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Wellington versus Soult
in the Peninsular War



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Princes of Peace
The WWI chaplains who
won the Victoria Cross



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Labour Service**
Medals and badges
of Nazi construction
organisation



**Rare Australian
Koorie gorgets**
The metal nameplates
for Aborigines from
the colonial past



**Saudi medal
for Kuwait**
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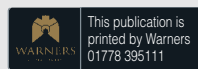
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Welcome

Aside from a few instances, the war in the Far East received far less attention than that in North Africa and Western Europe. Yet Britain, with the aid of Commonwealth and Dominion countries, was constantly at war from 1941 until the Japanese defeat in 1945. It all started on 8 December 1941 when Japan invaded the British territory of Malaya, before moving on to Singapore, and driving the British out of Burma. In Spring 1944 the Japanese war machine reached the borders of India at the town of Imphal and the village of Kohima. The stage was set for a ferocious and bloody battle that would decide the fate of India and British interests in the Far East. So, come with us, back to 1944 and the steep ridges and dense jungles as British and Indian forces, with their backs against the wall, held off and finally defeated the Japanese Imperial Army.

Tied in to our cover campaign feature we're taking a look at the classic British firearm, the Bren Gun, examples of which are readily collectable today. Then it's the turn of Japanese Imperial Army uniforms, less-sought after so more affordable than those of their Axis partners, the Germans. And lastly, the first part of a look at collecting the accessories of the most famous Allied SMG of WWII, the Thompson.

Away from the features you've responded to the news stories about new deactivation regulations so cast your eyes over the Letters pages. The fallout from this is still continuing, with anecdotal reports of members of the Police force saying that they have

better things to do than engage in the pointless form filling and checking that the regulation is enforced. Let's put it this way, if your deac needs to be registered with the Home Office, and you never get round to doing it, I wouldn't expect to see Her Majesty's Constabulary on your doorstep.

Of course, thanks to the General Election and Boris getting a working majority, Brexit is now happening so we will be spared from any more idiotic deactivated gun laws from Brussels. Now we simply have to contend with our own knee-jerk reaction, playing to the media politicians.

Back to the magazine then and some highlights this month include the Battles of the Nive, in the Peninsular War; John Walter telling the story of Suicide Special revolvers; Australian gorgets for Aboriginals favoured by the colonial settlers; a look at the work of a military artist for the Suffolk Regiment; the history of the Fokker Scourge in WWI; a lesser-known Saudi medal for the Gulf War; and the shocking story of civilian misery during the Siege of Leningrad in WWII.

If you have any comments on the features, please write in to our usual addresses and share your thoughts.

Duncan Evans • Editor

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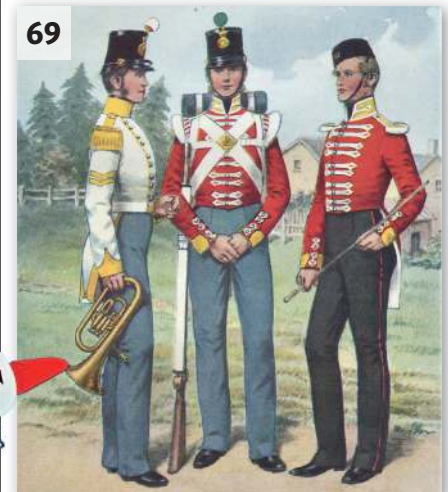
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The Battles of Imphal and Kohima

Graham Caldwell describes how the Japanese invasion of India was defeated in a bloody encounter on the border with Burma

After the fall of Singapore to the Japanese in March 1942, the British knew that the Japanese would advance into India. The Japanese had won all the way back over the border into India, having lost most of their equipment and transport. Throughout 1942, the British Indian Army engaged in a series of offensives against the Japanese in the Arakan region. These were largely unsuccessful, and the Japanese continued to advance. In April 1944, the Japanese launched a major offensive into India, the Imphal and Kohima battles. The Japanese had won all the way back over the border into India, having lost most of their equipment and transport. Throughout 1942, the British Indian Army engaged in a series of offensives against the Japanese in the Arakan region. These were largely unsuccessful, and the Japanese continued to advance. In April 1944, the Japanese launched a major offensive into India, the Imphal and Kohima battles.

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Duncan Evans reports on what's happening in the world of military history and collecting

EXHIBITION

Military maps of George III

George III's treasured collection of military maps has been published online to mark the 200th anniversary of his death. Highlights include charting the



loss of the American colonies and maps by the founder of the Ordnance Survey.

On the 200th anniversary of George III's death, the King's collection of more than 3,000 military maps, views and prints in the Royal Collection have been published online, offering an insight into the art of warfare and mapping. The culmination of 10 years of research by Dr Yolande Hodson to catalogue

one of George III's most prized collections, the new website (militarymaps.rct.uk) makes these documents publicly available for the first time and allows them to be explored in minute detail.

George III's Collection of Military Maps presents a diverse range of material from the 16th to 18th centuries, from highly finished presentation maps of sieges, battles and marches, to rough sketches drawn in the

field, depictions of uniforms and fortification plans, providing a vivid contemporary account of major theatres of war in Britain, Europe and America.

Maps were an important part of George's early life and education, and his passion for the cartographic sciences continued once he became King. He never left the south of England or fought on a battlefield, but his vast collection of more than 55,000 topographical, maritime and military prints, drawings, maps and charts allowed him to travel the world from the comfort of his library at Buckingham House, now Buckingham Palace. Upon the King's death, his son, George IV, gave his father's collection of topographical views and maritime charts to the British Museum (now in the British Library), but retained the military plans due to their strategic value and his own keen interest in the tactics of warfare. ■

CONVENTION

OMRS September Convention

Plans for the Orders & Medals Research Society's annual Convention, which will be held in Bristol for the first time, are progressing rapidly. All the Convention events will be held from 11-13 September 2020 at the Bristol Marriott Hotel City Centre, a four-star hotel just a mile from the end of the M32 motorway and a five-minute taxi ride from Bristol Temple Meads railway station.

The weekend will begin with a welcome reception on the evening of Friday 11 September. It will continue with exhibitions,



talks by guest speakers and the presentation of awards in the Bristol Suite on Saturday 12 September. The Society's annual dinner will be held on Saturday evening in the Conservatory at the hotel. Sunday 13 September will commence with the Society's

Annual General Meeting, followed by the OMRS Medal Fair, which is open to both members and non-members.

Advance booking will be via the OMRS website. Up to 16 August the weekend rate for the Convention will be £10 for

members and £15 for guests. After that the price is £20 for both groups. Bookings made by post will attract a further charge of £5 on these prices. Entry to the Medal Fair is free for those registered for the Convention or £10 payable on the day for Society members who have not registered or non-members who want to attend.

A preferential Convention hotel room rate of £120 single and £130 double, per night, both including breakfast, has been negotiated and is available on a first come, first served basis until 16 July. There are numerous other hotels in central Bristol. Car parking is available next door to the Convention hotel at a discounted day rate of £17.

For further information on the Convention and booking go to the OMRS website at www.omrs.org ■

REMEMBRANCE

Commemoration at Auschwitz

Some 200 survivors of the Nazi extermination camp gathered to mark the 75th anniversary of its liberation in January. Elderly survivors, supported by children and grandchildren, were present at the site of the former death camp in Poland where Polish President, Andrzej Duda and head of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald Lauder, led the commemorations. A number of world leaders met the previous week in Jerusalem to mark the anniversary as well. Those attending that ceremony included Russian President Vladimir Putin, US Vice President Mike Pence, French President Emmanuel Macron and Prince Charles for the UK. Tensions between Poland and Russia



resulted in the Polish President boycotting the event in Israel.

Also, Pope Francis appealed for remembrance of the Holocaust saying that, "In the face of this immense tragedy, indifference is not admissible and memory is due." Speaking

to those gathered in St. Peter's Square for the Angelus Prayer, the Pope recalled that 27 January, marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp. He added, "Tomorrow we are all invited to set aside a moment of

prayer and recollection, saying in our hearts: never again!"

There were three main sites to Auschwitz, the original concentration camp called Auschwitz I, a combined concentration and extermination camp called Auschwitz II-Birkenau, built three miles away, and a labour camp called Auschwitz III-Monowitz. With the war in the east going badly by early 1945, the Germans started destroying the site to conceal their crimes and sent many of the prisoners on a death march westwards. The 7,000 people remaining in the camp were finally liberated by the advancing Red Army on 27 January 1945, which is commemorated as Holocaust Memorial Day. ■

EXHIBITION

100 years of refugees

From World War I to the present day, countless lives have been affected by conflict, resulting in ordinary people having to make extraordinary decisions – should they stay or go? This is the focus of *Refugees: Forced to Flee* (2 April–29 November 2020), a major new exhibition at IWM London.

Combining new research and real-life experiences with over 80 photographs, oral histories, documents and objects – many of which will be displayed for the first time – the exhibition will question why conflict forces people to leave once safe places.

Stories from World War I and II and its aftermath, 1990s Bosnia and present-day Afghanistan will be compared to expose the similarities encountered by those who leave, move and re-settle. Whether making physical journeys or facing bureaucratic barriers, the exhibition will demonstrate that regardless of time or place, the impact



of conflict is the same – the catastrophic upheaval of ordinary lives.

Refugees: Forced to Flee is part of *Refugees*, a free season of exhibitions, artistic commissions and immersive events taking place across IWM London and IWM North in 2020. Highlights include a new commission from world-renowned artist Ai Weiwei called *History of Bombs* (2 April–29 November 2020) and a major new exhibition at IWM North, *Aid Workers: Ethics Under Fire* (15 May 2020–10 January 2021). ■

ANNIVERSARY

RAFA scrambles for VE 75



The Hull branch of RAFA, the Association that supports serving

RAF members, veterans and family members has announced a celebration dinner for the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

Scramble 75 on 16 March 2020 celebrates the 75th anniversary of VE Day and the Hull branch of RAFA. The Double Tree Hilton is hosting an evening dinner, featuring the RAF Waddington Pipes & Drums. For £35 per person or £350 for a table of 10, each table will be themed around an RAF base in the area. There's a full evening

of entertainment including cabaret artists covering music from the '40s and '50s, all the way through to the 2000s to finish off the evening. Also in the line-up is a comedy act call The Inflations, giving diners something a bit different from alternative VE Day events. Guest will be greeted by a red carpet, with a guard of honour presented by the local Air Training Corps Cadets.

All are welcome, you don't need to have a link to the RAF to attend. This is your chance to respect what members of the RAF did, and still do, for us all. For more information go to www.rafa-hull.co.uk or email scramble75@rafahull.co.uk. Check ticket availability via Mally King on 07786 117119. ■

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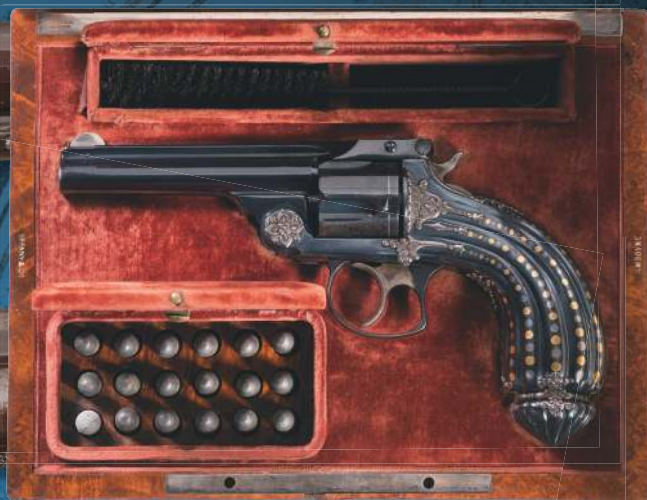
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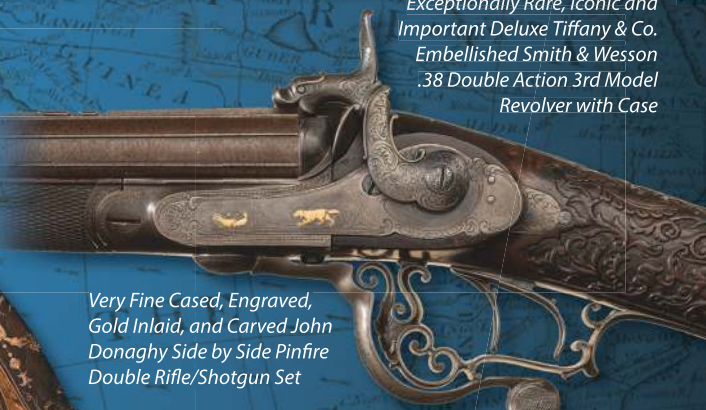
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Militaria for sale

Lenny Warren trawls the internet to find bargains, rare, interesting or bizarre items of militaria



As someone whose main area of interest is WWI, I had been eagerly anticipating the release of the movie *1917*. If you haven't seen it yet, err... why not? Well, you really need to see it, not since *Saving Private Ryan* have I been on the edge of my seat mesmerised by the action on screen, it really is that good. Set in April 1917, around the time my own grandfather was wounded in France, I thought this month I would highlight a few items from 1917.

Here we have a nice example of a British-issued Brodie steel helmet. The interior lining with a rubber ring indicating a post-1917 issue. Comes with leather chinstrap marked with the name of 'J Cox'. Nice dark patination to the shell, missing its felt cushion to the crown but overall in good condition. Priced at £280 from www.dearoldblighty.com.

The standard British service rifle in 1917 was the Short, Magazine Lee-Enfield, commonly referred to as the SMLE. Here we have a rare 1917-dated, S.S.A. manufactured, SMLE MKIII* rifle. Standard Small Arms (S.S.A.) was a company founded during WWI with the primary aim to supply rifles to the War Department to supplement the output of Enfield, BSA and LSA. However, the company only managed to make around



version replaced the earlier *Gummimaske* version and is distinguishable from the later M18 version by the presence of thin metal spider reinforcements behind the lenses.

The canvas head straps remain undamaged with lenses uncracked. The oiled string, often missing from the front of the facepiece, is present here with most of the original green paint remaining to the filter housing. It comes with the 11-C-11 filter canister which has also survived in excellent condition. The carrying tin is of the correct 1917/18 pattern with spare lens compartment to the interior of lid, with 'July 1918' dated spare lenses present in a protective paper packet. A very high proportion of the original green paint remains to the tin with its original long and short rolled paper cloth straps intact. Priced at £425 from www.csmilitaria.co.uk.

200,000 rifles in total during WWI.

This example was issued again during WWII, which was common.

The initials 'FTR', meaning Factory Through Repair, indicate that it was reworked at either the Enfield or BSA factories. The barrel carries the armourer and date stamps of '1944'

and it has had a replacement rear sight, numbered to the rifle as well as a WWII bolt fitted. It has also had a black, military Suncorite painted finish, which was used during WWII as a quick and effective way of protecting metal parts. Priced at £495 from www.deactivated-guns.co.uk.

Next is a WWI Imperial German M17 gas mask and carrying tin. These are becoming very hard to find in any condition, never mind the excellent condition we see here. This M17





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In the sale rooms

The weapons, uniforms, medals and militaria coming up for auction

Germans at DNW



We had a look at the British medals in the 4-5 March DNW auction last month so let's squeeze in some details of the German militaria in the same auction. First up, a NSDAP political leader's gorget. A good and complete political leaders gorget, good finish remaining to the face side, the full length chain with the RZM marks to each link, some moth damage to the green baize backing, otherwise good condition. The estimate is £600-£800.

Buckles are always popular so here's a brace of them, starting with one for a member of the SA, with swastika, all gilded brass two-piece in good condition. Estimate is £40-£60. The other one has an unusual central mobile swastika, estimate is £70-£90.

A little more expensive is a NSDAP Ortsgruppe Block Leader's armband. A service worn, slightly stained armband for the NSDAP, in reasonable condition with an estimate of £280-£320. More uniform parts next with Army Panzer Jager shoulder boards. The lot features two shoulder boards, one for an Oberstleutnant, the other an enlisted mans with wool piping and slip-on tab, glue on

the reverse side where it was fixed to a collectors display board, all with the light apple green piping, reasonable condition. Estimate is £40-£50. If you want value though, then have a look at this lot with a collection of 10 assorted Heer and Luftwaffe shoulder boards. There are two Heer infantry officer's boards, missing ciphers; one Heer infantry field grey centred slip-on; one Heer Cavalry Major; Heer Cavalry field grey centred NCO; Luftwaffe NCO with yellow cipher; Luftwaffe medical blue piped NCO; medical Kriegsschule with bad moth damage to the centre; a Luftwaffe flak artillery school, a Luftwaffe Airfield Engineer black piped board, with all generally in good condition. Estimate is £80-£120.

Cuff titles next, with a highly collectable Kreta band, full length, with excellent yellow weave for the title, some staining on the left but otherwise good condition. Look to bid £60-£80. Slightly more unusual, are an NCOs school and TN cuff titles. The lot has two cuff titles, both full length, both Bevo woven Unteroffizier Vorschule, accompanied by a TN cuff title, both good condition. Estimate

is £50-£70. Lastly, here's a pair of Bundeswehr cuff titles. One cuff title for Geschwader Richthofen the other for the Wachbattillon, both good condition. Estimate is a modest £20-£30.

Ideal for the cold weather, a pair of Waffen-SS camouflage autumn pattern mittens. A very good set of mittens, reversible to white padded mittens, as part of the winter padded four piece suit. Evidence of slight service wear, complete with their herringbone twill ties, good condition. Look at paying £80-£120.

If you can read German then there's an interesting collection of the history of the NSDAP. This is the first seven years of the NSDAP in photographs, a complete set of seven volumes, entitled *Das Jahr 1933* to *Das Jahr 1939*, all well illustrated with awards photo section up to 1939 in volume 7. In good condition, expect to pay £60-£80.

Moving on to documentation now, and a Great War collection of eight military passes, which includes three German Soldbüch, one German Soldbuch and its accompanying military pass to the same soldier, three military passes

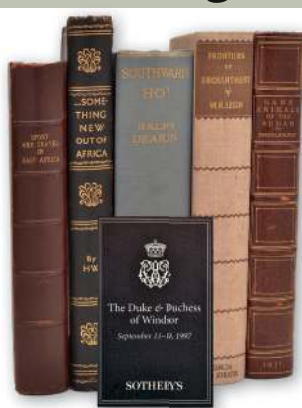
alone for individual German soldiers and one Austrian Great War military pass. All of these individual passes have been identified with detailed write-ups of their service during the Great War. The vendor has placed the information gleaned from each pass within each passbook. The estimate is £60-£80.

How about a couple of hats, starting with a Waffen-SS field grey fez. The field grey fez is the combat version, the red fez is for dress occasions. Excellent condition complete with its full length tassel and a matching mint set of Waffen-SS eagle and skull, complete with its inner sweatband and its original size 55 paper label attached to the inner side of the sweatband, extremely good condition. This one will go for £500-£700. And finally, a Prussian ersatz Pickelhaube. A very nice condition large size all felt, ersatz Pickelhaube without a front plate. The skull is absolutely perfect, the outline of where a Prussian plate was fitted is clearly visible, no extra holes, a reproduction front strap and cockades. The interior ersatz type lining all complete, extremely good condition so £150-£200. ■

Holts guns and militaria

Holts December auction was the first the company had held in Norfolk and grossed nearly £1.28 million, with 80% of lots selling either online, over the phone or via commission. Holts' next auction will be held over two days in March in Norfolk as well. On Monday, the auction will feature antique and vintage guns and accessories, books, edged weapons and militaria. Tuesday will feature modern, sporting guns and accessories. Here's what to look out for.

There's a German Third Reich first pattern Luftwaffe dress-dagger by Carl Eickhorn, Solingen. Comes with a hangar and bent cross swastika in the pommel. The estimate is £300-£500. Next is a good 1796 pattern heavy cavalry officer's sword, with scabbard, maker marked as 'D. Egg,



Hay Market London', carrying an estimate of £700-£1,200. Then there's a nasty looking, if scarce, 7mm pinfire six-shot combination revolver, Apache model by L Dolne of France. Combines the gun element with a knuckle duster and stabbing blade. Expect it to go for around £700-£900.



Trench armour is one of those things that you can hardly believe was ever a thing, but it existed alright and here's the major pieces of a scarce set of German World War I, m1917 trench armour. Estimate is £250-£350.

On to WWII now and a WWII Luftwaffe tunic for a Stabsgefreiter,

together with its leather waist belt and buckle. Has a Luftwaffe eagle on the right side. The estimate is £150-£250.

For the last item in this brief roundup, we have books, but not just any books and for that reason they are almost impossible to put an estimate on. These are formerly the property of the Duke of Windsor. The lot contains a small selection of books, some containing signed dedications by their authors to the Duke, whose journeys and expeditions are recorded in these publications. Needless to say provenance is king here and that comes from the previous sale of them at The Duke & Duchess of Windsor: The Private Collections, Sotheby's, New York, 11-19 September 1997. ■

Bene Merenti's militaria auction

This might not be a European auction house you're familiar with but Bene Merenti has a dual language website, in German and English, and partners with Mailboxes Stuttgart to ship auction items to the UK. The company's next auction is 6 March, with all lots listed for bidding via internet on www.the-saleroom.com. There is also a full catalogue at www.benemerenti.de with better quality photos.

Let's start then with some classic armour and an iron helmet, collar with riveting, side lock hook, ventilation openings with floral decoration. Expect to pay around €450. Or there's a pair on iron gauntlets from France with etched lilies décor, roped edge and rivets for a rudimentary lining. Estimate is €200.

However, who doesn't love a helmet with a spike so here's one for officers of the Baden Dragoons, Regiments 20, 21 and 22. It has a black fibre body, silver fittings, cross blade with gilded star screws and lace, golden domed chin-scales on both cockades, light brown sweatband. Estimate is around €250. A more typical example is this spiked officer's



helmet from Prussia. It has a leather body, gilt-fitting, plates with star screws tipped with Perlrand flat chin-scales. Estimate is €400. Or, slightly more grubby, a Prussian field grey replacement spiked helmet for teams of artillery. It's warped slightly, with an additional small eagle of the right swing of the fitting eagle plate. The liner is missing but still expect to fork out €680.

Also from Prussia, a tunic for a deputy officer of the first battery, Foot Artillery Regiment Encke No. 4. It has a bright blue cloth, black collar and cuffs, edged with silver braid, epaulets for Offiziersstellvertreter, white buttons.



Estimate is €380. Another uniform from Prussia, it's for a Lieutenant in the Hussars 12/13, in cornflower blue cloth, with silver braid with black rim holes, silver rosettes and toggles. Estimate is €120.

The next item relates to the Imperial Navy and comes from the estate of the Lieutenant Wilhelm Mende. From August 1914 Mende was the Commander of the II. Sailor artillery department of the Mobile Division. Here you've got a needles felt hat with gold tassel, anchor button, silk lining; a pair of epaulets to a Lieutenant Commander; and a naval officer dagger with etched blade with marine motifs, gold



plated fittings, white grip. Estimate for the three is €2,250.

Let's round off with a look at some awards now. Here's a Baden Grand Ducal Order of Berthold the First, Grand Cross breast star. It has a silver-plated body, the multi-part medallion gold and enamel, with pin, 'L. FEW' and escutcheon hallmarked.

Only 107 copies of the Grand Cross version were issued, which is why it has an estimate of €2,900. Now, here's another Baden Grand Ducal Order of Berthold the First, but in the Commander's Cross form. It's made from silver, gold relined, is partially enamelled, manufactured from several parts and measures 167mm x 91mm x 59mm, and weighs 29.4g. Between 1896 and 1918, 97 commanders and 76 commanders 1st Class were awarded. The estimate is €1,500.

Finally, the Order of the Lion of Bavaria, a religious cross (1768-1808). Made from gilt bronze, partially enamelled, the openwork medallions in gold, finely enamelled, sited on a fluted collar ring. It's a decoration from the last third of the 18th century. Estimate is €2,000. ■

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Warwick & Warwick

Take a tour to India

Kerry Culbert hits the jungle trail to take in a 16-day WWII tour from Kohima to Imphal



Maintained by the Commonwealth Graves Commission, this is the other major war cemetery at Kohima



One of the main attractions of the tour, the Kohima Military Museum with exhibits and audio-visual displays

The twin battles of Kohima and Imphal were instrumental in stopping the Japanese invasion of India and turned the tide of war in Asia. Now, thanks to Pettitts Travel, you can walk in the footsteps of the soldiers who defended the eastern border of the British Empire. Pettitts

offers custom-designed trips to India, of which this is one possible example. It starts in Kolkata, former capital of the Raj when it was known as Calcutta, before flying to Kohima and a visit to the Kohima War Cemetery and local villages. Kohima is the hilly capital of Nagaland, built on a high ridge, typical

THE TOUR

Day 1: Depart from the UK on an Emirates flight to Dubai.

Day 2: Arrive in Dubai and catch a connecting flight to Kolkata, staying in the Elgin Fairlawn hotel.

Day 3: Explore Kolkata, visiting buildings of the old British Empire and the Writers Building, now the seat of local government. The biggest attraction is the Victoria Memorial, built in 1921 and contains a treasure trove of relics of the Raj. Other locations include St. John's Church, South Park Cemetery, the General Post Office with its silver dome and the Indian Museum, the largest in India, established in 1814.

Day 4: Leave Kolkata and fly to Dimapur, then drive to Kohima, stopping at the medieval remains of the Kachari kingdom. Stay in the Vivor Hotel in Kohima.

Day 5: Visit the Kohima War Cemetery where the remains of 1,420 soldiers are buried. It's maintained by the Commonwealth Graves Commission. Continue on to the State Museum before finishing in the 700-year old Angami villages of Khonoma.

Day 6: Start at the Kohima War Museum, then visit local villages and the Cathedral Church of Kohima, built, in part, thanks to donations from those who fought in the WWII battles.

Day 7: Drive 435km to Guwahati, the cultural, commercial and political centre of the region,



The Cathedral at Kohima was built, in part, thanks to donations from soldiers and their families who fought in WWII



The War Cemetery at Imphal where British and Indian soldiers who fell in the fighting are buried



Now developed into a tourist attraction, the Museum of the Indian National Army at Moirang



Kangla was the ancient capital of Manipur and the Fort is the old palace of the royal family there

of Naga settlements. The tour then heads for Imphal to visit the Indian National Army Museum in Moirang. Imphal is the capital of Manipur state and features the ruins of the Palace of Kangla, the royal seat of the Kingdom of Manipur. The final hub of the tour is Darjeeling, famous for its high quality tea, which

was an old Raj hill station where many of the soldiers who fought in the battles went to recuperate afterwards. The town sits 2000m above sea level with spectacular views of Kanchenjunga. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway network provides transport from the town down to the plains below. ■

on the banks of the Brahmaputra River. Stay at the Radisson Blu Hotel.

Day 8: Fly from Guwahati to Imphal, visiting the Govindaji Temple.

Day 9: Visit Kangla Fort, Kangla Museum, local markets, the State Museum and the Imphal War Cemetery where 1,600 British and Indian soldiers who fought in the Battle of Imphal, are buried.

Day 10: Travel from Imphal to visit the Japanese War Memorial, Loktak Lake and Sendra Island. Next is the Indian National Army Museum at Moirang and the Keibul Lamjao National Park.

Day 11: Fly from Imphal to Guwahati.

Day 12: From Guwahati, fly to Bagdogra

and then drive to the old Raj hill station of Darjeeling, famous for its tea. Visit the town with its colonial and Buddhist architecture.

Day 13: Visit Tiger Hill before sunrise to see the incredible panorama of peaks and then visit the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, the Himalayan Zoo and jump on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway to the Yiga Choling Monastery at Ghoom.

Day 14: Day in Darjeeling. Stay at the Windamere Hotel.

Day 15: Drive back to Bagdogra and fly back to Kolkata, staying at a hotel near the international airport.

Day 16: Fly from Kolkata to Dubai and then back to the UK.

i TOUR DETAILS

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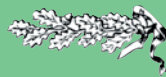
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Under the hammer

Duncan Evans reports on the latest militaria sold at auctions around the country

Rare badges at Bosleys

Bosleys' Badge Auction of 29 January offered 648 lots among which there were two consigned part-collections of British Colonel Regiments and Police badges. This area of badge collecting has seen a new, strong international interest and this was confirmed by some of the prices achieved. A Sudan, White Nile Province silver Crocodile badge sold for £480, but this was overshadowed by a Sudan Nuba Mountains Province scarce cap badge, which sold for £580. A scarce Sudan, Bahr-el-Ghazal Province Police 1925 London hallmarked silver cap/pagri badge sold for £480 and an Indian, Bengal Armed Police 1930s' cap badge hammered at £460. A Canadian Princess Patricia's



Officer's pre-1933 cap badge sold for £400.

More traditional badges were to be found with a fine selection of British Army Officer's badges. These included a rare Royal Bucks Hussars 1918 silver hallmarked badge which sold for £600, and a WWI Machine Gun Guards 1916 hallmarked silver and enamel cap



star for £780. Remaining with WWI the auction saw a collection of Kitchener's Army badges which included 18th (Service) Bn, (1st Public Works, Pioneers) Middlesex Regiment for £340; 13th (Wandsworth) Bn, East Surrey Regiment WWI 1st pattern cap badge for £300; 11th (Lonsdale) Battalion Border Regiment WWI

ORs cap badge for £300; and it is worth mentioning that a 1914 silver hallmarked officer's badge to the same battalion sold for £600.

Badges of the OTC and Cadet units appear to be having a surge in popularity with a rare Royal College of Surgeons (Ireland) OTC brass cap badge with title 'CONSILIO/R.C.S.I.O.T.C./MANUQUE' selling for £840 and a similar example with title 'Royal College of Surgeons OTC' hitting a hammer price of £720.

Bosleys next badge sale will be held on the 8 April, promising a more varied selection of original military badges, ranging from the splendour of the Georgian age to the humble badges of the Cold War period. ■

Records at Rock Island

The Premier Firearms Auction featured collections from Robert M Lee, Mac McCroskie, Dr Gerald Klaz, Larry Jones and Alvin White while featuring guns with ties to historical figures such as Annie Oakley, President Andrew Jackson, and Civil War General George McClellan.

Within the first half hour of auction a seldom-seen panel scene engraved Colt Single Action Army was crossing the podium. This significant revolver found a new home for \$299,000. Another exciting offering was a Colt M1911, serial number 81. High condition and straight out of the original owner's family, this bagged \$195,500.

Next we have one of only 1,011 Single Action Army



Revolvers chambered in .38 Colt as manufactured up to 1914; a total of 2,376 chambered in that calibre throughout production. It sold for \$9,200.

One of the most exciting items to go under the hammer once belonged to Annie Oakley.

The fully gold-plated Marlin Model 1897 rifle created a huge buzz leading up to its sale. Annie's Marlin beat its \$350,000 high estimate and sold for \$575,000. Seven lots later was a nearly pristine Colt Root Sidehammer revolver also never

before publicly offered and with a significant place in American history. It was presented by Samuel Colt to Secretary of State Edward Everett. The man is a grocery list of accomplishments. It sold for \$149,500.

On the third and final day was a silver-inlaid Winchester Model 1886 exhibition engraved by John Ulrich for display at the 1889 *Exhibition Universelle* in Paris. Resting in its stately French fitted case, this Winchester made for the world to see achieved a healthy \$126,500. The overachiever of

the day came when a martial Colt Cavalry Model with its 1881 pattern holster came up for bid. Sub-inspected by David F Clark, this time capsule of condition had also never been offered at a public sale. Its first impression was a good one and it rang the bell for \$80,500.

Let's finish now with an extremely rare, documented prototype Walther Model PP, long slide semi-automatic pistol with rare hard-chromium finish. These are easily identified because they have the extra long (127mm) length barrel and matching long slide, and are finished in a very early, almost experimental/rare dull hard chromium finish, that is very similar to the *Verchromt* finish. There were exactly six of these pistols produced, with all six being shipped to Glaser in Zurich. It sold for \$34,500. ■

Classic militaria at Peter Wilson

The late January auction at Peter Wilson, Fine Art Auctioneers, saw a combination of classic firearms, sporting guns, medals and militaria. Let's start with an interesting revolving percussion pistol. This was a Clarkson of Chesterfield gun, the hand-rotated five shot cylinder mounted on scroll-engraved action with safety catch, concealed folding trigger, finely chequered grip, 19cm long. As an antique, it didn't need a firearms licence and sold for £380. Another unusual shaped weapon was a percussion double-barrelled pistol, with turn off .400 barrels, scrollwork engraved action, 20cm long, fitted into a later case. It sold for £180. One gun you did need a licence for was a Lee Enfield SMLE III* .303 bolt action rifle, serial number G4416, matching numbered bolt, dated 1917, with sling, 114cm



long. It went for £360.

If you wanted something to put on the end of your rifle, then how about this lot consisting of three bayonets. There was a Swiss M1918 bayonet and scabbard, together with a Martini Henry socket bayonet stamped '77', and a Mosin Nagant M91 bayonet, the largest item measuring 53cm long. All three went for a bargain £65.

A little more pricey was a German Third Reich WWII Army

dagger, with scabbard hanging straps, and portpee knot, the blade by Alcoso Solingen, 40cm long. It was found in France during WWII, on top of a filing cabinet in an office building, by a British soldier. His son sold the dagger to the current vendor. It went for £550. The buyers were less convinced by a Third Reich Hitler Youth dagger and scabbard, the blade marked 'Rich. Abr. Herder Solingen', 'RZM

M7/18' and dated '1940'. It sold for just £240. If you were looking for value though, how about this collection of 14 swords and bayonets. The haul included five Chassepot M1866 bayonets, two M. 1874 Gras bayonets, an Enfield/Snider bayonet, Sudanese knife, cutlass etc. The largest item measured 96cm long. The entire lot sold for £240.

Something a bit more unusual now, if a little grim. It was a 19th century army field amputation kit, the saw named *Coxeter*, fitted in brass-bound mahogany case together with leather strop. It sold for £300. Another interesting lot consisted of an F Barker and Son, leather cased compass, the case inscribed 'Wo OKE 11 1/2, 1930 M&G', also a Service Pattern Clinometer in leather case, a DRGM Busch Compass and a Boson's whistle. You could have had the entire lot for £85. ■

Medals ahoy at C & T

There was a flotilla of medals at the February auction with C & T Auctioneers, starting with a number of awards to the Navy. First up then, a Naval GSM with a clasp for 'ST VINCENT' which was awarded to John Hancock and remains in very good overall condition. John Hancock was confirmed on the roll as an Able Seaman on HMS *Britannia*, a 100 gun first rate ship-of-the-line. The battle of Cape St Vincent was one of the opening battles of the Anglo-Spanish war of 1796-1908. It hammered for £3,300. The next lot was a miniature, but with a clasp for possibly the most famous naval battle ever, Trafalgar. So, a miniature GSM, clasp for 'TRAFALGAR', awarded to Henry Rich, a Midshipman who was serving on HMS *Defiance* during the battle which captured the Spanish ship *San Juan Nepomuceno* and the French ship *Aigle*. It hammered at £1,100. The third navy medal was a GSM with two clasps, awarded Commander Richard Morgan of HMS *Tonnant*. It came with clasps



for '14 BOAT SERVICE 1814', of which only 205 were ever issued, and 'ST DOMINGO'. The award was for action against Americans in the War of Independence and has connections to the American national anthem. It sold for £6,600.

Let's have a look at an unusual Great War Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Medal pair with League of Neutral Countries Medal, consisting of British War and Victory medals awarded to 'R.1344 O HICKS A.B R.N.V.R', bronze medallion showing British sailor shaking hands with Dutch merchant sailors. The medal is

housed in its original card case. Accompanied by a quantity of research material. The award of the League of Neutral Nations was for the following action: Lieutenant Commander Hersing in submarine U.21 was heading for home on 22 February when he met a Dutch convoy of eight steamers off the Scillies and sank six of them. In response to a wireless signal from one of them, three of HM Tugs from the newly formed Rescue Service came out from Falmouth and, with the assistance of other vessels, saved two of the steamers. The lot sold for £700.

Moving on to WWII now and

a Battle of El Alamein Casualty Military Cross Medal group of four of Lieutenant AT Almond 46th (Liverpool Welsh) Royal Tank Regiment RAC, consisting of 1942-dated George VI Military Cross (MC), 1939-45 Star, Africa Star with 8th Army bar and 1939-45 War Medal. Accompanied by the original Royal Mint case for the Military Cross, casualty forwarding slip named to 'Lieutenant AT Almond MC', bronze OSD Royal Tank Regiment collar badge, miniature Military Cross and tunic rank pips. The group sold for £1,500.

Let's combine WWII and that navy theme with the next lot, centred around the siege of Malta. The group of six medals consisted of 1939-45 Star, Atlantic Star, Africa Star, Italy Star, 1939-45 War medal with MID oak leaf and George VI Royal Navy Long Service Good Conduct medal to 'J.101813 JFE TUBB P.O HMS PEMBROKE'. Accompanied by a folder of research material the lot sold for £280. ■

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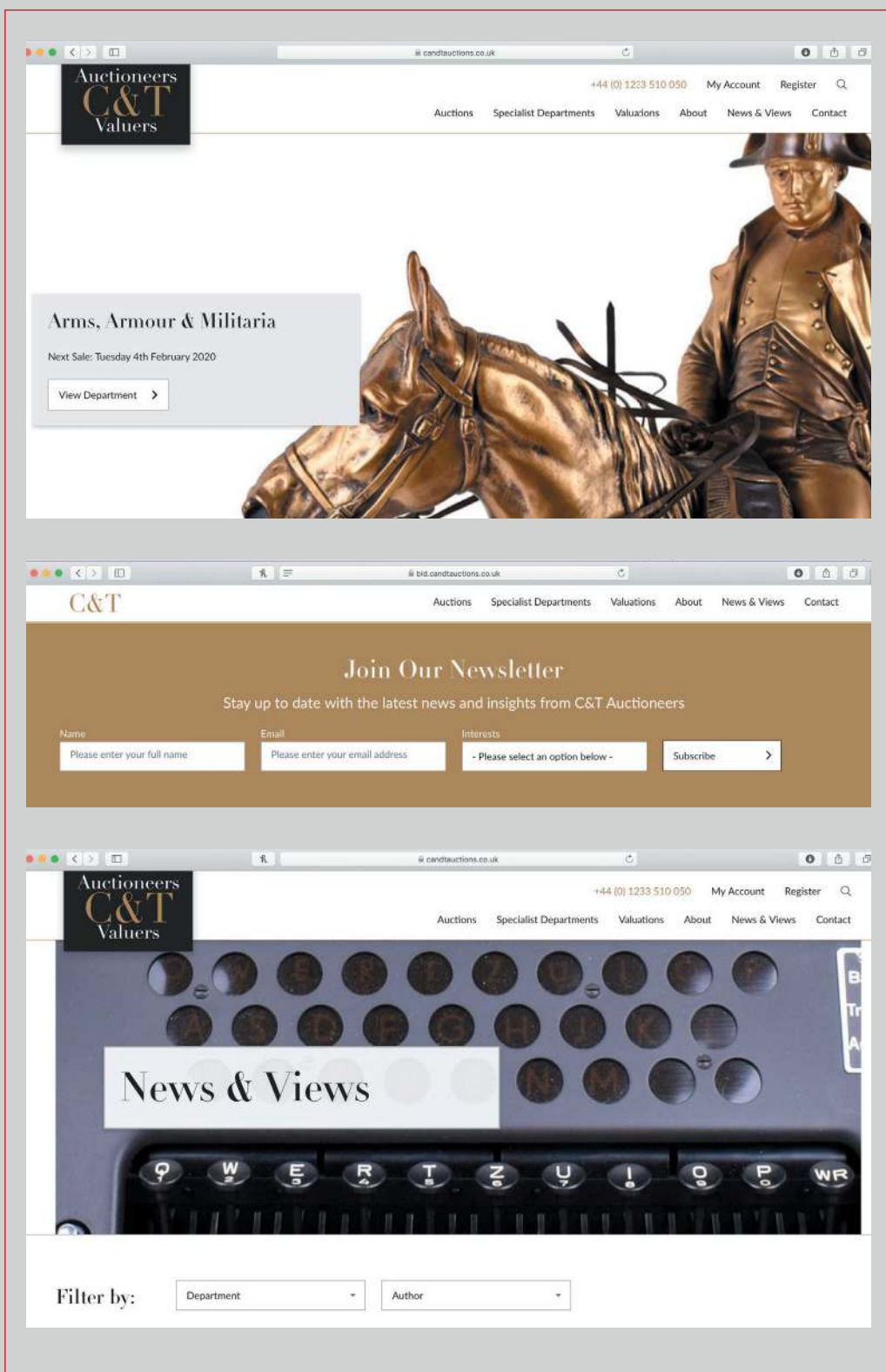
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Battles of Imphal and Kohima



Graham Caldwell describes how the Japanese invasion of India was defeated in a bloody encounter on the border with Burma

After the fall of Rangoon to the Japanese in March 1942, the British forces in Burma under Lieutenant General Bill Slim, started their retreat all the way back over the border into India, having lost most of their equipment and transport. Throughout 1943, the British-Indian Army reorganised with no major offensives planned, other than Chindit operations. These were Brigade sized long-range penetration units that disrupted supply and communications deep behind the Japanese lines in Burma (Myanmar), the brainchild of Major General Orde Charles Wingate. Strategically, the American top

priority during 1944 was the vital land route to China, otherwise it was feared that China would drop out of the war and allow the 26 Japanese divisions operating there to be used elsewhere against the Allies. By April 1944, but before the monsoon broke in June, Slim's 14th Army was ready to renew the advance back into the Burmese province of Arakan on the Indian-Burma border.

Anglo-Indian dispositions

The Chindwin River separates Burma from the northeastern Indian provinces of Manipur (provincial capital Imphal) and Nagaland (provincial capital

Kohima). The river was also the natural dividing line between the furthest advances of the Japanese Burma Area Army under General Masakazu Kawabe and the forward elements of Slim's 14th Army; namely Lieutenant General Geoffrey Scoones IV Corps at Imphal and Kohima, the former a massive base of encampments, airfields and supply warehouses operated by thousands of support troops and non-combatants. Kohima sits on a ridge with a single road that connects the main supply-base and railhead at Dimapur 45 miles north, which then passes through Kohima to Imphal, a further 85 miles south. A small garrison was kept at the administrative hill-town



(By permission of David Rowlands, artist. www.davidrowlands.co.uk)

of Kohima of miscellaneous Line of Communication troops. In fact, when Colonel Hugh Richards arrived to take command no one could tell him the exact ration strength! Imphal, standing on a 700 square-mile plain, 2,500ft above sea level and just 70 miles from the frontier with Burma, is extremely isolated, surrounded by massive ranges of jungle-covered mountains. Because the Allies were planning to take the offensive themselves, Scoones' units were positioned forward around Indian villages near to the Chindwin River, which were vulnerable to being isolated and surrounded. Based on Imphal, IV Corps dispositions were: 17th Indian Division occupied Tiddim, 150 miles to the south; 20th Indian Division was at Tamu, 68 miles southeast, 50th Indian Parachute Brigade was conducting jungle training at Ukhrul, halfway between Imphal and Kohima and the 23rd Indian Division, plus the 254th Indian Tank Brigade, were both

positioned on the Imphal Plain, the latter equipped with 120 Stuart and M3 Lee-Grant tanks, the M3 formidable in having a 75mm gun in the hull, plus a 37mm gun in the turret. Each of the three Indian infantry divisions comprised British, Indian and Gurkha battalions, supported by artillery. When intelligence was received at IV Corps that a major Japanese offensive was imminent, Scoones planned to withdraw his forward divisions back to the Imphal Plain, which would force the Japanese to fight at the end of impossibly long lines of communication. Meanwhile, however, the Japanese 15th Army began to cross the Chindwin River undetected on 8 March 1944.

Operation U-GO and Japanese initial success

Japan had no original plans to invade India, but Lieutenant General Renya Mutaguchi, a 56-year-old, fierce-tempered man of strong personality, whose opinions carried much weight, had formulated a war-winning strategic concept for South-East Asia. Impressed



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The Bren Gun

John Walter looks at the legendary Bren Gun, one of the weapons that helped to block the Japanese thrust into India. Discover how it originated in a design initially adopted by the Czechoslovakian Army and then check out the collecting opportunities.



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Japanese Imperial Army uniforms

Edward Hallett looks at the uniforms worn by Japanese soldiers in the last years of World War II. As shortages became ever greater, those garrisons furthest from supply lines began to suffer the most.



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Thompson SMG magazines

Richard Barnes, a member of The American Thompson Association, takes a look at the development of magazines for the iconic firearm. Then have a look at the prices the different versions will cost to collect.

Battles of Imphal and Kohima



Japanese infantry of the 31st Division attack British defenders on the perimeter of the Deputy Commissioner's garden tennis court at Kohima, April 1944 (Peter Dennis, *Osprey*)

with how the Chindits operated on extended lines of communication in Burma Mutaguchi, as C-in-C 15th Army, felt the concept could be emulated by simultaneously attacking Imphal and Kohima over terrain of mountainous ridges, dense jungle and rivers on an extended 100-mile precarious supply line, taking with him 20,000 cattle as fodder on the hoof, plus three-weeks reserve of food and ammunition; the short time Mutaguchi believed it would take to capture the British main base at Dimapur. Calling his stratagem: 'The March on Delhi', Mutaguchi pitched his plan to higher authorities. The proposal, after rejection by his superior General Kawabe, finally reached Prime Minister Tojo who, because he was desperate for success after recent defeats in the



Pacific theatre, authorised the venture codenamed *U-GO*, but on the condition that elements of the Indian National Army be included, which had been armed under Japanese control to overthrow the British rule in India by force. Japanese Imperial Headquarters recognised that invading the Indian north-eastern states would not only forestall 14th Army's attack plans, but also cut off the Hump, the Allied aerial supply route into China.

The offensive made a promising



Left: The border between Burma and India. Dimapur, Kohima and Imphal in northeastern India were connected by a single mountainous road (nam.ac.uk)

Above: Japanese attack and retreat routes and air-supplied Allied reinforcements. Not shown is XXXIII Indian Corps HQ, which took overall control of the Kohima battle from 3 April 1944

start stretched over a 150 mile front. The 33rd Division (Lieutenant General Motoso Yanagida) trapped the 17th Division at Tiddim in a surprise move before it had the chance to fall back, cutting it off from Imphal and capturing its supplies, before advancing towards the Imphal Plain from the south, but the 23rd Division was sent to the rescue by Scoones, resulting in both formations making it back to Imphal, causing Yanagida to suffer Mutaguchi's wrath for being



1: British Lance-Corporal of the 19th Indian Division in jungle green (*Orbis Publishing*)

2: Sepoy (Private) of the British-Indian Army, carrying a Vickers-Berthier Mk. III machine gun (*Orbis Publishing*)

3: Soldier of the 152nd (Gurkha) Parachute Battalion. Note his parachute wings and formation badge of crossed Kukri's, surmounted by a small parachute

4: A Japanese Infantryman as he would have appeared at Imphal in 1944 (*Orbis Publishing*)

5: Havildar (Sergeant) of the Indian National Army. Over 60,000 were raised by Japan to assist in the planned conquest of India (*Orbis Publishing*)

BRITISH ALLIED COMMANDERS

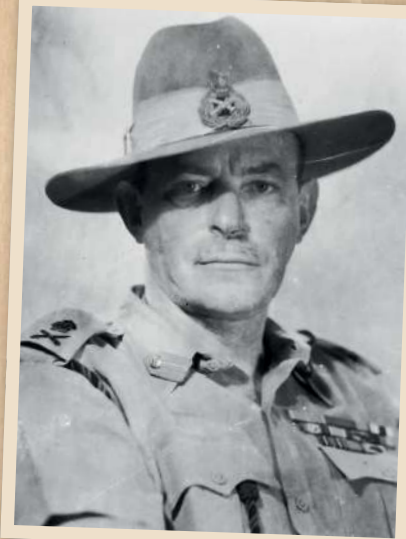
Lieutenant General Sir Geoffrey Scoones (1893-1975) was commissioned into the 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles in January 1912. He served in World War I receiving the DSO, MC and thrice mentioned in despatches. When war broke out Scoones was a Major General and a senior staff officer. Needing experience in leading large formations, Scoones briefly became GOC 19th Indian Division, followed by GOC IV Corps at the time of the Japanese U-GO offensive, which defended Imphal and Kohima on the frontier between India and Japanese-held



Lieutenant General Sir Geoffrey Scoones,
GOC British IV Corps (Imphal)

Burma, with responsibility for a large rear area of unmapped jungle. Judged as shrewd with an analytical approach to problems, his only major error was leaving it too late to order the withdrawal of 17th Division from Tiddim in mid-March 1944, which very nearly led to disaster. When Kohima seemed doomed (but before XXXIII Corps took over) he became tired and irascible, but never once lost control. Judged a good administrative and defensive commander, Scoones was dropped by General Slim for retaking Burma in 1944-45 and instead given a regional army command in India. Promoted General in 1947, Scoones ended his career as the High Commissioner to New Zealand until 1957.

Lieutenant General Sir Montagu Stopford (1892-1971) saw action in both Europe and the Far East. Commissioned into the Rifle Brigade in 1911, he served throughout WWI on the Western Front, ending as a Major with an MC and twice mentioned in despatches. At the start of WWII Stopford was promoted Brigadier and took the 17th Brigade to France, seeing much action, but ultimately he and his depleted brigade were evacuated from Dunkirk. In November 1943, following division and corps commands in the defence of the UK, Stopford, now a Lieutenant General, was sent to India as GOC XXXIII Indian Corps. When Kohima became outnumbered and besieged in March 1944, reinforcements were hurriedly built-up to relieve the town, but with IV Corps



Lieutenant General Sir Montagu Stopford,
GOC XXXIII Indian Corps (Kohima)

cut-off at Imphal, Stopford's XXXIII Corps HQ was flown out from India to take responsibility for the Kohima battle. It was not until June that Stopford completely drove the enemy out and reestablished contact with Imphal, taking over the whole front after IV Corps was stood down. Stopford went on to command his corps (and later Twelfth Army) during the re-conquest of Burma, taking the surrender of General Heitaro Kimura, C-in-C Burma Area Army, at Rangoon on 24 October 1945. Promoted General in 1946, Stopford retired as GOC-in-C Northern Command (UK) in 1949. ■

JAPANESE COMMANDER

Lieutenant General Renya Mutaguchi (1888-1966) was the originator of Operation U-GO, which he liked to call, 'The March on Delhi'. Ambitious and impatient, Mutaguchi so terrorised his staff, that they held back bad news from him with fatal consequences. He enjoyed sake and sex, in fact so confident was he that victory would be his within three weeks, he ordered his army headquarter prostitutes and geishas to be ready to fly into Imphal 10 days after the attack launched! Mutaguchi was commissioned in 1910 and served on the Army General Staff during WWI. As a regimental commander he was part-responsible for the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on 7 July 1937, which precipitated the war with China. By 1941 Mutaguchi was GOC 18th Division, which took part in the invasion of Malaya and Singapore in early 1942, when he received a shoulder wound. 18th Division then fought in the Philippines before being deployed to Burma in April 1942 to counter Chindit operations. His own 15th Army U-GO plan was authorised in January 1944 by Prime Minister Tojo, after going over the head of his own superior,

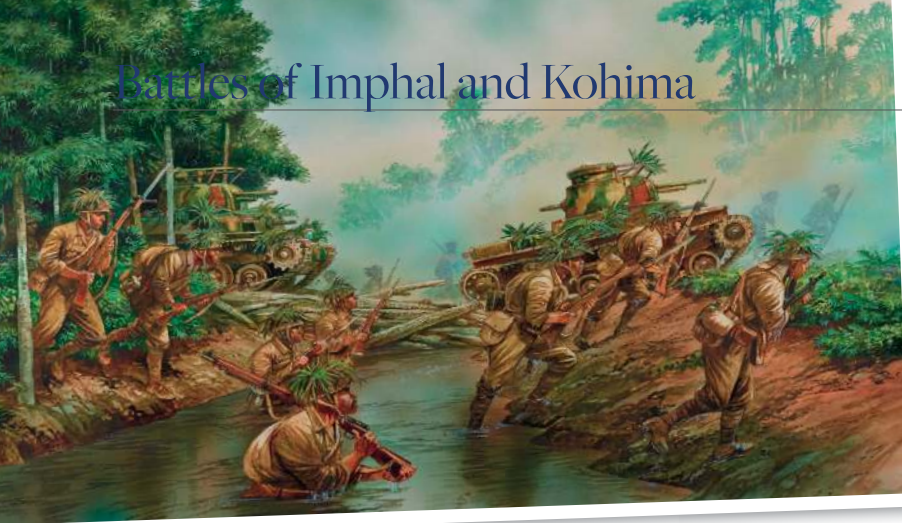


Lieutenant General Renya Mutaguchi,
C-in-C 15th Army (Operation U-GO)

General Kawabe at Burma Area Army HQ. His arrogance was on display when he told the commander of 5th Air Division that air supply was unnecessary, because Imphal's food warehouses would be in his hands in 21

days. For over a month Mutaguchi directed operations from Maymyo, hundreds of miles away, even then he lingered in Shwebo long enough to set up his staff's HQ comfort station. His morale-boosting communiqué to his troops read in part: 'If your hands are broken, fight with your feet. If there is no breath left in your body, fight with your spirit'. By sacking his three divisional commanders for stalling in their advances he was culpable in not going forward to see for himself how acute food shortages were the real cause. On 31 May events became personal when General Sato signalled: 'Propose withdrawing from Kohima with rearguard to a position suitable for re-supply'. Mutaguchi replied: 'Retreat and I will court-marshal you'. Sato responded: 'Do as you please, I will bring you down with me; the tactical ability of the 15th Army staff lies below that of cadets!' When Sato pulled his division out without authority his men were unrecognisable as soldiers, staggering half-naked, eating grass, bamboo shoots and slugs. A month after Sato was sacked, Mutaguchi was himself relieved and not re-employed. ■

Battles of Imphal and Kohima



Japanese infantry and armour of Yamamoto Force cross a river at Manipur on the Imphal Plain, 11 miles from IV Corps base at Imphal (Peter Dennis, Osprey)



An aerial photograph of the mountainous Imphal-Kohima Road as it looks today (outlookindia.com)



C-47 Dakota of RAF Transport Command releases parachutes with ammunition and rations in a clearing for the surrounded 60th Indian Parachute Brigade at Ukhrul



USAF Skytrain C-47 (Dakota's) were diverted from the vital China supply route to land reinforcements and drop supplies during the Imphal and Kohima sieges

too slow to react. Yamamoto Force (Major General Tsunoru Yamamoto) formed from infantry units detached from the 15th and 33rd Divisions and supported by the 14th Tank Regiment equipped with 66 assorted tanks, set off to destroy the 20th Division at Tamu, attacking Imphal from the east. The 15th Division (Lieutenant General Masafumi Yamauchi) aimed to envelop Imphal from the north. In a subsidiary operation 31st Division (Lieutenant General Kotoko Sato) aimed to isolate Imphal by capturing Kohima on the singular Imphal-Kohima road, then advance north to take the British Dimapur main base. An Indian

National Army brigade strength unit accompanied the offensive, principally as scouts in the opening stages, tasked to infiltrate the Indian formations to encourage them to defect, but nothing came of the enterprise.

Between 8 and 16 March the bulk of 15th Army crossed the Chindwin and Manipur Rivers and by 20 March Sato's troops besieged the 50th Indian Parachute Brigade at Ukhrul and nearby Sangshak, which had to be supplied by parachute drop; the survivors retreating to Imphal on 27 March leaving behind their wounded and equipment, but the weeks' delay had thrown Mutaguchi's timetable into disarray. On 29 March

the road between Imphal and Kohima was cut, allowing Yanagida's 33rd Division to commence its attack on Imphal, whilst Yamamoto's tank column pushed the 20th Division back 200 miles from Tamu to Nippon Hill, a defensive position on the Imphal Plain. Imphal was then besieged for the next 13 weeks and at Kohima, when Sato's 15,000 strong division came swarming out of the vegetation, there were only 1,500-odd clerks, drivers, signalmen, cooks, storemen and the newly raised 1st Assam Regiment defending the town, joined just in time by 4th Royal West Kent's on 4 April. General Slim, at 14th Army HQ in East Bengal, realised that it would be only a matter of time before IV Corps would be annihilated and the railhead, airfields and storehouses at Dimapur captured.

The battle for Imphal

Scoones evacuated 40,000 unarmed labourers and formed a series of all-round defence strongholds sited to cover airfields and store dumps, each self-contained with supplies and ammunition for 10 days. With the leading columns of 15th Army



M3 Lee-Grant Tank, obsolete in Europe by 1944, but still formidable in SE Asia, with a 75mm gun in the hull and a second 37mm gun in the turret (Purnell Publishing)



Japanese Type-97 Chi-Ha Medium Tank, the mainstay of Japanese armour with a 37mm gun, 7.7mm machine gun and crew of only two (dragonmodels.com)



Ghurkhas advancing with Lee-Grant tanks to clear Japanese forces on the Imphal-Kohima Road



Bren-Gun Carriers of the 9th Indian Brigade from Imphal race along the Imphal-Kohima Road to link-up with British 6th Brigade from Kohima. The Japanese roadblock was lifted on 22 June 1944



British infantrymen charge into dense jungle, which was typical of the terrain around the Kohima hilltop settlement



Led by their officer, who deliberately wears no rank insignia, a British patrol cross a stream after exiting from thick vegetation



After the resolute defence of Kohima, British M3 Lee-Grant tanks cross a river on the heels of the vanquished Japanese as they retreat back over the India-Burma border

approaching Imphal from the south, a request was made by Slim at the highest level to divert C-47 Skytrain (Dakota) aircraft of Allied Troop Carrier Command from supporting China over the Hump, to urgently fly in two brigades of the 5th Indian Division to reinforce Imphal, whilst its third brigade (161st) was landed at Dimapur. The outer perimeter of the Imphal Plain was a 90 mile horse-shoe shape, starting with 5th Division holding off Yamauchi's 15th Division in the north and north-east; 20th Division covered the approach of Yamamoto Force and parts of Yanagida's 33rd Division from the east; 23rd Division kept the main force of 33rd Division at bay in the south; whilst 17th Division was recuperating in corps reserve. Storemen of the 221st Indian Ordnance Depot foiled countless enemy attacks to capture anything useful, but elements of the Japanese 15th Division took the 1000ft ridge at Nungshigum overlooking the airfields. They were eventually dislodged, on 13 April, by Lee-Grant tanks of B Squadron, 3rd Carabiniers, supported by infantry, which removed the threat to Imphal's HQ. The Japanese inability to counter

Lee-Grant tanks was due to Mutaguchi's belief that tanks would be useless on the steep jungle-covered hills, deciding to leave most of his cumbersome anti-tank artillery behind. Meanwhile, Chindits operating behind the lines in Burma, had cut the Japanese food supply rail-line and blown bridges, severing the enemy's communications. Some of the bitterest fighting at Imphal took place at locations named Nippon Hill, Scraggy Hill, Crete East and West, plus Gibraltar and Malta, hills previously covered in dense jungle that were now completely bare. The Japanese made countless suicidal attacks and conditions became indescribable when the monsoon rain commenced at the end of May, yet Scoones divisions held firm. Day after day and night after night the fighting went on incessantly, often involving tanks of both sides. Of the five Victoria Crosses awarded during the campaign, four were cited at Imphal. On 22 April Mutaguchi relieved Yamauchi (15th Division) for slowness and cowardice, which started a command crisis. Next to go, on 9 May for the same reason, was Yanagida (33rd Division). Later, on 7 July at Kohima, Sato (31st Division)

was dismissed for refusing to obey orders. More troops were flown in to reinforce 5th Indian Division which, on 22 June, lifted the Imphal siege and set off along the road to link up with Stopford's troops of XXXIII Indian Corps coming down from Kohima.



Japanese infantry, supported by a tank, advance on a defensive position along the perimeter of the Imphal Plain (Ken Smith)



Battles of Imphal and Kohima



Japanese machine gunner takes aim at an overhead Allied transport plane attempting to drop supplies over the besieged Kohima garrison

Left: A posthumous Victoria Cross was awarded to Lance-Corporal John Harman, who single-handedly destroyed a Japanese machine-gun position at Kohima with just his bayonet, 9 April 1944

Fighting at Kohima

With the road cut, Slim relieved Scoones of responsibility for Kohima and flew-in Lieutenant General Montagu Stopford's XXXIII Indian Corps HQ to take control in the north, which would be incrementally reinforced. On 5 April 161st Brigade of 5th Indian Division landed at Dimapur, then moved south to Jotsoma, two miles from Kohima, to assist in the relief the besieged town, its artillery being particularly devastating. This was followed by 5th Brigade of the British 2nd Division.

By 13 April, Sato's 31st Division had forced the reduced garrison at Kohima into a small enclosure with only the width of the Deputy Commissioner's garden tennis court separating the opposing forces. So close was the fighting that soldiers threw grenades directly into each other's trenches,

plus hand-to-hand fighting was intense day and night. Sato's men swarmed everywhere, but to Mutaguchi's impatience, were too weak due to lack of food to finalise the matter. The perimeter was pushed back to 350sq. yd on top of Garrison Hill, but Colonel Roberts and his remaining defenders held on for another 11 days until 18 April, when the 1st Royal Berkshire's reached them to lift the siege. By this point only the chimneystack of the Deputy Commissioners' bungalow remained standing! When Stopford sighted the decaying corpses and rat infested shell-churned battleground, it reminded him of the Somme in 1916.

On 22 June, 6th Brigade (2nd Division) from Kohima, met up with the 9th Indian Brigade (5th Indian Division) from Imphal at milestone 107 on the Imphal-Kohima Road. Less than 20,000 of the 85,000 Japanese trudged back over the River Chindwin into Burma, the rest were all killed or had committed suicide; less than 90 Japanese surrendered. The Anglo-Indian Army counted 17,857 killed, wounded and missing. With what was left of Mutaguchi's army in full retreat, the scene was set for General Slim to re-enter Burma and take the Japanese surrender in Rangoon on 27 August 1945.

COULD THE JAPANESE HAVE WON?

Yes, if it hadn't been for the British ability to reinforce and resupply by air, a factor totally underestimated by General Mutaguchi, because without

it, his estimate of starving the two British garrisons within a couple of months was sound, once their only supply road was cut. Hardly any of Mutaguchi's cattle survived the 100-mile trek through impossible tracks, river crossings and disease to supply his troops with meat had they reached India. The Chindit operations had been successful only because of Allied air supply. Whilst Mutaguchi had witnessed this for himself, Lieutenant General Noboru Tazoe, commanding 5th Air Division, told him that of his 160 aircraft, not one was a transport plane, plus he was fully committed combatting the Chindit air-operations in Burma and thus incapable of providing any air cover for *U-GO*.

There were three all-weather airstrips on the Imphal Plain, plus three fair-weather landing grounds nearby, which the Japanese failed to capture before the onset of the monsoon. The British 5th Division alone required 30 C-47 Dakota's flying a total of 758 sorties to transport men and equipment into Imphal and Dimapur. During the 76 days that Imphal was besieged, Allied Transport Command flew in 19,000 reinforcements, 14 million tons of rations, 1,300 tons of grain for animals, 835,000 gallons of fuel, 12,000 bags of mail and 44 million cigarettes, utilising 404 aircraft from 15 RAF/USAAF squadrons. It was the all-important Allied air superiority that was to prove decisive in defeating the Japanese invasion. Nevertheless the *U-GO* offensive into India remains one of the most fascinating episodes of the Burma war and even as things turned out, it was a near run thing. ■



The Japanese 31st Division surrenders to their old Imphal-Kohima adversary, 17th Indian Division, at Thaton, Burma on 25 October 1945 (colour by Tom Thounaojam)

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The Fokker Scourge

John C Pursley looks into the influence of Anthony Fokker on aircraft design and his iconic WWI fighter plane

Although the first airplane built and successfully flown, by the Wright Brothers, was only 11 years prior to the start of WWI, the new invention would become a significant part of the military during the hostilities. During the war's early days, aircraft were not widely accepted by the old guard military leaders and rarely used but,



Three Fokker Dr.I planes, similar to that flown by Baron Manfred von Richthofen, lined up and ready for a mission (National Archives)

by the end, were a distinct and valuable armed forces entity.

The airplanes were initially used in conjunction with Zeppelins and hot-air balloons for reconnaissance missions. Their mobility and speed allowed them to fly above the battlefield to determine the enemy's movements and position.

The downside of early military flight was that the open-cockpit aircraft were very crudely and poorly manufactured making them extremely dangerous. They were made of wood and canvas, outfitted with unreliable engines, and too cramped to carry parachutes.

Enter Anthony Fokker

However, none of this deterred the progression of combat aircraft and many engineers, scientists, and businessmen became involved in the industry. One such visionary was Anthony Herman Gerard Fokker, a Dutch citizen. His interest in aviation began at age 16 after seeing his first airplane in flight, which eventually resulted in the wealthy Fokker

senior enrolling his son in a German school offering practical aeronautics courses.

Anthony Fokker was nothing like the

stereotypical aeronautics student. He had a reputation for being inattentive and preferred playing athletic games and tinkering with mechanisms to academia. However, he possessed a natural talent for flying and was a shrewd and clever businessperson.

By all accounts he performed extremely well until the instructor wrecked the first project airplane and the school dropped the course. But this did not stop Fokker from building and flying two monoplanes.

After the completion of his third project in 1912, Fokker took it to his native Holland where his father was so impressed, he financed a company for his son to manufacture airplanes in Johannisthal, Germany, a centre of aeronautical activity.

Being quite astute, Fokker quickly realised there was an opportunity to make a great amount of money through securing military contracts. To that end, he designed and built a scout plane capable of being trucked to a location and put together in minutes. After witnessing the assembly and flight, the German

Army representatives immediately ordered two of the

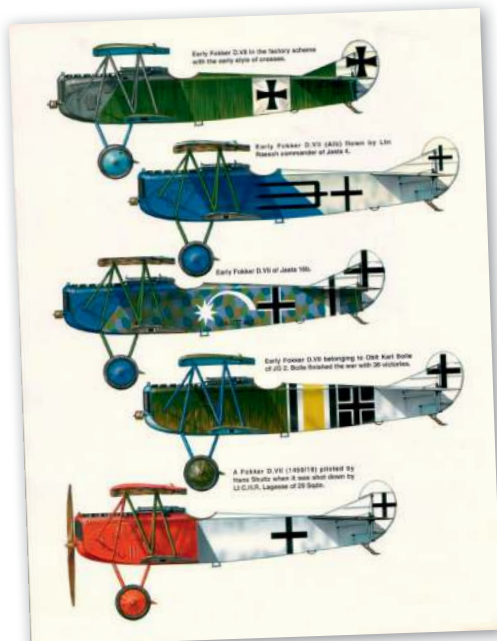


The first impression of the Fokker D.VII was such that Allied pilots seriously underestimated its abilities



The Fokker triplane made famous by the Red Baron, although less than half his kills were in this type of airplane

The Fokker Scourge



Above: A rendering of several Fokker D.VIIIs demonstrating the individuality pilots were allowed to display in the early days of military aviation (*Weapons and Warfare.com*)



Anthony Fokker sitting in the highly successful E.I during the early days of WWI. The planes became known as the Fokker Scourge after being fitted with a forward-firing machine gun



The future commander of the German Air Force and aviation ace Hermann Göring posing next to his all-white D.VII Fokker (*History.net*)



Crude by today's standards, the cockpit of the Fokker D.VIII was state-of-the-art and there seems to be a lot to do for one pilot (*National Air and Space Museum*)



The engine and cockpit component of the Fokker D.VII (*Wingnuts.com*)

planes for testing.

The business of selling airplanes

In 1914, Fokker moved his manufacturing business to Schwerin, Germany and, like millions of others, was taken completely by surprise by the outbreak of WWI. He decided to stay in Germany when Holland declared itself a neutral nation and was soon swamped with orders for his unarmed observation and scout planes.

Although they conducted business together, the German high command didn't totally accept Fokker because of his Dutch citizenship and demonstrated their feelings by denying him access to the best German aircraft engines available. In their place, Fokker was issued a license for his company to build copies of the less powerful, and not as reliable, French Le Rhône rotary engine. Making matters worse the war limited the import of castor oil which, unfortunately, was the lubricant for those engines.

Fokker realized he would get nowhere as an aircraft industrialist without more orders from the German military. In an effort to appease them he applied for citizenship to no avail so his access to



One of two deadly machine guns mounted on the D.VII. By the time this plane came out all of the problems with the synchronised interrupter gear had been solved (*National Air and Space Museum*)



The engine mounted into the D.VII

better engines remained unchanged and his products were regarded as inferior.

Meanwhile, on the Western Front, pilots began shooting at one another with small arms until Frenchman Ramon Garros outfitted his plane with a forward firing machine-gun. To keep from shooting off his propeller, he installed metal deflector wedges. On 1 April 1915 Garros became the first-ever pilot to shoot down another aircraft by firing through a tractor propeller.

Two weeks later while on a mission, Garros was forced to land his plane on the German side of the lines. He was taken prisoner before he could destroy his plane which allowed the enemy to remove the still-intact machine gun and armoured propeller.

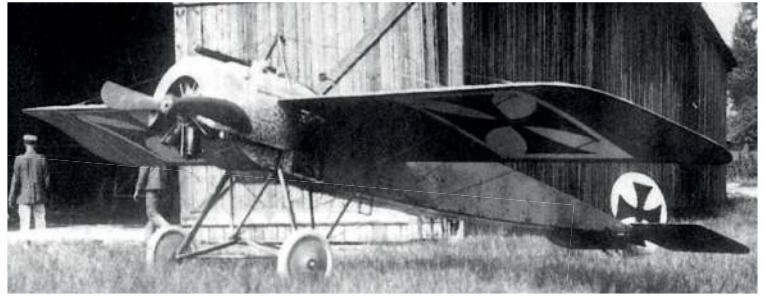
Fokker's big break

The German High Command subsequently ordered Fokker to outfit his planes with bullet deflecting metal plates, but he had other plans. He'd spent the previous six months on a mechanism to synchronise a machine gun's firing with propeller rotation so bullets would never contact the blades.

In the late spring of 1915 Fokker mounted the gun and firing gear on



Flying at over 20,000ft in a Fokker Dr.I on a cold winter day, in an open cockpit without the benefit of a parachute, required nerve and endurance



Initially a reconnaissance plane, once fitted with a machine gun and an interrupter gear the E.I Monoplane became known as the Fokker Scourge



Flying in a restored Fokker Dr.I must be a fairly expensive thrill. They are not as big as we may have once believed (*Aviation Stack Exchange*)



To honour his achievements, KLM airline celebrated the Fokker heritage with tail fins emblazoned with his image during the final days of using his planes (*ZAP16.com*)

one of his E.I monoplanes and created the first truly effective fighter plane in history. The fact that Fokker's new airplane surpassed everything else flying at that time was now impossible for the German air service to ignore.

The first victory by a Fokker was in August 1915 and from then on his planes shot down so many Allied aircraft they became known as the Fokker Scourge. As a result, the Germans gained control over the Western Front airspace for the next year with their unfortunate victims referred to as Fokker Fodder.

Realising the benefits, the Germans manufactured as many of Fokker's armed monoplanes as possible and sent them into combat against an almost defenseless enemy. The planes devastated the English and French aviators and the secret was kept until April 1916 when a Fokker-outfitted plane fell into French hands. In a technology arms race, by mid-1916 the firing interrupter gear was no longer sufficient to keep Fokker's planes competitive as Allied aeronautic developments produced faster, better airplanes.

The orders started to dry up but, as luck would have it, in June his fortunes were reversed when his chief designer Martin Kreutzer was killed as a result of a

jammed rudder while testing a prototype. Fokker arrived on the scene and is said to have yelled reprimands at the dying man for wrecking his plane. His replacement, Franz Möser, was subsequently directed by Fokker to develop a several models utilising the new wooden cantilevered wing configuration.

In 1917, the Di.I triplane was placed into production and quickly became one of the most daunting fighters invented to date. However, the famous Baron Manfred von Richthofen, the Red Baron, scored only 19 of his 80 kills in this type of aircraft, despite the popular link between them. But, after April 1918, the Di.I had already been out-classed by new Allied twin-gunned biplanes.

Fokker's D.VII, the best fighter of WWI

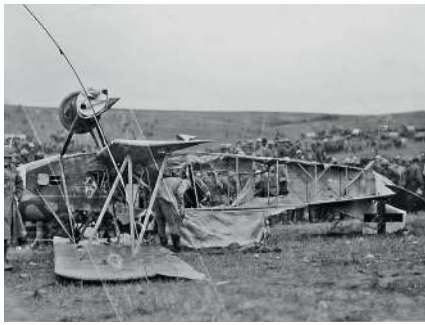
During January 1918, the German authorities collectively chose Fokker's new D.VII during a competition for a better fighter and after some alterations were completed, a large order for the new plane was made. Outfitted with a 160hp Mercedes engine it lacked a little power but reached a speed of 116mph and performed operations at levels up to 22,900ft.

Armed with two machine guns firing through the propeller arc, when the plane appeared on the Western Front in April 1918, Allied pilots underestimated it because of its squarish appearance but the D.VII quickly established itself as the dominant single-seat fighter.

Most of the aircraft at that time were constructed with wooden frames, but the fuselage, tail surfaces, external wing, and landing gear struts of the D.VII were fabricated out of a framework of welded lightweight steel tubes. The wings were a basic plywood cantilevered box structure with the leading edges clad in plywood veneer and the remainder covered with fabric.

It was very responsive without being demanding and its flying qualities helped make an average pilot appear better. It remained maneuverable at high altitude and, because of the heavy wing construction, could hang on its propeller and fire at the undercarriage of an enemy's plane from a position that would cause other planes to stall.

The plane was also very sturdy, could sustain significant battle damage, and when the 185hp BMW engine became available and was installed, the D.VII was transformed into a force to be reckoned with. Flying ace Hermann



Allied soldiers inspect the remains of a crashed D.VII. Most planes of the time would have been totally destroyed upon impact, but the steel-tube frame used by Fokker made for a much stronger unit



Above: A line of biplanes, ready for combat, in front of the machine shed with the sign for 'Fokker'



A restored E.III Eindecker in flight. Tiny by modern standards, the plane was a menace over the Western Front

Göring quickly achieved many victories flying his white-coloured Fokker. By July there were 407 in service with more delivered in August, when the D. VII's achieved 565 victories. When the war ended in November 1918, some 775 D.VII aircraft were in service.

Although the D.VII had not been in production long, by the end of the war roughly 70 German fighter squadrons contained at least a few of them. Approximately 3,300 D.VII's were manufactured and many were doled out to Allied countries after the war.

Another achievement for Fokker was his revolutionary D.VIII parasol-monoplane. Unfortunately, due to wing structural failures it was grounded until late October 1918 before it appeared on the front lines. After being involved in the few days of combat remaining in the war the flying razorblade, as it was referred to by the British, established itself as a first-class fighter.

The end of the war

Fokker was only 28 years old when the war ended and he left Germany for the Netherlands with his £1.5 million fortune (£90 million today) and fiancée, the daughter of a German general. Not before he carefully hid 400 engines and 200 airframes though, which were eventually smuggled into Holland.

His new company sold Fokker military airplanes, which included the highly successful Fokker C.V reconnaissance aircraft, to Russia, Romania and the covert German air force. Eventually the customers

COLLECTING WWI AVIATOR ITEMS

Flying gear of the German Air Force of WWI is scarce, so your best source are European auction sites like Ratisbon's and Hermann Historica. You can pick up replica flight uniforms for around £140. However, there was a genuine German fighter pilot leather cap in good condition on eBay, for £220. Items such as vintage prints or aerial recon photos are more plentiful and can be found from around £30-£40. There are also items such as airmen binoculars, from around £60, and items to individuals like medals that can be linked to pilots. A cased watch, Iron Cross, button and Wound Badge, all attributed to a German WWI pilot, were for sale for £1,235 on eBay. A search also found an Imperial German Zeppelin badge for £245 and a WWI Pilot's Badge for £250.



Taken from a German pilot of WWI, here's a watch, Iron Cross and Wound Badge in a case

included the Royal Netherlands Air Force, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Hungary, and Italy. The commercial airlines market was also prosperous.

In 1924, Fokker emigrated to the United States to start the Atlantic Aircraft Corporation and soon after, created the famous Fokker trimotor. The concept was an immediate success and quickly became the world's standard for airline comfort and safety. A Fokker trimotor was used by Commander Byrd and Floyd Bennett when they made the first flight over the North Pole. Later a similar plane was used to make the first flight from California to Hawaii.

Business mogul Juan Terry Trippe recognised the commercial potential of the Fokker trimotor and bought several for his Pan American Airway Company. In 1929, General Motors acquired control of Fokker Aircraft Corporation and Anthony Fokker was named Technical Director of several projects.

The Flying Dutchman, as Fokker was known, died on 23 December 1939. He was an astute business entrepreneur and had a talent of recognising the importance other engineers' work.

The Fokker company produced a variety of modern passenger and commercial jet airliners and turbo-prop planes but eventually declared bankruptcy in 1976. The last commercial flight of a Fokker plane was for KLM in 2017. As a tribute, the starboard side of the tail was adorned with a portrait of a young Fokker wearing an early leather aviator cap and goggles. ■



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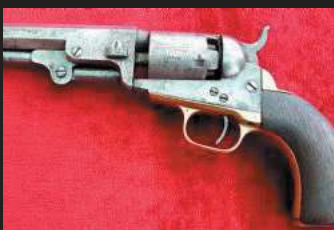
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The Battles of the Nive

Mark Simner examines two of the fiercest battles fought during the climatic phase of the Peninsular War

Following the Allied storming of San Sebastián in September 1813, Arthur Wellesley, the Marquess of Wellington, commenced a pursuit of French Marshal Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult as he withdrew his army towards the Bidassoa River to take up defensive positions on the Franco-Spanish border. The ensuing clash on 7 October on the Bidassoa resulted in the Allies gaining an important foothold on French territory. On 13 November, Wellington and Soult again fought near a river, the Nive, which ended in another handsome victory for the British general. The Peninsular War had entered its final climatic phase but there would be more bitter fighting ahead.

Opposing plans

Driven from the Nive, Soult withdrew to Bayonne where he took advantage of a strongly fortified military base. The Marshal had only 63,000 men, but now he was back on French soil, he knew he could

expect reinforcements. Soult deployed his forces just south of Bayonne and along the east bank of the Nive River, establishing a bridgehead on the west bank at Cambo. Here he placed four divisions with the intention of using them to attack the flank of the expected Allied advance up the coast. Bayonne, itself, was easily defended since the Atlantic offered protection to the west while the Adour River did the same to the east. Soult presumed Wellington would have little choice but to advance along the coast into the narrowing triangle of land formed by the Atlantic and the Nive.

Wellington intended to advance on Bayonne from both the east and the south. His plan was to force Soult to abandon the city by threatening his only line of retirement. The downside of this plan was it forced Wellington to divide his army in order to operate either side of the Nive. The river was also threatening to flood, which it did on 16 November just as Allied forces managed to drive in the French bridgehead at Cambo. Wellington could do little but wait for three weeks

as the flood waters slowly receded.

It was not until 9 December that Wellington could resume operations. Rowland Hill's 2nd Division and Carlos Frederico Le Cor's Portuguese Division were to cross the Nive by fording at Cambo, then advance north along the east bank. The 3rd and 6th Divisions under William Beresford were to cross at Ustaritz using a pontoon bridge. Following Beresford were the 4th and 7th Divisions, which acted as Wellington's reserve. John Hope, with the 1st and 5th Divisions, was to conduct an advance along the coast to make a demonstration against Soult's main position at Bayonne. Charles Alten's Light Division was to defend the centre near Bassussary while Pablo Morillo's Spanish Division was to engage French troops located south of Cambo.

The Battle of the Nive

The battle commenced just before dawn on 9 December 1813. Hill and Beresford crossed the Nive encountering little resistance as Soult pulled his

The Battle of Nive, 10 November 1813, another in a long list of victories for Wellington (J.J. Jenkins)





Sir Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington (Thomas Lawrence)



Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult (Louis Henri de Rudder)

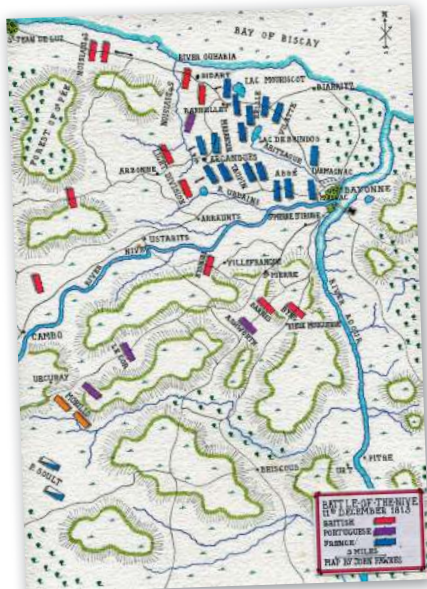


Rowland Hill, who commanded Allied forces at the Battle of St. Pierre (William Beechey)



John Hope, who advanced along the coast road with 1st and 5th Divisions, as Soult had expected

outnumbered divisions back towards Bayonne. Hope's advance also faced little opposition and was able to establish a line stretching from Biarritz to Arcangues.



Map of the Battle of the Nive, 9-12 December 1813

However, the Allies would encounter strong resistance the following morning from Soult, who had concentrated nine of his divisions, totalling some 50,000 men, south of Bayonne.

Alten's Light Division was attacked by four French divisions under Bertrand Clausel, who relentlessly pushed Alten's men back for two miles into Arcangues. Captain John Kincaid of the 95th Rifles was caught up in the melee: 'We no sooner moved up, than we found ourselves a party engaged ... under a heavy skirmishing fire, retiring gradually from hedge to hedge, according as the superior force of the enemy compelled us to give ground.'

The French made no attempt to drive the Light Division out of the village, but a deadly contest between riflemen of the 43rd Light Infantry and 12 French artillery gun crews took place, the latter eventually abandoning their guns after sustaining heavy casualties. Nevertheless, the French attempted to outflank Arcangues only to be stopped

dead in their tracks by 7th Division.

Honoré Charles Reille led three French divisions along the coastal road towards St Jean de Luz, forcing Hope's picquets to fall back three miles to the Château Barrouillet. The first of Reille's divisions then came up against two Portuguese brigades, who blunted the French advance, although Reille simply sent forward another division to threaten the Allied right-flank. This new threat was barely met in time by 5th Division but Reille again ordered another of his divisions into the fray, and it looked as if Hope would again be forced to retire. Fortunately for the Allies, Matthew Whitworth-Aylmer's Independent Brigade and detachments from 1st Division managed to check the determined French attack. As fighting continued into the afternoon of the 10th, the French assault around Arcangues slowly fizzled out before withdrawing.

The night of the 10th/11th was largely uneventful, but in the morning, Soult again went on the offensive



Charles August von Alten, commander of the Light Division (Joseph Paelinck)



Pablo Morillo, who commanded the Spanish Division tasked with engaging French troops south of Cambo (Horace Vernet)

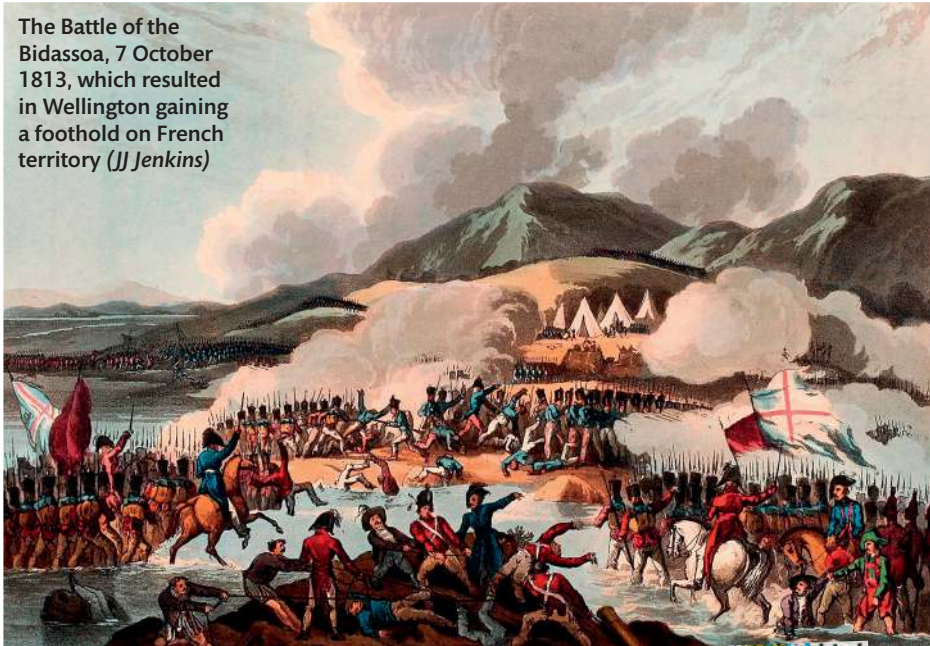


Matthew Whitworth-Aylmer, who commanded an independent brigade during the Battle of the Nive



William Beresford, who led the 3rd and 6th across the Nive at Ustaritz (William Beechey)

The Battle of the Bidassoa, 7 October 1813, which resulted in Wellington gaining a foothold on French territory (JJ Jenkins)

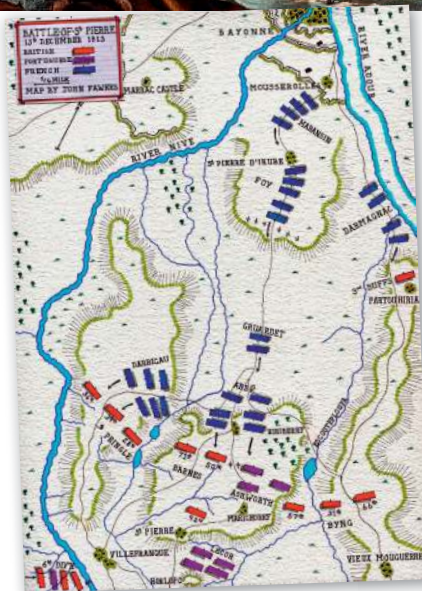


against Allied positions at Barrouillet. Again the Allies were robustly driven back for about a mile but Hope, who now had the 4th and 7th Divisions at his disposal after they had been redeployed by Wellington from the east to the west bank of the Nive the evening before, was able to stand firm against the French. Soult understood that his latest assault was unlikely to succeed and so ordered his men to withdraw. Nevertheless, the French had managed to effectively halt Wellington's advance.

Soult attempted one more assault on the 12th, which saw limited success when French troops briefly occupied Château Barrouillet. However, Allied troops were quick to drive them out at bayonet point and retake the château. This marked the effective end of the Battle of the Nive. Casualties for both sides stood at around 1,500 to 1,600 killed, wounded or missing. However, another battle hot on the tail of the Nive would take place at St. Pierre on the 13th, in what would also become one of the most bitter contests of the Peninsular War.

The Battle of St. Pierre

Having invested Bayonne, Wellington grew concerned that his forces were too dispersed. In particular, he worried that Hill, who had only 14,000 men and 14 guns on the eastern side of the Nive near St. Pierre d'Irube, was cut off from the rest of the Allied army and vulnerable to attack. In such an event, Hill would have little choice but to hold



Map of the Battle of St. Pierre, 13 December 1813

out until reinforcements could reach him via pontoon crossings at Ustaritz and Villefranque. Unfortunately for Hill, the river unexpectedly rose sharply on the night of the 12th due to heavy rain. A surge of water swept away the bridge at Villefranque.

The terrain over which the forthcoming Battle of St. Pierre would be fought consisted of a series of three ridges, in between which was swampy ground. The road connecting Bayonne and St-Jean-Pied-de-Port ran along the centre ridge. Hill decided to defend all three ridges, placing William Pringle's Brigade on his left near the Château Larralde, John Byng's Brigade on the right and Edward Barnes's Brigade and Charles Ashworth's Portuguese Brigade, along with the most of his guns, in the

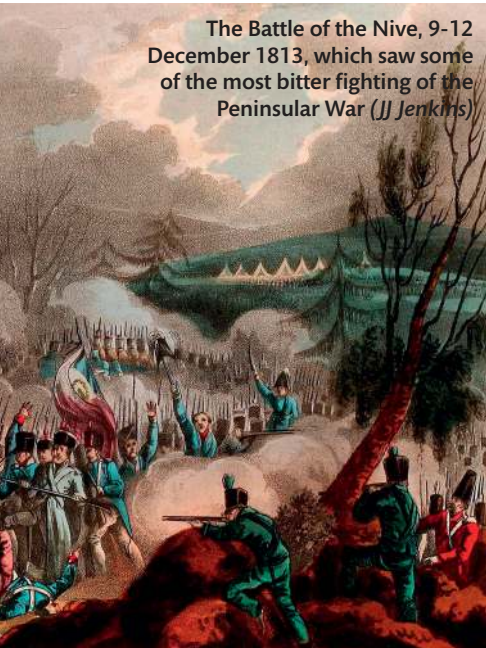
centre. It would be in the centre where Hill expected the French to launch their main assault.

The attack came at 8am on the 13th, when columns of French infantry could be seen advancing on Hill's position. Kincaid recalled the moment when he realised Hill was under attack: 'As soon as day began to dawn ... a tremendous fire of artillery and musketry was heard to our right. Soult had withdrawn every thing [sic.] from our front in the course of the night, and had now attacked Rowland Hill with his whole force.'

Soult's attacking force numbered 35,000 men with 22 guns, vastly outnumbering Hill's force. Pringle's Brigade, numbering no more than 1,800, was faced with a French force of 5,000. In the middle of this onslaught was the Colonel of the 28th Foot, who was heard to stoically remark, "Dead or alive, we must hold our ground." Byng's Brigade similarly came under intense pressure, the 3rd Foot (The Buffs), who had been placed 800yd forward at Partouhirie, were mercilessly driven back past Mouguerre. This left the rear of Ashworth's Brigade exposed and vulnerable. The battle was not going well for Hill and defeat seemingly loomed.

As Hill had expected, the main thrust of the French assault was directed at the Allied centre. This consisted of 6,000 men of Louis Jean Nicolas Abbé's division, who sharply pushed home their attack and soon began to drive back the Allied line. Barnes, at the head of the 92nd Highlanders, counterattacked but the French kept up their relentless pressure. A near disaster

The Battle of the Nive, 9-12 December 1813, which saw some of the most bitter fighting of the Peninsular War (JJ Jenkins)



The Battle of St. Pierre, 13 December 1813, a desperate action that almost ended in French victory (JJ Jenkins)



then struck the Allied force, when the 71st Highlanders were ordered by their nervous commanding officer, Sir Nathaniel Peacock, to abandon their positions, much to Hill's irritation.

Hill's centre now appeared on the verge of breaking, and so he ordered up Le Cor's Division, which had formed a reserve, and moved men over from his right. William Stewart gathered the men of the 71st, reformed their ranks and lead them forward once again against the French. Nevertheless, after four hours of bitter fighting, Soult believed victory was within his grasp and likewise poured in reinforcements.

Finally, Hill now launched his all-out counterattack, personally leading the way. The 92nd Highlanders conducted a bayonet charge, a piper, suffering from a broken leg, at the front playing his pipes. Stewart was also out at the front and was heard to remark when a shell landed near his feet, "A shell, Sir, very animating." It had been a desperate attempt to halt the French advance, but it had worked. Soult's assault stalled, albeit seemingly only temporarily.

Nevertheless, Hill had done enough. Wellington and the 6th Division were by now across the river and approaching within sight of both Hill and the French. In addition, the 3rd, 4th and 7th Divisions were also across, the bridge at Villefranque having been hurriedly rebuilt. Hill gave over command of the battle to Wellington, but he declined saying, "My dear Hill, the day's your own." Buoyed by this, Hill now went on the attack. At 2pm, he ordered a general advance

and within an hour the French were conducting a full withdrawal.

The Battle of St. Pierre ended in Allied victory, but it had been one of the most desperate of the whole war. The Allies had suffered almost 1,800 casualties while the French lost over 3,000. Indeed, in a letter to Wellington written just after the battle, Hill stated: 'From the fire of our artillery and the gallant resistance the enemy met with at all points, his loss is immense.' Yet, it almost ended in victory for Soult with Hill holding out only just long enough for reinforcements to arrive.

It had been a brilliant campaign for

Wellington. However, the Battles of the Nive had proved to be some of the fiercest of the whole Peninsular War. Nevertheless, the French were now shut up in Bayonne and after almost six years of war Allied victory over France would come in just four more months.

Collecting medals of the Battles of the Nive

The Military General Service Medal (MGSM) offers the collector a personal link to the men who were present in December 1813. Both battles, known collectively by historians as the Battles of the Nive, are recognised on the MGSM with the clasp 'Nive'. The medals are named to the recipient so offer potential research opportunities. Prices can vary considerably depending on the combination of clasps, the recipient and regiment. However, it is possible to find entry-level examples starting from around £1,000 to £1,200. ■



The Military General Service Medal with a clasp for 'Nive' (Auckland War Memorial Museum)

FIGHT THE BATTLE

If you're interested in wargaming this Peninsular War battle then have a



look at the January issue of sister title, *Miniature Wargames*. It contains a 10-page battle report, re-enacting the conflict, using Warlord Games' *Black Powder* rules. You can buy a back issue from this link: <http://tiny.cc/z4k1iz>

The German Labour Service awards

Jamie Cross investigates the medals and badges of the Third Reich's civilian construction service

The RAD, as it was finally called, underwent a number of name changes throughout its history. Originally called the Deutscher Arbeitsdienst (German Labour Service), Freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst (Voluntary Labour Service, FAD), or The National Socialist Labour Service (NSAD), the organisation was set up by Konstantin Hierl who was a WWI and Fricorps veteran. Hierl's idea pre-dated his association with Hitler's National Socialist party. Whilst in the German Reichswehr, he proposed the establishment of a labour service for fit males between the ages of 17 and 35. This was put forward not only to help Germany get back onto her feet, but to help with social reform of moving Germany beyond the class-based structure, held together by traditions from the past, using peoples' abilities to the best advantage.

Dissatisfied with the Reichswehr, he retired in September of 1924 and joined his comrade General Ludendorff when he founded the Tannenberg Bund in 1925. Hierl became the organisational leader for South Germany but, once



Reichsarbeitsführer Konstantin Hierl, leader of the RAD. Holder of the Golden Party Badge

again, his Labour Service plans were not advocated. So he left, joining Adolf Hitler and the NSDAP on 20 April 1929. Hitler was well aware of Hierl's military and organisational skills so put him in charge of the party's Organisationsabteilung II (organisation department), with an office in the Brown House in Munich. He was commissioned to come up

with a working Arbeitsdienst Plan (Labour Service Plan). This is, indeed, what he did. Hierl was also elected to the Reichstag as a National Socialist Deputy in 1930 where he put forward his state labour plan. This benefited from Germany, like much of the world, slipping into the Great Depression of the 1930s. The then-German Chancellor Brüning, envisioned these labour camps as only temporary to help the unemployed. Some German states used the Labour Service for farming, others construction. All service in this organisation was voluntary, hence the title Freiwilliger. The Treaty of Versailles had banned any compulsory labour service because it feared that it would have military training elements.

As time went on, these camps became state-wide and state funded, with leadership courses, training and research camps set up throughout Germany.

With Hitler becoming Chancellor in 1933, the RAD started to absorb all the other labour services, both local and state run. Also, by this time, a uniform had come into effect with its own distinct hats, insignia and ranks.

A parade at the Nuremberg Rally where each member was carrying a spade





RAD men in uniforms with clear military overtones



The RAD cap badge for men on the cover of a photographic album

After reaching the age of 19 young men were now being conscripted into the RAD to serve for a six month period. Young women were also eligible to enrol and many did. The Womens Labour Service (Frauenarbeitsdienst FAD) was then incorporated into the RAD, as the RADwj in April of 1936. They too were given their own uniforms and insignia.

The RAD first took part in the 1934 Annual Party Rally at Nuremberg where 50,000 members paraded, with the RADwj following on in 1937. Membership was expanded in 1938 to Austrians and ethnic Germans in Sudetenland and Memelland.

The organisation was set up along semi-military lines, with members from the RAD serving in a combat capacity before the end of the war. Members of the RAD could be highly trained, with many courses open to people with ability.

The RAD was used within Germany and the occupied territories on a number of projects, and members could be found building runways, repairing roads, trains, cars and other vehicles, as well as farming, ditch digging, anti-tank trap construction, working as firemen, forestry workers and other emergency relief projects. One project that the membership of the RAD took part in was the German Siegfried Line, with the 2nd award of the German Defence Wall Decoration, (West Wall Medal as is often called in collectors' circles) being given to Reichsarbeitsfuhrer Konstantin Hierl, just after Dr Fritz Todt, Minister of Armaments on 23 November 1939.

Originally, the RAD members were unarmed but, as the war progressed, members found themselves in many war zones so, by 1943, military instruction was made part of the RAD training.

Young recruits from the age of 16

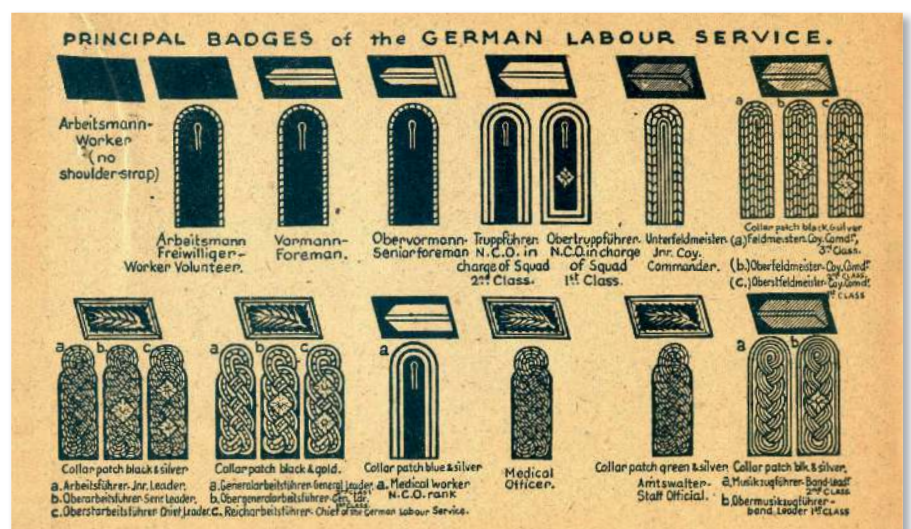


Above: Court mounted medal group with Iron Cross, Eastern Front and RAD

Below: The principle badges and collar patches of the Labour Service



Right: A RAD member wearing the Rad Hewer



years six months were taught how to shoot, lay minefields, use both grenades and anti-tank weapons as well as taking part in flak gun service. During the course of World War II, members of the RAD were awarded the rare Knights Cross of the Iron Cross. The leader and founder of the RAD Reichsarbeitsfuhrer Konstantin Hierl, was awarded the

very rare Golden Cross of the German Order with Oakleaves and swords, one of only 10 of these awards given during WWII. At the end of the war Reichsarbeitsfuhrer Konstantin Hierl was taken prisoner. He along with his RAD members had no indictments against them. As such the service was not banned or declared a criminal

The German Labour Service awards



Female RAD pass issued to a 19-year old woman in 1941

RAD Service awards in bronze, silver and gilt for men and women

Above: German Other Ranks belt buckle – these are very collectable in their own right
Right: Traditional badges for the German Labour Service

Above: Female service badges, with 'RADWJ' lettering including the War Service badge

organisation like the Waffen-SS, NSDAP or the Gestapo.

The German Labour Service like many of Germany's semi-military groups, had its own insignia and badges, as well as long service awards and decorations that members would strive to achieve. Here are some of them.

Long Service awards

Instituted on 30 January 1938. These oval medals show, to the centre, the RAD designs of the cap badge, for both male and female members.

The men's award has an upwards-pointing spade with a swastika to the centre, flanked by two ears of corn. The women's award has just a swastika and two ears of corn. These awards come in bronze for four years service and were worn on a plain blue ribbon. Next came a silver award for 12 years of service, again worn suspended on a plain blue ribbon. Then there is another silver award for 18 years of service, this time with the national eagle and swastika in silver on the ribbon. Lastly, the 25 year service

award came in gilt with a gilt eagle to the blue ribbon. Conscripted labour did not qualify you for this award and, as such, these awards are now hard to find.

The bronze four year and silver 12 year awards came in a brown card box and the 18 year and 25 year awards came in a nice brown, hard two-piece hinged case with the years printed to the lids. Female awards can be found mounted on a bowed ribbon and, on the whole, are much rarer than the mens' award. The 25 year service awards are very hard to find, whether male or



Female RAD 12 year's service award with the bowed ribbon fixing

female. It is worth pointing out that all the awards are the same size, but you will find some are made from heavy tombak and plated, while others are of a couple of manufacture and these are very light. When worn, only one medal could be worn at any time, even if you held a lower grade example. So, you would wear your silver 12 year award and not the four year bronze award with it. There was also a rare ribbon emblem, that was only around for three months, that is in the shape of the RAD male medal centre or RAD female medal centre. This was worn over the left breast pocket on military and semi-military tunics.

RAD Badges

The RAD cap badge follows the same design as the medal. In the centre is an up-turned red-edged spade with a white centre and black swastika for men and a plain swastika and ears of corn within an oval wreath for the women. The mens' cap badge is sometimes found in enamel and these are often maker-marked.



A maker-marked, female Labour Service badge

Civil membership badges of the RAD

A RAD service badge, a Norway RAD and Sudentanland state labour service day badge

Above and right: The RAD insignia, cap badges and a collar patch

The females in the RADwj also had service and rank badges, that often turn up on the collector's market. These awards are designed by Egon Jantke, who was also responsible for the RAD Long Service Awards, along with the Rad Hewer (dagger) and a lot of the Service insignia. These rank and service awards are round with, to the centre, a swastika above the ears of corn and, around the edge, a plain or raised border. The badges came in four colours of iron, bronze, silver and gold and then they are split into three by the edge border which was either plain, a raised circle or a rope. The badges are commonly found in iron and bronze, but are harder to find in silver and gold. The next rank badge in the series is oval, with the swastika again to the centre and a stylised rope border. These awards are of silver zinc metal.

Other female RADwj badges are worth mentioning. The War Volunteer Service Badge is like the other service badges but has the swastika and ears of corn with a scroll along the base, along with the letters 'RADwj'. This badge is quite



Female service badge with the words, 'Reichsarbeitsdienst - Weibliche Jugend' around the outside

common and can be found without too much difficulty, unlike the next two female RAD brooches which will take more searching.

Both are round and have a swastika to the centre. Around the edge, in German, is the wording: 'Work for our people work for ourselves German Womens Service'. This badge is often numbered. The other is also a round badge with the wording around the edge: 'REICHSARBEITSDIENST REIBLICHE JUGEND' which was given for one year's service. All these awards were worn at the throat.

As stated earlier, male and female members wore a uniform unique to the

RAD, along with insignia. The men wore, on their sleeve, a down-turned spade with either a combination of letters, numbers or both, and the women also wore a shield with their emblem and either letters, numbers or both, on them.

Often worn on the Robin Hood caps by members of the RAD were unit tradition badges. These colourful badges can be found on the right side of many of the caps. Designs vary from unit to unit and most relate to the area that they came from. These semi-official badges range in quality and construction.

Other occupied countries even copied the same structure as the German State Labour Service and, as such, you can sometimes find rare awards and badges that mirror these German counterparts. A few examples from some of the occupied territories are shown.

This is only a brief look at the German State Labour Service to give you a rough overview on the items of insignia and awards. For an in-depth study, the reader is invited to read *Labour Organizations of the Third Reich* by JR Angolia and David Littlejohn. ■

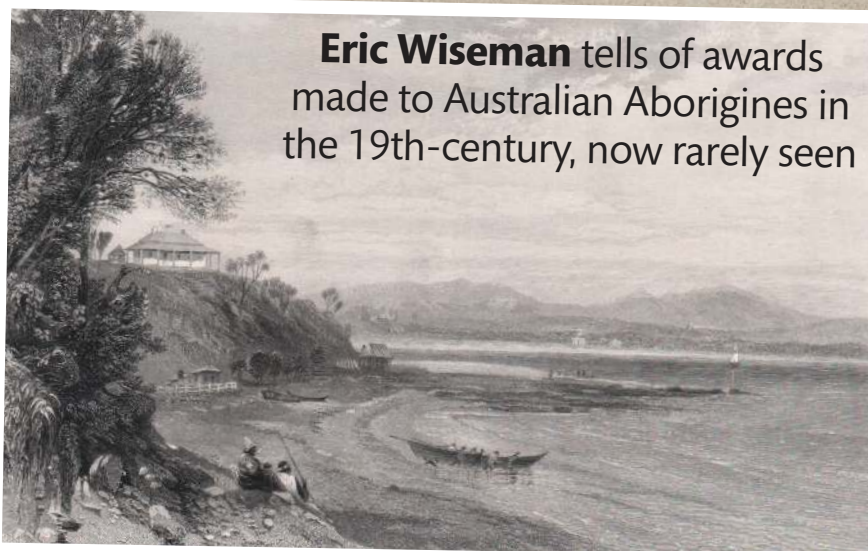
The Broulee shipwreck breastplates

Very early on the morning of October 13, 1841, the people of Broulee, on the New South Wales South Coast saw a schooner tearing south with a strong northerly wind behind her. They saw her again that afternoon, the wind had changed, as it often does in those parts, and had turned into a southerly gale. Her sails were tattered and torn and she was clearly in a bad way. The schooner turned into the shallow bay, but instead of heading for the lee of the southern shore, headed for Candlagan on the other side, perilously close to some nasty rocks.

Locals believed the schooner *The Rover* was in danger of being wrecked, so Captain Stevenson, a Jervis Bay whaler who was sheltering in the bay, took a whaleboat rowed by six local Aboriginal men, to warn the schooner's master, Captain Lawrence, of his precarious position. The warning was ignored, and *The Rover* went aground in a pounding surf. More local Koories (the name Aborigines prefer for themselves) were among the people who hurried down to the shore to see what was going on.



Above: The painting of a splendidly turned out Aboriginal man was painted by Augustus Earle and entitled 'Bungaree, a native of New South Wales, with Sydney Harbour in the background' (National Library of Australia)



Eric Wiseman tells of awards made to Australian Aborigines in the 19th-century, now rarely seen

Broulee Bay, as it was in the 19th century. It featured sandy beaches but was surrounded by rocks. The illustration appeared in *Australia Illustrated* *

Without hesitation, according to HJ Gibney in *Behind Broulee*, Hopping Joe, Warrigal Tom, Batemans Bay Harry, Boolbee and other Koories dashed into the surf to drag out drowned and half-drowned passengers (including some convicts) and sailormen.

Europeans joined in, lighting two big fires of driftwood to thaw out the survivors. 11 people died in the sea, about half the crew and passengers. The schooner had been on its way to Gabo Island where the 11 convicts on board were to work on the construction of a lighthouse.

One bright spot came when locals where given permission to buy tea from

the wreck as they'd been out of it for some time. One of the early settlers of Broulee, Captain William Oldrey RN, bought the hulk but made nothing of it and the last of the wreckage was eventually washed out to sea in 1904. Oldrey also tried to obtain an official reward for the Koories but received a cold shoulder. So, instead, he obtained some brass breastplates, had them engraved, all at his own expense, and presented them to the rescuers. Captain Oldrey was born in England and was prominent in early Broulee affairs. He was chairman of the Bench there from 1839 to 1844 when he was declared bankrupt and moved to Port Macquarie on the NSW Central Coast,





Above left: This example was awarded to 'Timothy, Chief of Merricumbene' for valour after he swam with a lifeline to a stranded ship at Broulee, near Batemans Bay, New South Wales South Coast, in 1841. **Above right:** After a violent storm in 1901, the wreck of *The Rover* washed up on shore where it stayed until the next big storm reclaimed the timbers

living there for the rest of his life. He isn't forgotten, though, as the Broulee sports area is named Captain Oldrey Park.

It was a common practice for Europeans, in pre-Federation Australia, to present breastplates, or gorgets, to notable Aboriginal men and women. They were given to those that the white settlers viewed as chiefs, or courageous and faithful servants. The Aboriginal people did not traditionally have kings or queens, but rather lived in small

clan groups with several elders. The practice of handing out the gorgets with the words 'King' or 'Queen' on them is, therefore, somewhat controversial. Some Aborigines were quite happy to receive them and wore them with pride but others viewed them with disdain. Nobody knows how many were handed out, and many were just lost, buried with their owners when they died, or hidden. The practice declined after Australia became a Federation on 1 January 1901, when the British Parliament passed legislation enabling the hitherto six colonies of Australia to govern themselves. By the end of the 1930s the giving of gorgets had virtually died out.

There are a number of gorgets surviving to this day, in private and public collections, with the occasional one coming up for auction. The National Museum of Australia, Canberra, has some in its inventory, including:

- Dicky, King of Clyde Road. He ruled the area covering Moruya, Batemans Bay, Broulee and the Clyde River to Braidwood. He was described as a man of very peaceful disposition, given mostly to hunting and fishing. He died at about 90 and was buried on a bank of the Clyde River near Nelligen.
- Thomas Tinboy, King of Nelligen. King Tommy was the leader of the Walbanga group in Nelligen district for many years. The plate was found buried in an anthill near Nelligen Creek.
- Coomee, Last of Her Tribe, Murramarang. The plate was presented to Coomee by one Edmund Milne in 1909. Coomee, who was over 90 years of age when she died in 1915, said she remembered her grandmother speaking of the first time the white birds came by, referring to the passage of Captain Cook along the coast in 1770. It was because of that historical association Milne presented her with the breastplate.

• Jenny, Queen of Broulee. Another plate with Eurobodalla Coast connections was last reported to be in a private collection in Queensland.

At the time of the wreck of the *The Rover*, Broulee contained about half a dozen houses and about 22 residents, though that didn't include the original inhabitants, the Koories. It was first settled in 1839. The village is much larger now, but of variable population as it is, to a great extent, a holiday and retirement area. Efforts by a retired Australian Army colonel in the late 2000s to have an Aboriginal war memorial established there came to nothing. It was to honour Koories killed in resisting invasion by Europeans, and those who died serving Australia in the armed services in the 20th century. It just wasn't the sort of things the average Koorie is interested in.

Roger Liversidge of Downies, a prominent Australian firm of auctioneers, said Koorie gorgets were rarely seen and the last time the company was offered one was in July 2013. The description of it was: 'Aboriginal gorget or breastplate 203mm x 130mm c. 1850-1870, hand-executed in brass with 580mm brass chain, embellished with hand-engraved naive emu left and kangaroo right, spiked crown above, engraved lettering "King Peter, Peels River" in two lines with boomerang, nulla-nulla and spears between, foliage sprigs above suspension holes, VF with attractive aged patina. A unique and desirable piece of early Australian.'

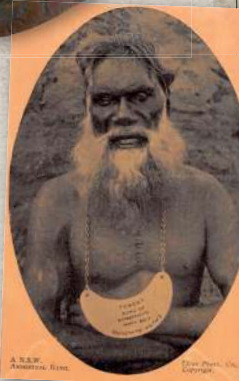
Peel River is located in the Northern Tablelands district of New South Wales and is named after Sir Robert Peel, a noted politician at the time the river was discovered by British settlers in 1818. The item was offered with a pre-sale estimate of \$4,000 and sold for \$6,000 (plus buyer's commission). ■

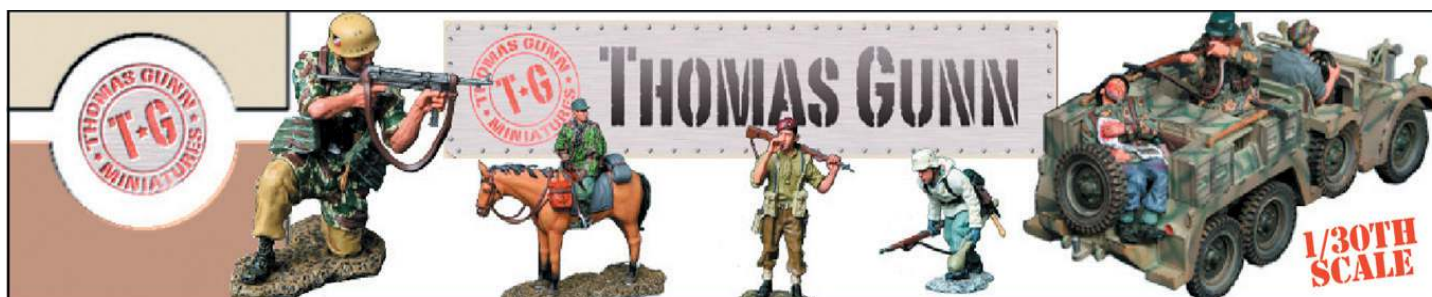
Gorgets awarded to Aborigines are scarce, so this one sold in Australia a few years ago cost the buyer \$A6,000, plus commission, about £3,000



Above: A gorget inscribed, 'Bendy, King of Durundur, 1892' even though the Aborigines didn't have kings as such

Right: From c. 1900, Robert, King of Gumbathagang tribe, New South Wales





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The Bren Gun

John Walter looks at the legendary British weapon that helped to block the Japanese thrust into India at Imphal and Kohima

In November 1918, the Lewis Gun remained the principal light-support weapon of the British Army. Its flaws were well known, but its contribution to the war effort had been immense. Protracted trials seeking a replacement were inconclusive, though a preference was initially expressed for the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR). Lack of enthusiasm for new weapons and a perceived low threat continued to restrict progress but, by 1930, work was concentrating on the BAR, a Vickers Berthier, a Danish *Madsen*, a Hungarian *Kiraly* - all chambered for the rimmed .303 cartridge, and the 7.9mm Czechoslovakian *ZB vz. 27*. The tests were undertaken with great attention to detail, until a modified *ZB vz. 27* known as the

ZGB outperformed the Vickers Berthier.

The *ZGB* originated in a series of guns designed in the early 1920s by Václav Holek (1886-1954) for Zbrojovka Praga. Beginning with the *Praga 1*, Holek had progressed to the perfected *M 24* Hand held Machine Gun, but the Praga company encountered such severe financial problems that production was switched to state-owned Zbrojovka Brno. Once minor changes had been made to facilitate mass production, the *M 24* became the *ZB vz. 26*, supplemented by the *vz. 27* and ultimately the *vz. 30*.

A .303 version of the *vz. 27*, the *ZGB Model 1*, arrived in Britain from Brno early in 1931. It soon proved to be good enough to eclipse an improved Vickers Berthier and a *Darne* in the summer

of 1931, though the trials suggested a number of improvements.

Holek altered the *ZGB Model 1* in 1932 (perhaps in the Enfield workshops) and the short gas tube version performed well enough to convince the British authorities to continue work. The improved *ZGB Model 2* of 1932, retaining the gas port close to the breech, had a body and barrel assembly that slid back against a buffer to reduce the recoil sensation. The *ZGB Model 3* had a new 30 round magazine and an attachment for an experimental tele lensatic sight under development for the Vickers Gun, and the *ZGB Model 4* of 1934 had a



The Bren Gun, sat on the sidecar, was the main light machine gun for British and Commonwealth forces in WWII *



British and Indian troops pose on the border between India and Burma in 1943. Note the Bren Gun in the foreground



Indian men pose with the three principal small arms of Imphal – the Bren, No. 1 Lee-Enfield rifle and the M1 Thompson SMG

shortened barrel. Radial fins and flutes were omitted, as they complicated manufacture out of proportion to any beneficial cooling effects. The position of the back sight was stabilised on the body behind the magazine, and the rate of fire was reduced from 600 to 480rpm to minimise dispersion.

The *ZGB Improved Model 4* (also known as the *Model 4 Type 2*), the last gun in the series, had a vertical back sight notch plate. Two guns were tested in January 1934, with a handle beneath the butt to allow an underhand grip, and 62 Czech-made *Improved Model 4* machine guns, ordered in December 1934, duly appeared in Britain early in 1935.

The finalised *ZGB* was approved for British service under the acronym Bren (for Brno and Enfield) and a production licence was signed on 24 May 1935. The British authorities sought 84 'Guns, Machine, Bren, .303 inch Mark I' from Brno in April 1936 to allow training and familiarisation to begin, and the first of 10,000 guns ordered from the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield on 13 November 1936 were test fired on 3 September 1937.

Series production began in Enfield in the Spring of 1938, work continuing until May 1939 helped by butts, bipods and carrying handles supplied by BSA Guns Ltd. In March 1938, an order for 7,000 guns for the Canadian Army was given to the John Inglis Company of Toronto, followed in November by 5,000 for Britain. The first Canadian made Mk I was test fired in March 1940.

To war once more

Enfield held orders for 15,512 Mk I Brens in September 1939, but production was so time-consuming that the last guns from these pre-war contracts were delivered in 1942.

The loss of vast quantities of equipment on the beaches of Dunkirk reduced the inventory of Bren Guns to merely 2,130, forcing the British, fearful of imminent German invasion, to impress obsolescent Lewis and Hotchkiss guns from store. Production of Bren Guns clearly had to be put on a better footing, and attempts were soon being made to simplify the basic design.

Orders placed for Bren Guns between

3 September 1939 and 14 March 1944 amounted to 416,658, of which 253,633 came from Enfield by 1945. Most of the others were made in Canada by Inglis of Toronto, though some were made by the Lithgow manufactory in Australia.

In addition, tens of thousands were made in Britain under the Monotype Scheme. Monotype & May Ltd, the power behind Britain's leading manufacturer of type casting machinery, intended to make Bren Guns by combining components made by an engineering syndicate, minimising disruption if individual factories were disabled by air raids.

The principal participants were the Daimler Co. Ltd, the Hercules Cycle Co. Ltd, the Monotype Corporation Ltd, Climax Rock Drill & Engineering Company, Tibbenham & Company, the British Tabulating Machine Co. Ltd and Sigmund Pumps Ltd. Each contractor made specific components which were then assembled in the Monotype factory in Salfords (near the Surrey town of Redhill), where 400 Bren Guns were completed weekly. Beginning with



The ZB vz. 26 was very successful, and provided the basis for the Bren Gun



The *ZGB* vz. 33 with fluting on the barrel replacing the radial fins of its predecessors



The *ZGB* 1 (or *ZGB* vz. 31) was the first of the .303 vz. 26 derivatives



With the *ZGB* 4, the trials had all but perfected what would become the Bren gun



British Mk I Bren Gun No. BB8559 was made at Enfield early in 1943 (*Morphy Auctions*)

Left: The Inglis Bren Mk II, with the bipod unfolded (*Morphy Auctions*)

5,000 ordered in January 1940, the Monotype Scheme produced 83,438 guns; the final order, for 10,000, had been placed in March 1944.

Tooling began in the Toronto factory of the John Inglis Company in 1939, but production was still insignificant at the time of Dunkirk. However, Inglis made about 120,000 Bren Guns for Canadian and British forces in 1938-43, and 43,000 7.9mm guns for China in 1943-5.

The different types

The pre-war Mark I Bren Gun and the Inglis-made 'C. Mark I' were about 45.5in long, with 25in barrels, and weighed 22lb 13oz without the 30-round box magazine; cyclic rate averaged about 500rpm. The Mk I was supplemented by the Mark I (Modified) introduced in the autumn of 1940. The new version had the angular Mark I* body, lacked the bracket for the optical sight, and the barrel handle base became a simple, welded tube. The Mark II butt slide, a simplification of the Mk I, and the new Mark II bipod were fitted. The Mark I Modified Bren was made in Britain only in Enfield, though some subsequently emanated from the Lithgow factory fitted with Australian Mk 3 bipods.

Approved in June 1941 and made exclusively under the Monotype Scheme, the Mark II Bren Gun had a simpler body, a leaf pattern back sight, a fixed cocking handle instead of the folding pattern, a simple stamped butt plate, a modified barrel with a detachable flash hider/front sight assembly and a single recoil spring instead of two in the butt. The guns were originally made with Mk II bipods, but so many were repaired or altered at a later date that hybrids will be found. The C. Mark II Bren Gun was similar,



The body of the Mk II Inglis Bren, showing the fixed charging handle on the right and the selector on the left side above the trigger (*Morphy Auctions*)



The butt of the Mk II Bren, showing the shoulder rest made simply by folding a sheet-steel plate, and the bracket for the rarely issued monopod (*Morphy Auctions*)



The fire-selector of the Bren - 'A.', automatic fire; 'S.', safe, and 'R.' for repetitive (single-shot) fire (*Morphy Auctions*)

but had a distinctive Canadian-made variant of the Mark 3 bipod.

Too late to see service at Imphal, the Mark 3 Bren Gun, approved in May 1944, had a shorter barrel, a lightened body, simpler magazine well and ejection port covers, and the plain Mark 4 butt. Mark I or Mark 3 bipods were standard. Approved concurrently with the Mark 3 to conserve supplies of raw material, the Mark 4 Bren gun had a modified Mark II type barrel cradle, noticeably less metal in the body, and an ultra short barrel with a new flash hider.

Simplified designs

When WWII began, production of the Bren Gun was concentrated at Enfield. Though components were being made in Birmingham by BSA, the Royal Small Arms Factory was the only agency assembling and test-firing the LMG.

When the Luftwaffe began to bomb southern England in September 1940, it was clear that one severe raid on Enfield could paralyse or even destroy the only Bren Gun assembly line operating in Britain. As much of the inventory of light machine guns had been lost at Dunkirk, the situation was potentially very serious.

Efforts had begun in the Spring of 1940 to develop a simple machine gun which could be made by virtually any small engineering workshop. The most Bren-like of the emergency designs was the Besal, usually credited to Harold Alexander Faulkner (1890-1969) who was listed in 1940 registers as BSA's chief gun designer. The prototype was demonstrated to the Small Arms Committee in March 1942. It had a skeletal butt and a fixed pistol grip beneath the rear of the body, with the charging handle on the front right side of the breech. The first of several

The Bren Gun



This Lithgow-made Mk I Bren Gun, A1961 of 1942, is accompanied by its transit chest and magazine box (Arundel Militaria)

revised versions was submitted in August 1942, cocked by unlatching the pistol grip sub assembly and pushing it forward to engage the bolt/piston extension unit, then retracting the components until the striker was held on the sear. This was copied from the Czechoslovakian ZB vz. 53, which had been transformed by BSA into the Besa vehicle gun.

Testing was successfully undertaken throughout the winter of 1942 on the ranges at Pendine, allowing the Besal to be adopted provisionally as the 'Gun, Light, Machine, Faulkner, .303 inch Mark I'. By the summer of 1943, however, the likelihood of a German invasion of Britain receded and deliveries of Bren Guns from Enfield, Inglis and the Monotype Scheme were meeting demands. Consequently, introduction of the Faulkner machine gun was rescinded on 10 June 1943.

Accessories

The first 17 tripod mounts (copied from the ZB 206) came from Brno in November 1937, destined for trials in India. They were successful enough to

Veronica 'Ronnie' Foster poses in Toronto with a Mk I Bren Gun made by her employer, John Inglis & Company (Library & Archives Canada)



The Mark I Bren tripod, with onboard traverse control (Arundel Militaria)

persuade the British authorities to place a 3,500 piece order for 'Mounts, Tripod, Bren, Mark I' with BSA Guns Ltd on 3 February 1939; more than 127,000 tripods had been made in Birmingham when World War II ended, though most spent their lives in store.

There were three differing tripods: the original Mk I, with folding legs and an anti aircraft adaptor; the simplified Mk II with fixed legs, introduced about 1941; and the lightweight Mark 2* of 1944, intended for airborne troops.

Among the special anti aircraft mounts developed during World War II were the Motley cradle and the Gate, with guns suspended from overhead frames. The Lakeman Mount, a pendant system popular on armoured vehicles in 1940-1, had a large coil spring behind

the support arm.

Even though the earliest Bren guns proved to be efficient, their magazines were troublesome. Consequently, the basic design had soon proceeded from Mk I to the perfected Mk II* by way of Marks I*, I*** and II.

The success of the Bren gun encouraged the British authorities to seek other roles for it. The box magazine clearly limited the ability to sustain fire. Two experimental 100 round drums were acquired in 1938, but were unsuccessful. Eventually an improved 100-round Mark I magazine was approved to be followed by a Mark II with a folding L shape winding handle. Production is said to have approached 950,000, but this may refer to total orders instead of actual output. A 200 round High Speed Drum was developed for anti aircraft use, but is now rare. ■

Acknowledgements: Morphy Auctions (www.morphyauctions.com), Rock Island Auctions (www.rockislandauction.com), Arundel Militaria (www.deactivated-guns.co.uk), Real-Gun (www.real-gun.com) and DWS UK (www.dwsuk.org).

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Immaculate, live-fire Brens with matching parts can sell for as much as \$10,000, but legal restrictions mean that there is a greater market in Britain for deactivated examples. Arundel Militaria (www.deactivated-guns.co.uk) is offering an Inglis-made Mk I M for £425, while Real Guns (www.real-gun.com) has a 1942-vintage Inglis Mk I for £885 and a Mk III for £595. Spare barrels can sell for £125-£160 depending on pattern and condition; magazines are usually under £10 though a pristine Mk I, comparatively rare, can fetch £95.

Bren Guns invariably bear maker's marks on the body, together with proof and inspectors' marks and cyclical serial numbers in batches of 9,999; when

Enfield reached 'Z9999', work recommenced at 'AA1'. However, some 'A' and 'B' prefix numbers were used by both Enfield and Lithgow, and continual upgrades ensure that very few guns will now be found with all of their original components.

In addition, many engineering companies were recruited in World War II to help the primary contractors accelerate production. Specific components were often identified with numbers prefixed by 'M', 'N' and 'S', indicating factories in the Midlands, the north or the south of Britain respectively. Enfield had been the sole source of box magazines until additional contractors were recruited in May 1939: the Austin Motor Co. Ltd (code 'M 13'), BSA Guns Ltd ('M 47'), the

Hercules Cycle Company ('M 117'), the Monotype Corporation Ltd ('S 81') and Wilson & Mathieson ('N 90'). The roster of manufacturers was subsequently expanded on more than one occasion. Total production was approaching 10,000,000 when the war ended, and 147,500 magazine-filling tools had been made in 1941-2, nearly half of them by Lines Bros. Ltd.

The 100-round Mark I magazine was made by the Austin Motor Co. Ltd, Lines Bros. Ltd ('S 68'), the Vickers Armstrong factory in Bath ('S 121') and Wilson & Mathieson; the Mark II came from E.S.S. (Signs) Ltd ('S 223'), V. & N. Huntley ('N 29'), Sigmund Pumps Ltd ('N 65') and Waygood Otis Ltd ('S 292').



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Saudi Arabian Medal for the Liberation of Kuwait

Duncan Evans takes a look at another one of the more obscure medals awarded for service during the first Gulf War

We covered the little-known Kuwait Liberation Medal in the September 2019 issue of *The Armourer*, which was issued by the grateful Kuwait government to Allied forces. However, there was also another medal issued by one of the involved parties, this time from Saudi Arabia. When Saddam Hussein's Iraqi troops occupied Kuwait on 2 August 1990 it prompted Operation *Desert Shield*, a massive re-enforcement of Saudi Arabia to deter further Iraqi incursions. The US feared Saddam Hussein would attempt to seize Saudi oilfields which, combined with those of Kuwait and Iraq itself, would give it control of 65% of the world's oil reserves. When King Fahd of Saudi Arabia also called for help, the US sent troops on 8 August, along with two naval battlegroups.

The key to retaking Kuwait though, was building up a coalition of troops, starting with a series of UN Council resolutions on the issue. The most important was Resolution 678 which gave Iraq the ultimatum of withdrawing from Kuwait by 15 January 1991 and specified: '... all necessary means to uphold and



The medal on its own, showing the central globe, wording and national emblem

Right: The reverse of the medal with pattern and the suspender fixed to it



implement Resolution 660,' which was diplomatic language for authorising military force.

All told, the coalition against Iraq drew support from 34 countries, with

US personnel making up 73% of the 956,600 troops involved. The UK, Canada and Australia all committed forces, with the UK providing the most from any European country. British operations in the Gulf were given the title Operation *Granby*.

The main British Army ground force was the 1st Armoured Division, which

was involved in the ground assault that began on 24 February. The US VII Corps launched the assault into Iraq, supported on the left wing by the US XVIII Airborne Corps with cover from the French Division Daguet.

The 101st Airborne dropped 2,000 soldiers 155 miles into Iraq to bottle up fleeing forces while the British 1st Armoured took the right flank of the advance,



A Challenger 1 tank of the British forces, during the Gulf War



The miniature version isn't as well made, with the arms looking cruder



Left: An immaculate condition medal in case of issue with ribbon bar



Right: The case for the medal with the Saudi Arabian emblem on the lid

before turning east and mounting a flank attack on the elite Republican Guard. After just two days of fighting the 1st Armoured had destroyed over 200 Iraqi tanks, crushed four Iraqi infantry divisions and defeated the Iraqi 52nd Armored Division.

By 26 February Iraqi troops were streaming in retreat from Kuwait down the main Iraq-Kuwait highway, where they were so extensively bombed it became known as the Highway of Death. On 28 February, after 100 hours of fighting, President Bush declared a ceasefire and the liberation of Kuwait was complete.

The Medal for the Liberation of Kuwait (*Naut Tahrir al-Kuwait*) was instituted by King Fahd ibn Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia to members of the coalition forces who participated in Operation *Desert Storm* and the liberation of Kuwait between the dates of 17 January 1991 and 28 February 1991. Unlike the medal issued

by Kuwait itself this one only came in one class and covered a much

shorter time period. All 53,462 British servicemen taking part were eligible for it but only a few have been authorised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to actually wear it.

The medal itself is made from a white metal, approximately 45mm across, with a star containing 15 long and 15 short rays, with round tips. It is surmounted by a gilt medallion with a silver globe to the centre featuring a gilt map of Arabia. Around the bottom is a wreath with the words 'LIBERATION OF KUWAIT', repeated in Arabic script. Above the medallion are the crossed swords and palm tree, which is the official emblem of Saudi Arabia. There are various definitions for these elements, but generally the palm tree represents vitality and growth of the country while the swords represent justice and strength from faith. The reverse is unadorned except for a pattern, presumably of date fruit from the palm tree, and the fixing for the suspension ring.

The ribbon has a centre of green with red, black and white stripes from the edges, the colours representing the Saudi Arabia national colours. The

service ribbon bar features a gilt device of palm tree over crossed swords.

The case of issue is a green box with the national emblem and the words, 'Kingdom of Saudi Arabia' in English and Arabic on the lid. Inside is space for the medal, ribbon and ribbon bar, with a catch at the front.

Production of the medal was shared between Spink and a Swiss company for the original medal, but subsequently a flatter version, more practical for wearing with other medals, was manufactured in the USA. ■

i COLLECTING

Examples are fairly easy to find, although it's rarer than the Kuwait-issued medal and is often mis-labelled as that medal as well. A quick search on eBay found a perfect condition, cased example for £49.99 and a miniature for £14.99. The cheapest medal on its own was selling for £22.49 and the box on its own for £20.70.

Original medal: from £22

Boxed version: £50

Flat, US version: £25-£35

Miniature: £15-£20



British Tornado used in Operation Desert Storm



Japanese Imperial Army uniforms

Edward Hallett looks at the uniforms worn by Japanese soldiers in the last years of World War II



In the field the Japanese Army favoured a loose and practical lightweight uniform

Below: This fine portrait shows a Japanese soldier in the simple tropical tunic and cap. Note the rank insignia on his collar and the leather chin strap to his field cap

By 1943 the Japanese nation was under extreme pressure. They had been at almost continual war since the early 1930s (Japan had been fighting in Manchuria since 1931). Following the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941 the US and its allies had been targeting Japan's commerce with a highly effective maritime blockade and submarine campaign that saw Japan's shipping and their cargos destroyed in ever increasing numbers. All this meant that economically the country was really struggling and re-equipping its troops in the field was very difficult as, not only were resources to make new uniforms scarce, but once they had been manufactured there was no

guarantee they could be safely shipped to theatre past the US Navy. Soldiers in the field, therefore, wore a mixture of the old patterns of tropical uniform that had been designed in the late 1930s, economy production uniforms created in the home islands to conserve resources and locally produced expedient clothing that at least gave the men some protection from the elements until proper uniforms could catch up with them. Traditionally interest in Japanese uniforms has been strongest in the US, but in recent years interest is also growing in the UK and with prices far lower than Third Reich uniforms, and far fewer fake items, collectors are increasingly turning to the uniforms of the Japanese military.



Other Ranks uniform

The Japanese had developed a new tropical uniform in 1938 that was to see service throughout the rest of the war known as the Type 98. For Other Ranks this was a simple cotton tunic with an open collar, four pockets (two on the breast and two at the waist) and secured up the front with five buttons of either wood or plastic depending on wartime exigencies. The top button was usually left unbuttoned and the collar worn open for comfort. Rank was worn on the collar in the form of cloth bars; these had reduced in size by this period of the war compared to their original design. The smaller size was not only more discreet in the field but helped save precious resources. The breast pockets could either be external patch types, or internal pockets; either design had external flaps secured with a single button. Large vents were cut in either side of the tunic for ventilation, with a flap that could be secured with a button when the weather turned cooler.

As well as the tunic, a simple cotton shirt could also be worn, again it had the side ventilation flaps and rank could be worn either on the collar or on a bar above the left breast pocket or sewn to the left sleeve.

Japanese soldiers paired these tunics and shirts with either a pair of half-breeches or shorts. The half-breeches were a lighter weight version of the standard woollen temperate uniform breeches and were either worn loose or laced up and with puttees. Untied and left loose the breeches resembled a long pair of shorts and were worn with socks and boots. The true shorts were far shorter and came above the knees; both breeches and shorts were made of simple khaki drill cotton. The shorts had a V-notch at the rear and a pair of sewn-in cloth ties that wrapped around to serve as a belt. The simple nature of these uniform items allowed captured stocks of British Empire uniform to be issued to men alongside clothing made specifically for the Japanese, there being little difference in practical terms between the two belligerents patterns of tropical uniform.

The uniform was worn with a simple cotton field cap, a piece of headgear that had a peak to keep the sun out of the wearer's eyes and a cotton flap at the back of the crown to protect the neck from the effects of the sun. A brown leather chinstrap was applied and a yellow star badge sewn to the front.



1: Occasionally complete sets of Japanese uniform appear for sale. The simplicity of the uniform is evident. The peaked visor cap was abandoned in the field in favour of the more practical field cap

2: This senior NCO's tunic is made of khaki drill fabric and secured up the front with five buttons. This example has internal pockets, but the flaps are sewn to the outside

3: The Other Ranks shirt was a very simple collared shirt with a pair of buttoned patch breast pockets

4: Breeches were commonly worn with the uniform and could either be worn with boots and puttees or left unlaced and used as long shorts

5: Japanese Army shorts had a distinct V-notch at the back of the waist band and a pair of cotton tapes sewn to them to act as a belt

Japanese Imperial Army uniforms

Wartime constraints were especially evident with caps where inferior quality leather was increasingly used for the chin straps, or indeed substituted altogether with a cloth example.

In combat the field cap was often put aside in favour of a steel helmet. The standard Japanese helmet of World War II was the Type 90, introduced in 1930. This was a brimless steel helmet, painted khaki and with a stamped, metal badge on the front; either a star for the Imperial Japanese Army or an anchor for naval forces. The inner liner had three leather pads attached to a leather headband and was one of the first helmets in the world to use a three-point attachment system for the chinstrap. Cloth covers and camouflage nets were occasionally worn, but it was far more common to use the helmet unadorned.

The colour of the uniform was officially khaki drill but a combination of poor dyes and wartime shortages meant that in the field the colour could vary from a pale sand colour right through to dark green. Chemically fast dyes were often not available on a local level so if replacement clothing was sourced in theatre then it was often dyed with less reliable organic dyes. These were far more susceptible to bleaching from the sun and being affected by tropical rains that caused the dyes to degrade.

The Japanese soldier was issued with leather ankle boots made from pigskin or light black canvas boots known as *jika-tabi* which had a moulded rubber sole on them. The *jika-tabi* boot was very distinctive, with a separate big toe moulded into it. This appears very odd to western eyes, but was an accepted design of footwear in Japan. Similar socks were available with split toes to allow them to be worn with traditional slip-on thonged sandals. This design was then translated over into heavy duty boots in the early 20th century. These distinctive boots actually made the mopping up of routed Japanese soldiers in Papua in 1942 much easier as the boot prints were easy to track through the jungle.

Again as wartime shortages became more of a problem, increasing use was made of simple sandals for soldier's footwear, often woven of straw. These straw sandals were traditionally worn by Japanese peasants in the rice fields of the Home Islands and many men would have known how to manufacture them themselves. This sort of home production helped free up shipping space, saved the Japanese government



1: The field cap was made of wool, with a chin strap (missing here) worn over the peak. A yellow cloth star was sewn to the crown. **2:** The Type 90 helmet was made of steel and was a rimless design with a star braised to the front. **3:** A cloth cover was occasionally used that reduced the shine from the steel helmet and helped conceal the wearer.

money in production and was a good way to keep idle hands productive in quiet times. Although no substitute for proper boots in combat, they were ideal for fatigue work and helped preserve leather footwear in good condition for longer. Simple puttees, known in Japanese as *Makikyahan* were worn with the ankle boots, these being long strips of khaki cloth with cotton tapes at one end. The Japanese soldier wore the tapes in a distinctive criss-cross pattern.

As well as the standard infantryman's uniform, some specialist troops received dedicated clothing for their role. By



The liner of the helmet consisted of three leather pads, secured with a drawstring. The lettering gives details of the sizing

1943 the Japanese tank regiments were outclassed in every way by US armoured units. Despite this they bravely, if vainly, went into battle. Tank crews were issued one piece overalls made of lightweight cotton. These were worn with canvas covered cork crash helmets that, although offering no ballistic protection, did protect the head within a tank from being bumped and injured on the many sharp protrusions that abound within an armoured vehicle.

One unusual item that is sometimes seen in wartime photographs is a white sash worn around a soldier's body. This has no practical use, but was a visual sign to both his comrades and the enemy that the wearer was willing to fight to the death for his Emperor.

Officers uniforms

Officers in the field usually wore a lightweight cotton version of their woollen Type 98 winter uniform. The tunic was open collared and secured up the front with four green or brown plastic buttons; it was usually worn over a white cotton shirt, the collar of which was worn open over the collar of the tunic. This practice of wearing the shirt collar over the tunic collar led



4: Some Japanese officers continued to wear high brown riding boots in the field right through until the end of the war. 5: Standard Japanese Army boots were made of pigskin and were ankle high. 6: Jika Tabi boots were made of rubber and had a distinct and separate big toe that was unique to the Japanese armed forces in World War II. 7: Long Japanese puttees were made of khaki wool. Note the faint acceptance stamp in black ink on one of the puttees near the securing tape. 8: A private purchase Lieutenant's tunic. The rank is in the form of silver stars on a red collar board

to the rank bars on the collar of the tunic being made smaller and placed lower down on the collar so that they were still be visible under the shirt. In the field it was common to discard this tunic and white shirt and instead wear a version of shirtsleeve order with a khaki shirt, name tabs being sewn above the pockets. This was worn with a pair of officers breeches and a pair of boots similar to the other ranks but generally of higher quality. It was also still common, until late in the war, for officers to wear knee high riding boots, or ankle boots with high leather gaiters in the field as a symbol of rank.

As officers bought their own uniforms they generally bought these locally from bazaar tailors and consequently managed to keep their appearance smarter than enlisted men. In 1943 an economy version of the officer's uniform was introduced which saw the rank bar added to the cuff as well as the collars, but was recut to reduce the amount of fabric needed.

Expedient clothing

As shortages became ever greater, those garrisons furthest from supply lines began to suffer the most and

uniforms became ever more ragged. There was a limit to the number of times men could sew them back together and, after a time, alternatives were needed. As mentioned, captured Allied uniform could be and was used, however the average Japanese soldier was considerably shorter than his western counterpart and so captured uniforms often had to be heavily altered to fit. Some units, however, had to go even further and one garrison in New Guinea ended up making new uniforms from surplus rice sacks. These ersatz uniforms can hardly have been comfortable and the soldiers must have looked like a band of vagabonds, but they did at least have some protection from the elements. Other common practices were to weave certain items from grass, as well as the sandals noted above, field caps were also woven from local materials. Even those who could get resupplied found that substitute materials were used in ever increasing amounts. Leather was in short supply so rubberised fabric was substituted for belts and equipment although, ironically, this may have actually been a benefit as it did not rot as quickly in the humid conditions of a South East Asian jungle.

If the uniforms provided to Imperial Japanese troops by the late war period were poor, spare a thought for the poor allies of the Japanese, such as the Koreans, whose lowly status in the eyes of the Japanese ensured they were equipped with only the lowest quality uniforms and were rarely, if ever, resupplied. ■

i COLLECTING THE UNIFORM

Japanese uniforms are certainly harder to find in the UK when compared to either Allied or German uniforms. Having said that, they are a more niche area of collecting and, with fewer people after these items, the prices are lower than equivalent Third Reich uniforms. WD Militaria currently has an example of an Imperial Japanese Army enlisted man's cap at £345 and an other ranks summer tunic at £145. There is far more of a market for Japanese uniforms in the United States and thanks to the number of captured items brought back by GIs there is a more plentiful supply of objects, although prices do seem to be higher than for equivalent items in the UK. IMA currently offers a Type 80 helmet with cover for \$1,895 and an original pair of other ranks leather ankle boots for \$350.

The siege of Leningrad

John C Pursley investigates the protracted and deadly siege of the northern Soviet city in WWII

On 23 August 1939, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union entered a political Treaty of Non-aggression. Drafted by Foreign Ministers Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov, the agreement was a pact dividing eastern Europe into German and Soviet areas of influence.

On 1 September 1939, less than two weeks after the signing, Germany invaded Poland with the Soviets following suit on the 17th. 20 days later, on 6 October, Poland capitulated, her territory annexed and divided by a new border separating the two powers.

The terms of the mutual non-

aggression pact were violated on 22 June 1941 when the massive invasion, code-named Operation *Barbarossa*, was launched by the Germans against the Soviets with three primary objectives in mind. The plan was to take the coal and iron fields in the Donet basin to the south as those natural resources were essential to the German war effort. The next two objectives were more personal to Hitler as he intended to demoralize the USSR by destroying the heavily populated cities of Moscow and Leningrad, which was responsible

for 11% of all Soviet industrial output. A directive sent to Army Group North made it clear that the ultimate fate of Leningrad was to be flattened and areas to the north of the River Neva given to Finland. Each objective was to be swiftly attacked by a combined force of tanks from various army groups, formed and operating as separate entities. It was believed they would clear the path so the slower





Casualties accumulated in the streets as the German aerial bombing continued relentlessly



Supplies intended to sustain the besieged people of Leningrad were transported across frozen Lake Ladoga from the harbours of Lednevo and Kabana

infantry divisions could follow in their wake, eventually forcing the Russians to either surrender or die.

To resist the invading forces the Russians used over 1,000,000 civilians to construct fortifications on the north and south sides of the city, as well as multiple lines of defence around the perimeter. Normal citizens, whose only previous training had been held on weekends, were also conscripted into the militia.

Some of the militia members were armed with a rag-tag assortment of weapons to include some military rifles, machine guns, shot guns, and training rifles, but unfortunately, not enough to go around. A great percentage of the defenders possessed only Molotov cocktails and hand grenades. The Soviet military was in little better position as none of the army groups had any reserve units and a single breach in their defensive lines by German forces could spell disaster for the city.

Army Group North, under the command of Field Marshall Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb, advanced towards Leningrad, severing the last rail connection to the city on 30 August. The Germans had reached the Neva River. On 6 September, Hitler recalled the 4th Panzer Group for an attack on Moscow but even so, two days later, the main road to the city was cut when German forces reached Lake Ladoga at Shlisselburg. Only a narrow strip of land between the lake and Leningrad remained unoccupied. With Finnish forces to the north, Leningrad was to be encircled and starved into submission.

The two attacking Panzer divisions were quickly bogged down in the anti-tank ditches and earthworks hastily constructed by the city dwellers. After weeks of mobile fighting, the German commanders were slow to adapt to the close defences and suffered heavy



Map of the Siege of Leningrad

casualties including four consecutive Commanders of the 6th Panzer Division and many tanks. The Russians fought with extreme tenacity but, by the evening of 10 September, the Germans were facing the last line of the defensive positions which were about six miles south-east of Leningrad.

Once darkness had fallen the Germans quietly moved many tanks



Two unfortunate elderly women of Leningrad sit in the ruins of the building that was once their home (*Russia Beyond*)



Women were drafted to construct defences around Leningrad to stave off the invading Germans

forward of their main positions and surprised the unsuspecting Russians as they executed their predictable nightly counterattacks, breaking up the Soviet formations as they attempted their advance.

In the early morning twilight, squadrons of Stuka dive bombers supported the attack of the 1st Panzer Division, which had already lost 50% of its numbers.

Although they were short of heavy guns, as with all other weapons, the defenders were well supplied with medium and heavy mortars and used them as artillery against the attackers. Naval guns from ships of the Soviet Baltic fleet on the coastal sector bombarded the German rear positions and a great number of Russian troops in KV tanks stood their ground against the aggressors.

On Friday, 19 September, 276 German bombers in six air raids hit the city killing 1,000 civilians. It was the heaviest aerial attack Leningrad would suffer during the war. Many of the previously wounded and recuperating victims in the cities' five hospitals were killed by the bombing.

On 21 September, the Germans were considering their options regarding the complete destruction of the city because occupation would make them responsible for a supply of fuel and food for the people. The German High Command resolved to blockade Leningrad, continue aerial and artillery bombardment and, if they were first into the city the following spring, any survivors would be sent into captivity and the buildings demolished. On 7 October Hitler ordered the Commander of Army Group North not to accept the offer of surrender from the defenders.

After November, the Germans reduced their numbers to a single army, continued the siege and made no

The siege of Leningrad

attempt to advance. The Russians also reduced their defenders to a number barely enough to withstand the enemy. The siege had become a secondary concern for both forces.

However, despite its diminished strategic significance, the suffering and sacrifice of Leningrad's dwindling population had just begun. The rapid advance of the Germans happened so suddenly that the demand for military items and ammunition had taken complete precedence over the needs of the civilian population and few humanitarian supplies had been brought in before the siege began.

Hunger and cold became the city's greatest enemies. By the end of September, the oil and coal supplies were exhausted resulting in buildings without central heating and, as the Russian winter set in, water pipes froze and broke, denying drinking water to the population. Any electricity or fuel was designated for military use only.

Within two months all that was edible had been consumed including pets and rats. From November 1941 to February 1942, citizens were issued 125g of bread per day, of which a good portion consisted of sawdust, floor sweepings and other unpalatable combinations, but only if they could survive the walk to a food distribution kiosk in temperatures as cold as -30 °C.

Fatalities from starvation peaked during that time at 100,000 per month and people dying on the streets became commonplace. The dead could not be buried in the frozen earth, so corpses piled up in the city's streets, parks and other open areas.

During that period rumours of cannibalism were noted, which for a starving population would not be totally out of the question. However, studies conducted decades later concluded the reports were anecdotal second-hand horror stories and not personal experience. There were, however, instances of police threatening to imprison uncooperative suspects in a cell with cannibals.

To compound the misery for the people, the Germans incessantly bombarded them with constant air and artillery attacks that only increased in intensity during 1942 with the arrival of new equipment. The next year several times as many bombs were used on the city.

There was little medical attention given to civilians as the hospitals were



After the German aerial bombing destroyed the public works infrastructure, the citizens of Leningrad were left without drinking water and all other life-sustaining essentials



Defiant Russians waving flags of patriotism amidst the most horrific siege of a modern city



Two female Russian soldiers preparing for the German attack on Leningrad during the summer of 1941 (*Vintage Everyday*)



An actual piece of the bread-like concoction that was fed to the citizens of Leningrad during the winter of 1942

damaged and without heat, water or electricity. Patients lay in their beds fully clothed with blankets piled upon them; sheets could not be laundered, and medicine was almost non-existent. The only saving grace for the city was ironically, the Russian winter as supplies were transported across frozen Lake Ladoga from the harbours of Lednevo and Kabana. However, the gale winds of October had caused the ice to form in irregular heaps leaving crevasses of unfrozen water. The trips began slowly on 18 November across 5in thick ice and those were on foot using ponies drawing sleds with small loads. A week later trucks were used, but nine were initially lost in the unfrozen crevasses.

However, as winter progressed the ice thickened, and trucks began making the journey despite being strafed by the German air force. Finally, in the middle of January the ice froze to over 3ft which allowed more trucks on the route capable of carrying heavier loads. Over 1,000 trucks were lost that month, but a lifeline was created.

To support their military operations



Although the Germans came close to destroying the city of Leningrad, they were not so successful at breaking the spirit of the populace



Anti-aircraft guns were not enough to protect the city from years of continual German aerial bombardment



Above: While their parents served in the militia or built barriers around Leningrad, children were put to work making arms for the defence of the city. **Left:** One of millions of starving citizens living on a few hundred calories a day in the form of bread made mostly from sawdust and floor sweepings



Civilians were drafted into the militia and used every type of weapon made available to them (*Vintage Everyday*)

during the siege, planes from the Russian Baltic Fleet Navy flew over 100,000 sorties against German positions.

On the return trips from the city, thousands of weak and elderly were evacuated. The loss of population through death and departure somewhat minimised the strain on those remaining in the city. A total of 1,400,000 people made it out in this manner.

The spring and summer of 1942 brought reinforcements to the besieged city over the now-thawed sea route across Lake Ladoga. Material and food deliveries increased from 1,500 tonnes in May to over 3,500 in June. The ships were able to evacuate wounded and additional suffering civilians

As Leningrad slowly recovered thanks to the influx of supplies, the Germans realised the Soviets could eventually become strong enough to threaten their far northern flank and made plans for the German 11th Army, backed by the 8th Air Corps, to conduct a full-scale assault on the city.

To this end, 800 heavy pieces of field artillery were placed on rail cars to form a siege train that were intended

to surround the city at critical points. Fortunately for the Russians they were better prepared this time and launched attacks against the Germans at the end of August which disrupted the Nazi plans.

Most of the German forces ended up being deployed in other locations to prevent the Soviets from choking off their access to the Lake Ladoga corridor and the attack on Leningrad was called off.

The siege began to lift at the beginning of 1943 when the Soviets took a narrow passage about five miles wide along the southern shore of Lake Ladoga and established a rail link. Food rations were increased, and the city's situation was greatly stabilised. By January 1944, the Soviets had managed to push the German Army back from Leningrad, signifying the end of the 872-day siege. Most of the imperial palaces and other historic landmarks in, and near, the city were destroyed along with 5,723 civilian deaths by German aerial bombardment. Starvation and loss of public utilities resulted in the additional deaths of up to 1,500,000 soldiers and civilians. ■

COLLECTING

There is good news for militaria collectors as authentic Medals for the Defence of Leningrad are available and cost from £30, with award documents for the medals costing around £50. Have a look at www.collectrussia.com for these medals, along with uniforms from Privates to Generals and Admirals, dress daggers, bayonets, hats, helmets, flags, boots, buttons and propaganda posters.

In general, WWII Russian items are less expensive than German militaria and a lot of it is available, but the items are rapidly gaining in popularity and price.



Above left: Medals for the Defence of Leningrad are available on-line for about £30. **Above right:** Document for the Medal for the Defence of Leningrad (*Kanopy.com*)

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Thompson SMG magazines

Richard Barnes, a member of The American Thompson Association, takes a look at the development of magazines for the iconic firearm

The image of the Thompson submachine gun with the drum magazine is a timeless silhouette, known by all.

However, during the development phase of the Thompson SMG, the Auto Ordnance Corporation (AOC) development team went through several stages before reaching the final drum magazine design.

The idea of the Thompson submachine gun itself was born in the trenches of WWI. General John Taliaferro Thompson had followed the war closely and believed the lack of firepower contributed to the stalemate that had been created in the trenches of the Western Front. General Thompson had explained in detail to his chief engineer, Theodore H Eickhoff, what he was looking to create, "It would have to be so small and light that an infantry man could go over the top and rush an enemy trench behind the shield of his own firepower, then sweep it clean with bullets."

Following almost two years of refining the design, the development phase for the Thompson SMG began

in 1919. During this period, it is believed AOC produced at least 40 Model of 1919s, but these were more an evolutionary series, than a model. The early guns had one thing in common though, they all met General Thompson's requirement of providing a soldier with a high rate of fire in automatic mode. Some of the experimental models fired over 1,500 rounds per minute, with early AOC literature and advertising often quoting this rate of fire as standard, when in automatic mode.

Such a high rate of fire created a problem - how to supply the weapon with enough ammunition? It took about two seconds to empty the contents of a 50-shot drum, therefore the AOC team had to find a suitable, high capacity feeding device for the weapon. There had already been an evolution of machine guns with high rates of fire and the solution, to ensure a steady feed of ammunition, were belts of ammunition.

The first prototype Thompson Model

of 1919 was called the Persuader. This Thompson was designed to fire .45 ACP cartridges from a belt of ammunition, inside a container to feed the rounds into the chamber (US Patent 1403623). However, the design proved to be unreliable. At best, only seven rounds could be fired before a malfunction of the feed system stopped the action. Therefore, running concurrently with the design of the Model of 1919, was the research to find a suitable loading device. They required a practical container to hold the ammunition, which fed the weapon directly. Eventually, the development team concluded a cartridge belt was not compatible with the design. An alternative solution was then developed by AOC engineer Oscar Payne, a staggered row-two position feed 20-round XX box magazine (US patent 1350619).

M3 Lee tank crew undergoing small arms training with M1917 pistols and Thompson submachine guns at Fort Knox, Kentucky, 1942



Thompson SMG magazines



AOC advert from the January 1921 issue of *Arms and the Man* magazine giving the rate of fire as '1500 shots per minute'



Thompson SMG and accessories typically seen during WWII

Left: First version Model of 1919, the belt-fed prototype Thompson submachine gun, the Persuader

During WWII, millions of 20-round XX box magazines were produced by various manufacturers and a nice collection of these can be accumulated. There were at least 15 differently marked, 20-round XX box magazines, produced for the Thompson. Amongst



Connecticut State Policeman firing a Thompson gun with a 20-round magazine in the late 1928/29

these, there are further collectors' pieces, with magazines modified for British and Commonwealth forces.

Due to the release of 20-round XX box magazines from WWII Lend Lease stocks from former USSR countries, there are currently many of these on the UK market. These can be bought relatively cheaply for as low as £10 per magazine, although the earlier pre and early WWII box magazines sell for a premium.

Oscar Payne's next challenge was the development of a high capacity magazine. Following a lot of trial and error the solution, he discovered, was a drum magazine, which would become an integral part of the Thompson image. In May 1919, Oscar V Payne filed the patent for the 100-round C and 50-round L drums, the first true drum magazine, with the absence of the extended box part, found on the German *Parabellum* (Luger)/MP18 Trommelmagazin 08 (snail drums). The magazine lips of Payne's design were cut into the side of the drum and used a six-armed rotor, powered by a clock type spring. The cartridges travelled along spiral tracking to the opening at the top of the drum, where the bolt loaded them one by one into the chamber, at a very fast rate. It was a

complicated design but operated much smoother than the single-follower models because each of the follower arms had to deal with just five or 10 cartridges, and not the entire contents of the drum. The initial production drum magazines, both 50 and 100 round capacity, were manufactured by John's Machine and Stamps Co., in Cleveland, Ohio.

The drum design was developed at the same time as the second series of 1919s, known as the Annihilators. The first Annihilator was based on improvements to the Persuader. The Annihilator I, Serial Number 1, Model of 1919 was the first Thompson design, to feed ammunition from a drum and a box magazine. This led to the original Thompson Model of 1921s being marketed with a choice of a 20-round XX box magazine, a 50-round L drum, or a 100-round C drum.

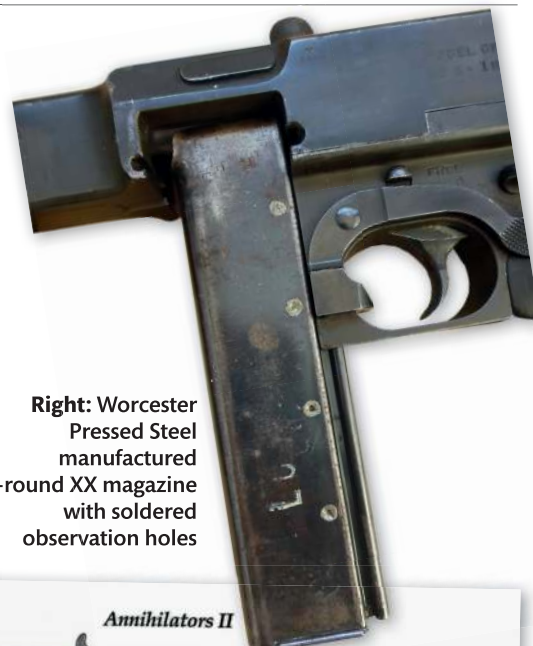
The drums had no mention of the model type, as at the time, there was only one model, the 1921. It was only with the production of the Models of 1928 and US 1928A1's that the drums began to be marked with the model, 'FOR 1928 MODEL'.

The initial drums produced in the early 1920s, were inscribed 'WIND TO



Above: SWCO, Crosby and Seymour, (fitted to M1A1), 30-round XXX magazines, with a 20-round XX magazine for comparison

Left: Early WWII AO patent date, Crosby and AO United Specialities marked XX magazines.



Right: Worcester Pressed Steel manufactured 20-round XX magazine with soldered observation holes



The second version of the Model of 1919 Annihilator II, fitted with the 50 round L drum

15 CLICKS' on the 100 round drums and 'WIND TO 11 CLICKS' on the 50 round drums, on their respective front plates.

In 1927 the contract with the John's Machine and Stamps Co. was not renewed and AOC transferred the tooling for the manufacture of the 50 round drums to the Stanley Works Co., of New Britain, Connecticut.

All the original C drums were manufactured by Johns Machine and Stamp Co. in 1921/22. It is believed that less than 5,000 C drums were produced and there were no further production runs of this model of drum, until the new generation productions appeared in the 1980s.

Original C drums are not only rare to find but carry a premium price tag. In October 2019, an original Johns Machine and Stamp Co. drum came on the market in the USA for a king's ransom of \$10,000, with an original web carry case.

The number of original C drums that exist today is unknown, but one documented fact should not be forgotten. A total of 535 C drums were produced during the first 10 weeks of production and most of these drums were shipped to Ireland. Assuming 5,000 C drums were manufactured by Johns,

at least 11% of those were shipped overseas. Many of the Irish Republican Army drums, together with the weapons recovered by the Irish and British security forces, were eventually destroyed.

The 4th edition of the AOC *Model of 1921* handbook, printed in January 1929, which included the Models of 1927 and 1928, incorrectly stated on two occasions that C drums would not function with the Model of 1928 guns. On page 3 it states, 'Type C, (100-cartridge), drum magazines are for the Model of 1921 Submachine guns only and cannot be used with Model 1928 guns.' This statement is also repeated in the AOC 1936 edition of the *Manual of Instructions on the Thompson Submachine gun*. Page three states: 'Type C, (100-Cartridge), Drum magazine are for use on the Model of 1921 Submachine guns ONLY. The magazine will not function correctly on the U.S. Navy Model of 1928 gun.'

Coincidentally, the inventory of the original C drums had run out around the time that the Model of 1928 was introduced, and the AOC *Commercial Price List and Catalog of 1929*, made no mention of the C drums at all. Perhaps AOC thought it easier to claim that the drum wasn't suited for their latest

model, rather than waste time and money returning C drum orders.

Stanley produced the first L drums specifically for the Model 1928, but only for a short period of time, as production was moved to the Worcester Pressed Steel Company in the same year.

During WWII, several manufacturers were contracted to produce the L drums to meet the wartime demand. The Worcester Pressed Steel Company, (WPS), and the Crosby Company both manufactured drum magazines under direct contract with the British government, prior to the enactment of the Lend Lease program in 1941.

Most of the L drums produced during WWII have the instructions for the Model of 1921 omitted from them, stating only 'WIND TO 9 CLICKS', for the Model of 1928.

Under the Lend-Lease program, 450,000 50-round drums were supplied to US allies. Manufacturers of the Lend-Lease drums included United Specialities Company, (110,000 units), the Crosby Company (150,000 units), and Seymour (190,000 units).

The AOC Bridgeport address-marked L drums, are the most common variation of drums encountered today. The letter 'U' stamped on those drums,

Thompson SMG magazines



Pre-WWII WPS manufactured L drum, with instructions for both the Model of 1921 and Model of 1928



IRA cache of Thompson guns and new C drums seized by Gardai in County Mayo, 1942



Left: Fully loaded GPC 100-round C drum sold by Numrich Arms Gun Parts Corporation



Right: 52nd Lowland Division soldier armed with early Savage-manufactured Thompson with a 20-round magazine in France during June 1940

indicates manufacture by AOC's prime subcontractor for their military contracts, the United Specialties Company of Chicago and Philadelphia. Wartime L drums occasionally come up for sale with militaria dealers in the UK, for around £500. In the USA, SARCO Inc., currently sells modern-produced L drums for \$150.

During WWII, the drum proved unsuitable for the military application of the weapon, with soldiers finding the drums too heavy, with a rattling sound when fully loaded. They were also time consuming to load while open to the elements, and therefore proved impractical for combat use. Indeed, Britain eventually returned a large quantity of drum magazines to the USA, in exchange for the 20 round box magazines.

Instructions on loading the L drums are found in the July 1940 edition of the *War Office, Small Arms Training Pamphlet No. 21* for the Thompson Submachine gun, but there is no reference to the L drums in the 1942 edition of the same pamphlet.

During the 1980s, the second-generation C drums were produced by Numrich Arms, (Auto-Ordnance)

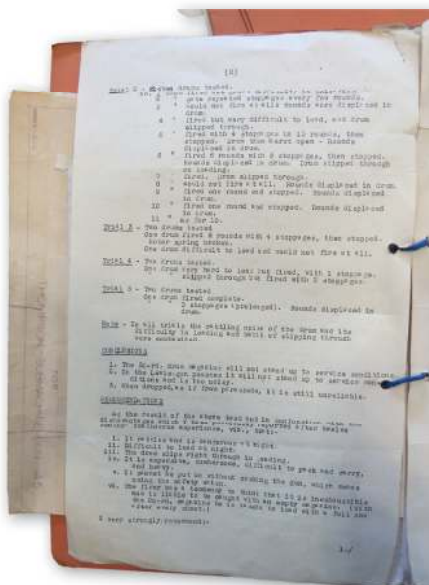
of West Hurley, NY). This was the first time that another company had produced C drums but were reported as not reliable. Indeed, without work/modification being carried out on them, they did not function correctly.

In 2007 the third generation C drums were produced by Kahr Arms (Auto-Ordnance). The Kahr C drums

are reported by colleagues in the USA as being reliable out of the box. Some Kahr drums are serial numbered on both sides, but it appears that dual numbering was discontinued soon after production began, resulting in examples only being numbered on one side. These drums are currently available from Kahr Arms in the USA for \$577.

In 2017 the 4th Generation of the C drum appeared, reportedly manufactured in Taiwan, these are marketed by Numrich (Gun Parts Corporations of West Hurley, NY), and are reported to run smoothly. They are currently available in the USA for \$395.25.

The third type of magazine produced during WWII for the Thompson gun, was the larger capacity, 30-round XXX box magazines. Their introduction coincided with the production of the simplified Thompson M1 and M1A1 SMGs, which were not designed to be fitted with drum magazines. These magazines, like the 20-round XX version, were produced by various manufacturers. A lot of 30-round magazines have also been released from former Lend Lease stocks, and can be found in the UK, selling for around £20 each. ■



Page two of the British army report on the L drum trials dated April 1941



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A military artist

Ray Westlake looks at the work of PW Reynolds and his contribution to Colonel Webb's history of the Suffolk Regiment

In 1914 Lieutenant-Colonel EAH Webb wrote how: 'All of the coloured drawings in these pages which bear the initials "P.W.R." will be easily recognised by readers of military histories, as the handiwork of the celebrated military artist, Mr PW Reynolds.' The pages to which the Colonel referred are those of his most valuable book, *History of the 12th (The Suffolk) Regiment 1685-1913* which was published in 1914 by Spottiswoode & Co, Ltd of 5 New Street Square, London. Writing in the preface, the Colonel went on to say of Reynolds how: 'The complete collection of notes and sketches

he possesses of army uniform, and the close study he has given to the subject, entitle him to be considered, in this respect, one of the leading experts of the day.'

Certainly the amount of Reynold's paintings that have appeared in regimental and other military records would, indeed, have rendered his work and style easily recognisable. And for sure, his name would easily rank equally among other experts in the field of military art such as Richard Simkin and Harry Payne. But, whereas the lives of those two have been well documented, little seems to be known about PW Reynolds.

A website dealing with military uniform, Uniformology, has little to say about the man other than he was: 'An amateur military artist of the late 19th/early 20th century.' Auction catalogues offering artwork can do little more in their writeups than comment that the artist was British. There is, however, AE Hasell Miller's important book *Vanished Armies* which, in its Editor's Preface by John Mollo refers to PW Reynolds as: 'A civil servant and amateur artist.'

A search through the 527 pages of Colonel Webb's book revealed a total of nine colour images signed with the initials 'PWR'.

LIGHT COMPANY OFFICER, 1796

With the Christmas celebrations still possibly lingering in the minds of the troops, orders were received on 7 January 1796 to proceed to the East Indies. The regiment had only returned home from foreign service in the December of the previous year and were stationed at Iron Hill Barracks close to Southampton.

Shortly after Captain George Elers joined the Light Company in 1796, he wrote of how he had to supply himself with a sabre and how: 'We (the Light Company officers) wore wings instead of epaulettes, blue pantaloons edged with scarlet, a scarlet waistcoat, ornamented with narrow

gold lace, and hats covered with the finest black ostrich feathers, with a stand up feather, composed of red and black.' Seen worn by the three men depicted in the image, but the design is far from clear, are oblong cross-belt plates. A more detailed sketch of Colonel Thomas Grey, dated 1797, reveals a plate with cut corners and the number '12' in the centre of an oval. As Colonel Webb pointed out, the jackets depicted were only authorised up to 1 May 1796 when a Warrant was published stating that coats for all ranks were to be fastened down to the waist, thus completely hiding the waistcoats.



THE WAR OF 1812-16

With the war with France approaching crisis point, it would be via a Horse Guards letter that a 2nd Battalion was ordered to be added to the 12th Regiment with effect from 25 December 1811. Recruiting for this was possibly going well due to the fact that an Army Circular, dated 12 March 1812, directed that corporal punishment awarded by regimental courts-martial should be limited to just 300 lashes.

Here in Reynold's image we see both officers and men wearing the headdress introduced in 1812, commonly referred to as the Waterloo Shako. On the false front, the gilt or brass crowned plates at this time bore

the intertwined letters 'GR' with the regimental number below. The officer on the left wears on his white sword-belt the oval plate introduced in 1799 which had a crowned strap inscribed with the Gibraltar battle honour authorised on 14 April 1784. The number '12' again in the centre. A green plume is worn indicating that he is a member of the Light Company and, as we can see, wings in lieu of epaulettes are being worn. A gilt device of a bugle-horn was worn on these. His brother officer to the right has the white-over-red plume of a battalion company. We can just see in the far left of the picture a spontoon, the pointed pike carried by Sergeants until 1830.



OFFICERS 1825-30

The beginning of the year 1825 found the regiment stationed at Gibraltar where it would remain until returning to England in 1834. While at Gibraltar the 12th was inspected on several occasions and each time reported as in high order in every respect. In September 1828, however, Gibraltar was devastated by an epidemic of fever causing some 4,000 deaths, the regiment losing two officers and 53 men.

All three officers in Reynolds's fine study are wearing the shako (the Regency shako) introduced by General Order dated 10 August 1815. 11in in diameter at the top, and 7½in deep,



it was fitted with two separate gilt chain scales which allowed for wear under the chin, tied together with black tape, or up behind a black cockade as seen in the painting. A regimental button was placed in the centre of the cockade.

The headdress was decorated with a 2½in band of gold lace around the top, and another of ½in at the bottom. The star plates consisted of a laurel wreath

surrounding an oval inscribed with the battle honours 'Minden', 'Gibraltar' and 'Seringapatam' and surmounted by a crown. Within the oval are the Roman numerals 'XII'.

The officer in the centre can be identified as being from a Grenadier company by his elaborate shoulder wings, gold lace and tall white plume. Although the 1815 General Order mentioned above permitted Grenadier companies to retain their bearskin caps, this privilege was, however, confined to service in Great Britain, Ireland or America, the shako to be worn when on other stations.

The breast plate being worn is that introduced in 1825. A gilt oblong, it featured a silver star and the battle honours 'Minden', 'Gibraltar' and 'Seringapatam'. Clearly seen is the gold embroidered on red cloth star ornament worn on the skirts by the battalion company officer (identified by his white over red plume this time) on the right. It carried the 'Gibraltar' honour and the number '12'. We also see a gorget being worn by the grenadier officer, this throat ornament being abolished in 1830. So far unmentioned is the officer on the left who wears the regulation frock coat and, plume removed, a canvas cover over his shako.

BATTALION AND LIGHT COMPANY 1834

In this plate, dated 1834, by Reynolds, there's an officer and two men of a battalion company, and a Sergeant of the Light Company, all in summer dress. After 10 years and six months' service at Gibraltar, the regiment had embarked for England during April and May 1834 and, upon arrival at Portsmouth, marched over to Winchester where it remained until the middle of September.

Much wider at the top than at the bottom was the new shako introduced in 1829. Gone was the ornamental lace and cockade of the previous headdress, the white-over-red plume being retained until exchanged for a plain white one two years later. For the plates, large universal pattern crowned stars were introduced for line infantry, the 12th placing on the star a similar device, but without



the crown, to that worn on the old Regency shako. Note how these large plates covered almost the entire front of the headdress, having been shaped so as to match the contour.

The breast plate being worn by both the officer and men is that which was introduced in 1825 (see above), Reynolds being careful to include in his artwork a suggestion of the Roman numeral 'XII'. On the collars and across the chests of the men is the regimental lace which was white with yellow, crimson and black lines. But, in 1836, a General Order directed that coloured lace should be abolished and replaced by plain white. The Light Company Sergeant wears the green ball tuft introduced in 1830. Note also his shoulder wings and the Sergeant's red and yellow sash authorised in 1825.

SOUTH AFRICA 1846-55

Colonel Webb included two plates with the caption '1846-55', these years seeing the 12th Regiment fighting in South Africa and 55 of its men involved in the wreck of HMS *Birkenhead* off Danger Point, in False Bay about 50 miles from Cap Town on 26 February 1852.

Both the bandsman in his white jacket and the Light Infantry company man in the centre are wearing the shako introduced in 1844 and worn until

1855. This had been authorised in December 1843 and is generally referred to as the Albert Shako after the Prince Consort. Simple plates were worn by other ranks which consisted of a circular wreath made up of half oak and half laurel. Above this, a crown, and, in the centre, the number of the regiment on a solid ground. Once again the Light Company man in the centre has a green ball tuft and white shoulder wings. On the right of the painting the man is wearing a forage cap with the number '12' as a badge. Colonel Webb pointed out that as far back as 1841 a crown was worn above the numerals by the battalion companies, possibly without authority. Also seen is the narrow welt of red cloth down the outer seams of the trousers which, notes Colonel Webb, was authorised for the first time in 1833.

Moving now to the second of the '1846-55' paintings is a drummer, his jacket adorned with much regimental lace and whose bugle is hung via green cords. The plates worn on the Albert Shako by other ranks have been described; the officers, however, had a more elaborate device of a gilt crowned star upon which was placed a wreath of half laurel and half palm leaves. Engraved on four rays of the star were the



battle honours

'Minden', 'Seringapatam', 'India' and 'Gibraltar', the castle badge of the latter being placed on the lower point.

Also here for the first time is the designation 'East Suffolk', received in 1782. A junior officer is standing with his back to the viewer, wearing the blue cloth forage cap with regimental number embroidered in gold on the front. This was introduced in 1834.

1857-61

The first date here fits perfectly with the introduction of the single-breasted tunic introduced that year. The old coatee had given place to a long double-breasted coat in 1855, but this was not popular, so the change was made to what we see in this Reynolds' painting. Here too is a crimson sash worn over the left shoulder and the badges of rank placed on the collar. In the painting you can just make out the gold embroidered crown of a Lieutenant-Colonel.

There is a new headdress too, namely the black felt shako authorised by Horse Guards on 16 January 1855 with its black patent leather peak, worcestered ball tuft and, in this case, two rings of gold lace around the top indicating a Lieutenant-Colonel. The plate, an eight-pointed crowned gilt star with the regimental number on a black leather ground inside a Garter. The Colonel's white belt has the familiar locket type fastening with



a crown over '12' in the centre and 'East Suffolk Regiment' around the edge. A second officer wears a double-breasted blue frock coat. His forage cap bears an embroidered regimental number.

The painting also shows two drummers with their regimental lace, the drum major and a fourth musician who wears a white shell jacket and scarlet cap. Colonel Webb noted that bandsmen of the 2nd Battalion wore round forage caps of scarlet cloth.



IRELAND AND INDIA, 1876

This year saw the 1st Battalion stationed in Ireland and the 2nd in India. In Reynold's painting for 1876 there are yet more changes in dress. The officer on the right can be seen now with pointed cuff decoration indicating the rank held. The old slashed cuffs as seen in the 1857-61 illustration was discontinued in 1868. His headdress is the shako we now refer to as the last shako. Authorised in 1869, it had a new design of plate consisting of a gilt laurel wreath surmounted by a crown enclosing the Garter. Within this was placed the regimental badge, in the case of the 12th Regiment, the Castle, Key and motto of Gibraltar.

The officer in the centre of the painting wears the blue patrol jacket introduced in 1867. To his right is a Corporal wearing a Glengarry cap which, according to Colonel Webb, was introduced in 1870, the badge being a star of 25 points surmounted by the Castle of Gibraltar with the key on top of the central turret. The regimental number was placed in the centre of a strap inscribed with the motto '*Montis Insignia Calpe*' and 'East Suffolk'. He also has Gibraltar Castle and Key collar badges. Note the figure in the distance with his rolled greatcoat and black valise bearing the regimental number worn on the hip. It would be worn, by 1882, on the back.



GREAT WAR 1913

From the date of the last painting to the eve of the Great War of 1914-18 there were many changes. The year 1881 had seen the 12th (East Suffolk) Regiment of Foot become simply the Suffolk Regiment, then in 1899 the 1st Battalion would find its way to South Africa and the 2nd Boer War.

There were changes in uniform, too. Here in the last of Reynold's paintings is, for the first time, khaki service dress and the 1908 pattern web equipment which would do good service throughout the war to come. The white foreign service helmet makes its first appearance, as

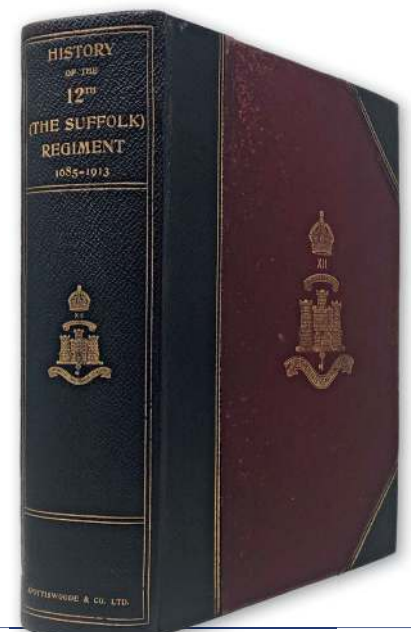
does the spiked cork helmet covered in blue cloth that had been introduced in 1878. Also, notice that the officers' badges of rank have been removed from the collar and placed on the shoulder cords and how the sash is now tied around the waist.

In all of PW Reynolds's nine plates are the yellow facings worn almost from the regiment's formation in 1685. But, to comply with the regulations set down in 1881, whereas all non-royal English regiments had to wear white, this was changed. Changed, that is, until yellow was restored in 1899.



i COLLECTING

Colonel Webb's *History of the 12th (The Suffolk) Regiment 1685-1913* can be placed into the more expensive range of military books. Hardback copies in good condition may require an outlay of £100 or more, but with colour plate collecting in mind, do look out for examples in not so good condition. It may be possible to find books literally falling to pieces, but with all plates present, for as little as £20. Colour plates sometimes get deliberately removed from old volumes, these too can often be found offered as sets or singles for a small sum.



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THE MEN BEHIND THE GUN:

Suicide Specials



John Walter looks at the cheap personal-defence revolvers that began to appear in the USA, in quantity, after the Civil War

The term Suicide Special was coined in 1948 by Duncan McConnell, writing in *The American Rifleman*, to define simply-made revolvers which were customarily distinguished by poor quality and a wide variety of brand names. The generic name achieved broader acceptance after the publication in 1958 of *Suicide Special Revolvers* by Donald B. Webster Jr.

The need for inexpensive personal-defence weapons was age old, but, as far as the North American market was concerned, had been highlighted by inexorable expansion westward – the California Gold Rush, the construction of the transcontinental railroad with its hell-on-wheels shanty towns – and by a Civil War in which handguns of virtually any type were pressed into service.

By 1861, several manufacturers were already providing small-calibre cap lock revolvers. Colt had introduced the so-called Root Model side hammer, and the advent of the Smith & Wesson No. 1, despite its ineffectual .22 rimfire

cartridge, was to be a turning point. The day of the single-shot cap lock derringers had passed, as the future clearly lay in multi-shot handguns firing self-contained cartridges.

The expiry in 1869 of Rollin White's bored-through cylinder patent removed the last obstacle to copyists. Even Colt and Remington were forced to compete with the many small gunmakers operating largely in New England, though higher prices restricted distribution of the Colt New Line and Remington Iroquois, both of which could be numbered among the Suicide Specials.

What was a Suicide Special?

Typically, it was a compact seven-shot .22 or five-shot .32, usually (but not exclusively) chambering rimfire ammunition. The one-piece frame usually had a detachable plate on the left side giving access to the simple single-action lockwork. Sheath triggers were customary, butts were squared or bird's head, and the barrels were generally less than 3in long. Cylinders

were customarily loaded through a gate on the right side of the frame, but could be removed when required simply by withdrawing the axis pin. Guns were blued or nickel-plated, and often had poor quality engraving rolled into the surface of the metalwork. Grips were wood or gutta percha, though mother of pearl was popular on the gaudier, nickelled guns.

Ever-increasing competition soon forced the primitive form of Suicide Special to give way to something much more effectual. Usually featuring double-action lockwork, break-open construction and automatic ejection, guns of this genre were made in very large numbers from the 1880s onward. More than 10 years ago, in *The Handgun Story*, I proposed naming them Super Suicide Specials. The best, such as Iver Johnson's Safety Automatic Hammerless and Harrington & Richardson's Automatic Ejecting models, left their mark on revolvers, which were being made a century afterwards.

The manufacturers

Production of Suicide Specials is believed to have exceeded 500,000 annually by 1885, but then went into a steady decline owing largely to market saturation and the gradual introduction, particularly in urban districts, of restrictions on readily concealable handguns. Production had declined greatly by 1900, though a handful of perhaps 50 businesses making inexpensive revolvers continued to prosper for many years. Among the most important contributors were:

The Bacon Arms Company, or Bacon [Arms] Mfg Co, established in 1858 by Thomas Bacon in Norwich, Connecticut, made pepperboxes, single-shot pistols and revolvers including an open-frame .31 Colt copy with a detachable side plate. Hopkins & Allen purchased Bacon in 1867, continuing to make side plate revolvers alongside the .36 cap lock Dictator. About 2,000 sheath trigger solid frame

The .22 Short rimfire Smith & Wesson No. 1 had a seven-chamber cylinder and broke open to load (Morphy Auctions)



The Robin Hood No. 1 Suicide Special (Rock Island Auctions)



Three typical Suicide Specials – two small Forehand & Wadsworth Terrors and the larger Hopkins & Allen XL No. 4 (Morphy Auctions)

.31 five-chamber cap lock revolvers were also made, occasionally under the Union Arms Co. banner.

Bacon also made .22 and .32 rimfire infringements of the Smith & Wesson Model No. 1. By 1888, a workforce of 20 was making about 2,500 guns annually. Operations ceased shortly afterward, however, perhaps owing to competition. **Wesson & Harrington**, a partnership formed in Worcester by Franklin Wesson and his nephew Gilbert Henderson Harrington, made a pocket revolver patented by Harrington in June 1871 (US 111,584). The gun had an ejector beneath the barrel which swung laterally and then slid back. Harrington then bought his uncle's share of the business and, with the factory manager William Augustus Richardson, formed Harrington & Richardson in 1874.

Harrington & Richardson continued to make Harrington's pocket revolvers. A new design with a removable cylinder-axis pin was introduced in 1876, and the first doubleaction pattern appeared in 1878. H&R revolvers bore a bewildering variety of brand names, including American, Automatic Ejecting Model, Automatic

Hammerless Model, Bicycle Revolver, H&R Bulldog, Premier, Police Automatic Model, Police Bicycle Model, Police Premier, Safety Hammer, Vest Pocket, Young America and Young America Bulldog. By 1908, three million had been made. After 1904, however, most had been distinguished by model dates and pattern numbers. For example, three similar-looking models introduced in 1904–6 were known as M1904 (.32 and .38), M1905 (.32) and M1906 (.22).

Large-scale production of inexpensive revolvers, however, continued until Harrington & Richardson, having moved from Worcester to Gardner in 1973, collapsed in 1987 – ironically, the centenary of the death of both its founders. H&R 1871, Inc., was formed in 1991, revolvers having been made, in the interim, under a New England Firearms Company name, but was itself purchased by Marlin and then Remington. Work finally ceased in 2015. **Freeman W. Hood**, trading from Worcester and Boston in Massachusetts, and then Norwich in Connecticut, designed a wide variety of firearms and related components. These including a pivoting ejector protected by US Patent 44,933 of 8 November 1864, which was incorporated in some of the revolvers made by Lucius Pond. Hood also received US Patent 116,593 of 4 July 1871 for an Improved Revolving



The so-called Peanut was the smallest of the pistols made in Philadelphia by Henry Deringer (Morphy Auctions)



The Baby Merwin, though embodying many classic Suicide Special features, had an upward pivoting barrel inspired by contemporaneous Smith & Wessons (Morphy Auctions)



The Merwin & Hulbert first model Single Action, shown here in .38 form, was another pseudo Suicide Special. The barrel unit could be pivoted laterally to the right, then slid forward to pull the cylinder away from the standing breech and expel spent cases (Morphy Auctions)



Left: An advertisement published by Harrington & Richardson, showing the company's range of compact revolvers (Morphy Auctions)



This Maltby, Henley & Co. Super Suicide Special (actually made by Hopkins & Allen) has double-action lockwork and a concealed hammer. Cartridges were slid into the cylinder individually, the chambers aligning only during the loading process to ensure that cartridges could not fall out accidentally (Morphy Auctions)

Firearm, and 160,192 of 23 February 1875 for the five-shot revolver made by the Hood Firearms Company of Norwich, Connecticut, c. 1875-9.

Hopkins & Allen, founded in 1868 by Charles Allen, Charles Converse, Horace Briggs, Charles Hopkins and Samuel Hopkins, made a wide range of cheap sheath-trigger revolvers. On 27 May 1862, Charles Wesley Hopkins (1833-1904) had been granted US Patent 35419 to protect a sheath-trigger revolver with a cylinder which could be moved laterally within the frame just far enough to allow cartridges to enter freely, and Samuel Snow Hopkins (1830-1905) subsequently patented a solid frame sheath trigger revolver with a cylinder swinging laterally on a yoke – a concept now popularly associated with Colt and Smith & Wesson.

Hopkins & Allen revolvers were sold under a bewildering array of names ranging from Acme, Blue Jacket and Captain Jack to Tower's Police Safety, Universal and XL.

Charles Converse sold his interest in the business to half-brothers Milan and William Hulbert in 1874, allowing what had been Merwin & Hulbert, agents for Hopkins & Allen since 1871, to be reorganised as Merwin, Hulbert & Co. – destined to become, at least temporarily, the world's largest firearms and sporting-goods dealer.

Though Hopkins & Allen began making Merwin & Hulbert revolvers in 1876, Joseph Merwin died in 1879 and Merwin, Hulbert & Co. entered receivership in 1881. The eventual collapse of Hulbert Brothers & Co., which entered voluntary liquidation on 5 August 1897, forced Hopkins & Allen to fail the following year. Reorganised as the Hopkins & Allen Arms Company, the new business lost its factory to a terrible fire in 1900, but, after rebuilding, acquired the assets of Forehand & Wadsworth in 1902. In 1916, however, the Hopkins & Allen Arms Company entered bankruptcy and was then purchased by the Marlin-Rockwell Corporation.

Forehand & Wadsworth. Gunmaker Sullivan Forehand was co-designer with Henry C Wadsworth of a revolver

protected by US Patent 162,162 of April 1875, and another, with a detachable side plate, protected by Patent 193,367 of 24 July 1877. Forehand and Wadsworth joined Allen & Wheelock in the 1850s, but Wheelock died in 1863 and the business passed to Ethan Allen. However, Allen died in 1871 and Forehand & Wadsworth was formed in 1872. The partnership began by making a .41 rimfire single shot cartridge derringer, as well as solid frame five-shot .32 and .38 pocket revolvers, protected by the 1877 patent.

The Forehand Arms Company of Worcester, Massachusetts, then traded from 1894 onward. The five shot Forehand Model 1891 was a solid frame non-ejector similar to the XL DA No. 6 made for Forehand & Wadsworth by Hopkins & Allen. A safety catch was set into the back strap of the butt and the hammer was often enclosed in the frame. Work continued until the death of Forehand in 1898, Wadsworth having died six years earlier. As activity had been reduced to buying-in revolvers, so the assets of what had become the Forehand Arms Company were acquired in 1902 by the actual manufacturer of the guns, Hopkins & Allen.

Johnson & Bye, or Johnson, Bye & Company. Iver Johnson (1841-95), born Ivar Jonsen en Floe in Nordfjord, Norway, entered the USA on 26 June



Iver Johnson was among the leading promoters of inexpensive revolvers in the 1880s

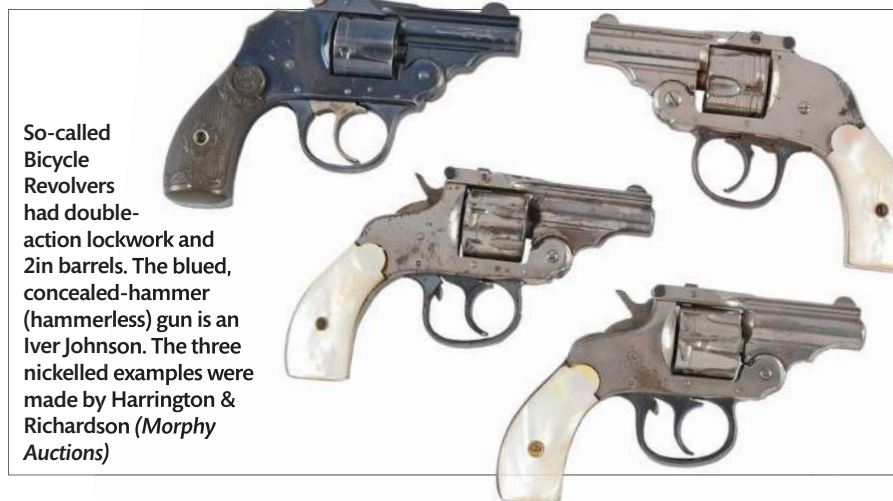
Suicide Specials



This good quality cased Wesson & Harrington Suicide Special, No. 112, embodies Gilbert Harrington's 1871-patent ejector (*Morphy Auctions*)



This early Forehand & Wadsworth Suicide Special, though otherwise typical of its class, has a sidehammer (*Morphy Auctions*)



So-called Bicycle Revolvers had double-action lockwork and 2in barrels. The blued, concealed-hammer (hammerless) gun is an Iver Johnson. The three nickelled examples were made by Harrington & Richardson (*Morphy Auctions*)



The Iver Johnson Safety Hammerless double-action revolver in its cardboard box. Guns of this type actually had hammers concealed entirely within the frame (*Morphy Auctions*)

1863 and began his gunsmithing operations in a small workshop at 244 Main Street, Worcester, Massachusetts, shortly after the Civil War had finished. In 1871, Johnson entered partnership with Martin Bye (1840-1906), born in what was then Christiania (now Oslo), who had arrived in the USA on 20 April 1862; both men became US citizens, in 1866 and 1872 respectively.

The company intended to make all kinds of firearms. The earliest Suicide Special revolvers were unmarked, or bore only brand names; in 1879, however, Johnson & Bye began to use its own name alongside brand names such as American Bull Dog, British Bull Dog, Defender, Eagle, Encore, Favorite, Favorite Navy, Old Hickory, Smoker and Tycoon.

Bye sold his interest in the company in 1883, operations continuing as Iver Johnson & Company and then from 1884 as Iver Johnson's Arms & Cycle

Works. Trading from Worcester, the business continued to make Johnson & Bye revolvers, joined by the Boston Bull Dog, the Improved Defender and the Swift. An important addition to the range was the Model 1879, introduced in 1884, which had a laterally-swinging cylinder patented in 1879-83 by Andrew Hyde. But this gun was generally deemed to be too sophisticated for Johnson's markets, however, and did not sell in quantity prior to the move from Worcester to Fitchburg in 1891. Merwin, Hulbert & Company, until superseded by Hulbert Bros. & Co. in 1881, marketed revolvers made by

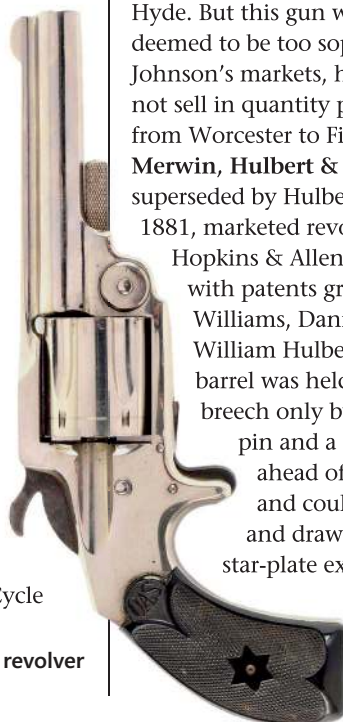
Hopkins & Allen in accordance with patents granted to Benjamin Williams, Daniel Moore and William Hulbert in 1874-7. The barrel was held to the standing breech only by the cylinder axis-pin and a lock on the frame ahead of the trigger guard, and could be swung laterally and drawn forward until a star-plate extractor, attached to the breech, pulled spent cases (but not unfired rounds) out of

the cylinder. The open-frame design proved to be too weak, however, and had soon been replaced by sturdier top-strap patterns which included compact guns which, in small-calibre form, are sometime placed among the ranks of Suicide Specials.

Otis Alexander Smith (1835-1923) of Middlefield and Rock Fall, Connecticut, made solid frame sheath-trigger revolvers incorporating a quick-release cylinder catch protected by his US Patent 137,968 of 15 April 1873. These were superseded by a break-open auto-ejecting sheath trigger Model 83 Shell Ejector, the subject of US Patent 251,306 granted on 20 December 1881 in collusion with John Turrill Smith (1828-92). Next came a solid frame hammerless five-chamber .32 and .38 M1892 with a pivoting loading gate. This gun had a double-action trigger system and an exposed cylinder stop which, when pressed, allowed the cylinder to rotate freely.

The designers

Designers and patentees involved with Suicide Specials, particularly the Super varieties, were often skilful engineers.



A typical Otis Smith sheath-trigger revolver (*Morphy Auctions*)



Three Iver Johnson .32 Safety Hammerless Bicycle Revolvers, with concealed hammers and 2in barrels. Nickel plating was much more popular with customers than traditional blued finish (Morphy Auctions)

The Forehand & Wadsworth Swamp Angel, shown here in nickel-plated deluxe form, was made by Hopkins & Allen (Morphy Auctions)



Marks found on the barrel of a Merwin & Hulbert show the earliest date on which the gun could have been made - that of the latest patent (Morphy Auctions)



A typical Merwin & Hulbert .32 Double Action revolver, a sophisticated design with a barrel and cylinder unit that was rotated laterally and pulled forward to load or eject (Morphy Auctions)

Among them were Andrew Fyrberg (1853-1936), born Anders Carl Fyrberg in Sweden, and Reinhard Thorvald Torkelson (1850-1932) from Christiania in Norway. Both men were employed by Johnson & Bye and Iver Johnson, but their contributions to revolver design are customarily overlooked.

One of the most versatile inventors was Homer Caldwell, born in New York in July 1839. Trained as a mechanic, he is best known for work undertaken for Harrington & Richardson, relevant US firearms patents ranging from 383,701 of 1888 to 649,809 of 1900. Patent

370926 of 4 October 1887, which can be taken as typical, protected a cocking system which could be actuated with the thumb, but only after the trigger had been pulled to raise the otherwise concealed hammer to half-cock.

Homer Caldwell may have been a freelance designer. In addition to patents assigned to Harrington & Richardson, US Patent 246,940 of 1881 was assigned to Dexter Smith, 453,421 of 1891 to Sullivan Forehand, and 561,963 of 1896 to Mary Johnson, widow and executrix of Iver Johnson. But arteriosclerosis restricted his working life as the 20th

century began, and the onset of dementia about 1905 confined him to the Worcester Hospital for the Insane. Homer Caldwell died on 18 February 1909, his significant contribution to the development of the inexpensive revolver is now largely forgotten. ■

Acknowledgements: Sarah Stoltzfus and Morphy Auctions (www.morphyauctions.com), Rock Island Auctions (www.rockislandauction.com) and the US Government Patent Office (www.uspto.gov) for images and information.

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Acquiring Suicide Specials in Britain, even though they may be 150 years old, is complicated because many chamber cartridges are still readily available. However, Andrew Bottomley, www.andrewbottomley.com, is offering a .32 Forehand & Wadsworth Terror and a .32 Colt New Line for £690 apiece. In North America, where no restrictions apply, prices can range from \$75-\$100 for hammerless Iver Johnsons, up to \$330 for a Blue Jacket No. 2 sold in 2011 and \$480 for a Hopkins & Allen XL No. 4 sold in 2014.

Identification is crucial to desirability, as an incredible profusion of wholesalers', distributors' or spurious manufacturers' marks, some common others exceptionally rare, will be found. Typical of these are Aetna Arms Company (made by Harrington & Richardson), Chicago Arms Company, Enterprise Gun Works (Philadelphia), Great Western Gun Works (JH Johnson of Pittsburgh), New York Pistol Company, United States Arms Company and the Western Arms Company. Otis Smith's revolvers were widely distributed by Maltby, Curtiss & Co., and may also be

encountered under misleading names such as Columbia Armory, Mohawk Mfg. Co., Spencer Revolver Company or Parker Revolver Company.

Brand names ran from Acme, Bang-Up and Conqueror to Wide Awake, Xpert and You Bet (no 'Z' name has been authenticated). However, the most successful names were copied so often that interpretation can be compromised. There are said to be more than 30 differing revolvers marked 'Defender'. Constructional details and patent can sometimes help to resolve confusion.

Princes of Peace

Frank Jastrzembski investigates the stories of men of the cloth who were awarded the Victoria Cross in WWI

Clergymen have accompanied English armies into battle for almost 1,000 years. In 1796, the Army Chaplains' Department (AChD) was established to comfort and aid soldiers spiritually and physically. For over 200 years, British Chaplains have served in the ranks of the AChD, exemplifying traits of patience, wisdom, empathy and courage. The sacrifice and valour exhibited by chaplains of the AChD during World War I led to the addition of Royal to the organisation's title (RACHD), conferred on it by King

George V in 1918. This honour was well earned as 96 Chaplains were killed due to enemy fire. Some 81 were awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) and 571 were awarded the Military Cross (MC). Only three Chaplains of the hundreds serving in the AChD were awarded Britain's highest accolade for gallantry, the illustrious bronzed Victoria Cross (VC).

What makes the achievements so impressive of these three saintly heroes is that they faced certain death armed only with their faith, putting themselves in harm's way to aid and minister

to their brother soldiers, indifferent to their own welfare or suffering. All three AChD clergymen awarded the VC faced hazards and performed phenomenal feats of altruism and bravery on the battlefield. They helped to stabilise and maintain morale and faith on the front line by setting a righteous example.

Edward Noel Mellish

Born on
Christmas
Eve in 1880,
Edward

Captain Bell of the Royal Fusiliers testified that Mellish was a most modest and unassuming man, and would probably say he was only doing his job (*Thomas Koivurinne*)



Noel Mellish seemed destined for a life dedicated to God. He earned an early education from Saffron Walden Grammar School, but coasted between jobs after, first finding work with his father, then spending some time in the wine business. He joined up with Colonel Robert Baden-Powell's military police during the Second Anglo-Boer War, making him the sole VC recipient of the AChD to see prior military experience. Mellish lingered in South Africa after being discharged from the Army following the war, working for a period on the construction of a railway line in the South Orange Colony and as a laborer in a diamond mine.

Mellish became involved in missionary work while in South Africa, returning to Britain two years later in 1910 to be ordained. He was serving as the assistant curate at St. Paul's, Deptford when war erupted in 1914. His Boer War experience and desire to help in the war effort led him

to volunteer for service with the AChD in 1915. Mellish was attached to the Fourth Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers stationed on the Western Front. That same year, he received the tragic news that his brother was killed was serving as a Lieutenant on 25 September 1915, at the Battle of Loos.

On 27 March, the British planned to eradicate a German salient penetrating at a depth of 100yd forward and 600yd wide into line near the Belgian village of St. Eloi. They detonated six massive mines underneath the German trenches before launching an assault on the position at 4.15am, producing a hellish, shell-pocked wasteland of mud between the opposing units. Far outside the sphere of his normal duties, Chaplain Mellish, sporting his conspicuous gold-rimmed spectacles, ventured out to tend to his companions of the decimated Fourth Battalion. They suffered a total of 265 men and 10 officers as casualties. He raced over the cratered and churned landscape into this

tempest of fire to aid the wounded scattered and stranded in the desolate quagmire. He rescued 10 men under a hail of German machine gun fire and exploding projectiles, with three men literally killed in his arms.

The next day followed with heavy bombardments by both sides and a German counterattack. Mellish rescued 12 more wounded soldiers. Though physically drained and coated in a crusty layer of dried mud, he went one last time on the third consecutive day of the battle with six volunteer stretcher-bearers from the Second Suffolks, eager to retrieve their wounded comrades. Captain William Bell of the Fourth Royal Fusiliers took the time to compose a letter addressed personally to Mellish's mother living in Lewisham on April 1916, chronicling her son's conduct on those three days at St. Eloi: 'I feel

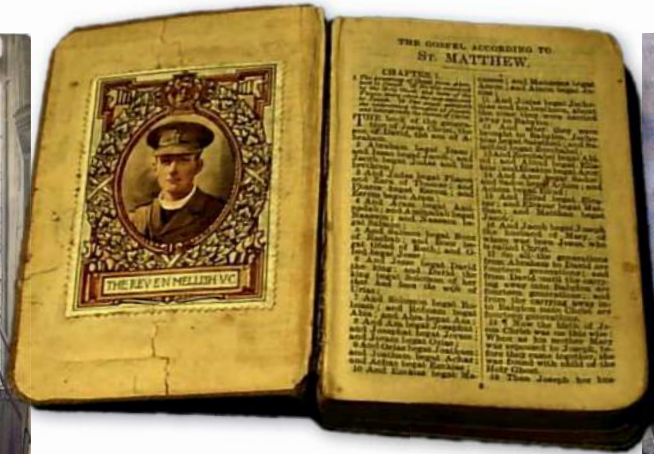
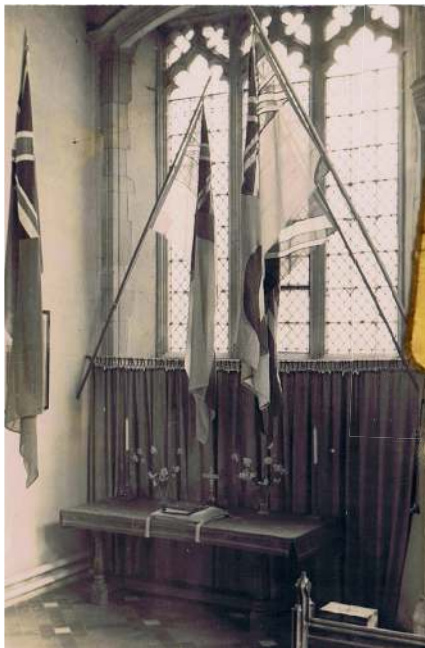
I cannot let this opportunity pass of telling you what a



Hardy made a special point to put himself in harm's way, bandaging the wounded, pulling men from the dirt, or providing moral support in the trenches (Tuomas Koivurinne)



Reverend Hardy's usual code to alert friendly sentries returning from a night's work was the reassuring whisper of, "It's only me" (Tuomas Koivurinne)



Above: The New Testament that belonged to Reverend Noel Mellish (Museum of Army Chaplaincy)

Right: AChD Chaplains provided comfort to British soldiers up until the last moments when they departed this life and began their journey on to the next (Tuomas Koivurinne)

Left: Reverend Noel Mellish placed this cross in the chapel of his church. It has a Royal Fusiliers cap badge fixed to it (Museum of Army Chaplaincy)

splendid man your son Noel is. During the recent operations at St. Eloi, in which my Battalion unfortunately lost heavily, he did the work of ten men in dressing and helping wounded men, he is a most modest and unassuming man, and would probably say he was only doing his job, but I was there, I know the splendid work he did. Many a man owes his life to your son and we are proud of him. The men of the Battalion love him and swear by our Padre.'

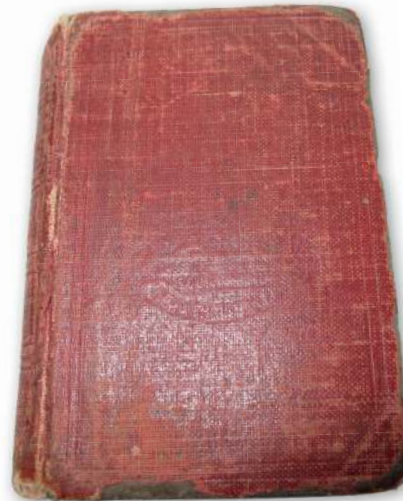
Mellish was presented with the Victoria Cross by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 12 June 1916. He was the second chaplain to receive the VC in British history, and the first of the three AChD Chaplains to receive this honor during the Great War.

Reverend William RF Addison

In *The Clergy in Khaki: New Perspectives on British Army Chaplaincy in the First World War*, Dr Edward Madigan claimed that the events that led to Reverend William RF Addison's VC were: '... wholly eclipsed by that of Noel Mellish and Theodore Bayley Hardy, who won their awards against the familiar backdrop of

Far right: A watch given to Reverend Hardy from the parishioners at Hutton Roof (Museum of Army Chaplaincy)

An icon made from shell nose cap and driving band in Great Dunmow (Museum of Army Chaplaincy)



Reverend Hardy's original New Testament (Museum of Army Chaplaincy)



the Western Front.' Like Mellish, the less familiar Addison came to find his sanctified vocation later in life. He was arguably the most down-to-earth of the three to win the VC, cursing at times and carrying a strong physique from his days working in a lumberyard, qualities that permitted him to blend in with the common soldier. One observer noted that Addison, "Spent most of his time with the boys," but recalled that when not in their company, "He was a prodigious worker, and would often sit up until two or three in the morning writing, and always to help somebody or something, or other."

William Robert Fountaine Addison was born on 16 September 1883.

In 1904, he relocated about 4,500 miles away to British Columbia. He worked in a lumber camp for a few years before returning to Britain in 1909, with the intention of studying farming in Devon. At some point Addison turned to God and proposed to become a priest instead of a farmer. He attended Salisbury Theological College in 1911 and was ordained in May 1913 at the age of 30. He became curate of St. Edmund's, Salisbury where he remained until volunteering for service with the AChD with the outbreak of war.

He made up part of Major General Sir Stanley Maude's 13th Division when it landed at Basra, Mesopotamia, in March 1916. He ministered



Sir Douglas Haig praised the devotion and self-sacrifice of the Army Chaplains serving in France

Left: The holy men of the AChD helped to stabilise and maintain morale and faith on the front line, indifferent to their own welfare or suffering (Tuomas Koivurinne)

to two Lancashire battalions of the 38th Brigade of the division. Though Addison would have rather been at home then confronting the 120 degree heat of the Iraqi desert, he felt his place was with the men, writing that: 'I often wish I was back at St. Edmund's, but really I like the life out here.' He accompanied General Sir George F Goring's (replaced General Sir Fenton Aylmer) relief column that raced to rescue the besieged British garrison at Kut, located on a peninsula on the left bank of the Tigris River.

Between Kut and Goring's column stood four daunting defensive positions manned by Ottoman soldiers, one being Sannaiyat, that extended two miles on either bank of the Tigris with two marshes shielding its flanks. Addison was cited for: 'Most conspicuous bravery' at the botched assault on the Ottoman position at Sannaiyat on 9 April 1916. He moved unconcerned within 400yd of the Ottoman entrenchments while under heavy fire, tending to the wounded and comforting the dying. He carried a number of injured men back to safety, at one point urging fearful stretcher-bearers to hurry forward and retrieve the wounded. It was a miracle Addison escaped without even a flesh wound, as the 13th Division suffered 1,807 casualties at the battle. At Sannaiyat and Fallahiyyeh alone, the division suffered 46% casualties of those engaged. Addison received his VC (one of the five awarded as a result of the battle) from King George V at Buckingham Palace on 3 August 1917.

Reverend Theodore Hardy

The Anglican priest Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, endeared to British soldiers as Woodbine Willie, offered the 52-year-old Reverend Theodore Hardy sound advice when he arrived fresh to the Western Front. "Live with the men. Go everywhere they go. Make up your mind you will share all their risks, and more, if you can do any good," Kennedy stressed. He reasoned to his eager listener, "The line is the key to the whole business. Work in the front, and they will listen to you when they come out to rest, but if you only teach and preach behind, you are wasting time, the men won't pay the slightest attention to you; without that you are useless." Kennedy had no need to worry, Hardy would take his advice and run with it. Before the end of the war, he would be the most decorated of all the chaplains of the AChD, earning a DSO, MC, and VC (recommended on four separate occasions) before his tragic death.

Theodore Bayley Hardy was born in Exeter on 20 October 1863. Educated at the City of London School and London University, he was ordained in 1898. He taught class at Nottingham High School from 1891-1907 and then served as the Headmaster of Bentham Grammar School until 1913. One of his former students remembered that his modest teacher was the last person you would expect to win a VC.

Hardy stressed the need of a strong mind, body, and spirit to his students. He abstained from drinking alcohol and eating meat. He was also a passionate

bicyclist. This regular diet and exercise put him in great physical shape that sustained him in the trenches during the Great War.

Despite being in excellent shape, he was initially turned down for being too old when he tried to volunteer for service with the AChD. But Hardy refused to accept defeat, and intended to get to the front line one way or another. He instead trained to act as a stretcher-bearer. He was finally summoned to the War Office, and Reverend Douglas Carey, who interviewed Hardy, could immediately distinguish that he was dealing with no ordinary mortal. Hardy was permitted to travel to the Western Front and would instantly make an impact on the front line.

He made a special point to inject himself in harm's way as Kennedy urged, seeking out the wounded during the chaos of a battle or while the field was shrouded in darkness, bandaging their wounds, pulling men from the dirt, or just being in the trenches to provide moral support. An observer claimed his ministrations were simply invaluable and his devotion absolutely untiring. His usual code to alert friendly sentries returning from a night's work was the reassuring whisper of, "It's only me." Hardy worked until his body could do no more during stints on the front line, many times collapsing to the ground from exhaustion. His humble demeanor, devotion to the men, and fearlessness in battle endeared him to those in his company.

Hardy received a DSO for his actions in August 1917 during



Above: Mellish's VC held at the Royal Fusiliers Museum. Located second row, five from the left (Steve Lee, www.memorialstovalour.co.uk)

Left: Mellish's ashes were scattered at the St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Great Dunmow (Steve Lee, www.memorialstovalour.co.uk)



A plaque commemorating Mellish's war service at St. Mary's Church, Great Dunmow (Steve Lee, www.memorialstovalour.co.uk)

the Passchendaele offensive near Oostaverne, east of Wytchaete. He gripped the hand of a dying British soldier submerged in mud for almost 48 hours, providing nourishment and words of encouragement. During the day while comforting the man, Hardy was under German sniper and machine gun fire and also suffered from a shattered left wrist. He only left the dying soldier's side when he took his last breathe, but Hardy still went back out to extradiate and provide comfort to others in need of his help. After being reported missing, the saintly Chaplain was finally discovered fast asleep, but untouched, in a shell crater near the British main line.

In April 1918, during Germany's Kaiserschlacht at Rossignol Wood, he received a VC after retrieving a wounded officer with a mangled leg ensnared in barb wire. Hardy and a Sergeant crawled to within 10yd of the German position under the cover of darkness, wrapped a cloth over the pliers to mask the noise and snipped the wire, then dragged the man back to friendly lines undetected. He hated decorations. Lt. Colonel Challener of the 63rd Infantry Brigade recalled that Hardy would place his left arm across his breast to hide his decorations when he was speaking to a soldier who, himself, had no such decorations. When Hardy heard he was being recommended for the VC, he protested, but the senior officer assured him it would cause more trouble protesting the honour than accepting it.

King George V awarded the Victoria Cross to Hardy on 9 August 1918, while visiting the headquarters of the Third Army located at Frohen-le-Grande. On 11 October 1918, one month before the end of the war, Hardy was shot through the thigh by a burst of German machine gun fire. To the stretcher-bearers carrying him to the rear he uttered, "I've been hit. I'm sorry to be a nuisance." A week after being transported to a hospital in Northern France he died of his wounds. He ended his service as the most decorated Chaplain of the AChD.

In 1917, Sir Douglas Haig honored the Chaplains who served in the ranks



Reverend William Addison's final resting place at Brookwood Cemetery (Steve Lee, www.memorialstovalour.co.uk)

of the AChD when he released this official report: 'I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of all ranks of the British armies in France, our great appreciation of the devotion and self-sacrifice of the Army Chaplains serving in France. No considerations of personal convenience or safety have at any time interfered with their work among the troops, the value of which is incalculable.'

The role played by holy men on the front line during World War I was vital. For some soldiers and officers, religion died in the trenches of the Western Front or on Britain's other distant battlefields, but for others, the war provided a renewal of faith or a whole new discovery of God. It helped soldiers to endure the horrors experienced on the battlefield, and thousands found sanctuary in the tiny Army pocketbooks issued of St. John's Gospel. Religion also helped to maintain discipline and stabilise morale among the common British soldier. The champion of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington, even stressed at one time the advantage of religious instruction, stating: '... it is the greatest support and aid to discipline and order.'

Many nameless Chaplains of the AChD shared in the hardships, misery, and pain of the common soldier on the front line, and without their sacrifice and feats of bravery, their words of faith would have held no credence to the men engaged on the appalling and deadly battlefields of World War I. ■

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The rifle that thinks it's a shotgun

When is a gun, not a gun? The answer of course is a Paradox, as **Gavin Gardiner** explains

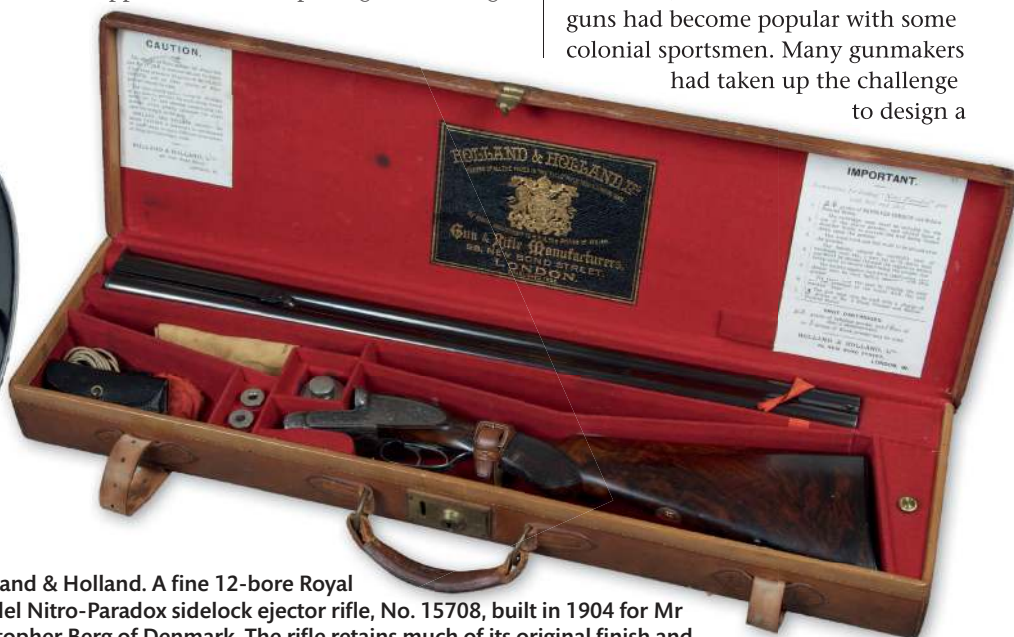
Of course there is a simple answer to every thing, and the answer to this question is Holland & Holland's famous Paradox double-barrelled rifle. The Paradox is a remarkable rifle in that it is also a shotgun. It has smooth bored barrels and is only rifled for the choked portion of the barrel, right at the muzzle. Indeed it is quite possible to own one of these rifles and to be blissfully unaware that you are actually holding a rifle in your hands, not just a shotgun.

First though, the reason for the invention. Colonel George V Fosbery VC was a decorated army officer, who had won his Victoria Cross in India in 1863 and dabbled with designs for explosive bullets. He became an inveterate firearms inventor with patents to his name for many things, including improvements to military rifles, breach mechanisms, a straight pull rifle, rifle magazines and an apparatus for the opening and closing

of carriage doors. None of these designs met with any commercial success, and his name might be forgotten today were it not for his two of his final inventions. The last was an automatic revolver that is better known today as the Webley Fosbery but, before that, he finally achieved the success he had been after with a design for a rifled choke-bore shotgun barrel. We know it today by the brand name that Holland & Holland gave it, The Paradox.

GV Fosbery Patent 7568 of 20 June 1885, called *Improvements in gun barrels*, Describes a smooth bore barrel with a coarse, ratchet-type rifling applied to the choked portion at the muzzle. The abridged specification for the patent simply stated: 'The contracted part of the choke-bored gun barrels is rifled, the grooves not being sufficiently deep to extend further than the choked part.'

Army service in India would have introduced Colonel Fosbery to the demands of the sportsman in the sub continent, and that Shot and Ball guns had become popular with some colonial sportsmen. Many gunmakers had taken up the challenge to design a



Holland & Holland. A fine 12-bore Royal model Nitro-Paradox sidelock ejector rifle, No. 15708, built in 1904 for Mr Kristopher Berg of Denmark. The rifle retains much of its original finish and appears little used. It is cased with its original accessories

The rifle that thinks it's a shotgun



Left: Barrel engraving and rearsight detail, 12-bore Paradox No. 15708

Above centre: Holland & Holland 8-bore Paradox hammer rifle, No. 15054, built in 1892 and later converted to a regular shotgun

Above right: A Holland & Holland. 12-bore backlock non-ejector Paradox, No. 2 quality, No. 11768, built in 1888

barrel through which both shot and solid ball could be used with equal success, but all had failed. If they worked well as a shotgun, then they failed to perform with the accuracy required as a rifle, and vice versa. Many different projectiles and cartridges were also designed for these guns, but again, none lived up to their inventors' hopes. In a land where you were likely to encounter a tiger while you were out hunting winged game, there was a distinct advantage for the sportsman if he could safely dispatch a snipe as well as an angry tiger, with just a change of ammunition.

Fosbery's design was for an entirely

conventional smooth bore barrel incorporating the usual choke-bore of a regular shotgun. The choke portion of the barrel, is a reduction in diameter towards the muzzle, usually the last 2in or so, to concentrate the pattern of shot and increase the effective range of the gun. This choked portion of barrel was cut with a deep ratchet rifling that allowed shot to pass without disturbing the pattern that the gun would shoot. However when a solid ball or bullet was fired, the rifling would catch the projectile as it passed through the muzzle, and impart the spin that a full length rifled-barrel would give.

The results were quite surprising, as the rifle shot as well and accurately as any Express rifle, up to 150yd while shooting as well as any cylinder bored shotgun when used with regular shotgun cartridges.

It seems that Colonel Fosbery was quick to realise that he required a partner to achieve success with this design, so he approached Holland & Holland. At this time, Holland & Holland was best known as a rifle maker, which had enjoyed great success winning the 1883 Field Rifle Trials. It also employed William Froome as chief rifle regulator, an expert shot who had won most of the classes at the Field trials.

Holland & Holland was quick to reach an agreement and, by October 1895, two experimental rifles were in production. The rifle was formally demonstrated in April 1886 and launched very shortly afterwards. It was demonstrated to the Editors of all the leading sporting publications of the time and was well written up and received. It was an, almost, instant hit, and was offered in almost every grade and style that Holland & Holland was producing at the time. As a 12-bore, the rifle weighed little more than a regular shotgun, coming in at a little over 7lb, and retained all of the proportions of a regular gun. Most would have the extended top tang of a rifle, and the



Muzzle details showing the distinctive Paradox rifling of rifle 15708

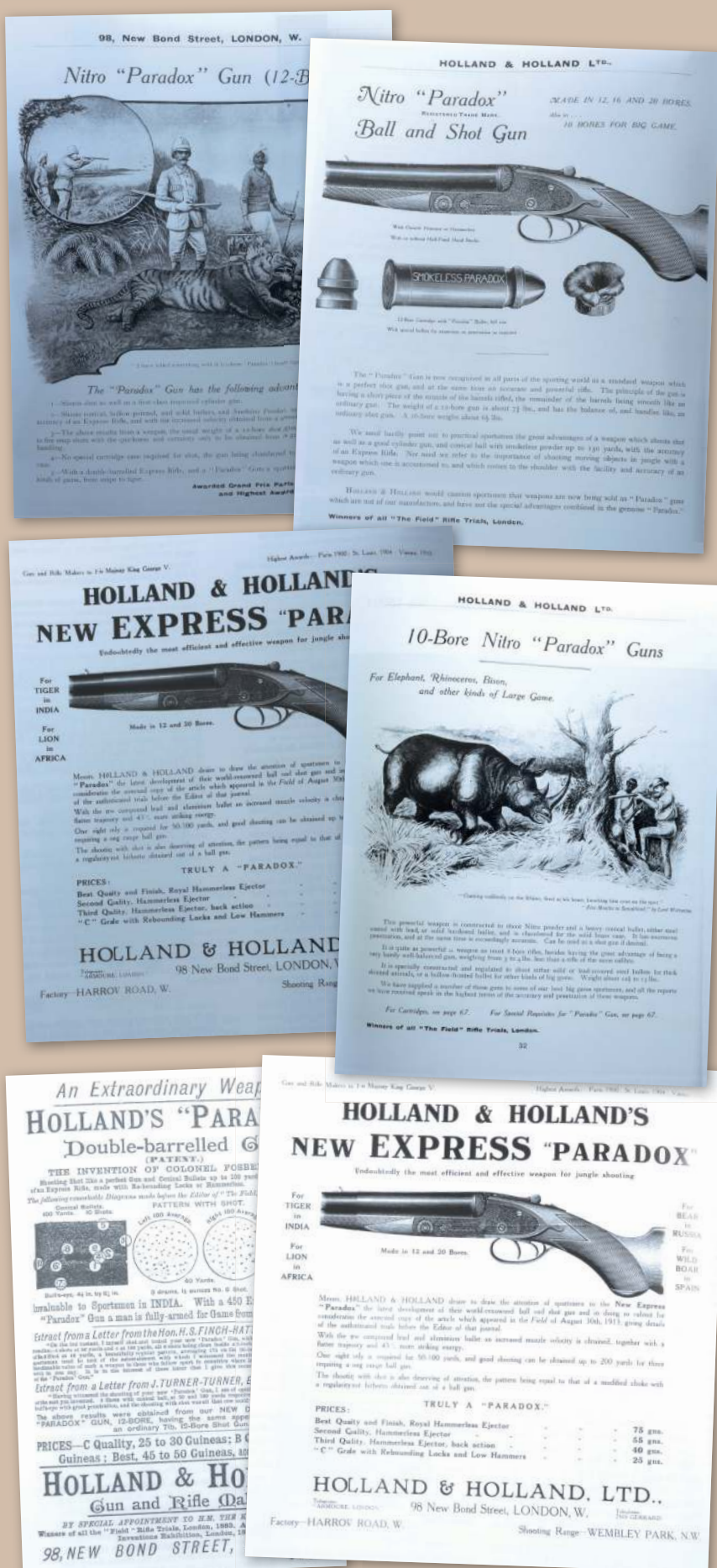
third grip to provide additional strength to the action. The giveaway that this was not a usual gun, was the addition of folding leaf sights to the rib, usually regulated at 50yd and 100yd.

Contemporary advertising made the following claims:

1. Shoots better than any cylinder gun.
2. Shoots conical hollow pointed and solid bullets up to 100yd with the accuracy of an Express rifle, and with the increased velocity obtained from a smooth bore.
3. The above results from a weapon, the usual weight of a 12-bore shotgun, enabling the sportsman to fire snap shots with the quickness and certainty only obtained from a gun which he is constantly handling.
4. No special cartridge cases required, the gun being chambered to Eley's ordinary 12-bore case.
5. With a double barrelled express rifle, and a Paradox gun, a sportsman is fully armed for all kinds of game, from snipe to tiger.

Orders came thick and fast in the first few years, and between 1886 and 1896, production hovered between 50 and 100 Paradox rifles per year. These rifles were produced in every grade, with the majority of hammer rifles being built in those early years. Plain or elaborately finished, these were rifles built to work hard in the outposts of the Empire. C Grades, at around 35 Guineas, were plainly finished rifles, while the B Grade rifles were finished with better engraving at around 55 Guineas. Rifles of the best grade were also built at a great price, though in the early years these were in a minority.

Colonel Fosbery's patent enjoyed a life of 14 years, and Holland & Holland paid a royalty on each of the 920 rifles built during this period. It is no coincidence that these figures coincided with a highpoint in Britain's colonial power as well as the evolution and perfection of the modern breech loading sporting gun. Production dropped after 1896 to around 30 rifles a year (apart from 1904 at almost 80) with this figure falling slowly again until the beginning of World War I in 1914. After 1900, the majority of rifles were built on the new, Royal hammerless sidelock ejector action. This likely accounted for the blip in production in 1904. Holland & Holland had hit its peak as a maker of best guns and was now accepted as one of the best of all the London makers. A great



Extracts from period Holland & Holland catalogues

The rifle that thinks it's a shotgun

Right: Holland & Holland 12-bore Royal model sidelock ejector Paradox, No. 15449, built in 1900



Far right: Another Holland & Holland 12-bore Royal model sidelock non-ejector Paradox, this being No. 15450, built in 1900



number of guns and rifles, right to the present day, have been built on this action and it remains the basis for most sidelock ejector shotguns, built both at home and abroad today.

Post World War I production never rose above a handful of examples each year, however. Nothing was quite the same after 1918 and the Empire was contracting, while fewer officers were being sent overseas. Indian Royalty had ordered many Paradox rifles but, by the 1920s, they had fallen from favour. The concept of the shot and ball gun was now old fashioned and modern high velocity cordite and nitro Express rifles had taken their place.

In total, 1,479 Paradox rifles were made between 1886 and 1933, of every style and quality, from the plainest Anson & Deeley boxlock (bought in from Webley & Scott) to the very highest grade Royal hammerless deluxe.

The 12-bore was the mainstay of

production and accounted for over 80% of all production over its almost-50 year life (the last being completed in 1933), but it was produced in all calibres, from 8-bore down to 28-bore. Bizarrely the Paradox was still being listed in Holland & Holland catalogues in the 1950s, presumably in a bid to sell the handful of examples that remained unsold in Holland & Holland stock. Eventually these unsold guns would be rebarreled as conventional guns for sale.

The Paradox shoots exceptionally well, often giving groups of under 4in at 100yd. The 750 grain .735 diameter bullet travels at around 1,100ft/s and is quite capable of dispatching most dangerous game that you are likely to encounter. As a shotgun with convention ammunition, it will consistently shoot patterns that correspond with improved cylinder and a quarter choke borings. They are conventionally proofed and even with the solid ammunition develop pressures within the limits for a normal shotgun.

The rifles handle well, weighing not much more than a regular double barrel shotgun though in a slightly barrel heavy way. This is because of the additional thickness required in the barrel tubes, and the muzzles, to accommodate and give strength to the rifled chokes.

As the rifles fell from general

use, having been superseded by high velocity bolt action rifles, and ammunition became difficult to find, many rifles were simply forgotten about. In the UK, where the rifled chokes classifies them as Section 1 Firearms, many had the choke portion of the barrels bored out, so that it could legally be held as a Section 2 shotgun. Gunmakers across the UK, including Holland & Holland itself, routinely carried this work out to their customers instructions during the 1970s as there was no market for these guns otherwise.

Renewed interest in them in the 1980s, as well as a new generation of collector resulted in them becoming more than just an interesting curiosity. Rifles no longer had their rifling removed, and were now fetching more money in their original state than they had for years previously. People were finally appreciating the unique properties of the Paradox and they were being shot once again.

The story does not entirely end there because, as a postscript, the Paradox is again in production. Holland & Holland reintroduced the rifle in the late 2000s with a new, round bodied model, partly because of collector demand, but also because of renewed interest in the calibre and concept. This is a good thing for collectors and owners of vintage examples, as 12-bore Paradox ammunition is now available again from its maker. It has been pleasing to find that the story has run full circle. ■



The barrel flats showing the London proof marks for rifle No. 15708

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The Photo Inspector

Ray Westlake examines the uniform of a Scout of the Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)

The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) dates from 1661 and the formation that year of the Tangier Regiment, also called the Queen's Own Regiment of Foot. The royal association remained through

the several changes in designation, including the numbering system of 1751, which gave us the 2nd (Queen's Royal) Regiment of Foot. The Surrey connection arrived with the Queen's Royal West Surrey title in 1881. ■



White embroidered shoulder title, 'QUEEN'S'.

Scarlet jacket with bass Royal Arms type general service buttons, dark blue collar and pointed cuffs and white cord piping.

Brass Paschal Lamb collar badges which stand on a tablet inscribed 'QUEEN'S'. Note how these correctly face inwards towards the collar opening.

Readers will no doubt be familiar with the, often seen, *fleur de lis* metal badge worn on the arms of scouts. But, here we have the more unusual and rarely seen 'S' within a laurel wreath type. Made of worsted cloth, the badge was mentioned in Sidney Allinson's World War I memoir, *The Bantams*. The author recalling how, having been passed as a scout, he was entitled to wear an 'S' in laurel leaves.

Crossed rifles indicating that the wearer had been classed as the best shot in his company. The badge is worked in gold embroidery on a scarlet cloth backing.

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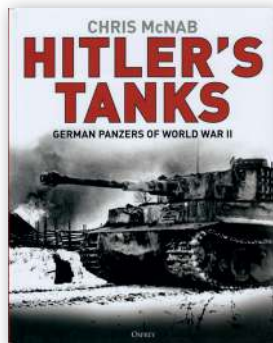
Duncan Evans reviews the latest releases in the world of military history and collecting

Hitler's Tanks

CHRIS McNAB

From the light Panzer I that rolled into Poland to the monstrous Tiger II that fought on both Eastern and Western fronts in Europe, this is the story of the development of German tanks up to the end of WWII. There are chapters on light panzers, Panzer III, Panzer IV, Panther medium tank, Tiger I heavy tank, King Tiger and Panzer crews. Although the introduction sets the scene and explains some of the developments to come, the chapters listed discuss tank development, deployment and performance during WWII. It's all printed on very glossy, high quality paper, with colour photos amongst the copious monochrome photography.

The initial German tanks



weren't technologically advanced so when they ran into the T-34 during Operation Barbarossa they were woefully underequipped, leading to the development of Panther and Tiger tanks. For anyone interested in German armour, it's a must-have overview. ■

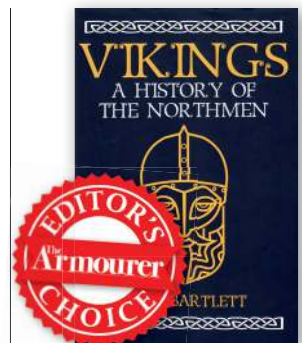
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Vikings

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Do we need another book on the Vikings? The enduring popularity of these Scandinavian warriors and traders would say that yes, we do. In this hefty tome by WB Bartlett, with a subtitle of *A History of the Northmen*, *northmen* being one translation derivative of Viking itself, there's a chronological view of their activities up until 1066, with a postscript on the Viking twilight. The first task though is to define what a Viking actually was, and here the author chooses practicality over pedantry, setting the tone of accessibility for the rest of the book.

It covers famous Vikings, their empire building, battles, trading and relations with neighbouring countries. The impact these



activities had on Dark Age Britain is discussed as well as just how adventurous they actually were, sailing relatively small ships across enormous distances.

With a colour plate section in the middle, this is an excellent, easily digestible look at the lasting impact the Vikings had on Europe. ■

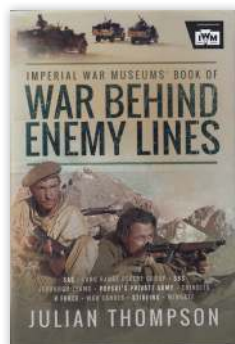
- Amberley Books
- ISBN 978-1-4456-6594-8
- 436 pages • Hardback • £25

War Behind Enemy Lines

JULIAN THOMPSON

Secret missions behind enemy lines have a glamour about them that fighting in the trenches do not. The air of mystery, peril and difficulty all appealed to a certain type of man during WWII. Those men and missions are what Julian Thompson sets out to reveal in this hefty book covering the LRDG, SBS, SAS, Chindits, Popski's private army and V Force.

One of the most successful forces in terms of impact verses resources was the Long Range Desert Group, which carried out over 200 missions. These aren't meant to be exhaustive accounts of the groups' activities, but rather overviews with plenty of quotes from the people involved. They explain some of the difficulties,



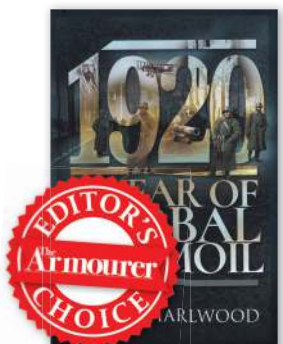
how these groups navigated great distances behind enemy lines, and their successes and failures. A section of glossy photo plates in the centre show the men relaxing or preparing for missions. Consider this an interesting introduction, leaving plenty of room for further reading on the various groups. ■

- Pen and Sword
- ISBN 978-1-5267-2407-6
- 456 pages • Hardback • £25

1920: A Year of Global Turmoil

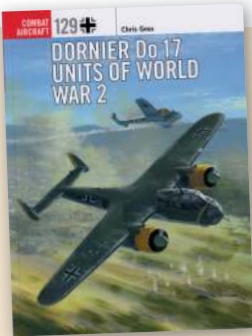
DAVID CHARLWOOD

One of the things about wars that is usually underreported, is how the various countries involved recover afterwards. WWI didn't have a clean end on 11 November 1918, as portrayed in the media, Britain carried on fighting in Russia in 1919 and the Russians themselves were fighting the Poles in 1920. Now, 100 years later, David Charlwood vividly tells the story of the state of the world after WWI, with a populist, politician in the US, conflict in the Middle East and rebellion in India. In four main parts, the author skips around Europe, from the secret negotiations of politicians carving up gains from victory, to securing oil pipelines



to the middle east. You can't help but feel that these events have repeated themselves down the years and that the greed of those in power means nothing is learnt from the past. This is an eye-opening, sweeping account of the world as it was, 100 years ago, that was, depressingly, very similar to how it is now. ■

- Pen and Sword
- ISBN 978-1-5267-2965-1
- 292 pages • Hardback • £25

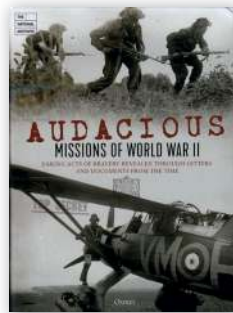


Dornier Do 17

CHRIS GOSS

This is *Combat Aircraft 129* from Osprey, taking a look at the fighting aircraft of WWII. The Dornier Do 17 was a strange-looking aeroplane, being very long and tapering off towards the back end. The chapters cover the design and development and then the deployment into Poland, the Battle of France, the Battle of Britain, its use in the Blitz and finally, a last hurrah on the Eastern Front. The typeface is very small, packing a lot in, but still leaving room for a series of colour illustrations in the middle. So, worthy, if not particularly engaging. ■

- Osprey Publishing
- ISBN 978-1-4728-2963-4
- 98 pages • Softcover • £14.99

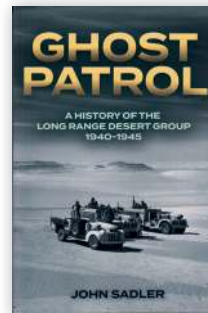


Audacious Missions of World War II

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

This is a selection of missions covering combined operations, SOE, the Royal Navy, RAF and a final couple that defy categorisation anywhere else. There's everything from the Dambusters raid, sinking the *Tirpitz* to the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich. It's all told with photos, maps and letters from those involved. The design is modern making each mission easy to read and digest, and you can pick and choose what order to read them in. An excellent production. ■

- Osprey Publishing
- ISBN 978-1-4728-2995-5
- 220 pages • Hardback • £25

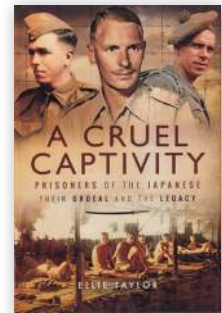


Ghost Patrol

JOHN SADLER

Here's another look at the LRDG, with more detail than the *War Behind Enemy Lines* release as it includes some unpublished first hand material, alongside the commonly quoted material from LRDG regulars. It largely covers the formation of the LRDG and covers activities through WWII but does so in a fairly self-indulgent and tiresome fashion. For every section of prose that entertains and informs, there's another that doesn't. Stuffing notes at the end of each chapter, some pointless poetry and the questionable typography don't help. Interesting in places, but not the best. ■

- Casemate Publishers
- ISBN 978-1-6120-0842-4
- 292 pages • Paperback • £16.99



A Cruel Captivity

ELLIE TAYLOR

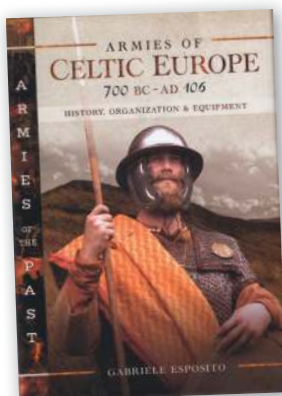
The subtitle of this moving book let's you know what to expect: *Prisoners of the Japanese, Their Ordeal and the Legacy*. It tells the story of how British prisoners were captured, where they were sent and the ordeal they were put through. As well as highlighting just how barbaric the Japanese were this book explains how it affected those who survived. Young men who survived the horrific conditions, but then couldn't cope or adjust to life as a civilian later. Even to the smallest things like not having rice in the house, or insisting children ate everything on their plate. It's a sobering but important read. ■

- Pen and Sword
- ISBN 978-1-5267-3261-3
- 212 pages • Hardback • £19.99

Armies of Celtic Europe 700BC-106AD

GABRIELE ESPOSITO

Here's another in the ancient army series from *Armourer* regular, Gabriele Esposito, this time tackling the world of the Celts. Despite consisting of many



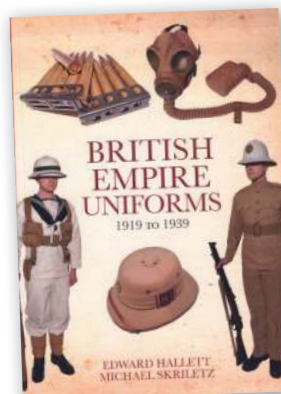
tribes spread across Europe, they were bound by the same customs and a common way of life. A goodly portion therefore, of the book is the history of the Celts and how their tribes ebbed and flowed. It includes battles here and there, mixed in with tactics, but it's all done in a more lively fashion than you might be expecting. The production quality is first rate, with colour photos of Living History enthusiasts showcasing outfits and weapons, throughout. ■

- Pen and Sword
- ISBN 978-1-5267-3033-6
- 178 pages • Hardback • £19.99

British Empire Uniforms 1919-1939

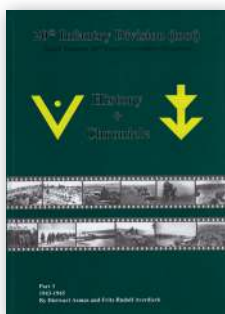
ED HALLETT/MICHAEL SKRILETZ

The Armourer's very own Mr Uniforms, Ed Hallett has teamed up with Michael Skriletz to go into detail on the British Army uniforms between the



two world wars. It covers gear used in China, India and the Middle East and uses full colour throughout to show off the uniforms and related accessories. There are period illustrations and some black and white photos, but these are largely of locations rather than an attempt to show the uniforms. With detailed descriptions and covering webbing, water bottles, comms gear etc, it's a handy reference book for collectors. ■

- Amberley Books
- ISBN 978-1-4456-8894-7
- 98 pages • Softcover • £14.99

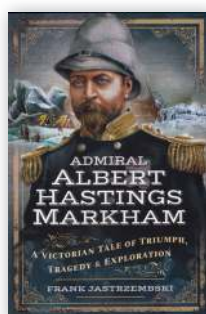


20th Infantry Division

DIETWART ASMUS/FRITZ AVERDIECK

Presented in an impressive A4, hardback format, these are the later war years (1943-1945) of the German 20th Infantry Division, which later became the 20th Panzergrenadier Division. It's the third part of the history of the division, originally written in German and translated, with variable accuracy, into English. The strengths are the incredible and fascinating detail, thanks to the contributions by ex-members, and the copious photography. The weakness are the barely legible maps and numerous faint scans. ■

- Mook wi Publishing
- ISBN 978-9-0829-6962-7
- 340 pages • Hardback • €67.50

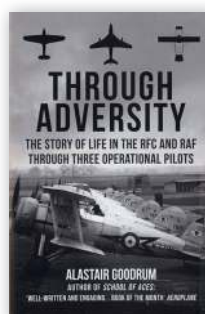


Admiral Albert Hastings Markham

FRANK JASTRZEMBSKI

The 19th century is full of explorers and Victorian Generals, or in this case Admirals, that history has largely forgotten. And yet their exploits are, in many cases, astonishing by any stretch of the imagination. The author has the story of another one of them here, from battling pirates, getting to within 400 miles of the North Pole, exploring Arctic islands, trekking across the vast American continent and of course, serving in the Royal Navy. With maps, illustrations and photos, this is a highly entertaining book. ■

- Pen and Sword
- ISBN 978-1-5267-2592-9
- 202 pages • Hardback • £19.99



Through Adversity

ALASTAIR GOODRUM

Subtitled *The Story of Life in the RFC and RAF Through Three Operational Pilots*, this is 100 years of the RAF as seen through the eyes of the pilots. The three fought in WWI, WWII and took part in the Cold War respectively, so their stories – and they could pretty much have been anyone – cover an incredible amount of technological change. In some respects the stories themselves aren't that notable, although Dickie Barwell flew with Bader's wing in the Battle of Britain, but it's the routine and change that are apparent as the years go by. It makes for a gripping look at the development of the RAF, but from the inside. ■

- Amberley Books
- ISBN 978-1-4456-9545-7
- 292 pages • Hardback • £20



Japan Triumphant

PHILIP JOWETT

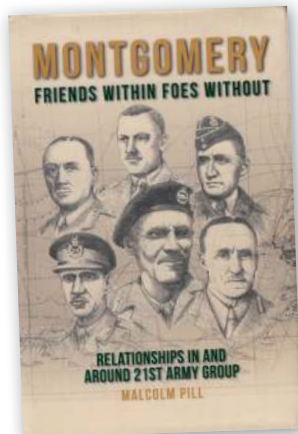
This is one of Pen and Sword's regular *Images of War* series, covering the Far East campaign of 1941-1942, as the Japanese Imperial Army rampaged across the Pacific. The campaigns covered include the fall of Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore, the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, Burma and the war at sea. Although packed with plenty of photos – over 200 of them – there is still plenty of text, making this a decent introduction to quite a number of battles. The photo reproduction could do with being better, especially for a title selling itself on that basis, but it's a good value, wide-ranging look at war in the Far East. ■

- Pen and Sword
- ISBN 978-5267-3435-8
- 186 pages • Softcover • £14.99

Montgomery: Friends Within Foes Without

MALCOLM PILL

Because Monty didn't really get on with the American part of the combined Allied structure,



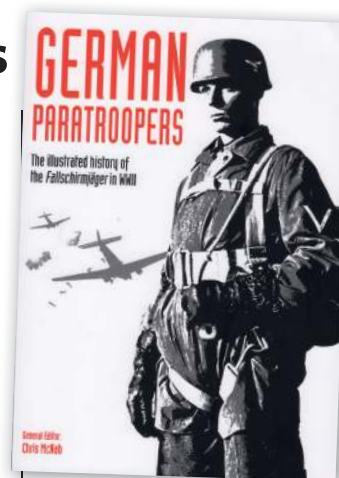
and latter disasters such as Operation *Market Garden*, his reputation from WWII is patchy. This book sets out to look at how Montgomery dealt with both his British command and those in the Canadian and American sides. It runs the risk of being an academic beard-stroking exercise and there is a lot of referencing other studies, but it's insightful and very even handed making it invaluable for anyone studying the WWII command structure. ■

- Unicorn Publishing
- ISBN 978-1-9126-9053-4
- 306 pages • Hardback • £25

German Paratroopers

CHRIS MCNAB

This, along with the others in the series from Amber Books, was originally published in 2000, which may explain the dated look to the typography. Anyway, it covers the Fallschirmjäger, their recruitment and training, then the missions they were sent on. This includes Crete, of course, but also the Eastern Front, defensive operations in Italy, Western Europe and specialist operations. It's a large format book, with plenty of photos of the paratroopers training and in action, giving a good



overview of this elite branch of the Wehrmacht. ■

- Amber Books
- ISBN 978-1-7827-4951-6
- 178 pages • Softcover • £19.99



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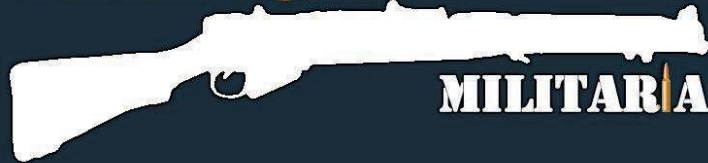
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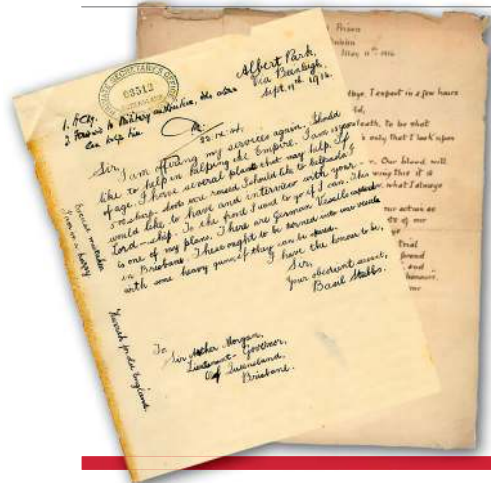


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AUCTION GUARANTEES

Steve Woolnough concluded his excellent letter on the subject of Auction Houses (February 2020 issue) by asking why our terms and conditions appeared to be at odds with my assertion that a catalogue description, published by a reputable auctioneer, effectively constituted a guarantee. The clause in question exists to cover rare eventualities in which we might feel justified in relying upon it, such as when a genuine item is vigorously contested by a buyer who has merely changed his or her mind about wanting to own it, or when the authenticity of an item is impossible to confirm and we have acted in good faith in the way in which we have offered it. In practice, if we accidentally sold someone a fake (and it would only ever be by accident), and that individual requested a refund, then subject to confirmation of their claim by an independent expert, they would receive a refund.

Ned Cowell, Woolley & Wallis, by email

Ed says: That's good to know. Personally speaking, if auction houses are going to charge buyers a 25% levy then they really must be prepared to guarantee the originality of what they are selling and issue a refund within an reasonable time period. The question then becomes what is an acceptable time after the sale? In line with other consumer purchase guarantees I would say 12 months.

SEA KING V WHIRLWIND

Having recently received my February 2020 copy of *The Armourer* I enjoyed a thoroughly great read of the various articles and stories. In particular, I do enjoy reading about the various military museums around the country, one of which I hope to visit this coming summer is the South Yorkshire Aircraft Museum in Doncaster.

I was somewhat surprised to see on the caption of a Royal Navy Westlands Whirlwind helicopter on page 17, of it being called a Sea King. Not only was the captioning wrong, but the spelling. I carried out maintenance work on both Whirlwinds and Sea King helicopters, in addition to other helicopters and fixed wing aircraft during my 24 years in the Royal Navy.

Please keep up the excellent articles with their accompanying photographs, the above small glitch will not stop me from continuing to buy your well produced magazine.

Malcolm E Beech, by email

Ed says: Well spotted Malcolm and our apologies for this production error. There are

both Whirlwind AND Sea King helicopters on site. The error came because the photos were changed after it had been designed and the caption was only partially rewritten.

YE OLDE ARMOURER II

Regarding the letter in the February issue about old issues of *The Armourer*. I have all issues, yearly bound from January 1994 in green leatherette with gold lettering on spine and cover, through to the last issue in 2016, when it amalgamated with *Classic Arms*. The wealth of information in these magazines is incredible which would require an extensive library otherwise.

David J Grose, by email

Ed says: That's an impressive, and very handy, collection.

OFFENSIVE WEAPONS ACT 2019

Regarding the letter in the March 2020 issue about Army Penknives and the lack of any reference material, my book *British and Commonwealth Military Knives* (Airlife Publishing) has a section on the subject. Unfortunately the book is now long out of print but

copies do occasionally turn up though they are now attracting some heavy prices.

It was, however, disappointing to see in the same issue that Steve Woolnough's article on buying at auction is still putting around the myth that bladed weapons cannot be shipped. This is incorrect. Besides the fact that OWA2019 has still not received its commencement order, the legislation does not prevent such items being shipped. What it does do is lay down specific regulation on the procedures to be taken to avoid committing an offence when posting bladed articles. It should also be borne in mind that the legislation is primarily designed to prevent the sale and delivery of edged weapons/bladed articles to under 18s.

If people could only be bothered to read the Act and draft statutory guidance it would hopefully stop the misinformation that is being peddled about what you can and cannot do in respect of bladed articles.

Ron Flook, by email

Ed says: Thanks for that Ron, though it needs to be said that even though the Act has not

FIREARMS PART II

I've just read your article about the new deactivation law. I have just bought a deactivated gun with the new spec so I take it I need to notify the authorities but who do I actually tell? I am absolutely sure if I walked into my local Police station they would not know what the hell I was talking about.

Richard Mawdsley, by email

Ed says: See the letter from Steve Woolnough. It's down to you whether you want to sit and

wait, ignore, or follow the letter of the law. If the latter, you can download the form you need to fill in from <http://tiny.cc/o2xnjz> which can then be emailed to the Home Office at: deactivatedfirearmsnotifications@homeoffice.gov.uk or, alternatively, you can print it out and send it by recorded post to: Deactivated Firearms Notification, Home Office, Serious Violence Unit, 5th Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF where it will undoubtedly sit in a dusty pile.

received its commencement order, some dealers in bladed weapons were refusing to ship them to private addresses as far back as seven months ago, simply because of the forthcoming legislation.

YOUR COLLECTIONS

With reference to 'Ye Olde Armourer' letter in the February 2020 issue, I have been collecting *The Armourer* since the 1990s. Irene Moore and Gary Sterne were the originators of the magazine and I have met them several times at arms fairs. I was short of No. 1-20 so, wondering where I could get them, I decided to call Gary. Eventually I spoke to his son, who had all the ones I required, plus extras, and in binders too. As he was just starting university we came to a purchase agreement. Therefore, I have the whole, complete set, up to date, which I am very proud to own. As for the *Classic Arms* – nearly a complete collection. Both are brilliant magazines, leading to a good and interesting combined magazine. Best wishes to all concerned with the publication.

Mark Cheyne, Liverpool

Ed says: Many thanks for your continuing support.

I would like to say how much I enjoy the variety of articles within *The Armourer* each month. *The FANY during WWI* piece covered a subject that was new to me, was interesting and well written.

I also have some comments on your piece on the new deactivation law: Concerning the notification of ownership of deactivated guns passed on 31 October, which came into effect on 12 December. Whilst it does indeed appear to be ill-considered and perhaps draconian, I feel it needs to be viewed in the context of the political situation at the time, when it was uncertain as to when, or even if, we would leave the EU.

Along with other pieces of European-driven legislation, it was not expected for this to ever be part of British law as we were due to have left the EU before the date it was due to be implemented. It was driven under the requirements of the *EU Firearms Directive (Directive 1420)* and the Home Office had no choice other than to enact it as we were still part of the EU. It was therefore rushed through to avoid a significant fine,

DEACTIVATED WEAPONS

explaining why there was not any consultation or impact assessment undertaken prior to its enactment.

It is also worth noting that under the Home Office's Guide (see: <http://tiny.cc/lvxnjz>) states: 'Firearms which were deactivated prior to 8 April 2016 are not covered by these provisions' so the majority of deacts held by collectors should not be covered by the legislation.

Directive 1420 considers a 'deactivated firearm' as a Category C Firearm, so although nominally considered a firearm, is subject to notification rather than any licensing. The 'appropriate National Authority' that has to be advised is simply stated to be the Home Office. On speaking with a County Firearms Licensing Unit Officer, I was advised that as no licensing was necessary, the Police did not consider that their firearms units would be involved and no instructions concerning this legislation had been issued. More colloquially, I was told that the Police have more than enough work to do without focussing on an EU Directive which may well be revoked now that it is known that Brexit will occur, and that Boris's additional

20,000 police officers would be fully employed chasing down non-compliance with this legislation if any attempt was made to enforce it.

In this respect, it seems similar to the ban on the transfer of ownership of 'old style' deacts that came into being a couple of years ago. Despite some deliberate efforts by deact collectors to provoke being charged with an offence that they can defend in court, neither myself nor anyone else I've spoken with is aware of a single case to date having been brought under this legislation.

The deacts that I hold all pre-date the 8 April 2016 cut-off date but even if this was not the case, I wouldn't be rushing to complete any of the related forms but would currently do nothing and wait. My expectation is that any forms which are sent to the Home Office will be left unattended in a computer file or sat on a shelf gathering dust.

Steve Woolnough, by email

Ed says: Thanks for this information Steve. It pretty much sums up the entire sorry saga. We will update this story as and when more news arrives.

NEXT MONTH – MAY 2020 ISSUE

They fought on the land, in the air and at sea. It was a multi-faceted battle for Narvik in Norway at the start of WWII, with the British trying to support their Scandinavian ally against the Wehrmacht war machine. Swedish iron ore in particular, was a vital resource for both



sides. Transport of this ore from Sweden was problematic, especially for Germany, and consequently the Norwegian port of Narvik, with its ice-free harbour on the north Atlantic coast and good rail connections to the important Swedish mining town of Kiruna, had become the major departure point for that country's iron ore since the start of the war. So the occupation of Norway, and Narvik in particular, was finally seen as a vital necessity by both sides.

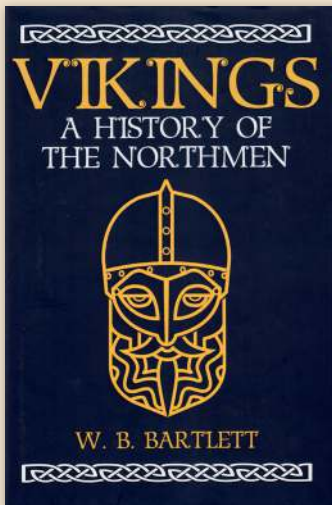
To back up our campaign feature we're taking a look at the medals issued for the fighting in Norway, German Alpine troop uniforms and the German *Kar 98k* rifle. Other WWII features include the second part of our look at accessories for the Thompson SMG, the forerunner to the Home Guard, the LDV, some 80 years after its formation, and Soley bayonets.

On the classic side there's a feature on the British Army formations that took part in the Indian Mutiny, Roman arms and armour, the Siege of Lucknow and the soldiers of the Royal Waggon Train. ■

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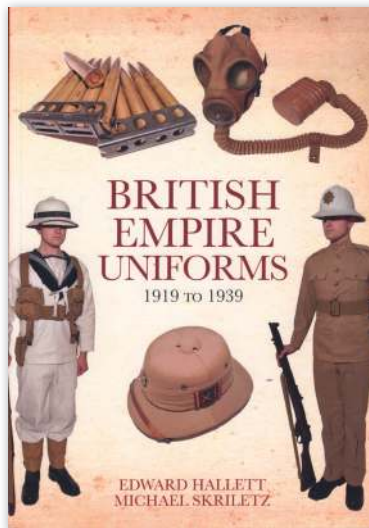


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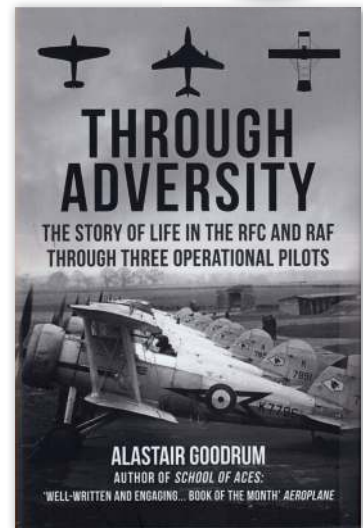
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- (C) Short Magazine Lee-Enfield

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Entries close at midnight 4 April 2020. One entry per person. To enter you must answer the question correctly and entries received after this date will not be accepted. Full terms and conditions can be found at www.armourer.co.uk.

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