Transvaal and Orange Free Sate Republics during the South African War, reports that she found 2,000 women and children in shocking circumstances in the concentration camp at Bloemfontein.

- **1915** - Battle of Dogger Bank: Royal Navy defeats the Germans in the North Sea.
- **1923** - The Italian Air Force was formed as the as the Regia Aerea.
- **1941** - British troops invade Italian East Africa.
- **1961** - A B-52 breaks up over the North Carolina coast, losing two H-bombs, one of which is still missing.
- **1964** - British troops are flown in to Uganda to suppress an army mutiny over low pay.
- **1965** - Winston Spencer Churchill, British Prime Minister during World War II, dies at the age of 88.
- **1978** - Private Cornelius Jacobus Borchardt from the Administrative Service Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident, at Otjiwarongo. He was 23.
- **1979** - Rifleman Gerald Wayne Williams from 6 SAI accidentally drowned during a training exercise at the Base. He was 22.
- **1981** - Trooper Eugene Margo Nel from 4 Vehicle Reserve Park was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Kroonstad. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Dawid

Lambert van Niekerk from Regiment De Wet was killed instantly after being struck by lightning during a thunderstorm while in the field. He was 25.

- **1985** - Corporal Jacobus Petrus Hall from 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier who was on guard duty while the patrol was in a TB for the night North of Okankolo. He was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Saul Frederick de Kock from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during a follow-up operation against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1985** - Rifleman J.H. Filipus from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents. He was 22.
- **1987** - Rifleman William Viljoen from 8 SAI was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned after losing a front wheel 3km South of Ondangwa. He was thrown out of the vehicle which then rolled over him. He was 20.
- **1988** - Sergeant Ockert Barendse from the School of Artillery accidentally drowned in Potchefstroom. He was 28.
- **1986** - Guerrillas advance into Ugandan capital of Kampala as army opposition crumbles, pushing mil-

itary government to edge of collapse.

- **1991** - US Navy helicopters liberate Kuwaiti offshore oil rigs from the Iraqis.
- **1993** - Three Somalis are killed and at least five are wounded in clashes with troops of a US-led coalition trying to safeguard efforts to feed the country's starving.

25 January

- **1916** - Montenegro surrenders to Austria-Hungary.
- **1919** - At the end of the war, the Paris Peace Conference accepts the proposal to create the League of Nations. The League was eventually established by Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed on 28 June 1919.
- **1940** - Nazis decree the establishment of a Jewish ghetto in Lodz Poland.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: Japanese in full retreat, closely pursued by U.S. forces.
- **1945** - Audie Murphy earns the Medal of Honour.
- **1951** - UN begins counter offensive in Korea.
- **1961** - Military coup in El Salvador.
- **1971** - General Idi Amin Dada takes power in Uganda by military coup while the existing president, Milton Obote, is at a Commonwealth meeting in Singapore.
- **1980** - Three MK operatives entered the Volkskas Bank in Silverton (Silverton Bank Siege) and took 25 members

of Staff and customers hostage. In the ensuing gun battle with Security Police, two civilians were killed, 5 civilians were wounded and all three MK Operatives were shot dead.

- **1981** - Rifleman Stephen Stuart Whittaker from 3 SAI was Reported Missing while hitch hiking back to his Unit in Potchefstroom. He was picked up by a motorist, Mr Pieter Du Plessis and they stopped at the Laingsburg bridge for a travel break. Unfortunately, it was that time when the river came down in flood and they were both washed away. Their bodies were never located and they remain unaccounted for. For administrative, both men were officially declared dead by Judge C.F.W. van Zyl on 03 June 1981. He was 18.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Patrick Louis Walsh from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed instantly when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle during musketry training at Haakdoringlaagte. He was 20.
- **1983** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a Contact with SWAPO/

PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable T. Matais (33). Special Constable K. Tjimbua (31).

- **1987** - Four members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a fierce engagement with SWAPO/PLAN and FAPLA forces in Southern Angola. During the attack on Mongua, friendly mortar fire fell short of the target and landed on their position. They were: Sergeant Johan Martin (35) Corporal H Alugodhi (24). Rifleman W Shitongeni (26). Rifleman G Shilulu (23).
- **1987** - Sapper T. Seibib from 1 South West Africa Engineer Regiment was Killed in Action in a Landmine explosion in the Kaokoveld. He was 24.
- **1988** - Airman John Hendri Flemming from the Air Force Gymnasium collapsed and died after experiencing respiratory and heart fail-



Winston Churchill

ure during physical training exercises at the Air Force Gymnasium. He was 18.

26 January

- **1880** - General Douglas MacArthur was born on this day.
- **1885** - The Mahdist forces take Khartoum in Sudan after a nine-month siege and slaughter most inhabitants and the British garrison, including General Gordon.
- **1901** - General Christiaan de Wet, accompanied by President M.T. Steyn, starts his journey at Doornberg, near Winburg, to invade the Cape Colony for the second time.
- **1902** - General Ben Viljoen and seven men are ambushed and captured by the British. His pocket book saves his life by warding off a bullet and preventing it to strike his chest.
- **1934** - Nazi Germany and Poland sign ten year non-aggression pact.
- **1939** - Franco's Spanish Nationalists capture Barcelona.
- **1943** - Nazis began using Hitler Youths to operate anti-aircraft batteries in Germany following heavy Allied bombing of Berlin and other cities.
- **1950** - India becomes a republic within the British Commonwealth, converts the Victoria Cross to the Param Vir Chakra, 14 of the 21 of which awards have been posthumous.
- **1952** - Egypt is placed under martial law in response to wide-spread riots against the British.
- **1977** - Rifleman Sabino Luciano from 32 Battalion was killed in a shooting incident in the residential camp at Buffalo. He was 25.
- **1977** - Rifleman Isak Nel Myburgh from 6 SAI Died of Wounds received in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman Petrus Wilhelmus Prinsloo from Middelburg Commando accidentally drowned in the Assegai River at Amsterdam. He was 20.
- **1980** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Lodewicus Buys from 6 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle accident near Grootfontein. He was 22.
- **1980** - Rifleman Hendrik Christoffel Janse van Rensburg from SWA SPES was accidentally shot dead during the night at their TB by a guard who mistook him for a SWAPO/PLAN insurgent. He was 18.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Jacobus Adriaan Smuts Louw from 1 SAI was killed instantly when he detonated a booby-trapped Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine while returning from a patrol on the Cut-line. He was 19.
- **1983** - At a special press conference it is announced that a senior South African

naval officer, commanding Simon's Town dockyard, Commodore Dieter Gerhardt and his wife, have been detained for questioning in connection with alleged espionage.

- **1986** - Two Members from 5 SAI were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in wet weather near Nkurenkuru. The casualties were: Corporal Jan Daniel Schmidt (23). Rifleman Johannes Gerhardus Janse van Rensburg (18).
- **1986** - The National Resistance Army takes over the Ugandan capital of Kampala.
- **1991** - Rebels overrun the Somali capital of Mogadishu.
- **1992** - Russia announces it will no longer target US cities with nuclear weapons.
- **1994** - Romania became the first former Cold War foe to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

27 January

- **1859** - German Kaiser Wilhelm II was born on this day.
- **1915** - US Marines begin occupation of Haiti.
- **1943** - SA prime minister, General Jan Smuts, asks parliament's approval to send troops to Europe, contrary to his promise in 1939 that SA troops would only fight in Africa.
- **1943** - The U.S. 8th Air

Force conducted the first all-American bombing raid on Germany as 55 bombers targeted Wilhelmshaven, losing three planes while claiming to have shot down 22 German fighters. The success of this first mission encouraged U.S. military planners to begin regular daylight bombing raids, which eventually resulted in high casualty rates for the American crewmen involved.

- **1944** - Russian Army General Govorov announced the lifting of the Nazi blockade of Leningrad. During the 900-day siege, an estimated one million Russian civilians inside the city died of disease, starvation and relentless German shelling.
- **1944** - U.S. issues a report on "The Bataan Death March".
- **1945** - The Russian Army liberated Auschwitz death camp near Krakow in Poland, where the Nazis had systematically murdered an estimated 2,000,000 persons, including 1,500,000 Jews.
- **1967** - Treaty signed banning military use of nuclear weapons in space.
- **1973** - U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War ended as North Vietnamese and American representatives signed an agreement in Paris.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Adam De Beer from 8 SAI was Killed in Action after

stepping on an enemy Anti-Personnel Mine while on Patrol in Southern Angola. He was 19.

- **1984** - Special Constable Paulino Kangombe from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
- **1991** - President Mohamed Siad Barre of Somalia flees the capital, Mogadishu, as a coalition of rebels seize power. The country plunges into virtual anarchy.
- **1996** - Niger's first democratically elected president, Mahamane Ousmane, is ousted in a coup and army Colonel Barre Mainassara Ibrahim takes over as head of state.
- **2002** - Munitions at an army base in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital, explode, sending fireballs and shrapnel into the air and forcing hundreds of area residents to flee. As many as 600 people drown in a canal that blocked their way to safety.
- **1871** - The British forces are defeated and 83 British soldiers under Sir George Colley are killed and 111 wounded in the battle of Laings Nek in the Anglo-Transvaal War, caused by the refusal of the Transvaal Boers to submit to British authority as proclaimed by Shepstone in 1877.
- **1885** - British relief force reaches Khartoum, and the Sudan is evacuated.
- **1916** - German colony of Cameroon surrenders to Britain & France.
- **1932** - Japanese capture Shanghai.
- **1942** - Five power stations are blown up by pro-Axis saboteurs in an attempt to destabilise the Rand gold mines.
- **1942** - German troops capture Benghazi, Libya.
- **1944** - RAF puts 683 bombers over Berlin.
- **1970** - Cairo suburbs are attacked by Israeli jet fighters.
- **1976** - Rifleman Chris Kruger Moorcroft from 1 Parachute Battalion died from

28 January

- **1871** - The Franco-Prussian War ended as Paris surrendered to the Germans after a four month siege.

Jan Smuts



bronchial pneumonia and renal failure in 3 Military Hospital, Bloemfontein. He was 20.

- **1977** - Sergeant Abraham Jacobus Smith from 32 Battalion died from injuries received when a private Piper PA28 Cherokee aircraft in which he was travelling as a passenger, crashed at Grootfontein. He was 34.
- **1978** - Rifleman Domingos Augusto from 32 Battalion was killed instantly from a gunshot wound accidentally self-inflicted during operations in Southern Angola. He was 35.
- **1978** - Corporal Manuel Antonio Infante Ganhão from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during an engagement with FRELIMO Troops at a railway siding south of Mapai in Gaza Province, Moçambique during Operation Melon (SADF Name Operation Acrobat). He was 28.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jacobus Frederick De Beer from 61 Base Workshops was critically injured on 25 January 1982 when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving military vehicle. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on 28 January 1982. He was 18.
- **1982** - Two members from 5 SAI were Killed in Action near Elundu when their patrol was ambushed by numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents.

The casualties were: Rifleman William Robert Dawson (20). Rifleman Alexander Forbes (19).

- **1983** - Private Peter Alan Beard from the South African Medical Corps Headquarters was killed in a Military Vehicle accident at Mooi River. He was 19.
- **1985** - Sergeant Willem Johan Gouws from Air Force Base Hoedspruit was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Pilgrims Rest. He was 40.
- **1993** - Troops in Zaire run riot, killing the French Ambassador.

29 January

- **1915** - Erwin Rommel is awarded the Iron Cross, First Class, for action in the Argonne.
- **1916** - During World War I, the first aerial bombings of Paris by German Zeppelins took place.
- **1943** - HMNZS 'Kiwi' rams & sinks Japanese sub 'I-1' off Guadalcanal.
- **1944** - Heavy Luftwaffe raid on London.
- **1979** - Rifleman Gary James Rautenbach from 6 SAI Died of Wounds after being critically injured in a landmine explosion at Endobe on the 20 Jan 1979. He succumbed to his wounds in 1 Military Hospital on 29 January 1979. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman George Edmond Jacobson from the Kimberley Regiment

was killed at Katima Mulilo when he was run over by a private civilian vehicle while manning a control check point. He was 22.

- **1987** - Private Charel Andries Fourie from 5 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Ogongo. He was 22.
- **1987** - Three members of the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) were killed in a military vehicle accident in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Sergeant Tulengepo Lungameni (36). Special Sergeant Petrus Pius (35). Constable Willem Christiaan Scheepers (24).
- **1991** - Battle of Khafji, Saudi Arabia: Iraqis capture the town.
- **1993** - French marines land in Kinshasa, Zaire, to free French nationals confined to the embassy.
- **1996** - Two serving members of the army and a third man are arrested in connection with the attack on St James's Church in Cape Town in July 1993.

30 January

- **1882** - Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born on this day.
- **1902** - Anglo-Japanese alliance formed.
- **1911** - The Royal Canadian Navy was founded on this day.
- **1915** - German submarine attack on Le Havre.

- **1930** - Magnus André De Merindol Malan, former Chief of the SADF and SA Minister of Defence, is born in Pretoria on this day.
- **1933** - Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany by President Paul von Hindenburg.
- **1939** - Hitler calls for the extermination of the Jews.
- **1943** - Hitler promotes Friedrich Paulus, commanding the Sixth Army, surrounded at Stalingrad, to field marshal, with a hint that he should commit suicide.
- **1945** - Danzig: Soviet sub sinks German ship 'Wilhelm Gustloff'. More than 7,700 die, making it the worst loss of life in a single sinking in history.
- **1952** - Martial law is imposed in Egypt as King Farouk dismisses the premier Nahas Pasha and his Wafdist government.
- **1964** - Two members from 5 SAI accidentally drowned in a boating accident at Ladysmith. They were: Rifleman Johannes Frederick Kies (19). Rifleman Cornelius Marthinus Du Plooy (19).
- **1964** - Military coup by Gen Nguyen Khanh in South-Vietnam.
- **1968** - Beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam as North Vietnamese troops attacked 36 provincial capitals and 5 major cities in South Vietnam, including an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and the presidential

palace.

- **1972** - In Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 13 Roman Catholics were killed by British troops during a banned civil rights march. The event became known as Bloody Sunday.
- **1981** - Twenty-four people are killed in Operation Beanbag, an attack by the South African army on the ANC and PAC in Matola, a suburb of Maputo, Mozambique. A Portuguese engineer, Jose Ramos, is "mistakenly identified" as Joe Slovo, one of the raid's main targets, by the South African forces and is shot at a roadblock. Numbers killed vary. Some sources state that twelve were killed and three abducted.
- **1981** - Two members of 6 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action and one Reported Missing during a Special Forces Raid on the African National Congress Headquarters in Maputo, Moçambique during Operation Bean Bag. They were: Sergeant Robert Louis Hutchinson (24). Sergeant Ian Suttill (22). Lance Corporal James King Park (21). The body of Sergeant Robert Louis Hutchinson was never recovered. He has known grave and remains unaccounted for.

- **1983** - Rifleman R.R. Kufuna from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 23.

- **1992** - Argentina allowed access to numerous files of Nazis who had fled to South America from Germany after World War II, thus aiding the hunt for Nazi war criminals.

31 January

- **1901** - Generals Smuts and Liebenberg captures Modderfontein, Transvaal.
- **1915** - Battle of Bolimów: The Germans stage the first major poison gas attack, but the Russians hold.
- **1917** - Germany notifies the US that it will resume unrestricted submarine warfare.
- **1943** - German troops surrendered at Stalingrad, marking the first big defeat of Hitler's armies in World War II. During the Battle of Stalingrad, 160,000 Ger-



Adolf Hitler

mans were killed and 90,000 taken prisoner, including the commander, Friedrich von Paulus, the first German field marshal ever to surrender. The captured Germans were forced to march to Siberia, with few ever returning to Germany.

- **1945** - Eddie Slovik, a 24 year-old U.S. Army private, was executed by a firing squad after being sentenced to death for desertion, the first such occurrence in the U.S. Army since the Civil War.
- **1972** - Military coup ousts civilian government of Ghana.
- **1982** - Sergeant (Mrs) Elizabeth Mostert from the Orange Free State Command Headquarters was killed while on duty in Voortrekkerhoogte, Pretoria when she was accidentally run over by a police vehicle. She was 50.

ange Free State Command Headquarters was killed while on duty in Voortrekkerhoogte, Pretoria when she was accidentally run over by a police vehicle. She was 50.

- **1985** - Sergeant Willem van As from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1985** - Rifleman K.E. Mbambo from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 22.

• **1986** - Commandant Marshall Aubrey Joseph Facer from the Highveld Air Space Control Sector at Devon was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Delmas. He was 39.

• **1987** - Corporal Charles John Oram from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed in a private motor vehicle Accident between Phalaborwa and Hoedspruit. He was 26.

• **1994** - In Mogadishu, US Marines in a convoy carrying American diplomats open fire near a crowded food distribution centre. At least five Somalis are killed and many wounded.



The execution of Private Eddie Slovik.



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Springbok

Journal of the South African Legion
Tydskrif van die Suid-Afrikaanse Legioen



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Modern Assault Rifles

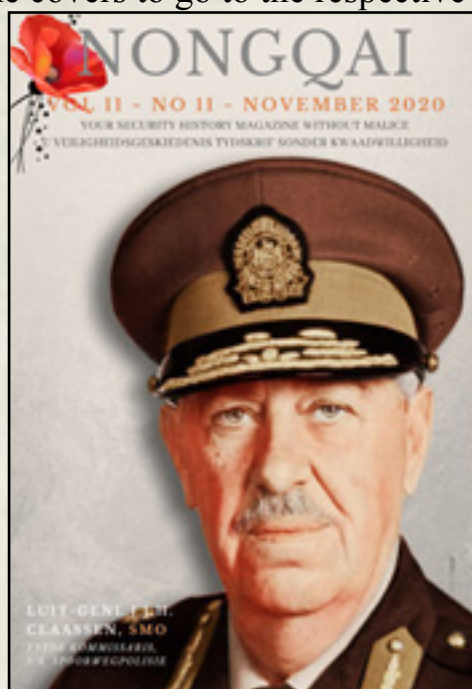
1. XM8 (Heckler & Koch, Germany)
2. ADS amphibious rifle (KBP Instrument Design Bureau, Russia)
3. Vepr (R&D Center, Ukraine)
4. AK-12 (Kalashnikov Concern, Russia)
5. Vektor CR-21 (Denel, South Africa)
6. Barrett REC7 (Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, United States)
7. Trichy Assault Rifle (Ordnance Factory Tiruchirappalli, India)
8. Colt CM901 (Colt Defense, United States)
9. Desert Tech MDRx (Desert Tech, United States)
10. FAMAS (Nexter, France)
11. F2000 (Fabrique Nationale d'Herstal, Belgium)
12. Tavor (Israel Weapon Industries, Israel)
13. L85 (BAE Systems, United Kingdom)
14. QBZ-95 (Norinco, China)
15. Steyr AUG (Steyr Mannlicher, Austria)



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.



Military Despatches Website



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Steve Jobs



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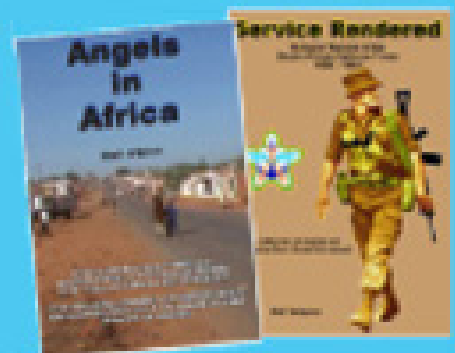
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