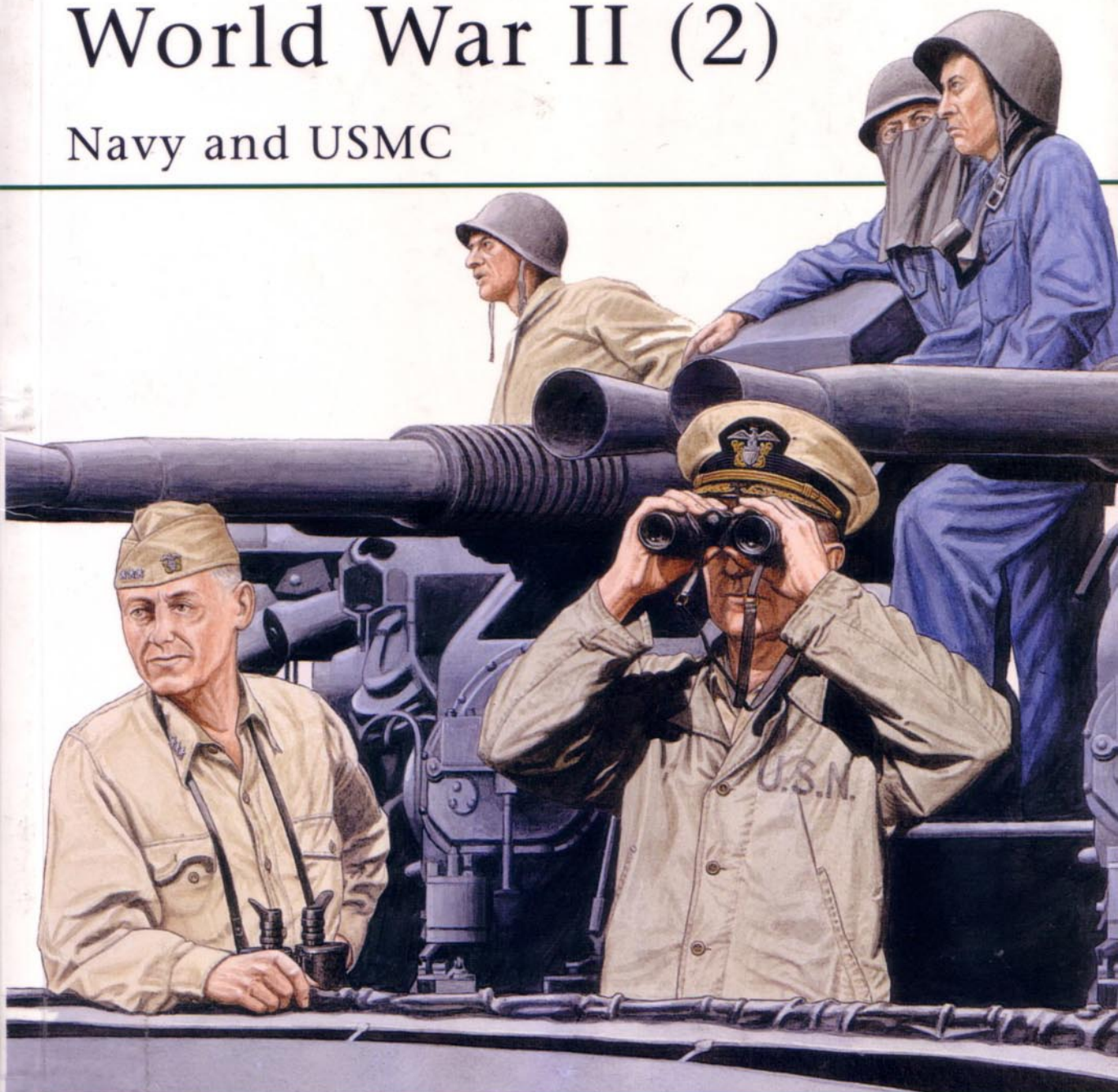


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US Commanders of World War II (2)

Navy and USMC



J Arnold & S Sinton • Illustrated by Darko Pavlovic

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

3

BIOGRAPHIES

4

US NAVY

- Husband Edward Kimmel
- Ernest Joseph King
- Chester William Nimitz
- Thomas Charles Hart
- William Frederick Halsey Jr
- Frank Jack Fletcher
- Raymond Ames Spruance
- Robert Lee Ghormley
- Richmond Kelly Turner
- Thomas Cassin Kinkaid
- John Sidney McCain
- Norman Scott
- Willis Augustus Lee Jr
- Charles Andrews Lockwood Jr
- Marc Andrew Mitscher
- Theodore Stark Wilkinson
- William Daniel Leahy
- Harold Raynsford Stark
- Alan Goodrich Kirk

US MARINE CORPS

- Alexander Archer Vandegrift
- Holland McTyeire Smith
- Roy Stanley Geiger
- Julian Constable Smith
- Lemuel Cornick Shepherd Jr

BIBLIOGRAPHY

57

THE PLATES

58

INDEX

64



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US COMMANDERS OF WORLD WAR II (2)

NAVY AND USMC

INTRODUCTION

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES gave the president supreme control over all armed forces. Before and during World War Two, President Franklin D. Roosevelt served as president and commander-in-chief. A civilian served as Secretary of the Navy and exercised control of the navy and marines through the Navy Department and its bureaus. A navy board provided expert military advice to the secretary. At the time Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the highest post in the navy, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), was held by Admiral Harold Stark.

The outbreak of global war revealed the pressing need for a stronger civilian-military command structure and army-navy cooperation. Consequently, in February 1942, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) replaced the Joint Board as the highest military authority. Among the four original members of the JCS were Admirals Ernest King (Commander-in-Chief, US Fleet) and Harold Stark. When Stark was reassigned in March, the position of Chief of Naval Operations was merged with King's position. In July, the balance on the JCS of two admirals and two army officers was restored when Roosevelt appointed Admiral William Leahy to become JCS chairman as well as chief of staff for the president. Leahy's excellent relations with Roosevelt ensured that the JCS became the dominant military planning organization. The JCS both controlled the nation's armed forces and advised the president on everything from strategy to industrial policy.



A Japanese pilot's view of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941 shows the US fleet at anchor with smoke rising from Hickam Field in the distance. (National Archives)

In 1939, the US Navy had 15 capital ships, five carriers, 18 heavy cruisers, and 19 light cruisers. It held its own aviation assets, which included carrier planes and land-based sea patrol planes. In February 1941, planners established both an Atlantic and a Pacific Command in order to conduct naval warfare simultaneously in both oceans. Admiral King commanded in the Atlantic while Admiral Husband Kimmel took command of the Pearl Harbor-based Pacific Fleet. The surprise strike against Pearl Harbor led to changes in the naval command structure. Most importantly, Admiral Chester Nimitz succeeded Kimmel as Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC). He reorganized his command into three geographic zones: North Pacific, Central Pacific, and South Pacific. Because Nimitz's Central Pacific offensive diverged from MacArthur's drive toward the Philippines, the Joint Chiefs of Staff provided the necessary coordination. Leading the offensive were the numbered fleets such as Halsey's famous 3d Fleet. They had varying strengths, with their offensive strength organized into task groups and task forces. In the Pacific, fast carrier task forces provided the dominant striking force. Consequently, carrier admirals quickly became the key naval leaders. Statistics clearly show the colossal expansion of naval aviation. Between June 1940 and the end of the war, the number of naval air personnel rose from 10,923 including 2,965 pilots, to 437,524 including 60,747 pilots.

The US Marine Corps (USMC) was a separate service under the Navy Department. Unique among marine forces, the USMC also operated its own aviation force. The Corps Commandant was the highest-ranking active marine officer, with his own headquarters and staff. September 1939 found the 20,000-strong Marine Corps with two Fleet Marine Forces. These forces were specially trained in amphibious landings and each was supported by an aviation group. One of these brigade-sized forces was stationed on the Atlantic coast and one on the Pacific. In February 1941, they were expanded to become full-sized divisions, each with an associated Marine Aircraft Wing. A corps headquarters provided administrative support. Later in the war, such headquarters were redesignated as Amphibious Corps and became the planning headquarters for amphibious operations. The Marine Corps expanded to six marine divisions during the war. The corps' aviation group grew from 641 pilots and 13 squadrons to 10,049 pilots and 128 squadrons.

BIOGRAPHIES

US NAVY

Husband Edward Kimmel

Husband Edward Kimmel was the son of a West Point graduate who had fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War. Born in Henderson, Kentucky, in 1882, Kimmel graduated from the US Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1904. He served as an ensign at sea and then did post-graduate study in gunnery. During the decade before World War One, Kimmel earned a solid reputation as a gunnery and ordnance expert. He served primarily aboard American battleships. Kimmel received a wound during the Vera Cruz occupation in 1914. The next year, he served as an aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin



Admiral Husband Kimmel was the senior naval officer present at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. In his capacity as commander of the United States Pacific Fleet, he received much blame, some justified, some not. Following the successful British torpedo attack on the Italian fleet at Taranto, the Secretary of the Navy suggested to Kimmel that an anti-torpedo net barrier be placed around Battleship Row. Kimmel rejected the idea because it "would restrict boat traffic by narrowing the channel." Such lack of foresight cost Kimmel his job ten days after Pearl Harbor. (National Archives)

Roosevelt. When the United States entered the war, Kimmel went to Great Britain to advise the British about new methods for gun spotting. He then served as staff gunnery officer for the American battleship force that operated with the Royal Navy.

During the interwar years, Kimmel steadily climbed in rank while serving in a variety of staff and ship commands. He burnished his reputation as a professional sailor who displayed energy and drive. Between 1939 and 1941, he commanded first a cruiser division and then all of the cruisers assigned to the Pacific Fleet's Battle Force. His outstanding performance led to his promotion, over the heads of many senior flag officers, to full admiral in February 1941 and commander of the Pacific Fleet. Admiral Stark told Kimmel around this time that "the question of our entry into the war now seems to be when, not whether." In the months before Pearl Harbor, Kimmel prepared the fleet for war with Japan through a series of rigorous training exercises.

Kimmel expected war with Japan but believed it would begin elsewhere, probably in the Philippines. The Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor totally surprised him. Recovering quickly, he planned to use his three carriers to relieve the beleaguered garrison on Wake Island. Instead, he himself was relieved of command on December 17, 1941. The special commission that investigated Pearl Harbor found Kimmel guilty of "dereliction of duty." The finding compelled Kimmel to resign in disgrace. A navy court of inquiry in 1944 found Kimmel not guilty, but Admiral King reversed the verdict. King ruled that he had made serious mistakes by not ordering sufficient air patrols and had shown that he "lacked superior judgment necessary for his post." Modern critics assert that Kimmel should have realized that war could come at any time and that he failed to take the steps to keep his command alert. Kimmel's defenders argued that Washington had withheld important information and then used him as a scapegoat to cover up the failings of his superiors. More recently, some historians have alleged that Roosevelt deliberately withheld information from Kimmel in order to facilitate the Japanese strike and thus drag the United States into war. This controversy continues, although most serious historians find the evidence of Roosevelt's duplicity unpersuasive.

Kimmel had the great personal misfortune to be the commander on the spot on December 7, 1941. He must, therefore, assume responsibility. As one historian wrote, "While he was not always well served by authorities in Washington, he was not prepared for war when it came." Kimmel died in 1968.

Ernest Joseph King

Born in 1878 in Lorain, Ohio, Ernest King graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1901. Before graduation, he managed to outflank normal



After Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Admiral Ernest King wrote, "The way to victory is long. The going will be hard. We will do the best we can with what we've got. We must have more planes and ships - at once. Then it will be our turn to strike. We will win through - in time." King's determination helped the navy through the difficult, early war days. His insistence on procuring the best ships and planes that money could buy, at prices within the nation's budget was a key factor in overcoming obstacles to the navy's expansion. His fixation on the Pacific Theater interfered with overall Allied strategy. His difficult personality led Roosevelt to joke that he "shaved with a blow torch." (National Archives)

protocol and secure a position aboard a cruiser that saw action in the Spanish American War. During the years leading to World War One, King served in a variety of technical and administrative positions and commanded destroyers. He accompanied the Atlantic Fleet to Europe when the United States entered the war. He attended planning sessions and acquired a profound understanding of the complexities of multinational strategic planning. He also developed a mistrust of both the British and all bureaucracies. After the war, his abrasive personality impeded promotion.

Sensing the growing importance of air warfare, King qualified as a naval aviator in 1928. He graduated from the Naval War College and became Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. This position taught him a great deal about government spending as he successfully lobbied for funding of aviation programs. When President Roosevelt sought a qualified flag officer who was also a pilot, the only choice was King. Consequently, he promoted King to rear admiral in 1933. By 1938, King was a vice admiral in command of the Pacific Fleet's carriers and land-based aircraft. He urged the development of fast carrier and battleship squadrons, but the navy's orthodox thinkers ignored him.

Facing apparent retirement, King's great chance came in 1940 when he served with the Secretary of the Navy on a fact-finding mission. He impressed the secretary who, in turn, urged

President Roosevelt to appoint him to command the Atlantic Fleet as a four-star admiral. This gave King a direct link to Roosevelt and led to his appointment to the Combined Allied Staff. As part of the major shake-up in the navy's senior command, following Pearl Harbor, King became Commander-in-Chief of the US Fleet. This post overlapped with the Chief of Naval Operations, so in March 1942 Roosevelt gave King enormous powers by appointing him to both positions. He became the first officer to hold the navy's two most senior positions simultaneously. In this capacity, King also represented the navy on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

King believed that the Pacific Theater should get first call on military resources. This belief led him into frequent disputes with advocates of the "Germany first" strategy. His blunt, candid, and domineering personality caused frequent clashes with numerous American and Allied leaders. His daughter explained that King was "even tempered, he's just mad all the time." With King in attendance, strategic debates often became heated and led to personal antagonisms. In particular, King and General "Hap" Arnold, the air force representative on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, did not get along very well. However, King knew that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had to cooperate to prosecute the war effectively, and that was always his overriding goal.

Still, the fierce competition for resources led to repeated bureaucratic battles. During the planning for an attack in the Solomon Islands, the army-navy feud became so heated that King warned General George Marshall that he would order the operation to proceed "even if no support of army forces in the southwest Pacific [MacArthur] is made available." At the January 1943 Casablanca Conference, King wanted a larger share of the rapidly expanding store of Allied resources committed to the Pacific. He and Marshall proposed that 30 percent of Allied resources go to the Pacific, China, Burma, and India. The real issue was not the total, but rather the amount, of scarce, critical resources: landing craft, heavy bombers, ocean escort ships, and cargo shipping. The British were more interested in Europe than the Pacific and skillfully avoided categorical responses to King's plan. During a heated argument, King suggested that after the United States aided Britain in Europe the British would fail to help the Americans in the Pacific. Prime Minister Winston Churchill interceded to promise that this would not happen. Because of King's arguments, the Combined Chiefs agreed that there should be no let-up in the pressure against Japan. King informed Nimitz that the US Chiefs of Staff had convinced the British "of the fact that there is a war going on in the Pacific and that it had to be adequately implemented even though the major operation continues in Europe."

This picture shows three architects of victory in the Pacific: Admiral King (center) with his two key subordinates, Admiral Nimitz (left) and Admiral Halsey (right). (National Archives)



King's efforts at Casablanca did not address the problems of the divided command in the Pacific. According to boundaries on the map and prior plans, after the capture of Guadalcanal, the next offensive would occur within MacArthur's jurisdiction. However, after great effort, the navy had assembled a powerful fleet in the Solomons and it did not like the idea of handing over operational responsibility to a general. This type of inter-service rivalry plagued operations in the Pacific until the war's end, and King did little to resolve it. He also continued to dispute with British strategists over the proper conduct of the war. This caused him to prod Nimitz to rush preparations for operations in the Central Pacific. He informed his staff that they



Marines struggle ashore on Tarawa in November 1943. Among many difficult, bloody island invasions, Tarawa was the hardest. (National Archives)

must hurry "so that the British could not back down on their agreements and commitments. We must be so committed in the Central Pacific that the British cannot hedge on the recall of ships from the Atlantic." The marines paid with their blood at Tarawa for this demand for haste.

On the other hand, King was instrumental in forcing the navy to develop the fleet train concept: the ability to supply and repair ships without returning to a home base. The fleet train, in turn, allowed wide-ranging carrier raids and amphibious landings that bypassed numerous Japanese strongholds. King was convinced that the destruction of Japan's fleets alone would not bring victory. He believed that the Chinese coast would have to be secured to provide a base for the aerial bombardment and subsequent invasion of Japan. He clung to this view until the end of the war and, thus, opposed General Douglas MacArthur's strategy regarding a return to the Philippines.

However, King viewed with skepticism the notion that strategic bombing operations alone could win the war. The B-29s would have to fly from islands captured by the navy and the marines. One of King's staff officers observed, "The interests of the AAF [Army Air Force] and the Navy clash seriously in the Central Pacific campaign." The navy worried that it would be relegated to a secondary role, namely capturing bases from which the air force would win the war.

Tough and outspoken throughout his career, King retired in December 1945 and died in 1956. King shares responsibility with Marshall for failing to unify command in the Pacific. Pacific operations remained unwisely divided between the navy under Nimitz and the army under MacArthur. The two-prong advance against Japan gave the Japanese the opportunity to concentrate forces to defeat the widely

separated American efforts. Fortunately, the Japanese failed to seize the chance. King was one of the most influential strategic planners on the Allied side. He commanded a force through difficult times and oversaw its expansion into the world's largest navy with over 8,000 ships, 24,000 aircraft, and 3,000,000 people. The prevailing historical judgment is, "No other officer has had such complete authority over so large a navy institution and few could have wielded it so well."

Chester William Nimitz

Chester William Nimitz was born in Fredericksburg, Texas, in 1885. After first applying to West Point, Nimitz instead entered the US Naval Academy at the age of 15. He graduated in 1905. Nimitz began his career in unpromising fashion by being seasick during his first voyage. He ran his second command, a destroyer, aground and received an official reprimand. Nonetheless, by the time of World War One, Nimitz had risen to chief of staff to the commander of the Atlantic Fleet's submarine division. Between the wars, Nimitz graduated from the Naval War College, served on a variety of capital ships, and taught naval science at the University of California. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor found him as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation.

Nimitz had received serious consideration in 1940 for the command of the Pacific Fleet. Thus, when the Roosevelt administration decided to make Admiral Husband Kimmel a scapegoat for Pearl Harbor, the choice to replace him naturally fell on Nimitz. Nimitz arrived at Pearl Harbor on Christmas Day 1941. As he motored across the harbor, he saw naval craft collecting bodies as they floated to the surface from the doomed ships on the harbor bottom.

The Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet was responsible for an immense area. In violation of the principle of unity of command, the Pacific was divided into two theaters. MacArthur was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Southwest Pacific Area. This area embraced Australia, the Philippines, the Solomons, New Guinea, the Bismark Archipelago, Borneo, and all of the Dutch East Indies except Sumatra. Nimitz commanded everything else in the Pacific except the coastal waters of Central and South America. This vast area received the designation, the Pacific Ocean Areas. Holding the rank of full admiral, Nimitz also retained command of the Pacific Fleet.

Nimitz confronted the challenge of rebuilding his demoralized fleet and protecting American interests in the Pacific with great skill. The fleet's air arm and its submarine force remained intact after Pearl Harbor. To restore morale and keep the Japanese off balance, Nimitz, a former submarine expert, ordered unrestricted submarine warfare against Japan. Nimitz reorganized the surface fleet into task forces centered on fast aircraft carriers. With the support of Admiral King, he began planning offensive action involving carrier raids. At this time, most senior naval officers believed that it was too risky for carriers to attack



Admiral Chester Nimitz utilized his resources aggressively. Still, he soberly recognized the gravity of the situation around Guadalcanal during the late summer and fall of 1942. Following the devastating Japanese battleship bombardment of Guadalcanal, on October 15 Nimitz assessed the situation: "It now appears that we are unable to control the sea in the Guadalcanal area. Thus our supply of the positions will only be done at great expense to us. The situation is not hopeless, but it is certainly critical." (National Archives)



The decisive Battle of Midway occurred because American strategists used their intelligence wisely. Admiral Nimitz observed: "Had we lacked early information of the Japanese movements, and had we been caught with carrier forces dispersed ... the Battle of Midway would have ended differently." Nimitz well understood how US hopes depended upon a small handful of fleet carriers. This shows some of the damage suffered by the *Yorktown* at Midway. (US Naval Historical Center)

heavily defended land bases. The senior carrier admiral, William Halsey, supported Nimitz and offered to lead the first attacks. The subsequent raids accomplished little in strategic terms but they were important in raising morale, providing experience, and developing tactics.

Relying upon intelligence intercepts, Nimitz aggressively employed his scarce carriers to intercept the Japanese at the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942. Before that battle, he confidently observed that "because of the superiority of our personnel and equipment" the United States could take the risk of fighting the Japanese even when facing adverse odds. This proved to be an overly sanguine view. Still, the drawn battle was a useful propaganda victory and marked the first strategic check to Japanese expansion.

Nimitz's superb intelligence teams predicted another Japanese thrust against Midway Island. Nimitz was determined to parry this thrust but the fleet was critically short of carriers. When the badly damaged *Yorktown* arrived at Pearl Harbor on May 22, Nimitz and the navy's technical experts sloshed around the dry dock to inspect the vessel. The best estimate was that repair would take 90 days. Nimitz told shipyard technicians, "We must have this ship back in three days." On the morning of May 29, the *Yorktown* departed to join the forces that intercepted the Japanese at the decisive Battle of Midway.

Nimitz supervised the Solomon Islands campaign in late 1942 and early 1943. Thereafter, the rapid buildup of American strength permitted offensive actions on a much larger scale. Nimitz endorsed the "island-hopping" strategy that bypassed many Japanese strongholds, leaving them to "wither on the vine" during the inexorable advance against the Japanese homeland. Through it all, Nimitz continued his aggressive leadership, as illustrated by the drive into the Central Pacific. While the battle for the Gilbert Islands was taking place, American planners considered the next step: the invasion of the Marshall Islands. Nimitz's chief planning officer suggested a bold stroke: a strike against

Kwajalein Atoll in the center of the island chain. Nimitz concurred. Citing the apparent enormous risks, General Holland Smith and Admirals Kelly Turner and Raymond Spruance vehemently disagreed. After a heated meeting on December 14, 1943, Nimitz polled his subordinates. They all said Kwajalein was a mistake. Directing his comments to Turner, Nimitz responded, "This is it. If you don't want to do it, the Department will find someone else to do it." The dissenters obliged.

The successful capture of the Gilberts and Marshalls demonstrated how fast-carrier operations could support amphibious invasions in wide-ranging operations. Nimitz turned his attention to an attack on the Marianas in order to provide a base to bomb the Japanese homeland. Palau and the Philippines came next. Nimitz advocated bypassing the Philippines in favor of an invasion of Formosa. Daunting logistics and MacArthur's political influence helped persuade Roosevelt to overrule Nimitz and order the invasion of the Philippines. In December 1944, Nimitz received promotion to fleet admiral, a rank that made him equal to MacArthur. The two great leaders had cooperated well in the past and this cooperation continued to the end of the war.

Nimitz ended the war as a hugely popular and respected leader. He succeeded Admiral Ernest King as Chief of Naval Operations for a two-year stint that ended in 1947. In this capacity, he won an important bureaucratic victory by opposing the proposed consolidation of the army and navy. He retired in December 1947 and died in 1966.

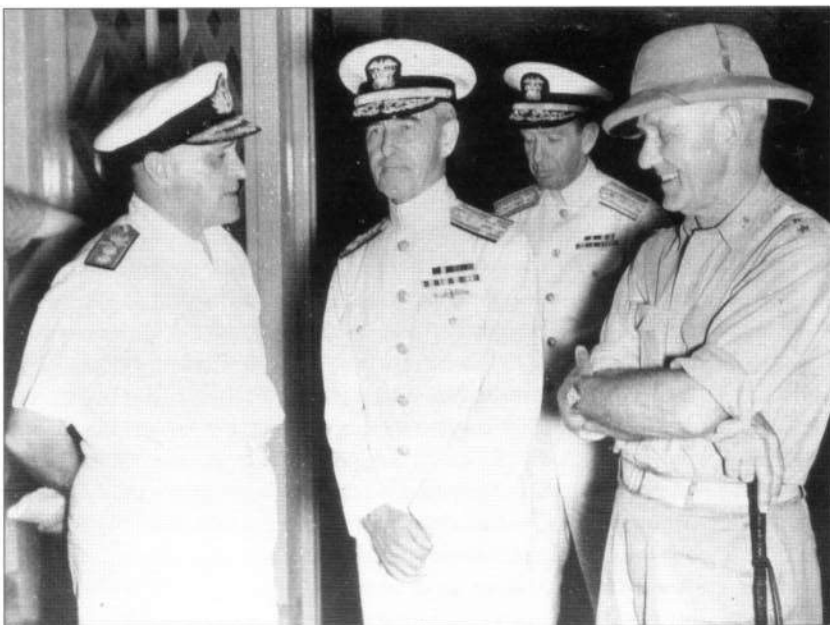
Admiral Thomas Hart (second from left) doubted that the Dutch East Indies could be held in the face of Japanese air superiority. Hart meets with the British Admiral Layton (left) on Java in a futile effort to coordinate an effective defense. (The George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, VA)

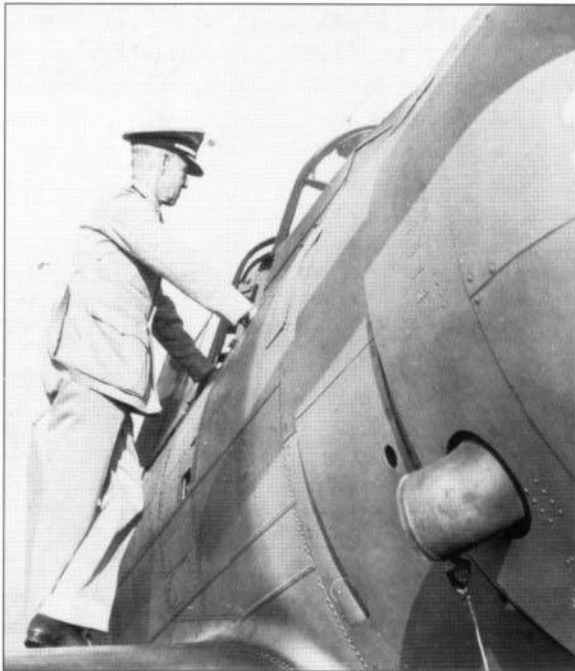
Thomas Charles Hart

Thomas Hart was born in Davison, Michigan, in 1877. He graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1897. Hart led two submarine divisions to Europe in 1917. He graduated from the Naval War College in 1923 and the Army War College the next year. Hart gradually climbed the promotion ladder and became commander of fleet submarines from 1929–31. He held the prestigious assignment of Superintendent

of Annapolis from 1931 to 1934. He next commanded a cruiser division and then became a member of the General Board from 1936 to 1939. His successful tenure, while holding a mix of important sea and shore duties, led to his promotion to admiral in July 1939.

Hart was in command of the small, aging Asiatic Fleet when the Japanese attacked the Philippines in December 1941. The Asiatic Fleet had never been intended to operate as a fighting fleet. Rather, its purpose was simply to show the flag. On the war's first day, Japanese bombers





Admiral Hart inspects a Douglas SBD Dauntless on the flight deck of the *Lexington*. American carriers were unable to support Hart during his doomed defense of the Dutch East Indies. (National Archives)

drove the fleet out of its main base in Manila Bay. Even though Hart had experience with submarines, the outbreak of war found his 22 submarines at sea inexplicably scattered. Neither they nor the surface elements accomplished much in the defense of the Philippines. Hart had built Manila into his fleet's major logistical center. MacArthur's decision to abandon Manila caught him by surprise and deprived the fleet of supplies, repair facilities, and communications. The day after Christmas 1941, Hart fled south aboard a submarine.

Because of his failure, Hart patriotically recommended that someone else assume command of the defense of the Dutch East Indies. Because he was present on the scene, Washington refused. Therefore, Hart next received the unenviable position of commander of naval forces for the American, British, Dutch, and Australian Command. He correctly doubted that the Dutch East Indies could be defended because of Japanese air superiority. He wanted to use his

cruisers and destroyers for hit-and-run raids against Japanese convoys. The British wanted to use them to escort convoys to Singapore, and the Dutch to defend Java. Washington's efforts to manage operations from a distance added to the confusion. Hart supervised the successful destroyer action off Borneo on January 24, 1942. It marked the first time an American surface force had engaged since 1898. Still, Hart's pessimism angered some top American leaders and, more importantly, caused difficulties with the senior Dutch commander, Admiral K. W. Doorman. To placate Doorman, Hart was recalled to the United States "for reasons of health." He retired in July 1942 but was recalled to serve on the General Board. He did not see duty at sea again.

Hart retired again in February 1945 to accept appointment to a Senate seat. He held this position until the end of 1946 and died in 1971. During World War Two, fate had dealt Hart an enormously difficult task. He proved unequal to the challenge.

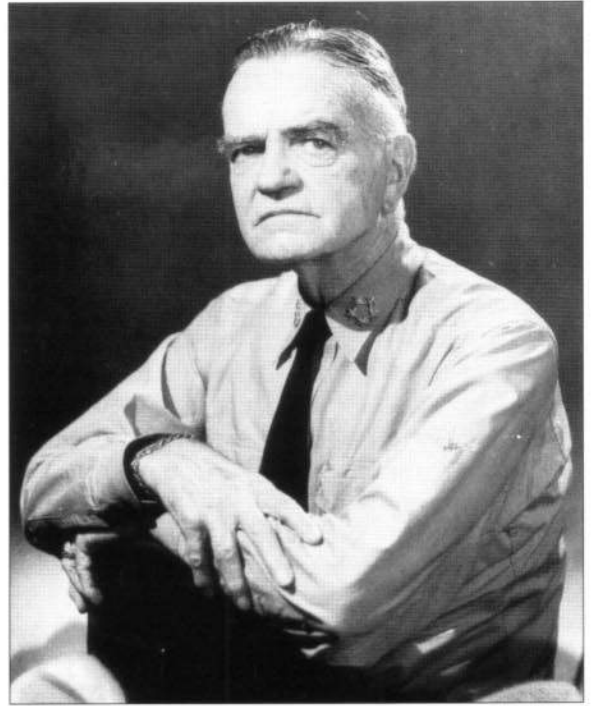
William Frederick Halsey Jr

Born in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1882, the son of a naval captain, William "Bill" Halsey graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1904. After sailing with the global tour of the "Great White Fleet" from 1907-09, Halsey began a 23-year tour involving destroyers, escort duties, and torpedo warfare. In 1917, he commanded a destroyer based in Ireland. After the war, he served as a naval attaché in various European capitals. By 1927, Halsey sensed that the navy's future would be closely associated with air power. A vision impairment prevented him from becoming a pilot. Halsey finally qualified as a naval aviator in 1935 at the age of 52. Meanwhile, he had graduated from both the Naval War College and the Army War College. He commanded the aircraft carrier *Saratoga* from 1935-37 and rose to rear admiral the next year. The outbreak of war found him the senior carrier captain in the Pacific.

The aggressive Halsey supported Nimitz's strategy calling for carrier raids against Japanese bases. Halsey led the first US offensive in the Pacific, an attack against Kwajalein on February 1, 1942. This attack, and ensuing raids in early 1942 against Marshall, Gilbert, Wake, and Marcus islands, caused little damage but provided useful experience for the carrier task forces. Halsey's task force launched the B-25s that raided Tokyo in April 1942. Halsey was in hospital with a skin infection during the Midway campaign. He recommended that Admiral Raymond Spruance replace him.

Halsey replaced Ghormley as commander of the South Pacific Theater in October 1942. When sailors learned about the change in command they cheered wildly. Halsey went to theater headquarters in New Caledonia where, in the words of one historian, he "swept through Nouméa like a tornado." At this time, the supply line supporting the marines on Guadalcanal was badly clogged. Halsey's energy galvanized the support troops and encouraged hard-pressed marines and sailors. To the ground commander on Guadalcanal, General Alexander Vandegrift, Halsey said, "Go on back [to Guadalcanal]. I'll promise you everything I've got." Halsey was true to his word. He made numerous decisions that aggressively placed his major surface units and scarce carriers at risk in order to win the fight for Guadalcanal. In November, at a time when many doubted the wisdom of committing two new battleships to the narrow waters around Guadalcanal, Halsey sent Willis "Ching" Lee with the battleships to intercept a Japanese relief force. Halsey believed that "he must throw everything at this crisis." He also, wisely, relied upon his subordinates' initiative, in this case giving Lee complete tactical freedom of action. For his victories during the Guadalcanal campaign, Halsey received promotion to full admiral on November 26, 1942.

During discussions about how best to continue the offensive, Halsey met with MacArthur. To everyone's surprise – both men had mercurial temperaments – the two leaders got along well together. Halsey commanded the offensive against the Solomon Islands throughout 1943 and into 1944. The American advance through the Solomons triggered a Japanese counter-offensive in November 1943. To defend the Bougainville invasion force, Halsey ordered a carrier strike against Rabaul. Since the early hit-and-run raids in 1942, carriers had avoided attacking strongly defended Japanese bases. Halsey knew that Rabaul was one of the strongest Japanese bases in the Pacific. He boldly ordered the raid to proceed. He later remembered, "I sincerely expected both air groups to be cut to pieces and both carriers stricken if not lost. (I tried not to remember my son Bill was aboard one of them.)" In the event, the raid was a stunning success. It demonstrated the power of carrier task forces and paved the way for subsequent, far-ranging operations.



Admiral William Halsey was the most aggressive senior US naval commander of the war. A typical Halsey message was sent to his commanders in the Solomon Islands on October 26, 1942 at a time when the fate of Guadalcanal hung in the balance: "Attack – Repeat – Attack!" His message electrified his combat elements. He also inspired men throughout his command with his injunction to, "Kill Japs, Kill More Japs!" These words, in letters two feet high, hung over the fleet landing at Tulagi, across the water from Guadalcanal. When Halsey became famous, newspapers corrupted "Bill" to "Bull" to capture his thrusting nature, but no one who knew Halsey personally ever called him that. Halsey's aggressive nature served him well until the invasion of Leyte, when he uncovered the invasion beaches as he led his carriers after a Japanese decoy force. He later wrote that when informed that Japanese battleships would soon be loose in Leyte Gulf, "There was nothing I could do except become angrier." (National Archives)

From the summer of 1944 on, Halsey and Spruance shared active command of the carrier task forces. The idea behind this notion was that each admiral and his staff would have time to rest and plan after a major operation but that the ships themselves would stay in action. Even though his fleet had grown tremendously, Halsey retained his improvisational command style. A staff officer observed that under Halsey "you never knew what you were going to do in the next five minutes or how you were going to do it, because the printed instructions were never up to date ... [Halsey] never did things the same way twice."

Successful carrier operations against the Philippines convinced Halsey to advocate an early invasion of Leyte. He did not expect the Japanese fleet to intercede against the October 1944 Leyte landing. He was wrong. When his scout planes located the Japanese carriers, he did not realize that these carriers were bait designed to lure his own carriers away from Leyte Gulf. Halsey gobbled up the bait but carelessly left the San Bernardino Strait unguarded, thereby allowing Japanese battleships to attack the invasion fleet. Arguments over Halsey's action continued for years but it is evident to most observers including, at the time, Admirals King and Nimitz, that Halsey had blundered. In 1944 Halsey's enormous popularity with both sailors and the public protected him from punishment and from possible relief. Halsey made another controversial decision when he sailed his fleet into the teeth of a terrific typhoon in December. Three destroyers sank, with the loss of 800 sailors. Many historians have roundly criticized Halsey's judgment and management during this storm. Halsey's fleet provided air cover for the Okinawa invasion during July and August 1945. His last combat command involved attacks against the Japanese home islands. The Japanese surrender occurred aboard Halsey's flagship, the battleship *Missouri*.

Halsey's dynamic leadership bolstered morale during the difficult early war months. His aggressive style usually paid enormous dividends. He was guilty of inefficient, sometimes careless, administration. In spite of these flaws, Halsey emerged from the war as a highly respected leader who attracted fierce loyalty from his men. Halsey died in 1959.

Frank Jack Fletcher

Frank Fletcher was born in Marshalltown, Iowa, in 1885. He graduated from Annapolis in 1906 and received his commission two years later. His gallant participation in the Vera Cruz occupation in 1914 earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor. Fletcher commanded a destroyer during World War One. During the interwar years he held a variety of staff positions and graduated from both the Naval War College and the Army War College. Promoted to rear admiral in 1939, Fletcher served with the Atlantic Fleet as commander of Cruiser Division Three from 1939 to 1941.

When the Pacific War began, Fletcher commanded the effort to relieve Wake Island. However, he had never before led carriers. Consequently, the relief effort was badly bungled. The high command at Pearl Harbor ordered Fletcher to turn back from Wake Island as its American defenders foundered. Although some members of Fletcher's staff argued that he ignore the recall, Fletcher dutifully obeyed orders. In the words of navy historian Samuel Eliot Morison, "the failure to relieve

OPPOSITE **Frank Jack Fletcher** was an admiral of the old school who had trouble adjusting to fast-paced, carrier warfare. His orders for the May 1942 battle in the Coral Sea were to "destroy enemy ships, shipping and aircraft at favorable opportunities in order to assist in checking further advances in the New Guinea-Solomons area." Given that he commanded only two carriers, such daunting orders would have challenged anyone. In the event, Fletcher proved reluctant to utilize his radio intelligence and made several tactical blunders. Nonetheless, his planes sank the first Japanese carrier of the war – the American pilot jubilantly radioed, "Scratch one flattop" – and gave the first check to the Japanese advance in the Pacific. (National Archives)



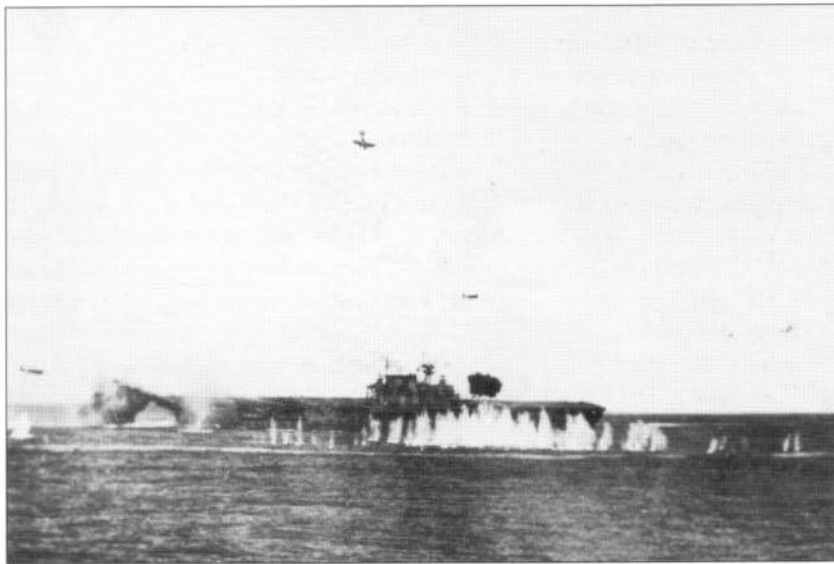
Wake resulted from poor seamanship and a want of decisive action."

Fletcher commanded the carrier task force that intercepted the Japanese thrust into the Coral Sea in May 1942. This confused fight was the first sea battle in history fought entirely by air. Although the *Lexington* was lost, Fletcher's carriers repulsed the Japanese and prevented them from moving against Port Moresby, New Guinea. Next came the decisive sea battle of the Pacific War at Midway. As he steamed into position near Midway, Fletcher faced an enormous responsibility. At Pacific Fleet headquarters, an analyst noted, "The whole course of the war in the Pacific may hinge on developments of the next two or three days." On June 3, 1942 Fletcher received reports that search planes had found the main Japanese fleet. He correctly judged the reports to be wrong and instead trusted his intelligence reports regarding the more likely location of the Japanese carriers. He also correctly judged that the Japanese had no idea that his carriers were in the area. When, the next day, search planes did find the enemy carriers, Fletcher ordered an attack. Fletcher's aviators sank four Japanese carriers. The Japanese managed to damage Fletcher's flagship, *Yorktown*, so severely that Fletcher had to transfer to the heavy cruiser

Astoria. The *Yorktown* later sank. Still, the four-to-one exchange rate was hugely favorable to the Americans.

Fletcher showed that he had learned from his experience at the Coral Sea and did well at the Battle of Midway. Promoted to the rank of vice admiral, Fletcher next took charge of the impending counter-offensive in the Solomons. When he met with the principal commanders to discuss

Sudden bursts of brief, intense combat characterized carrier warfare in the Pacific. A battle's outcome could hinge upon the precise location of a bomb strike. For example, had the bomb that hit Fletcher's *Yorktown* at Coral Sea struck 20 feet toward her centerline, thereby damaging her flight deck instead of penetrating the comparatively unused lee of her island, she would have been disabled for Midway. Here, a Japanese dive-bomber descends on the *Hornet* at the Battle of Santa Cruz while a torpedo plane approaches from the left. (US Naval Historical Center)



the operation, Fletcher was openly skeptical. Worse, he had a public row with Admiral Richmond Turner, the newly arrived commander of the transports and cargo ships that were to land the marines at Guadalcanal. Having lost the *Lexington* at Coral Sea and *Yorktown* at Midway, Fletcher was afraid to risk his three remaining, priceless carriers, particularly if they had to operate within range of Japanese land-based aircraft. Consequently, Fletcher announced that he would keep his carriers within supporting range of the landing forces for only two days, half the time needed to land all the troops and supplies. In the event, Fletcher abandoned the marines 12 hours earlier than even he had planned, claiming that he was short of oil and weak in fighter planes. He retired without authorization from his superior, Admiral Ghormley. Turner and the marines felt this desertion unwarranted. Historians have concurred, exposing Fletcher's claims about oil and fighters as flimsy excuses to hide his real concern: his unwillingness to risk his carriers.

Based upon intelligence reports about another major Japanese operation in the Solomons, on August 23, Fletcher's carriers were operating about 150 miles from Guadalcanal. The next day he received contact reports and hurried his carriers, including his flagship *Saratoga*, to intercept the Japanese. At the ensuing Battle of the Eastern Solomons, the war's third great carrier engagement, he hurled most of his air power against the first target his scouts detected. His planes sank a Japanese light carrier, a ship the Japanese had designated as "bait." This left the enemy's two fleet carriers intact and able to retaliate. However, Fletcher showed that he had learned from previous battles and retained 53 fighters for combat air patrol over his carriers. A ferocious aerial combat took place, with the *Enterprise* absorbing three bomb hits. Thereafter, both sides cautiously withdrew. Overall, Fletcher's handling of this battle was timid, but because the Japanese were even more cautious and had lost a carrier, the Americans could claim victory. Admiral Nimitz observed, "The Japanese had shot their bolt and with air forces seriously reduced were retiring." For the next two months, both sides sought to reinforce Guadalcanal and a naval war of attrition ensued. Fletcher's flagship *Saratoga* was torpedoed on August 31 by a Japanese submarine. Fletcher himself received a wound.

After the Guadalcanal campaign, the high command, responding to widespread criticism of Fletcher's performance as a carrier task force commander, reassigned him to command of naval forces in the North Pacific. He held this position from 1943 until the war's end. After the war, he became Chairman of the General Board until his retirement in 1947. He died in 1973.

Fletcher possessed unquestionable personal courage. However, he was unable to adjust to the stress of fast-moving carrier warfare. The loss of *Lexington* at Coral Sea and *Yorktown* at Midway made him extra cautious during the Guadalcanal campaign. Nonetheless, Fletcher commanded the carriers that gave the Japanese their first important check, at the Battle of the Coral Sea, and was in charge of the vessels that turned the tide of battle in the Pacific at the Battle of Midway.

Raymond Ames Spruance

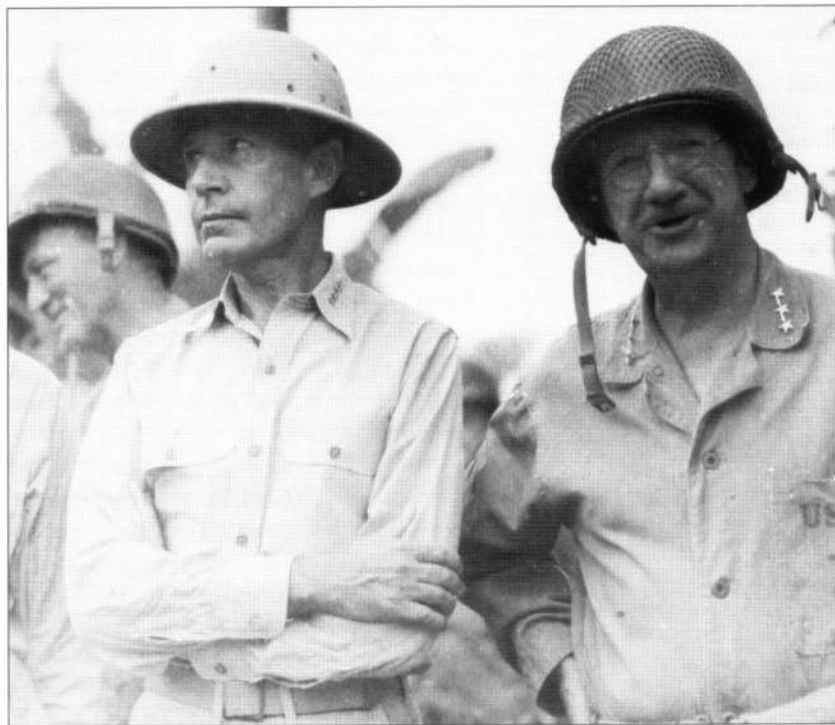
Born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1886, Raymond Ames Spruance graduated 25th in his class from the US Naval Academy in 1907. He

sailed in the global voyage of the "Great White Fleet" in 1907. Thereafter, he followed a typical career trajectory that did not include any combat duty. His specialty was gunfire control. His most uncommon service before World War Two involved three tours of duty at the Naval War College. In July 1941, Spruance assumed command of the Pearl Harbor-based cruiser squadron. The outbreak of war saw this unit assigned as a surface screen for Admiral Halsey's carrier forces. Spruance learned a great deal by observing Halsey in action. When Halsey, in turn, realized that he was too sick to command during the Midway campaign he recommended that Spruance replace him even though Spruance was not an aviator. In May 1942, Spruance assumed command of Task Force 16 aboard the carrier *Enterprise*.

Spruance immediately plunged into the pivotal Midway campaign. On June 4, he received orders from Admiral Fletcher to attack the Japanese carriers. Spruance initially intended to launch his strikes at 0900 hrs., when his planes would be only some 100 miles from the enemy. Upon learning of the Japanese early morning raid on Midway, Spruance revised his plan. He decided, on the basis of advice from his chief of staff, to attack two hours earlier. This meant his planes would risk running out of gas and probably result in the loss of planes and pilots. Nonetheless, Spruance judged it an acceptable risk because the possible reward was to catch the enemy carriers in the act of refueling their planes on deck. In addition, Spruance decided to launch every available plane, "a full load," retaining only enough fighters for a combat air patrol over his own carriers. Spruance's calculated risk worked brilliantly. His planes did strike at a time when fuel lines, bombs, and ammunition were strewn about the Japanese flight decks. His dive-bombers fatally damaged three Japanese carriers in their first strike, turning the tide of battle in the Pacific War.

Spruance's performance at the Battle of Midway justified his appointment. He had wisely used his available forces to help win this decisive action. His cool, calculated tactics overshadowed the performance of his superior, Admiral Fletcher. Two weeks later came promotion to chief of staff of the Pacific Fleet and subsequent assignment as a deputy to Fleet Commander Admiral Nimitz. In this capacity, he helped plan the offensive into the Central Pacific. In August 1943, he assumed command of this

Admiral Spruance (left) on Saipan, is standing next to Marine General Holland Smith. (National Archives)





At the decisive Battle of Midway, Admiral Raymond Spruance (on left, standing next to Admiral Nimitz) performed superbly. He maintained a clear picture of the rapidly changing tactical environment and judiciously listened to advice from his staff to boldly seize the chance to strike the Japanese carriers when they were most vulnerable. According to naval historian, Samuel Eliot Morison, "Spruance emerged from this battle one of the greatest fighting and thinking admirals in American naval history." (National Archives)

offensive, supervising the invasion of the Gilbert Islands. The American carrier task forces now dominated the Pacific. Spruance demonstrated this fact when he led a raid against the formidable Japanese base at Truk in February 1944. Thereafter, he directed the invasion of the Marianas.

During the Marianas campaign Spruance's Task Force 58 virtually annihilated the last of the Japanese carrier-borne air fleet. However, he also had a chance to destroy the Japanese surface fleet. Instead, he cautiously avoided using his battleship force in a night engagement. In the words of an American after-action report, "The enemy had escaped ... we could have gotten the whole outfit! Nobody could have gotten away if we had done what we wanted to do." Throughout the war, Spruance held a healthy respect for Japanese fighting prowess. In this case, his respect may have been misplaced. During subsequent operations, Spruance participated in a unique command arrangement. From the summer of 1944 on, when Spruance assumed active command, his force was known as the 7th Fleet. When Halsey commanded

the same vessels, it was known as the 3d Fleet. The idea behind this sharing of command was that each admiral and his staff would have time to rest and plan after a major operation but that the ships themselves would stay in action. Spruance was in command during the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He was planning the invasion of Japan when the war came to an abrupt end.

In November 1945, Spruance superseded Nimitz as Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet. He was appointed President of the Naval War College in February 1946 and held that position until his retirement in the summer of 1948. He served as Ambassador to the Philippine Islands from 1952 to 1955 and died in 1969.

Spruance's cautious, methodical command style contrasted with Halsey's impulsive, risk-taking approach. An officer who served with both admirals observed that whereas Halsey improvised and did not utilize up-to-date printed instructions, Spruance relied on printed instructions "and you did things in accordance with them." In Nimitz's words, "Halsey was a sailor's admiral and Spruance was an admiral's admiral." The cool, aloof Spruance inspired respect but not love.

Because he eschewed publicity, he never received the popular acclaim accorded to other officers. Among naval historians, Spruance is regarded as a great commander. Many claim him to be "the most brilliant fleet commander of World War Two."

Robert Lee Ghormley

Born in Portland, Oregon in 1883, Robert Ghormley graduated twelfth in his class from Annapolis in 1906 and received his commission two years later. He served with the Atlantic Fleet's battleship force and in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations during World War One. He graduated from the Naval War College in 1938 and received promotion

to rear admiral. Thereafter, he directed the Navy Department's War Plans Division and then served as assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations from 1938 to 1940. Because of his diplomatic skills, Ghormley served in London as senior naval observer from 1940 to 1942 and became a vice admiral in September 1941. He then transferred to the Pacific as Commander South Pacific Forces in April 1942.

The next seven months placed him in a crucial position as the US Navy began its first significant offensive, Operation Watchtower, the invasion of Tulagi and Guadalcanal. Admiral King told Ghormley, "You have a large and important area and a most difficult task. I do not have the tools to give you to carry out that task as it should be done." From the beginning, Ghormley believed that this invasion was unwise because the forces were too few and unready. Surprisingly, Ghormley remained at his headquarters in New Caledonia instead of taking an active role aboard a combat ship. Still, his planning measurably contributed to the fact that the invasion force reached the beaches of Tulagi and Guadalcanal with little difficulty on August 7, 1942. Ghormley well knew that he possessed so few resources that any loss would be significant. The disastrous Battle of Savo Island on August 9 subtracted four Allied cruisers from his order of battle and caused Ghormley and his headquarters staff to become excessively anxious and cautious.

Subsequent combat further reduced Ghormley's surface fleet as Guadalcanal became a war of attrition: the carrier *Enterprise* damaged during the Battle of the Eastern Solomons on August 24; the carrier *Saratoga* torpedoed on August 31; the carrier *Wasp* torpedoed and sunk on September 15. The steady losses wore down Ghormley. His caution changed to indecision. In addition, he suffered from badly abscessed teeth at this time. As a result, while the battle for Guadalcanal raged, Ghormley worked extremely hard to little avail, at one point radioing Nimitz, "My forces totally inadequate to meet the situation." General "Hap" Arnold reported that Ghormley did not leave his shipboard office in Nouméa for about a month and commented, "no man can sit continuously in a small office fighting a war ... without suffering mentally, physically and nervously." The strain caused depression and defeatism and prompted concerned senior commanders to investigate. Both Arnold and Nimitz concurred that Ghormley seemed to have lost his confidence. The burden of work and worry had crushed him. They recommended that he be relieved. Nimitz commented that Ghormley was "too immersed in detail and not sufficiently bold and aggressive at the right time." On October 18, the far more aggressive Admiral William Halsey replaced Ghormley.

Ghormley was reassigned to the 14th Naval District, a largely administrative post. Thereafter, he served on the staff of Admiral Stark in Europe from 1944 to 1945. In this capacity, he oversaw the demobilization of the



Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley's excessive caution during the naval battle of attrition for Guadalcanal caused him to be relieved of command. When he asked Admiral Nimitz why, Nimitz replied, "I had to pick from the whole Navy the man best fitted to handle that situation. Were you that man?" Ghormley candidly answered, "No. If you put it that way, I guess I wasn't." (US Naval Historical Center)

German Navy. Ghormley commanded US Navy forces in German waters from May 1945 until his retirement in August 1946. He died in 1958.

According to naval historian, Samuel Eliot Morison, Ghormley was "a meticulous and conscientious man with a long record of achievement." Morison adds, that he "apparently lacked the personal qualities needed to inspire American fighting men in a tough spot." In August 1942, Ghormley was thrust into the most critical combat assignment in the Pacific. He proved wanting.

Richmond Kelly Turner possessed a "grizzled head, beetling black brows, tireless energy and ferocious language," that made him legendary in the Pacific. Fully aware that it was the first American amphibious operation of the war, Turner carefully planned Operation Watchtower, the invasion of Tulagi and Guadalcanal. He attended to all essential details, including the employment of every landing craft and the exact times and amounts of naval gunfire support. He often explained his exacting attention to detail with the remark that he "hated above all things to see soldiers swimming."
(National Archives)

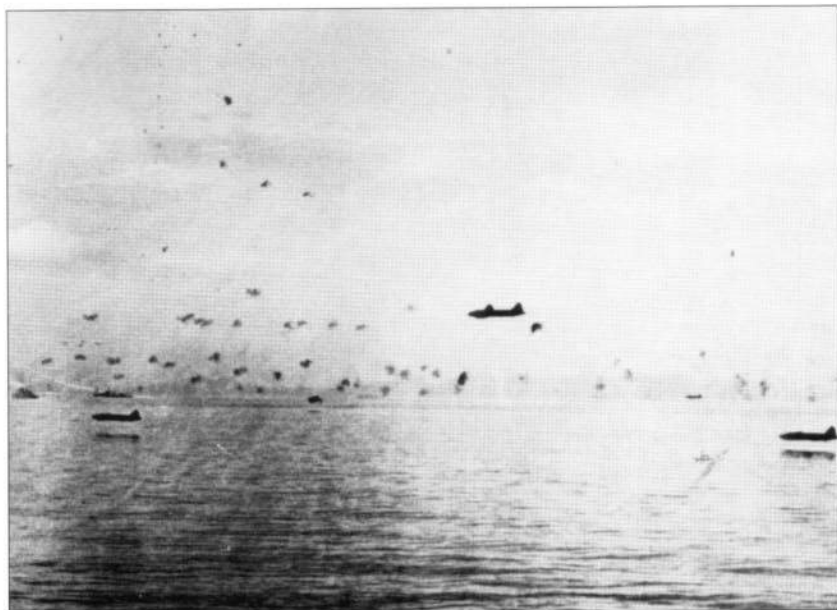
Richmond Kelly Turner

Born in Portland, Oregon in 1885, Richmond Turner graduated fifth in his class from Annapolis in 1908. During World War One, he served aboard battleships as a gunnery officer but did not see combat. Following the war, he had ordnance duty ashore for three years and then joined the staff of the Commander Scouting Fleet in 1923 as a gunnery officer. He commanded a destroyer in 1924. At the age of 42, he entered flight training and became a naval aviator in 1927. He commanded aircraft squadrons assigned to the Asiatic Fleet and then served as a technical adviser on naval aviation to the American delegation that participated in the Geneva Disarmament Conference. Promoted to captain in 1935, Turner attended the Naval War College and then stayed at the school to teach strategic studies. He commanded the cruiser *Astoria* from 1938 to 1940. In October 1940, Turner became director of the navy's War Plans Division. Promoted to rear admiral, he served as one of Admiral King's top strategists after Pearl Harbor.

Turner became the commander of Amphibious Forces South Pacific in July 1942. This placed him in charge of the scarce, but all-important, transports and cargo ships necessary to land and support amphibious invasions. In preparation for the invasion of Guadalcanal, the first major amphibious operation undertaken by the United States since 1898, Turner met with Admiral Fletcher. When he learned that Fletcher intended to keep his carriers within supporting distance for only 48 hours, Turner vehemently protested, to no avail. In the event, when Fletcher's carriers withdrew only 36 hours after the landing on Guadalcanal, the withdrawal left Turner "bare-arse" in his own colorful words. Turner made the stunning decision to withdraw his transports as well. The marine commander, General Vandegrift, vehemently protested about his "running away," but Turner believed that he had no choice. Before he could withdraw, the disastrous Battle of Savo Island took place on August 9, 1942. It was the worst defeat ever suffered by the US Navy and it was Turner who designed the flawed Allied pre-battle dispositions. Turner bravely continued unloading operations the next morning, but that afternoon ordered the transports to retire "in view of impending heavy air attacks." It was a



Fear of a Japanese air attack caused Turner to withdraw his vulnerable transports before they had completely unloaded their cargo at Guadalcanal. A flight of four Japanese bombers makes a low level attack against transports off Guadalcanal. (US Naval Historical Center)



Admiral Turner peers through field glasses at a captured Japanese observation post in the Marianas. At the far right is Holland Smith. (National Archives)

controversial decision that left the marines without their 1,000-man reserve, most of their artillery and heavy equipment, and half of their food supplies.

In contrast to this cautious decision, in September 1942 Turner boldly sailed reinforcements to Guadalcanal in spite of threatened air and submarine attacks. Moreover, it was Turner who sagely recognized the salient importance of Guadalcanal to the entire Pacific campaign. He wrote to Admiral Ghormley, "Here in the Solomons we now have an unsinkable aircraft carrier which I believe may

finally be multiplied into an invincible fleet adequate for a decisive move, but this will require patience and reinforcements." In addition to his profound grasp of strategy, throughout the Solomons campaign Turner demonstrated brilliant organizational skills. However, he could not restrain his instinct to control: he "studied everything, remembered everything, interfered in everything." A marine officer who served with him observed, "Turner was a martinet; very, very gifted, but he was stubborn, opinionated, conceited, thought that he could do anything better than anybody in the world." In the months ahead, Turner's difficult personality caused problems.

Until mid-1943, Turner continued to command amphibious landings in the Solomons and had his headquarters' ship sunk beneath him off Rendova. He took command of the 5th Amphibious Force for operations in the Central Pacific. In March 1944, he was promoted again to command of Amphibious Forces Pacific. Turner supervised the landings on Tarawa, Kwajalein, Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. During the Tarawa invasion, Turner and Marine General Holland Smith quarreled over command authority, to the detriment of all concerned. The terrible casualties suffered on Tarawa prompted Turner to carefully review the operation and devise a valuable set of "Lessons Learned." However, after supervising major amphibious operations, Turner began to falter. As he later told a biographer, "When I came back from the Marshalls I was dead tired. I stayed tired for the rest of the war." Moreover, Turner began to drink heavily. Although he was never observed to be impaired during combat, his frequent hangovers made him even more difficult to cooperate with.

Nonetheless, Admiral Raymond Spruance wanted to continue to work with Turner. He commented, "Our ideas of professional matters were thoroughly worked out together, and we usually thought alike. I was greatly impressed with RKT's brilliant mind, his capacity for hard work and his fine military and personal character." Turner received promotion to full admiral in May 1945 and received the assignment of planning for the invasion of Japan. After the war he was the US naval representative on the United Nations' military staff committee. He retired in 1947 and died in 1961.

In spite of his difficult personality, "Kelly" Turner's leadership earned him the accolade, "the premier US amphibious commander in the Pacific War."

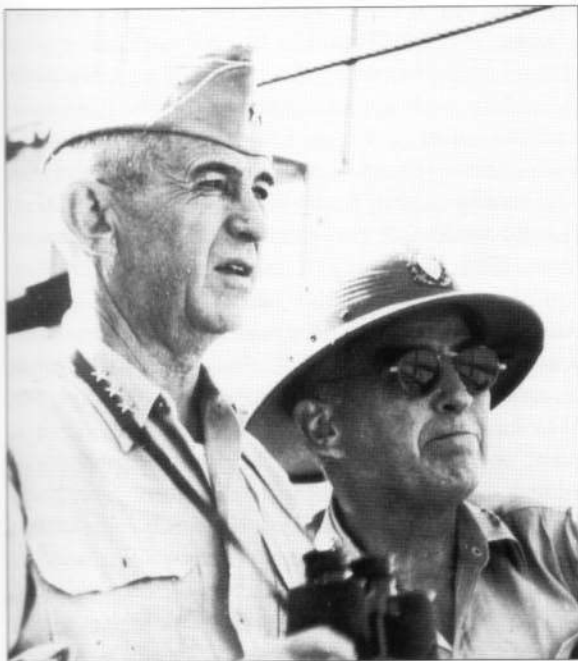
Thomas Cassin Kinkaid

Born in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1888, Thomas Kinkaid graduated from Annapolis in 1908. He served aboard the battleship *Arizona* during World War One. Kinkaid graduated from the Naval War College in 1930 and was commanding officer of the heavy cruiser *Indianapolis* from 1937 to 1938. He was naval attaché in Rome and then in Belgrade from 1938 to 1941. As a rear admiral, Kinkaid commanded a cruiser division following the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor. He fought in all of the Pacific War's early battles, including the Coral Sea in May 1942 and Midway a month later. He commanded the *Enterprise* task force during the Guadalcanal campaign and was aboard this carrier at the third great carrier versus carrier battle, the August 24 Battle of the Eastern Solomons. At this battle, the *Enterprise* was badly damaged by Japanese bombs. Aboard the repaired *Enterprise*, Kinkaid was the senior admiral and, thus, directed the next important carrier engagement, the October 26 Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands. It was the fourth carrier battle in six months. Kinkaid's forces included a new and inexperienced officer in charge of fighter-direction (Halsey had taken the experienced officer onto his land-based staff) and suffered a tactical defeat, as measured by combat tonnage sunk. However, the action bought invaluable time for the Americans to build up strength on Guadalcanal. It prompted Admiral Nimitz to observe, "The general situation at Guadalcanal is not unfavorable." On November 24, Kinkaid returned to Espiritu Santo to

After service with the fleet during many of its important early war engagements, Admiral Thomas Kinkaid (center) became commander of the 7th Fleet, the naval unit assigned to support General Douglas MacArthur, in November 1943. Not only did he have to satisfy MacArthur, but he also had to deal with MacArthur's difficult chief of staff, General Richard Sutherland (left). Admiral Halsey (right) correctly believed that Kinkaid was up to the challenge. (National Archives)



Admiral Kinkaid (left) with General Walter Krueger during the invasion of Leyte. (National Archives)



take over a cruiser task force based around the dead Admiral Callaghan's shattered command. Kinkaid had absorbed the lessons from previous battles and devised a sound battle plan for the next engagement at Guadalcanal. Unfortunately, the high command then made the mistake of transferring him, for no sound reason, before he could implement his plan. His replacement, Rear Admiral Carleton Wright, adopted Kinkaid's plan to engage an outnumbered Japanese destroyer force on November 30, 1942 at the Battle of Tassafaronga. It was an American debacle caused largely by Wright's inexperience.

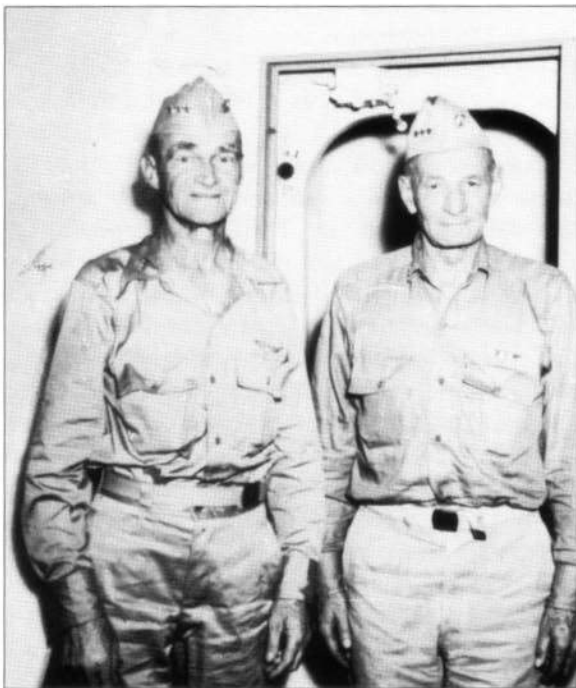
On January 3, 1943 Kinkaid assumed command of naval forces in the North Pacific and promptly placed a tight blockade around Japanese-held Attu and Kiska in the Aleutian Islands. Although he was not personally present, this effort led to the Battle of Komandorski Islands, one of the few daylight surface engagements of the Pacific War. His ineffectual efforts to direct his subordinates from afar during this battle caused amusement. Thereafter, Kinkaid supervised the recapture of Attu in May 1943 and Kiska in August 1943. In November 1943, Vice Admiral Kinkaid became commander of the 7th Fleet, the naval units assigned to support General Douglas MacArthur. This fleet was always a secondary force compared to the carrier task forces sweeping through the Pacific. Quite simply, naval leaders did not trust MacArthur with the responsibility for aircraft carriers and modern battleships. Still, the size of

the 7th Fleet swelled dramatically. For the invasion of Leyte in October 1944, it had grown so enormously that when MacArthur joined the 700-vessel invasion fleet, Kinkaid greeted him with the words, "Welcome to our city." The fleet included a bombardment force of six old battleships, four heavy cruisers, four light cruisers, and 18 escort carriers. Surrounded by such power, Kinkaid, like Admiral Halsey, did not expect the Japanese fleet to fight to defend Leyte.

When the surprise Japanese thrust came, Kinkaid sent Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf's battleships to block the Surigao Strait. Five of Oldendorf's six battleships had been salvaged from the wreckage of Pearl Harbor. Oldendorf's battleships "capped the T" on the Japanese. Having defeated the Japanese thrust through the Surigao Strait, Kinkaid was well satisfied. On the morning of October 25, he asked his chief of staff, "Is there anything we haven't done." The staff officer replied that they should ensure that Halsey was blocking the San Bernardino Strait. The surprising response came that Halsey was not doing this. Twenty minutes later Kinkaid learned that Japanese battleships and cruisers were attacking his escort carriers in the Leyte Gulf. Heroic American fighting and Japanese blunders saved the invasion fleet. After supporting MacArthur in the Philippines, Kinkaid performed a final operation, when his ships landed US forces in Korea following the Japanese surrender. Kinkaid retired in 1950 and died in 1972.

During the war, Kinkaid served under the Pacific Theater's two most demanding and difficult leaders, Halsey and MacArthur. As both a surface unit commander and a carrier leader under Halsey, he performed solidly. His ability to avoid confrontation and cooperate with MacArthur was unusual and his performance satisfied MacArthur as well. Kinkaid was one of very few officers whose wartime duties included extensive surface actions, carrier combat, and amphibious support.

Called "Slew" by his friends and "Popeye" by his men because of his skinny frame, sunken cheeks (he wore false teeth), and prominent nose, Admiral John McCain (left) was a strong advocate for naval aviation both before the war and during the war's early years. On McCain's left is Admiral Marc Mitscher. (National Archives)



John Sidney McCain

Born in rural Mississippi in 1884, John McCain graduated from Annapolis in 1906 and received a commission two years later. During the interwar period he served on surface ships but became steadily more interested in naval aviation. He waited nine years for acceptance to flight school and finally qualified as a naval aviator in 1936 at the age of 52. He commanded the carrier *Ranger* from 1937 to 1939. The attack on Pearl Harbor found him in command of naval aircraft on the American west coast. His first important wartime service came in May 1942 when he was named Commander, Air Forces, South Pacific Area under Vice Admiral Ghormley. His forces included army, navy, and Marine Corps planes operating from island bases or seaplane tenders in New Caledonia, Fiji, Efate, and Espiritu Santo. Initially, McCain's most important responsibility was to conduct air searches in the Solomons. After an airfield on Guadalcanal had been secured, McCain worked to provide scarce planes for

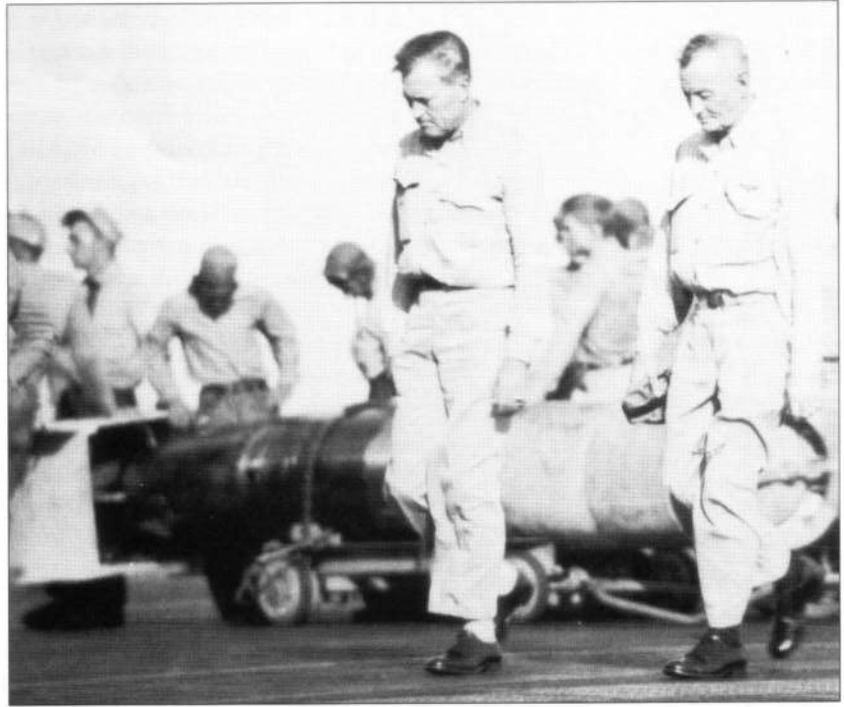
service at Guadalcanal. He managed this key task well and, hereby, helped make Guadalcanal an unsinkable aircraft carrier that dominated the surrounding waters. In October, he became Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. In August 1943, he was promoted to vice admiral and became the first officer to hold a newly created post, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air. The posting put McCain in charge of developing and training the air arm assigned to carrier task forces, land-based naval forces, and the Marine Corps air arm.

In August 1944, McCain received a coveted combat position as commander of Carrier Task Force 38.1 under Admiral Mitscher. During the Leyte campaign, an overconfident Halsey released McCain's Task Force for rest and refit at Ulithi. Then came the startling news, on October 25, that Japanese battlewagons were loose among the Leyte invasion fleet. Halsey hurriedly recalled McCain. McCain rushed toward Leyte Gulf. In order to recover his patrol aircraft, he boldly ordered his carriers to surge ahead at full speed and then, to gain a favorable wind for landing, to reverse at 33 knots and countermarch through the fleet. Having recovered his planes, McCain launched a strike, at the long range of 340 miles, against the marauding Japanese surface fleet. In the event, the strike did little damage, but McCain's performance showed that he was an aggressive leader willing to take risks.

Subsequently, McCain commanded Halsey's Task Force 38 and led a two-week raid against Hainan and Formosa in January 1945. The main Japanese threat had become kamikaze attacks. McCain improvised effective anti-kamikaze tactics. In addition, a damaging typhoon struck McCain's fleet. McCain was almost relieved of command because of this storm. As the war neared an end, McCain's health failed and he was relieved in September 1945. He died at his home in Colorado on September 6. McCain's son achieved four-star rank and was US Commander-in-Chief Pacific Command during much of the Vietnam War. His grandson, a navy pilot in that war, was shot down over North Vietnam, and imprisoned for the war's duration. As of 2002, McCain's grandson serves in the US Senate and holds presidential ambitions.

Norman Scott

Born in 1889 in Indianapolis, Indiana, Norman Scott received his commission from the US Naval Academy in 1911. He was the executive



Admiral McCain (left) paces a carrier flight deck in 1944. (National Archives)



Admiral Norman Scott was the first flag officer to fight a surface engagement in the Pacific with a carefully prepared battle plan. The resultant October 11–12, 1942 Battle of Cape Esperance made Scott a national hero. (US Naval Historical Center)

officer aboard a destroyer when it was sunk by a German submarine in December 1917. During this incident, he exhibited stellar conduct. During the interwar years, Scott served as naval aide to President Woodrow Wilson, held various staff and line assignments, including a three-year stint as instructor at Annapolis, was a student at the Naval War College, and command of the heavy cruiser *Pensacola*. When the United States entered World War Two, Scott was serving on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations. According to Admiral Spruance, Scott “made things so miserable for everyone around him in Washington that he finally got what he wanted – sea duty.”

Rear Admiral Scott commanded a light cruiser division during the August 9, 1942 Battle of Savo Island. His forces did not engage during this terrible American defeat. He commanded a three-ship cruiser division assigned to defend the carrier *Wasp* during the August 24 Battle of the Eastern Solomons. An aggressive leader, his great opportunity came at the October 11–12, 1942 Battle of Cape Esperance. He had orders to protect a convoy sailing to Guadalcanal by offensive action. His orders required him to search for and destroy enemy ships and landing craft. Scott had studied previous night actions against the Japanese. He worked out a

careful battle plan and trained his units intensively for three weeks to execute the plan. He conditioned his crews for night action by keeping them at their stations from sunset to dawn. Scott was also the first surface task force commander in the Pacific to enter battle with a carefully prepared battle plan. He instructed his ships to proceed in column, with destroyers in the van and rear. Destroyers were to illuminate with searchlights, fire torpedoes at large ships, and use their guns against smaller targets. Cruisers were to engage with gunfire without waiting for orders.

Superseded by Admiral Daniel Callaghan, who was a personal friend of President Roosevelt, Scott was relegated to a subordinate role on the night of November 13, 1942. He died in the opening moments of the battle, while aboard the anti-aircraft light cruiser *Atlanta*. The *Atlanta*, shown here, later sank. (US Naval Historical Center)



The Battle of Cape Esperance proved to be a complicated, confused fight. Scott had to order a countermarch shortly before the engagement began and this placed his ships in an awkward tactical situation. Moreover, at a crucial time, he mistakenly ordered a cease-fire because he thought that his ships were shooting at one another. Nonetheless, during the battle, his cruiser and destroyer task force managed inadvertently to “cross the T” of the Japanese cruiser force. The subsequent qualified success at the Battle of Cape Esperance marked the first time that the Japanese suffered a defeat in a night battle involving evenly matched surface forces. Over-optimistic reports of Japanese losses elevated Scott to hero status. In reality, the battle helped American morale but failed to prevent the Japanese from reinforcing Guadalcanal. Moreover, Scott had employed faulty tactics that succeeded more from luck than design. However, he fought the battle bravely and never allowed it to degenerate into a wild ship-to-ship mêlée.

In November, a desk officer whose commission antedated Scott's by a few days, Rear Admiral Daniel Callaghan, superseded Scott. Under Callaghan, Scott flew his flag aboard the anti-aircraft cruiser *Atlanta*. On November 12, 1942 Admiral Turner learned that a heavy Japanese force was steaming toward Guadalcanal. The only forces available to check them were Callaghan's two heavy and three light cruisers along with eight destroyers. Turner ordered Callaghan to stop the Japanese Navy at all costs. A month earlier, Admiral Nimitz had predicted that Guadalcanal could be defended only “at great expense to us.” His words were prescient. On the night of November 13, 1942 Callaghan

emulated Scott's long, single column formation. The result was an exceptionally confused night action in which the American vessels plunged into the middle of a Japanese formation that included two battleships. At the very close range of 1,600 yards, the battle began. Japanese searchlights illuminated the *Atlanta's* bridge. Shells rained down on the *Atlanta*, killing Scott and all but one of his staff. Later, Callaghan also died. Scott received a posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor for his conduct. Vandegrift eulogized the two admirals and their crews for “their magnificent courage against seemingly hopeless odds.”

Scott is best remembered for his leadership at the Battle of Cape Esperance. In the words of Samuel Eliot Morison, the foremost American naval historian of the war, he fought the battle “with a cool, determined courage.”

Neither Scott nor his contemporaries understood how best to utilize the American radar advantage during a night action against the Japanese. (US Naval Historical Center)

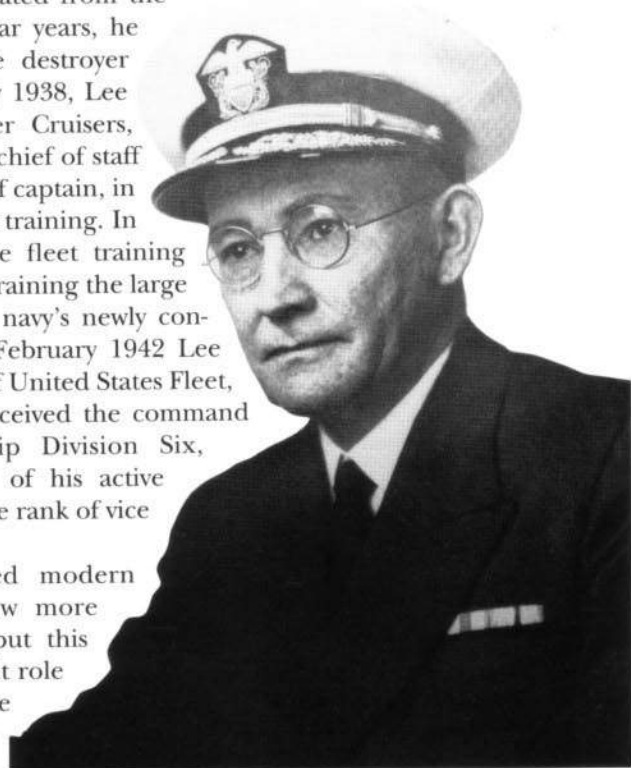


Willis Augustus Lee Jr

Born in Natlee, Kentucky in 1888, Willis Lee graduated from Annapolis in 1908 and received his commission two years later. Lee's first duty after graduation was aboard a battleship. He remained a “battleship sailor” for the rest of his life. In 1914, he participated in the Vera Cruz expedition and served aboard destroyers in the Atlantic during World War One. Lee was an expert rifleman. While on the US team at the 1920

Olympics, he won five gold medals. Lee graduated from the Naval War College in 1929. During the interwar years, he held a variety of commands, including more destroyer service and command of a light cruiser. In July 1938, Lee became operations officer to the Commander Cruisers, Battle Force. Thereafter, he served this force as chief of staff to the Commander Cruisers. Holding the rank of captain, in June 1939 Lee became assistant director of fleet training. In January 1941, he was elevated to head of the fleet training division. In this capacity, he was responsible for training the large influx of sailor recruits who were to man the navy's newly constructed ships. Promoted to rear admiral, in February 1942 Lee became chief of staff to the Commander-in-Chief United States Fleet, Admiral King. After six months' service, he received the command he most coveted, commander of Battleship Division Six, Battleships, Pacific Fleet. For the remainder of his active service, Lee commanded battleships, rising to the rank of vice admiral in command of Battleship Squadron 2.

Unlike most senior officers, Lee studied modern technology and understood radar. He "knew more about radar than the radar operators." He put this knowledge to good use and played an important role in defeating the final Japanese effort to capture Guadalcanal. Lee was especially motivated to perform well during this operation because the Marine General Vandegrift, who had led the invasion of Guadalcanal, was a longtime friend. American carriers had recently suffered so severely that Admiral Halsey decided to block the Japanese using his new, fast battleships. Accordingly, Lee took Task Force 64, his first independent flag command, composed of four destroyers and the battleships *Washington* and *South Dakota*, to intercept a Japanese force. The enemy force, which included a battleship, was intent on bombarding Guadalcanal. During the ensuing Naval Battle of Guadalcanal on the night of November 14–15, 1942, Lee lost three of his destroyers and scores of men during the initial exchange. A power failure aboard the *South Dakota* caused that ship to become a helpless target of the Japanese heavy ships. Only Lee's flagship, the *Washington*, was undamaged. Through it all, Lee remained imperturbable. Near midnight, the *Washington's* radar locked onto a Japanese battleship and mortally wounded it with a withering barrage; nine 16-inch shells and 45-inch shells hit in less than seven minutes. The burning battleship retreated, accompanied by the rest of the Japanese fleet. Lee took the *Washington* on a solo nighttime search for enemy transports. Failing to find any, he gave up the search at dawn only to confront torpedoes launched from two enemy destroyers. The *Washington* managed to dodge the torpedoes. The Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, a series of actions that included Lee's fight with his beloved battleships, was hugely significant. In the words of naval historian, Samuel Eliot Morison, the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal "was decisive, not only in the struggle for that island, but in the Pacific War at large." It marked a definitive American shift from the defensive to the offensive and a corresponding Japanese loss of offensive initiative.



Known for having "one of the best brains in the Navy," Willis "Ching" Lee displayed the capacity for quick decision-making on the night of November 14–15. During the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, a ferocious night surface action, Lee kept his head and displayed calm reasoning. In the words of naval historian Samuel Eliot Morison, "An able and original scientist as well as flag officer, [Lee] appreciated the value of radar, used it to keep himself informed of enemy movements and tactics, and made quick, accurate analyses from the information on the screens." (US Naval Historical Center)

At the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, Rear Admiral Willis Lee's flagship was the new battleship *Washington*. This battle was one of three battleship-to-battleship actions of World War Two. The others were the Battle of Calabria, June 27, 1940 and the Battle of Surigao Strait, October 25, 1944. In addition, the *Prince of Wales* fired at the *Bismark* during the latter's last fight. (US Naval Historical Center)



After the Solomons campaign, Lee's ships supported the series of amphibious assaults that catapulted US forces through the Central Pacific. Lee received promotion to vice admiral in March 1944. During the Marianas campaign in June 1944, Lee's battleships had a chance to engage the Japanese in a night action. However, his big ships had spent all of their time recently supporting the carriers, and this duty exclusively involved anti-aircraft defense. They had not practiced surface engagements of any sort, let alone a night action. As one of



Admiral Halsey presents the Navy Cross to Willis Lee for his leadership at the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. (National Archives)

Spruance's officers noted, "He'd had a lot of experience in night attacks and most of it bad." Consequently, with Spruance's concurrence, Lee declined to seize the chance. Late in the war, Lee received the assignment of developing tactics to combat the Japanese kamikaze attacks. He died from a heart attack aboard a launch taking him to his flagship in August 1945.

Known to his friends as "Ching" Lee, Willis Lee was the most notable American battleship admiral of World War Two.

Charles Andrews Lockwood Jr

Charles Lockwood was born in 1890 in Midland, Virginia. Raised in Missouri, he received a commission from the US Naval Academy in 1912. At the age of 24, in 1914 he commanded a submarine, and by 1917 commanded a submarine division. After a brief stint aboard a surface ship, he returned to submarines and commanded the ex-German submarine, UC-97, from March until August 1919. During the interwar years, Lockwood held both surface and submarine commands, including duty on the Yangtze Patrol off China, served as a member of the US Naval Mission to Brazil, and taught at Annapolis. In the fall of 1937, he served in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations and then became chief of staff to Commander Submarine Force. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor found Lockwood serving in London as US naval attaché, where he acted as chief of staff to Admiral Ghormley.

Rear Admiral Lockwood entered front-line service on May 26, 1942 when he assumed command of the submarines operating in the Southwest Pacific. Initially, these boats operated from western Australia, but Japanese pressure in the Solomons and New Guinea caused a shift to bases in eastern Australia. During the summer and fall, Lockwood sent occasional long-range patrols into the South China Sea and off the Philippines. Although there were many targets, his submarines achieved few successes because of faulty torpedoes. Not until September 1943 were all of the problems fixed. After 21 months of war, Lockwood's submariners finally had an effective weapon.

When the commander of all the US submarines in the Pacific Fleet died in a plane crash, Lockwood replaced him in February 1943. He held this position until the end of the war. Lockwood made it a habit to personally greet newly commissioned submariners who joined his force. Along with a train of experts, he boarded the new submarine to meet its captain and to learn about any teething problems and new equipment and gadgets. Then he invited the captain to lunch. He employed a familiar style that made him popular with officers and men alike. He became known as "Uncle Charlie."

By early 1943, code breakers cracked the code used by the Japanese to direct their supply and merchant ship convoys and escorts. Henceforth, the Pacific Fleet's submarines utilized this information to sail directly to potential targets, thereby eliminating the need for long,



Admiral Charles Lockwood was the most experienced American submariner. When he took command in Australia, his submarines were failing to achieve good results. They used the M-14 torpedo. It was an expensive, technical marvel equipped with a magnetic exploder. Because of its cost, the M-14 was never tested with a live warhead. Frustrated submariners reported that they seemed to miss their target repeatedly. Lockwood ordered tests and soon discovered that the torpedo's depth control mechanism was defective. At first, the Bureau of Ordnance refused to believe these results until Admiral King pressured the bureau into running its own tests, which confirmed the problem. The M-14 still suffered from faulty magnetic and contact exploders. The torpedo design did not compensate for variations in a ship's magnetic field caused by the ship's position on the earth's surface. Much more basic, the torpedo's firing-pin mechanism did not work. (National Archives)

"Uncle Charlie" Lockwood looks on while Admiral Nimitz shakes hands with a submarine crew. (National Archives)



fuel-consuming, and often fruitless searches. Still, submarine warfare remained a difficult enterprise. During 1943, decrypts directed submarines to over 800 potential targets. Submarines sighted only some 350, attacked about one-third of these vessels, and sank only 33.

Lockwood's force continued to grow. By July 1944, some 100 submarines operated from Pearl Harbor and another 40 from Australia. They carried the now reliable M-14 torpedo as well as an electrical torpedo that left no wake. By the year's end, about half of the Japanese merchant fleet, including replacements, and two-thirds of her tanker fleet, had been sunk. The submarines had closed the flow of oil from the

A torpedoed Japanese destroyer photographed in 1942 through the periscope of an American sub. By the war's end, the Pacific Fleet's submarines had sunk an impressive number of capital ships, including a battleship, eight aircraft carriers, and 11 cruisers. (National Archives)





Admiral Marc Mitscher, a master of carrier warfare, is shown here. (National Archives)

East Indies to Japan and cut her bulk imports by about 40 percent. Overall, they accounted for over 1,300 Japanese ships, or some 55 percent of Japan's entire losses at sea. The cost to Lockwood's submariners was heavy; about one in five submariners who made war patrols failed to return.

Lockwood retired as a vice admiral in 1947 and died 20 years later. Although little remembered, Lockwood deserves great praise for contributing to the success of the American submarine campaign in the Pacific.

Marc Andrew Mitscher

Born in 1887 in Hillsboro, Wisconsin, Marc Mitscher graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1910. He was an average student whose wild escapades earned him the nickname "Oklahoma Pete." After serving on a variety of surface ships,

Mitscher attended flight school in 1915 and qualified as a pilot the following year. Mitscher earned the Navy Cross in 1919 for piloting a flying boat across the Atlantic Ocean. His interwar service focused on the development of naval aviation. After serving at several naval air stations and working on experimental aircraft, Mitscher was assigned to the US Navy's first carrier in 1926. That same year, he landed the first aircraft on the newly constructed giant carrier, the *Saratoga*.

In July 1941, Mitscher was assigned to the new carrier, *Hornet*. He oversaw its commissioning and received promotion to rear admiral three days before war broke out. Mitscher's *Hornet* carried the B-25 bombers flown by the Doolittle raiders. As the *Hornet* passed beneath San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge on April 2, 1942, Mitscher announced over the *Hornet's* speakers, "This force is bound for Tokyo!" He commanded the carrier at the decisive Battle of Midway. After some land-based assignments, Mitscher took charge of all air units on Guadalcanal in April 1943. He led navy, army, marine, and New Zealand aircraft

Marc Mitscher's fleet endured punishing kamikaze attacks while operating near to the Japanese home waters. Here a Japanese "Zeke" (Zero) is shown on final approach against the battleship *Missouri* in 1945. (US Naval Historical Center)



THE FLEET ADMIRALS

1: Admiral William Leahy

2: Admiral Nimitz

3: Admiral Ernest King



1



3



2

THE RETREAT

1: Major James Devereaux

2: Lieutenant-Commander John D. Bulkeley

3: Admiral Husband Kimmel

4-7: See text for details



7



5



1



3



4



6



2

"HOLDING THE LINE"

1: Vice Admiral Charles "Uncle Charlie" Lockwood

2: Commodore Arleigh "31-knot" Burke

3: Lieutenant-Commander Dudley "Mush" Morton



MIDWAY

1: Admiral Marc Mitscher
2: Rear Admiral Raymond Spruance

3: Lieutenant-Commander Clarence Wade McClusky Jr



GUADALCANAL

1: Vice Admiral Ghormley

2: Vice Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher

3: Major-General A. A. Vandegrift

4: The 1st Marine Division insignia "the Old Breed"



THE CARRIER WAR

- 1: Admiral William "Bull" Halsey
- 2: Admiral John Sidney McCain
- 3: Commander John Thatch
- 4: The Naval Aviator's wings



4



1

3

2

"ISLAND HOPPING"

- 1: General Holland "Howling Mad" Smith
- 2: Admiral Kelly Turner
- 3: Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis "Chesty" Puller
- 4: The Navy Cross
- 5: Insignia of the 2d Marine Division



4



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3



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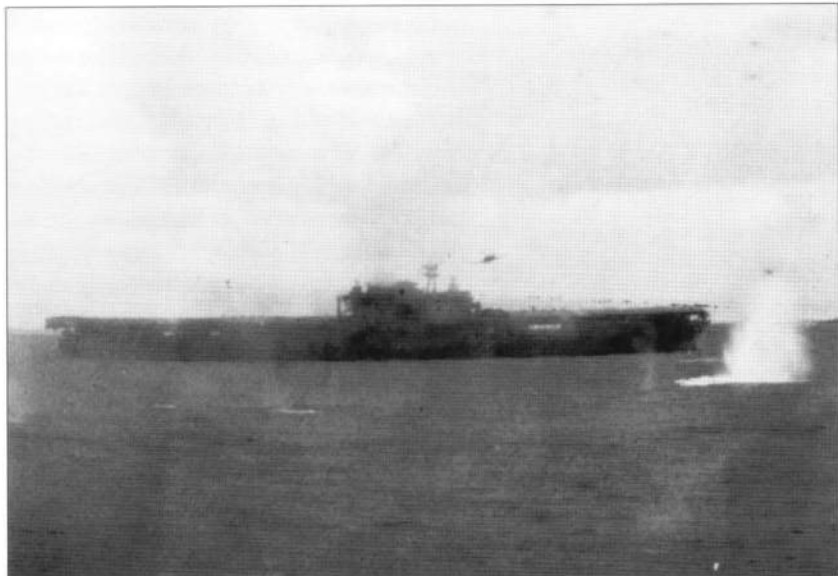


THE ATLANTIC

- 1: Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery
- 2: Admiral Francis "Frog" Low
- 3: Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk
- 4: Officer's Cap Insignia, 1941.



In this faded and scratched but remarkable navy photo, a Japanese "Kate" torpedo bomber bores in toward the *Hornet's* island at center. At right is the splash of the torpedo that has just been dropped. It will hit the damaged *Hornet* and end any chance of saving her. (National Archives)



during the ensuing Solomon Islands campaign. In January 1944, Mitscher became commander of Carrier Division Three, which served with Admiral Halsey's and Admiral Spruance's Fast Carrier Task Force. He led the carrier attacks against the Marshall Islands. To support the invasion of Eniwetok, Mitscher's carrier task force attacked the Japanese base at Truk in February 1944. Historian, Ronald Spector, observes: "For a carrier task force to attack such a base unaided by land based planes ... would have seemed near madness a year ago. Yet Mitscher, masterfully handling his carriers as a single striking force, showed how easily it could be done." Mitscher's carriers sent 30 strikes against Truk, each of them more powerful than either of the two Japanese strikes against Pearl Harbor.

Mitscher's airmen enjoyed overwhelming success during operations around the Marianas Islands in the summer of 1944, in part because of the decline in the ability of Japanese pilots. More powerful US anti-aircraft fire also took its toll on the Japanese. A Japanese plane is downed while attacking the *Kitkun Bay*. (National Archives)



Promoted to vice admiral in March 1944, Mitscher commanded the carrier forces that raided the Marianas in June. The subsequent, overwhelming victory became known as the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot." During this action, Mitscher's bold decision to turn on his ships' lights to guide his aviators back to safe night landings saved numerous lives. Under Halsey's command, Mitscher's carriers destroyed the Japanese decoy carrier force at the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944. His planes flew over Japan as a distraction from the attack on Iwo Jima. His forces completed the destruction of the Japanese surface fleet in the Battle of the East China Sea in April 1945.

Mitscher returned to Washington in July 1945, and received promotion to full admiral the following year. The strain of war had undermined his health. Mitscher died while C-in-C of the Atlantic Fleet in 1947. A modest leader, who avoided publicity, Mitscher was much respected by his men. In the words of historian Ronald Spector, he was "an inspiring leader [who] soon became the acknowledged master of the new carrier warfare."

Theodore Stark Wilkinson

Born in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1888, Theodore Wilkinson did not have to travel far to attend the US Naval Academy. He graduated first in his class from Annapolis in 1909 and received a commission two years later. Wilkinson won the Congressional Medal of Honor for leading a landing party during the 1914 invasion of Vera Cruz. During World War One, Wilkinson served as a naval attaché in Paris and then aboard American ships in European waters. Prior to World War Two, he commanded destroyers, performed staff work, and commanded the battleship *Mississippi*. Wilkinson became Director of Naval Intelligence in October 1941 and, thus, became partially involved in the post-

Pearl Harbor investigation of intelligence failures. Exonerated, in August 1942 Wilkinson assumed command of a battleship division in the Pacific but saw no action. Next came a brief tour as Deputy to Vice Admiral Halsey.

In July 1943, Wilkinson assumed the role that became the crowning achievement of his professional life: commander of the 3d Amphibious Force. In this capacity, he supervised amphibious landings during both the American drive through the Solomon Islands and General MacArthur's advance in New Guinea. Amphibious planning and

Admiral Theodore Wilkinson mastered the complexities of organizing and directing an amphibious invasion fleet. This type of job did not confer the same glory as a gun-to-gun duel or a carrier engagement, but it was indispensable to winning the war in the Pacific. (National Archives)



implementation were particularly complex operations. Wilkinson met the challenge ably. The 3d Amphibious Force conducted the landings during the Central Pacific campaign. Thereafter, Wilkinson received promotion to vice admiral in August 1944. The following January, he flew to Pearl Harbor to begin planning for the projected invasion of the Japanese mainland. In the event, he instead supervised the landing of American occupation troops in September 1945. Wilkinson received a post-war assignment to the strategic bombing survey of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in January 1946. He drowned the next month, when his car drove off a pier in Norfolk, Virginia.

Wilkinson began his career in a blaze of glory at Vera Cruz. His wartime service required meticulous planning, an essential duty for the American amphibious advance to prosper, but was without the credit attached to fighting sailors aboard carriers, cruisers, and submarines. He died a premature, tragic death.

William Daniel Leahy

Born in Hampton, Iowa in 1875, William Leahy graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1897. For the next twenty years, his active duty assignments included service in the Spanish American War, the Philippine revolt, the Boxer Rebellion, the occupation of Nicaragua, the Haiti campaign, and the 1916 expedition against Pancho Villa. In summary, he crammed as much active duty into this period as possible. While commanding the Secretary of the Navy's dispatch boat, *Dolphin*, in 1916, Leahy met the young Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Roosevelt. During the course of several cruises, the two became friends. The next year, Leahy commanded the battleship *Nevada*. In 1927, Rear Admiral Leahy received promotion to the important job of Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance. He next commanded the destroyers assigned to the fleet's Scouting Force. From 1933 to 1935 he was Chief of the Bureau of Navigation. Promoted to vice admiral in 1935, he became commander of battleships. Promoted again the next year to full admiral, he commanded the entire Battle Force. His friendship with Roosevelt led to Leahy's appointment, in 1937, as Chief of Naval Operations.

Leahy was certain that war with Japan would come, so he began preparing strategic plans for coalition warfare that later became the foundation of American global strategy. He participated in secret prewar meetings

At the Yalta Conference, Admiral William D. Leahy stands behind President Roosevelt, as befitting his position as one of the powers behind the throne. Leahy mastered political-military affairs to a high degree, winning the trust of most of the top-ranking leaders he dealt with. (National Archives)



with the British as part of his coalition-building efforts. Leahy reached retirement age in 1939. Rather than lose his services, Roosevelt appointed him Governor of Puerto Rico. The outbreak of war in Europe prompted the president to recall Leahy and, subsequently, send him to Vichy France as ambassador. Leahy accomplished little in this capacity but his unswerving devotion to Roosevelt's policies impressed the president. Roosevelt recalled Leahy to Washington, in April 1942, to join his inner circle of advisers and return to active duty.

Leahy spent the remainder of the war working to solve the novel challenges of total war on a world scale. In 1942, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) was a new organization, combining the senior heads of each service. The JCS's task was to advise Roosevelt on military strategy and to implement his decisions. General George Marshall suggested that Leahy be appointed to a special post to provide liaison between the JCS and Roosevelt. Marshall's inspired choice recognized that Leahy was senior in service to the chiefs and was liked and respected by them. Moreover, Roosevelt trusted him. Therefore, he would be an ideal channel between the president and the military. Also, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Leahy restored a balance to the JCS of two admirals and two generals. In July 1942, Leahy became the first chief of staff to the commander-in-chief.

Leahy now held a powerful position, greatly enhanced by his close relationship with Roosevelt. He met with Roosevelt daily, vetted which military men saw the president and which military issues received the president's attention, and attended most of the major wartime conferences with the various Allies. He was a central figure at the highest level of the military chain of command. Because he invariably sided with Roosevelt, the JCS members came to think of him as "one of them" as opposed to "one of us." Still, they retained their admiration for Leahy. Leahy, in turn, supported the "Germany first" strategy, while also sharing in the desire to put more effort into the Pacific War. This was typical of his attitude of compromise in order to get divergent interests acting in harmony. Leahy opposed the invasion of Japan at the war's end because he believed it would be very costly and that the blockade and strategic bombing would compel Japan's surrender. Leahy labeled the Japanese as barbaric "savages" but was one of very few senior leaders among the high command to oppose the use of the atomic bomb, partially on moral grounds.

Roosevelt successfully urged Congress to create a new rank of five-star admiral and then promoted Leahy to this post. President Truman retained Leahy as chief of staff until 1949, but the two never enjoyed the same warm relationship that characterized Leahy's service to Roosevelt. Leahy died in 1959.

Although Leahy never served at sea or even in the navy during World War Two, his position as senior military adviser to the president made him one of the most, if not the most, influential American military men in the entire war. He seldom contributed original insights into wartime strategy but, rather, harmonized civil-military relations at the highest level so that the war could be effectively pursued.

Harold Raynsford Stark

Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1880, Harold Stark graduated

Admiral Harold Stark (center) is shown during an invasion of France inspection tour. To his right is Admiral Kirk and to his left, Admiral John Hall, the commander of the naval forces assigned to Omaha Beach. Stark was the Commander US Naval Forces Europe. Known as London's "oldest American resident," Stark actively participated in all planning for the invasion of France, from early 1942 on. (National Archives)



from the US Naval Academy in 1903. He served as an aide to Admiral Sims during World War One and an aide to the Secretary of the Navy from 1930 to 1933. Promoted to rear admiral in 1934, Stark was Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance from 1934 to 1937. He rose steadily from commander of a cruiser division to commander of all the cruisers in the Battle Force, and became a vice admiral in 1938, and full admiral in August 1939. At that time, President Roosevelt chose Stark, over more than 50 senior flag officers, for duty as Chief of Naval Operations.

In November 1940, Stark wrote a memo to President Roosevelt that became one of the most important documents of World War Two. Stark identified four strategic alternatives for the United States: a) to concentrate mainly on hemispheric defense; b) to prepare for an all-out offensive in the Pacific while remaining on the defensive in the Atlantic; c) to make an equal effort in both areas; d) to prepare for a strong offensive in the Atlantic while remaining on the defensive in the Pacific. Stark strongly preferred d, or "dog," in the military alphabet. Stark noted that Great Britain was making a desperate, lonely effort to defeat Germany and that the United States was already strongly supporting the British. Furthermore, Germany was a more deadly military threat to the United States, being both stronger and nearer. His advocacy led to the adoption of "Plan Dog." It was a sharp reversal of the navy's traditional preoccupation with Japan, as described in Plan Orange. Stark's memo led to secret formal talks between American and British service chiefs in January 1941. The chiefs quickly agreed that Germany and Italy must be defeated first. As Chief of Naval Operations, Stark was instrumental in preparing for the expansion of the US Navy into a force capable of fighting in both the Atlantic and the Pacific, a "two-ocean" navy.

Like many naval officers, Stark anticipated that Japanese expansion in the Pacific would lead to war. He did not anticipate the strike against Pearl Harbor. His late November 1941 "war warning" to Pacific commanders proved inadequate in alerting leaders in Hawaii and the Philippines. It later became a source of enormous controversy, with Stark

receiving much blame for not sharing intelligence with Admiral Kimmel at Pearl Harbor. Within days after Pearl Harbor, to forestall public and congressional criticism, Roosevelt authorized a major change in the navy's senior leadership. He named Admiral Ernest King Commander-in-Chief of the US Fleet. This decision effectively removed Stark from authority. In March 1942, Stark transferred to London as Commander, US Naval Forces Europe. He held this position until 1945. Stark's duties in London were administrative, rather than operational. His most notable work involved planning for the invasion of France. Stark exhibited good diplomatic skill and was well regarded by the British.

Both the navy and Congress held investigations into Pearl Harbor, compelling Stark to testify at various times between 1944 and 1946. The initial naval investigation criticized Stark for failing to issue a clear warning. The subsequent congressional investigation was more lenient. In the end, Admiral King changed his negative assessment of Stark's performance. The Secretary of the Navy supported King, and so Stark received formal exoneration. Stark retired in 1946 and died in 1972.

Well-liked and kind, Stark contributed importantly to the key strategic decision to defeat Germany first. His subsequent work in London as a sailor-diplomat also received praise. However, his colossal failure to adequately warn American leaders about the Japanese threat has been roundly criticized by many modern historians. The words of an American lieutenant, who served in the Philippine Air Force, are worth remembering: "Our generals and leaders committed one of the greatest errors possible to military men – that of letting themselves be taken by surprise."

Alan Goodrich Kirk

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1888, Alan Kirk graduated from Annapolis in 1909 and received his commission two years later. During World War One, Kirk held a rear area assignment at the Naval Proving Grounds in Dahlgren, Virginia. He served as a naval aide to the president in 1920–21. Kirk graduated from the Naval War College in 1929 and stayed on as an instructor until 1931. He was a naval attaché in London from 1939 to 1941 and then returned to the United States to become director of the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) in March 1941. Captain Kirk tried to make the ONI responsible for both collecting and interpreting intelligence. The Head of the Navy's War Plans, Admiral Richmond Turner, opposed Kirk's notion and succeeded in keeping naval intelligence from becoming centralized. Some historians who specialize in intelligence argue that if Kirk's consolidation had taken place, the navy would have been able to interpret properly the signs of the pending Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In the event, Kirk escaped blame for Pearl Harbor.

Kirk's first combat assignment of World War Two was as commander of a division of destroyer escorts in the Atlantic Fleet from October 1941



Admiral Alan Kirk watches the D-Day invasion force. (National Archives)



Admiral Kirk and General Bradley arrived in the transport area off the American invasion beaches on June 7, 1944. Thereafter, Kirk conducted Eisenhower on a visit to the Normandy beaches. When the minelayer carrying the senior command ran aground off the British beaches, Kirk told Eisenhower that he would make a "kind" report of the incident and, hopefully, the minelayer's commander would escape with a mere reprimand from the Admiralty. Kirk added, "most good officers have a reprimand or two on their records." (National Archives)

to March 1942. Promoted to rear admiral, he returned to London in March 1942 to serve again as naval attaché. Kirk also served as chief of staff to Admiral Stark, the commander of US Naval Forces in Europe. In February 1943, Kirk again assumed an active command when he took charge of the Atlantic Fleet's amphibious forces. He was involved in the planning for Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa, and supervised the training of the naval forces that landed American forces on the easternmost beaches of Sicily. Although his task force suffered heavy landing craft losses because of high surf and rock outcroppings, there were very few personnel losses.

Kirk's combination of diplomatic experience in London with his knowledge of amphibious warfare made him the natural choice as commander of US naval forces for the Normandy invasion. He transferred to the United Kingdom in mid-November 1943 and became involved in the planning for Operation Overlord. At this time, many senior British officers, as well as Admiral Stark, believed that Germany would soon collapse and, thus, there would be no need to invade

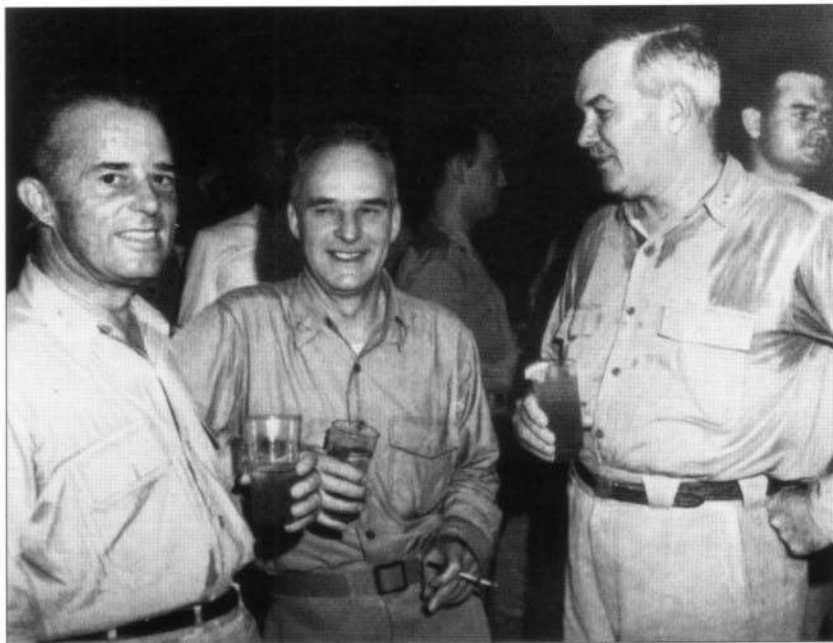
Admiral Kirk is aboard a torpedo boat off the Normandy coast in 1944. Ten years after D-Day, Kirk reflected upon the US Navy's contribution and said, "Our greatest asset was the resourcefulness of the American sailor." (National Archives)



France. This attitude made it difficult to plan seriously to accomplish Kirk's mission as commander of the Western Naval Task Force. Kirk was responsible for bringing American forces across the Channel, providing gunfire support for the assault landing, and defending the assault area from any German naval thrusts. Kirk handled this complex mission well. However, he made the fateful decision to launch the landing craft far out to sea, in many cases 11 miles from the beach. Kirk feared German coastal guns, thought to be in place at Pointe du Hoc. Intelligence officers regarded them as the "most dangerous battery in France." In fact, they turned out to be dummies. Meanwhile, the long trip to the beaches sickened soldiers and disrupted landing plans.

Naval gunfire support was enormously useful during operations within the Normandy beachhead. Ten days after the invasion, a German military journal wrote, "The fire curtain provided by the guns of the Navy so far proved to be one of the best trump cards of the Anglo-United States invasion Armies." The US 1st Army relied so heavily upon naval gunfire that Kirk had to warn General Bradley not to become overly dependent on the navy because the naval guns were being worn out by their frequent fire missions and many ships would have to depart soon to support the invasion of southern France. The Western Naval Task Force was dissolved on July 10, 1944. During the Normandy campaign, besides commanding fire support operations, Kirk also supervised the landing of supplies via the artificial harbors. This also proved a difficult technical challenge. In October 1944, Kirk was elevated to command of all US naval forces in France. In this capacity, he supervised the naval forces involved in major river crossings, including most prominently the Rhine crossings in March 1945.

Promoted to vice admiral in May 1945, Kirk served on the navy's General Board until he retired the following March. Thereafter, he held a variety of important diplomatic posts, including Ambassador to the



Three cruiser commanders relax between missions. From left to right: Aaron Stanton Merrill, Robert Ward Hayler, and Walden Lee Ainsworth. "Tip" Merrill and "Pug" Ainsworth were particularly prominent as task force commanders during the drive up the Solomon Islands, while Hayler commanded the *Honolulu* in Ainsworth's task force and coned her through the Battle of Tassafaronga without a scratch. (US Naval Historical Center)

Soviet Union from 1949 to 1951 and Ambassador to the Republic of China (Nationalist China) from 1962 to 1963. Kirk died in 1963.

No naval officer serving in the Atlantic was going to shine as much as those admirals serving in the Pacific. Kirk undramatically did his duty with a high level of efficiency. Eisenhower respected his professional ability.

US MARINE CORPS

Alexander Archer Vandegrift

Born in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1887, Alexander "Archie" Vandegrift came from a military family. Both of his grandfathers had fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War. Failing to gain admission to West Point, he attended the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He received a commission as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1909. Until 1925, Vandegrift spent most of his service time in the Caribbean region, including duty in Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Panama Canal Zone. He participated in the 1914 Vera Cruz expedition and served three tours in Haiti. He was with the Marine Expeditionary Force in China in 1927-29 and again from 1935 to 1937. Vandegrift applied his considerable experience with amphibious landings when he worked on the Tentative Manual of Landing Operations. This document codified valuable theoretical knowledge that the Marine Corps had acquired about amphibious warfare.

The beginning of World War Two found Vandegrift working as an assistant to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. In this capacity, he labored to reform the corps and make it war ready. Late in 1941, Vandegrift took command of the 1st Marine Division. Admiral Ernest King told Vandegrift that his division need not expect to enter combat

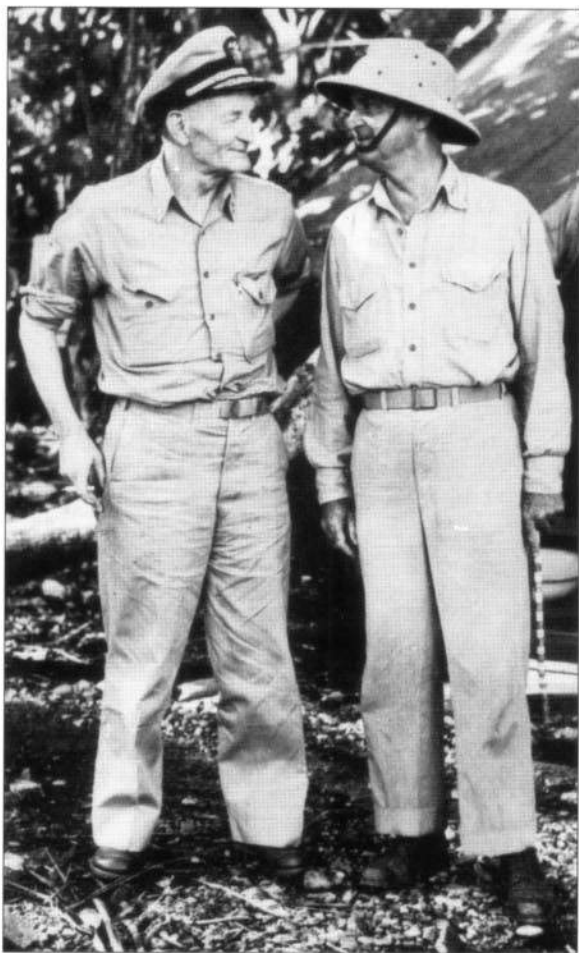
before 1943. Thus, it was a major surprise for him to learn that his marines had been chosen to spearhead the first American land-sea counter-offensive in the Pacific: Operation Watchtower, the invasion of Tulagi and Guadalcanal, islands of which he had never heard. His unready troops had a chance for only one brief rehearsal, which Vandegrift later described as "a complete bust," before they sailed for the Solomon Islands in August 1942. The night before the assault, he wrote to his wife, "Whatever happens you'll know I did my best. Let us hope that best will be enough."

The navy's premature abandonment of the

General Alexander Vandegrift (right) confers with Admiral Turner. Command and control struggles with Turner exacerbated the campaign's problems. Turner was Vandegrift's superior and wanted to direct the land campaign. Vandegrift believed that he should have undisputed tactical control. As a result, the marines did not receive much-needed logistical support. Vandegrift appealed up the chain of command until, finally, President Roosevelt personally intervened to order help for the beleaguered marines. (US Naval Historical Center)



Vandegrift (right) is with Admiral John McCain, who helped keep Guadalcanal's "Cactus Airforce" flying. Vandegrift's indefatigable determination to hold Guadalcanal led to victory in this pivotal campaign. A captured Japanese document underscored the importance of the struggle: "It must be said that the success or failure in recapturing Guadalcanal Island, and the vital naval battles related to it, is the fork in the road which leads to victory for them or for us." (National Archives)



landing force meant that the marines on Guadalcanal lacked ammunition and food as well as radar and radios, construction equipment, and even barbed wire. The iron-willed Vandegrift "uttered no complaint and let no doubt enter his mind that the Corps would hold Guadalcanal, with or without help from the Navy." A long, miserable campaign ensued, during which Vandegrift exhibited sterling leadership. Vandegrift's determination and persistence during the Guadalcanal campaign were key ingredients to eventual victory. If necessary, he planned to melt into the jungle with his men and conduct guerilla warfare rather than give up. Vandegrift won both the Navy Cross and the Congressional Medal of Honor for his conduct on Guadalcanal. After four months of hardship on Guadalcanal, a number of Vandegrift's surviving marines were underweight, dehydrated, malarial, or shell-shocked. Many were so weak that they had to be helped up and over the rails of the ships that evacuated them. Of those who were shell-shocked, Vandegrift later said, "There but for the grace of God go I."

Promoted to lieutenant-general in 1943, Vandegrift assumed command of General MacArthur's 1st Marine Amphibious Corps. He directed the landing operations in Bougainville in 1944 until he received appointment as 18th Marine Corps Commandant. In this capacity, he became the first active duty marine to achieve the rank of

full general. He had to address serious controversies involving inter-service rivalries. The new commandant wrote from Washington to his friend and successor, Roy Geiger, "Many times have I longed ... for the peaceful calm of a bombing raid on Bougainville."

The uneasy compromise worked out on Guadalcanal, whereby navy commanders exercised undisputed control only during the actual landing, failed to solve numerous problems. Moreover, the bloody amphibious assaults against well-defended Japanese islands such as Iwo Jima, where 21,000 defenders killed 6,000 marines and inflicted 26,000 total casualties, distressed both the American public and its government. Some questioned the competence of the Marine Corps. Vandegrift energetically defended the corps, explaining that Pacific combat against a fanatical, well-fortified enemy inevitably involved heavy cost: "No one realizes more than the Marine Corps that there is no Royal Road to Tokyo."

The war's end brought a new challenge to Vandegrift's beloved Marine Corps. As part of a rapid demobilization process, some influential people, including President Harry Truman himself, urged that the corps be merged into a single, unified service. Truman caustically commented that Marine Corps advocates relied upon "the world's second-biggest propaganda machine" in order to exist. Vandegrift skillfully lobbied Congress to retain the corps. His efforts

helped lead to a compromise by which the corps remained a separate service within the Navy Department.

After almost a 40-year-long tour, Vandegrift left active duty in December 1947 and retired in 1949. He died in 1973. His place in American military history is secured by his triumph over great adversity on Guadalcanal.

Holland McTyeire Smith

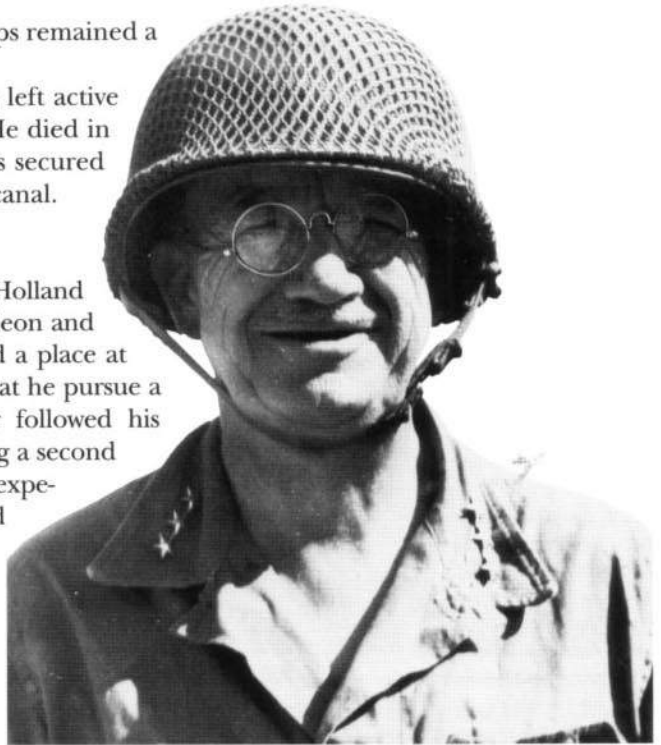
Born in Seale, Alabama, in 1882, at an early age Holland Smith showed an interest in books about Napoleon and other military leaders. Although he was offered a place at the US Naval Academy, his father demanded that he pursue a law degree instead. Nonetheless, Smith later followed his dreams by enlisting in the marines and receiving a second lieutenant's commission in 1905. During a 1916 expedition to Santo Domingo, he first experienced combat. Here too he began to pay serious attention to the intricacies of amphibious warfare. Smith served with the marines in World War One and won the *Croix de Guerre* for courage at the Battle of Belleau Wood.

He combined battlefield bravery with brains. He graduated from the Naval War College in 1921. Between the wars, Smith developed new amphibious tactics. He also went against entrenched doctrines by predicting that the next war in the Pacific would depend upon amphibious assaults, rather than decisive clashes between battle fleets. Following a stint at Marine Corps headquarters from 1937 to 1939, Smith received promotion to brigadier-general. In September 1939, Smith assumed command of the 1st Marine Brigade. He began practicing amphibious landings. The experience highlighted the lack of suitable landing craft. Along with boat-builder Andrew Higgins, Smith designed a practical assault boat, as well as an amphibious tractor.

Once war began, Major-General Smith held a stateside assignment directing amphibious training. He wanted a combat command, and in June 1943 persuaded Admiral Nimitz to appoint him to an amphibious command. He served as Head of the Joint Army-Marine 5th Amphibious Corps in the Central Pacific. The horrific assault on Tarawa, in which landing craft ran aground on the coral reef and marines had to wade to shore under heavy fire, angered Smith. He called it a "futile sacrifice of Marines." With characteristic bluntness, he demanded improvements, including more amphibious tractors, better landing craft, and increased naval bombardment.

His prickly personality caused numerous conflicts with fellow officers. It did not help that Smith freely criticized officers who, in his opinion, lacked experience or were too old. He also believed that speed in the attack saved lives and was sharply critical of cautious officers. His criticisms offended many, all of whom agreed with one officer's observation: "General Smith was a sorehead, indignant and griping about everything." He earned the nickname "Howling Mad" Smith.

Smith received his first chance at independent command during the invasion of Saipan. The faltering performance of the army's 27th Division



General Holland Smith on Saipan in August 1944. Behind his wire-rim glasses and craggy, friendly looking features, Smith was an iron-willed marine. He believed that the marines should master the art of "doing the impossible well." (National Archives)



Having distinguished himself in combat in World War One, Holland Smith, shown here bending over to talk with a wounded marine, understood the horrible cost of combat. He labored hard to make their job easier. He later recalled the impact of Tarawa: "I could not forget the sight of Marines floating in the lagoon or lying on the beaches at Tarawa, men who died assaulting defenses which should have been taken out by naval gunfire." (National Archives)

persuaded him to relieve its commander. He knew that this step, a marine general relieving an army general, would cause an inter-service firestorm. Nonetheless, he firmly believed the action necessary, "I know I'm sticking my neck out ... I don't care what they do to me. I'll be 63 years old next April and I'll retire anytime after that." Until this time, five army divisional generals had been relieved of command in the Pacific, so Smith's action had solid precedents. Yet it did cause an enormous controversy. The press also turned against Smith, labeling him a "reckless butcher."

Still, he rose in rank to lieutenant-general and commander of the Pacific Fleet's entire marine force. He commanded the initial assault on Iwo Jima. He had argued for more pre-invasion bombardment. He felt betrayed by the ensuing heavy casualties and requested reassignment in July 1945. For the rest of the war, he supervised training in San Diego. After the war, Smith vigorously continued the war with his pen. He tried to vindicate his own decisions, and the Marine Corps in general, in a series of partisan, controversial articles. As a result, his reputation suffered. Smith died in 1967.

Smith's aggressive leadership and blunt opinions made many enemies. His personality partially obscured his real talents. Admiral Raymond Spruance called the invasion of Tinian "the most brilliantly conceived and executed amphibious operation of the war" and gave Smith full credit. Smith's absence was fully felt during the invasion of Okinawa. Here, the army's slow progress frustrated Spruance. He doubted whether the army's methodical approach really saved lives and commented, "There are times when I get impatient for some of Holland Smith's drive." No single man did more to advance amphibious doctrine. The eulogy at his funeral accurately portrayed Smith as the "father of amphibious warfare."

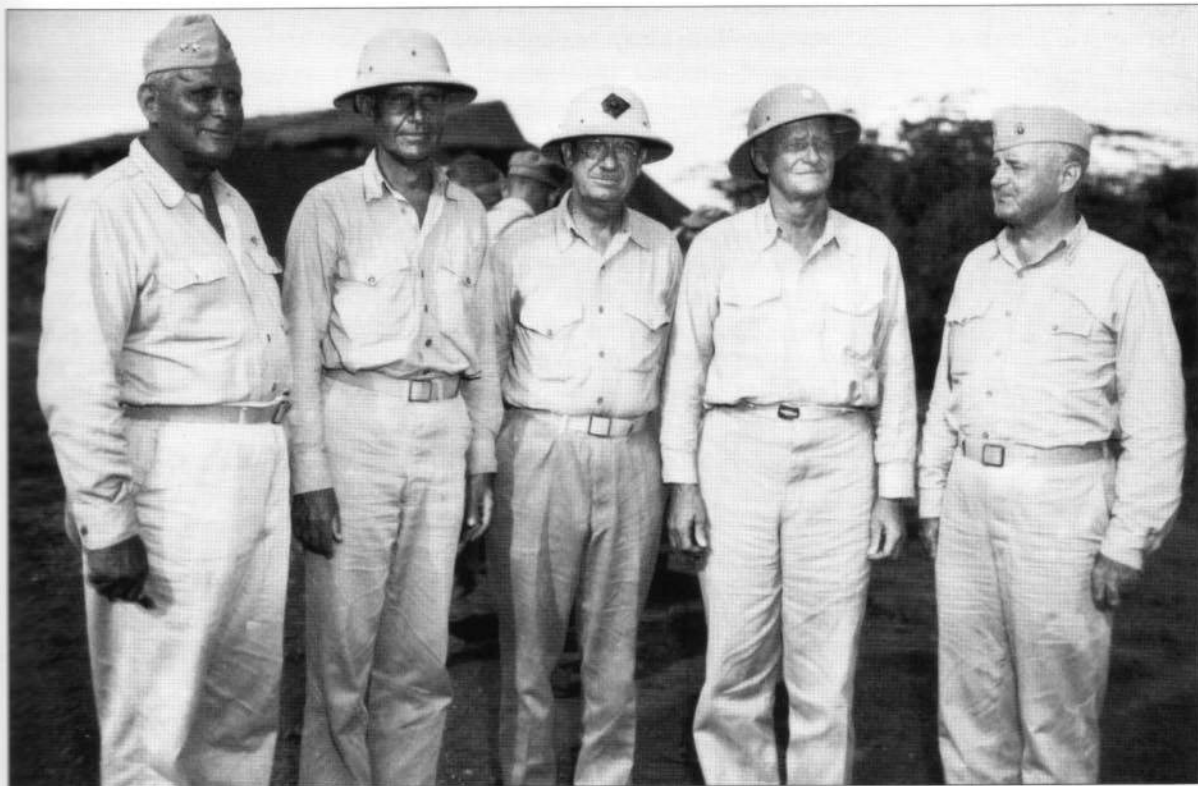
Roy Stanley Geiger

52 Born in Middleburg, Florida in 1885, Roy Geiger did not attend the US

Naval Academy but instead earned a law degree from Stetson University. He joined the marines and went through Marine Officers' School at Parris Island in 1909. At this time, he met and befriended "Archie" Vandegrift. Geiger served in Nicaragua and the Philippine Islands in 1912-13 and in Peking from 1913 to 1916. He became one of the first marines to qualify as an aviator and commanded Squadron A, 1st Marine Aviation Force in France during World War One. During the interwar years, Geiger graduated from both the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College. He was head of Marine Corps aviation from 1931 to 1935. Holding the rank of brigadier-general, Geiger served as assistant naval attaché for air in London from 1941 to 1942. His acquaintance with Admiral Ghormley and aviation experience made him a natural choice to take command of the mixed force of navy and marine aircraft, the "Cactus Airforce," operating from Guadalcanal.

Promoted to the rank of major-general, Geiger assumed command at Guadalcanal in September 1942. The "Cactus Airforce," officially redesignated as the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, supported both ground operations on Guadalcanal and, more decisively, interdicted Japanese naval efforts to reinforce the island. During this period, Geiger had to contend with numerous problems, ranging from a severe shortage of aviation fuel to keeping the airfield operable amidst frequent Japanese attacks. Through it all, he carefully deployed his scarce resources for specific objectives. Working closely with his friend Vandegrift, Geiger performed flawlessly during the late October battle for Henderson Field. In a remarkable ten-day period, October 16-25, his aviators shot down 103 enemy aircraft, sank a Japanese cruiser, and provided close

Photographed on Guam in August 1944, from left to right are: General Roy Geiger, Admiral Spruance, General Holland Smith, Admiral Nimitz, and General Vandegrift. Geiger commanded the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on Guadalcanal. After Japanese battleships savagely bombarded Henderson Field, knocked out half the "Cactus Airforce," and destroyed most fuel supplies, Geiger was told that there was no gas to fill his planes. He replied, "Then by God, find some!" Fuel was even siphoned from disabled aircraft so that a handful of Geiger's planes could fly the ten miles to the target area where Japanese transports unloaded reinforcements. (US Naval Historical Center)



support for the Marine Infantry. Relieved on Guadalcanal on November 7, Geiger returned to the headquarters of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on Espiritu Santo. Subsequently, this wing supported the advance in the Solomon Islands.

In November 1943, Geiger relieved Vandegrift as the commander of 1st Marine Amphibious Corps, when Vandegrift departed to serve as the Marine Corps Commandant. At this time, the marines were fighting on Bougainville. Geiger subsequently commanded the 1st Marine Amphibious Corps in landings on Guam, Peleliu (by which time it had been redesignated 3d Marine Amphibious Command), and Okinawa. Before the invasion of Guam, Geiger broadcast a speech over loudspeakers on the troop transports: "The eyes of the nation watch you as you go into battle to liberate this former American bastion from the enemy. Make no mistake; it will be a tough, bitter fight against a wily, stubborn foe who will doggedly defend Guam against this invasion. May the glorious tradition of the Marine *esprit de corps* spur you to victory. You have been honored." Like all marines, Geiger believed in front-line leadership. At Peleliu, he came ashore to look things over on the first day, before the beachhead was secured. He had to be talked into returning to his ship by anxious subordinates. Promoted to lieutenant-general, Geiger briefly took over command of the 10th Army from General Buckner in 1945, when that army officer was killed on Okinawa. He thus became the first US marine ever to command a field army. Having succeeded Holland Smith as Commanding General Fleet Marine Force Pacific, Geiger was the only marine general present at the Japanese surrender ceremony on board the battleship *Missouri*. Geiger continued as Fleet Marine Commander until 1946. He died the next year while still on active duty.

A big bear of a man, Geiger is best remembered for his valuable service during the Guadalcanal campaign.

Julian Constable Smith

Born in 1885 in Elkton, Maryland, Julian Smith did not attend the Naval Academy but, rather, received his undergraduate degree from the University of Delaware. He joined the Marine Corps and received a commission in 1909. After service in the Panama Canal Zone, he participated in the action at Vera Cruz in 1914 and at Santo Domingo the following year. He was an instructor at Marine Corps Schools from 1918-19 and, thereafter, commanded a machine gun battalion in Cuba. He performed various staff and training duties between the wars, including director of operations and training division at the Marine Corps headquarters from 1935 to 1938. He continued in training assignments through May 1943. Holding the rank of major-general, he then assumed command of the 2d Marine Division.

Smith led the division in the assault on Betio, the two-mile-long island that commanded the Tarawa Atoll. The navy promised to "obliterate the defenses on Betio." Believing the navy was being too optimistic, Smith reminded planners, "Gentlemen, remember one thing. When the Marines meet the enemy at bayonet point, the only armor a Marine will have will be his khaki shirt." The day before the assault, he sent a message to the troops: "What we do here will set the standard for all future operations in the Central Pacific Area ... Our people back home are eagerly



General Julian Smith is shown aboard the *Maryland* during the Tarawa landing. Smith's 2d Marine Division had a three-day fight to capture Betio. When a senior general inspected the island's 291 acres of ruined fortifications, he said with shock, "I don't see how they ever took Tarawa. It's the most completely defended island I ever saw." Looking at the survivors, the general added, "I passed boys who had lived yesterday a thousand times and looked older than their fathers. Dirty, unshaven, with gaunt almost sightless eyes, they had survived the ordeal, but it had chilled their souls. They found it hard to believe they were actually alive." (US Naval Historical Center)

awaiting news of victories ... your success will add new laurels to the glorious traditions of our Corps. Good luck, and God bless you all."

Confronted by an incredible array of defenses, including British 8-inch artillery captured at Singapore as well as defenders determined to, in the words of their leader, "withstand assault by a million men for a hundred years," the assault foundered. By noon of the first day, November 20, 1943, the marine loss rate had climbed over 20 percent. Reports from the beach said, "Issue in doubt." Smoke obscured Smith's view of the assault from the deck of the *Maryland*. Smith and Admiral Turner held an emergency staff meeting. In the uncertainty over whether the requested reinforcements would arrive, Smith planned to lead ashore an emergency force composed of his headquarters personnel. In the event, this proved unnecessary when a late afternoon report came from the commander ashore, "Casualties many. Percentage dead not known. Combat efficiency: we are winning!" According to official records, the three-day campaign to capture Betio's 291 acres was "the bitterest fighting in the history of the Marine Corps." The loss of 1,300 Americans killed shocked everyone.

Smith went from divisional commander to command the expeditionary forces of the 3d Fleet from April to December 1944, and then returned to his training duties as commander of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island from 1944 to 1946. He was a lieutenant-general upon his retirement at the end of 1946 and died in 1975.

Mild mannered but determined and decisive, Julian Smith will forever be associated with the terrible battle at Tarawa.

Lemuel Cornick Shepherd Jr

Lemuel Shepherd Jr was born in 1896 in Norfolk, Virginia. Most male members of his family had fought for the Confederacy so it was no surprise when the young man chose to attend the Virginia Military Institute (VMI). When the United States entered World War One, Shepherd volunteered for the Marine Corps. He won the Distinguished



General Lemuel Shepherd in a 1952 photo, at the time this distinguished World War Two veteran became Marine Corps Commandant. (US Naval Historical Center)

Service Cross, the Navy Cross, and the Silver Star for his conduct during battles at Belleau Wood and Mont Blanc.

Shepherd also received three wounds during this process of earning a heroic reputation. He explained his leadership style to a reporter: "You can't find out how a battle is going sitting in a command post."

Between the wars, Shepherd served as an aide to the Marine Corps Commandant and was with the 4th Marine Regiment in China from 1927 to 1929. Four years of duty in Haiti followed. He graduated from the Naval War College in 1937. Shepherd's most notable interwar service involved testing the Marine Corps' newly developed doctrine for amphibious warfare. A colonel serving on the staff of the Marine Corps Schools when World War Two, after Pearl Harbor Shepherd applied for a combat command. In March 1942, he became commander of the 9th Marine Regiment. He served as Assistant Divisional Commander in the 1st Marine Division and saw action at Cape Gloucester in New Britain in December 1942. Dense jungle, deep mud, and stiff Japanese opposition characterized the three-week Cape Gloucester campaign. In the campaign, Shepherd renamed the savagely contested Aogiri Ridge "Walt's Ridge," after the lieutenant-colonel whose battalion had taken it. Throughout the campaign, Shepherd performed admirably and won the favorable attention of General Douglas MacArthur. As a reward, he received command of the 1st Provisional Brigade in April 1944.

This unit took part in the difficult Guam invasion in July 1944. During a well-designed Japanese nocturnal counterattack, Shepherd characteristically led from the front. When the American flag was raised over the recaptured former site of the marine barracks, Shepherd said, "On this hallowed ground, you officers and men of the 1st Marine Brigade have avenged the loss of our comrades ... Under our flag this island again stands ready to fulfill its destiny as an American fortress in the Pacific." For his exemplary conduct on Guam, he received promotion to major-general and command of the newly formed 6th Marine Division. This unit would take part in the Okinawa campaign. To prepare it, Shepherd conducted a rigorous training program that earned him the nickname "the Driver" from his men. On Okinawa, the division confronted the heavily defended hills near the city of Naha, including the infamous "Sugarloaf." It took two weeks of heavy fighting to capture this height. Later in the campaign, Shepherd avoided a frontal assault by designing an amphibious flanking move that succeeded brilliantly.

When the war ended, Shepherd held a series of increasingly important commands until June 1950. He worked closely with MacArthur, who well remembered his conduct on Cape Gloucester, to help plan the Inchon landing. At Inchon, and later during the retreat from the Chosin



General Lemuel Shepherd studies a map on Okinawa. The captured capital of Naha is in the background. Throughout the Okinawa campaign, Shepherd led from the front. Each day he determined where the hardest fighting was taking place and then spent as much time there as possible. His conduct prompted an admiring marine officer to claim, with only slight hyperbole, that Shepherd was in the front lines as much as any private. (National Archives)

Reservoir, Shepherd continued to circulate among the front-line troops to inspire and lead. In 1952, Shepherd advanced to four-star general and assumed command of the entire Marine Corps. Showing that he was not only a brave combat soldier, Shepherd reorganized marine headquarters into a modern general staff. He also promoted the development of new amphibious tactics based upon helicopters and high-speed naval transports. President Dwight Eisenhower pulled him out of retirement to assume an important administrative duty involving a 21-nation anti-communist coalition. For four years, Shepherd combined his habitual drive with unsuspected tact to tighten the bonds of the coalition. He retired permanently in 1959.

Shepherd exemplified the Marine Corps at its best. His leadership style inspired men and won battles. He died in 1990.

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THE PLATES

A: THE FLEET ADMIRALS

A1: Admiral William Leahy

Admiral Leahy was an officer of considerable naval experience prior to World War Two and a personal friend of President Franklin Roosevelt. In this capacity, he was recalled from retirement to serve as special naval advisor to the president. His uniform consists of the dark blue double-breasted service dress jacket and trousers, with white cap cover and shirt. His position as advisor to the president is denoted by the addition of a heavy gold bullion aiguillette worn on the right side of his service dress jacket, unlike other aides, who wore their aiguillettes on the left side of their coats.

A2: Admiral Nimitz

Admiral Nimitz was originally from the submarine branch of the US Navy. He is pictured here in the working dress of that service, namely cotton khaki long-sleeve shirt and trousers, with black tie. This style of uniform came about in the US Navy because service aboard a submarine often made the wearing of service dress uniforms impractical, due to the "roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty" nature of the early submarines.

Submarine service officers needed a style of dress that gave them the ability to take off their coats and still be recognized as officers, hence, the introduction of rank insignia on the collar and the removable metal submarine qualification dolphin insignia for the breast. Of some note is the introduction of the non-regulation five-star tie keeper on Admiral Nimitz's uniform. US admirals, like their counterparts in the army, were given considerable leeway in their choice of uniform.

A3: Admiral Ernest King

Before World War Two, the US Navy had adopted khaki as a working dress uniform for warm climates and summer service dress. While this shade was practical for shore service, some senior officers thought it unsuitable for service aboard ships, due to its highly visible light coloration. Perhaps the best explanation lies in the fact that many of these officers, being "Old Navy," disliked khaki because it was not considered a "traditional" navy color. Admiral King was instrumental in the adoption of a new working dress uniform for the navy. When on a trip to England, he had a private tailor make up a new service dress uniform from a gray cotton twill material and he submitted it to the navy for adoption. Eventually, by 1942, the new gray uniform was selected to replace the khaki service dress.

All rank insignia, cap devices, and buttons on the uniform were in a subdued black finish to keep to the low visibility criteria of the new uniform. This uniform was very unpopular with most officers, many of them complaining that the gray color made them look like postal service employees or, as one officer quipped, "We look like Confederate sailors." By 1943, admirals at least, began to wear the gray service dress, with bright gold cap devices and shoulder boards to show rank insignia.

B: THE RETREAT

B1: Major James Devereaux

Major Devereaux was commander of the marine detachment on Wake Island in 1942. He is shown in the marine officer's early field dress, basically unchanged since World War One. He wears the khaki officer's shirt (always without shoulder straps), brown leather Sam Brown belt, khaki breeches and high black boots. He wears the M1917 steel



Lieutenant-Commander John D. Bulkeley's PT boat carried General MacArthur from Corregidor to safety. At this time, the US desperately needed heroes, so President Roosevelt awarded Bulkeley the Congressional Medal of Honor for this exploit. The US Navy named a new warship for Bulkeley in 2001. (US Naval Historical Center)

helmet and a web belt with leather holster for the M1917 Colt automatic pistol.

B2: Lieutenant-Commander John D. Bulkeley

Lieutenant-Commander Bulkeley was commander of PT (Patrol Torpedo) Squadron 3. For enlisted personnel exposed to extreme conditions, special protective clothing was authorized. Such clothing was quite popular and was shared and traded widely, resulting in its use by personnel not originally intended by the Regulations. Thus, Lieutenant-Commander Bulkeley wears the submarine protective jacket, made of blue-black wool, fastened with six black composition buttons. Pictures show him wearing such a jacket with an extremely large collar, possibly a hood. His cap is the service dress combination cap, so-called because it consisted of a lower portion, the frame, and a removable top. The tops could be changed for various orders of dress; blue tops were always of wool, while white, khaki, and gray tops were made of cotton.

B3: Admiral Husband Kimmel

Admiral Kimmel was Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet in November of 1941. He wears full dress blue, which was only worn on special occasions. The frock coat was double-breasted with five gilt USN buttons in two rows, the lower four of which were functional. The coat was made from blue-black wool, and the skirts reached to the top of the knee. Each cuff carried gold braid rings, as on the blue service coat. The trousers would have been of the same material as the coat, with two-inch gold stripes down the outside seams. The black silk cocked hat was edged with 1½-inch gold braid, with the cockade (obscured here) trimmed similarly. The tops of the epaulets were gold braid, with hanging bullions ⅝ inch in diameter. An embroidered anchor and three stars on the top of the epaulet showed flag rank.

B4: US Navy officer's button.

B5: Silver embroidered anchor, as worn on the epaulet.

B6: Marine Corps Expeditionary Ribbon with the silver "W" and Medal with the silver bar inscribed "Wake Island." This medal was awarded to all marines participating in the action at Wake Island.

B7: US Marine Corps officer's service cap insignia, bronze finish for service dress, silver for a full dress.

C: "HOLDING THE LINE"

C1: Vice Admiral Charles "Uncle Charlie" Lockwood

Vice Admiral Lockwood was Commander of Submarine Forces Pacific (COMSUBPAC). He wears the service dress blue C uniform. His coat is made of lightweight, navy blue Palm Beach (woolen) cloth. Blue service coats could be made up in serge, elastic, or lightweight material at the individual officer's option. White cotton trousers of the same material as those worn with the dress white uniform were worn in this order of dress, also with white shoes. Ribbons were worn only with service dress blue C. Unlike the army, navy ribbons were to be ½ inch in width, worn three per row with ½ inch between rows. Ribbons were worn in a specific order of precedence, with the highest in precedence on the top and to the right (when facing the wearer).

C2: Commodore Arleigh "31-knot" Burke

Commodore Burke commanded Destroyer Squadron 23 "the Little Beavers" and was chief of staff to the commander of



When a Japanese destroyer sliced through Lieutenant John F. Kennedy's PT-109 in August 1943, Kennedy thought, "This is what it feels like to be killed." Instead, Kennedy, the future 35th president of the United States, managed a four-hour swim to land while towing a crewman. (US Naval Historical Center)

Fast Carrier Task Force 58, Admiral Marc Mather. Service dress white was often worn, especially in warm climates. The coat was unlined, starched cotton duck, worn over the undershirt; no shirt was worn with this coat. The trousers were also white cotton, unlined, with two hip pockets and two rear pockets with optional pocket flaps. Standard gilt US Navy buttons were worn, as on the blue service coat. These were not sewn on, however, but were removable for laundering. White lace-up shoes, either of leather or canvas, were worn with white socks. White gloves and white cap cover were authorized for wear with this uniform. Shoulder boards with the same rank distinctions as were worn on the khaki service coat were of stiff black wool, 2¼ x 5½ inches, covered with two-inch gold braid, with an anchor and rank stars in silver embroidery. The end nearest the collar was pointed and displayed a small button. Medal ribbons were almost always worn on dress whites. However, here Burke has taken the unusual step of leaving them off.

C3: Lieutenant-Commander Dudley "Mush" Morton

Lieutenant-Commander Morton was the commander of the submarine, USS *Wahoo*, and was one of the navy's top submarine aces. As a working uniform, the wearing of the khaki shirt and trousers without the coat was widespread. The



Admiral Spruance (right) is aboard his flagship, the heavy cruiser *Indianapolis*, off Saipan in 1944. Admiral King is in the middle, Admiral Nimitz on the left. (National Archives)

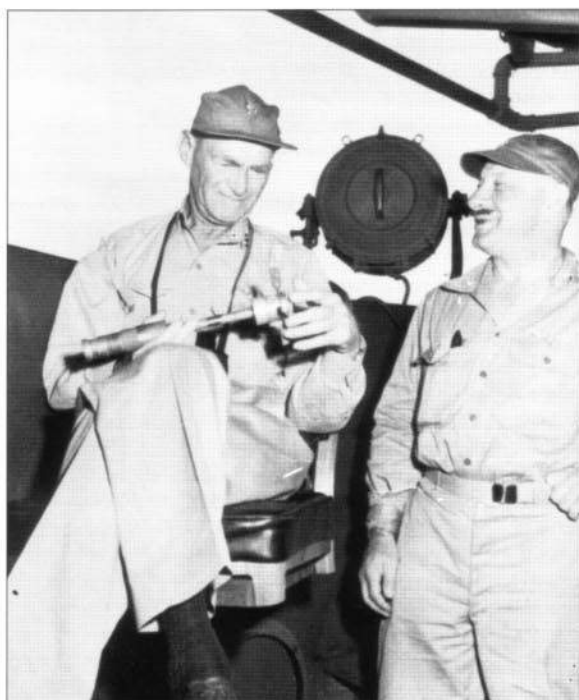
Marc Mitscher on the bridge of the carrier, *Lexington*. (National Archives)

khaki shirt was made of cotton and cut as a commercial dress shirt, with a yoke in the back panel and no shoulder straps. However, the shirt had two breast pockets with buttoned flaps. The shirt buttons were of tan composition material. Above the left breast pocket, Morton wears the submarine qualification badge. As a line officer, he wears the insignia of rank, a gold oak leaf on both collar ends. He has removed the stiff dress band from his cap, better to negotiate the narrow confines of the submarine.

D: MIDWAY

D1: Admiral Marc Mitscher

Admiral Mitscher was the commander of Carrier Task Force 18 during both the Doolittle raid on Tokyo and the Battle of Midway. A special aviation working uniform of "forestry green" was authorized for "men of the aeronautic organization." The coat was of the same cut as the khaki working uniform except that the aviation green coat had shoulder straps of the same material. This coat was usually made of wool elastique, though serge, gabardine, and whipcord were also authorized. Black embroidered stars and mohair rank rings of the same size and arrangement as those on the blue service coat were worn on the cuffs of the green coat. Aviation branch officers wore brown shoes with this and the khaki working uniform exclusively, giving rise to the expression "brown shoes" to indicate aviators.



D2: Rear Admiral Raymond Spruance

Rear Admiral Spruance was the commander of Carrier Task Force 16. This figure represents the full khaki working uniform. The coat was made of cotton duck, unlined, with three gilt USN buttons down the front, the lowest in the middle of the belt. The belt was of the same material as the coat and was sewn down all around. The cuffs were plain, although in the '30s, black worsted rank rings had been worn. A bellows pleat in each rear side seam was optional. The coat was worn with a cotton khaki shirt and plain black tie. Rank insignia was worn on the shirt collar and on the shoulder boards, called "shoulder mark," which were the same as on the dress whites. The universal combination cap was worn with a khaki cotton cover.

D3: Lieutenant-Commander Clarence Wade McClusky Jr

Lieutenant-Commander McClusky Jr was the commander of the Enterprise Air Group (CEAG) at the Battle of Midway. He is shown wearing a flight suit and flying gear from this period. The flight suit is a one-piece, warm weather model made of khaki cotton. It is worn with the inflatable life preserver, M1940, the so-called "Mae West." The leather shoulder holster was the same model as that used by the army, holding a .38 Smith and Wesson revolver. The flying helmet was also cotton, unpadded, with radio earphones sewn into the helmet itself. These helmets varied widely, since the replacement of earphones was done on board ship; often helmets were completely remade in the process.

E: GUADALCANAL

E1: Vice Admiral Ghormley

Due to the tropical nature of Guadalcanal's climate, Admiral Ghormley wears the typical khaki long sleeve shirt, trousers and overseas cap. Even though gray working dress had officially replaced khaki in 1942, the navy allowed officers to wear their old khaki uniforms until they were worn out. The gray service uniform was not unknown in the Pacific Theater but it was unpopular with most personnel and was, eventually, withdrawn from service in the 1950s.

E2: Vice Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher

Vice Admiral Fletcher is also kitted out in the ever-present khaki long sleeve shirt, matching trousers and khaki service dress hat. In addition, the admiral wears the US Navy version of the Army M1941 "Parsons" jacket (see Elite 85: *US Commanders of World War II (1) Army and USAAF*). This light OD jacket differs from the army counterpart, chiefly in the omission of shoulder straps and the addition of a black USN stencil on the breast of the coat.

E3: Major-General A. A. Vandegrift

Major-General Vandegrift, the commander of the 1st Marine Division, is dressed for service ashore on Guadalcanal, in the USMC version of khaki shirt and trousers. The general also wears the tropical pith helmet with the addition of the USMC Eagle, Globe and Anchor device affixed to the front. Ground commanders, like Vandegrift, would substitute their black oxford service shoes for army-style russet ankle boots and would often carry small arms and wear web combat gear.

E4: The 1st Marine Division insignia "the Old Breed"

The 1st Marine Division insignia was the first patch worn by USMC troops during World War Two. This came about in

response to a rumor that USMC troops might have to wear US Army uniforms during the war. Faced with this possible loss of identity, the division's operation officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Merrill B. Twining, designed the insignia for the division. The number one represents the division, with its association to the Guadalcanal operation, and the stars are arranged in the pattern of the constellation, the Southern Cross, to symbolize the area where the action occurred.

F: THE CARRIER WAR

F1: Admiral William "Bull" Halsey

Perhaps more than any other flag officer, Admiral Halsey is identified with the US Navy's efforts in the war against Japan. With his nickname "Bull," Halsey is typified as the "Old Salt" but one little-known fact about Halsey is that he is one of the few officers that obtained flag rank who had a tattoo sporting a large fouled anchor (rope wrapped around the anchor) on his right shoulder. The more conventional portion of Halsey's uniform consists of the khaki shirt and trousers with the four stars of a full admiral on his shirt collar. The admiral, being a member of the aviation branch of the navy, wears brown shoes rather than the black of the surface navy. The cap is one of the many eccentric forms of headgear sported by flag officers, contrary to regulations.

F2: Admiral John Sidney McCain

Admiral McCain was also a member of the aviation branch of the US Navy so he, too, wears the brown shoes of that service. Admiral McCain, in a service known for the odd headdress of its commanders, wears a hat that is in a class of its own. Although the hat was a khaki service dress hat, McCain has removed the dress band that gives the cap its stiffness and pulled the cover back to such an extent that it has lost all of its original shape.

F3: Commander John Thatch

Commander Thatch is dressed in the khaki shirt and aviation green trousers, with a green overseas cap. The rest of his uniform is completed with the addition of a USN-style brown leather flight jacket with a fur collar. Originally, these collars were of a dark brown shade but repeated exposure to salt air had the effect of bleaching the fur to an almost russet shade. Often, the flight jacket would be adorned with the insignia of the owner's squadron painted on the breast of the coat.

F4: The Naval Aviator's wings

All of the figures portrayed on this plate were members of the fraternity of Naval Aviators and, as such, were entitled to wear the wings of a Naval Aviator on their uniforms. These wings could be either an embroidered style or the more common removable metal wings.

G: "ISLAND HOPPING"

G1: General Holland "Howling Mad" Smith

General Smith, being a front line combat general, wears the USMC combat uniform of a one-piece herringbone twill (HBT) pattern jump suit. Along with the HBTs, the general wears the M-1 pattern steel helmet and liner with a helmet net. Smith carries the M-1 carbine and light OD M1910 pistol web gear (see Men-at-Arms 205: *US Army Combat Equipments 1910-1988*).

G2: Admiral Kelly Turner

Admiral Turner wears the khaki work uniform with the addition of a non-regulation khaki windbreaker and the



General Holland Smith (left) and Admiral Turner are shown during an amphibious invasion. Amphibious landings were always vulnerable to enemy air attack. To Turner's right, a handwritten notice reads, "Every Man a Lookout." Below it are airplane silhouettes to help identify friend from foe. (National Archives)

khaki overseas cap with USN crest and the twin stars of his rear admiral's rank insignia affixed to it.

G3: Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis "Chesty" Puller

Lieutenant-Colonel Puller wears the full dress blue uniform of a marine officer, consisting of blue tunic, medium blue trousers with a scarlet stripe, and a service dress cap with a white cover. On Colonel Puller's medal bar is the award of the Navy Cross, with three gold stars signifying the fact that "Chesty" had won the cross four times for bravery.

G4: The Navy Cross

The award of the Navy Cross was enacted in 1919 in order to reward both US and foreign personnel for either bravery or service. The actual award consists of a bronze cross, suspended from a blue ribbon with a 1/4-inch stripe. Several crosses awarded during 1941-42 had a dark gunmetal finish, earning them the nickname "Black Widows" due to the number awarded posthumously.

G5: Insignia of the 2d Marine Division

The patch of the 2d Marine Division was approved for wear in 1943 and consists of a red spearhead, yellow torch, and white constellation of the Southern Cross. The division participated in the Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan, Tinian and Okinawa invasions.

H: THE ATLANTIC

H1: Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery

Rear Admiral Gallery was the commander of Task group 22.3. Rear Admiral Gallery wears the gray working uniform introduced in 1942 to replace the khaki working uniform. The shirt was the same cut as the khaki working shirt, with two

breast pockets and no shoulder straps. Small silver rank stars were worn on each collar and the tie was plain black silk, as worn with the blue service coat. The 1/4-inch wide web belt was also gray and the buckle was brass. The open frame buckle was a common variation from the more usual solid, covered buckle. The overseas cap was also of the same cut as the khaki model, but made up in gray cotton. On the left side of the curtain of the cap, a miniature of the service cap insignia was worn, while a small insignia of rank was worn on the right side.

H2: Admiral Francis "Frog" Low

Admiral Low was commander of the 10th Fleet, but was actually the mastermind behind the war against U-boats in the Atlantic. He wears the service dress blues, this time made of heavy serge. Admiral Low's cap is the universal combination cap with blue-black woolen cover, but he wears the embroidered prewar cap insignia. The pre-1941 cap insignia and buttons displayed an eagle looking to its left. Heraldically unfortunate, this configuration was changed in 1941 so that the eagle looked to its right. Interestingly, the overall design was not changed; only the eagle's head was modified, resulting in a somewhat unbalanced design for the new buttons.

H3: Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk

Rear Admiral Kirk was the commander of the Western Naval Task Force on D-Day. The overcoat was often worn in the cold European climate. It was made of heavy blue-black woolen material, was double-breasted, lined with black saten, and had two rows of one-inch gilt USN buttons. This coat was normally worn with the four large buttons fastened, leaving the collar open, but could be worn with the collar closed by means of a tab and black button on the underside of the collar. The waist was fitted, with a half belt in the back, and the skirts were full, extending one-third of the way between the knee and the ground. The cuffs had no stars but did display rank rings made of lustrous black braid.

H4: Officer's Cap Insignia, 1941.

The shield and eagle are in silver, the fouled anchors in gold. The device could be manufactured in one or two pieces.

RIGHT ABOVE

This is the Pacific War's most famous photo, the flag-raising on Iwo Jima. When Secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal, saw the flag rise over Mount Suribachi, he turned to General Holland Smith and said, "Holland, the raising of that flag means a Marine Corps for the next five hundred years." (National Archives)

RIGHT BELOW

Fighters fly in formation during surrender ceremonies in Tokyo Bay. Secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal, wrote to discharged navy veterans about what the US Navy had achieved in the four years following Pearl Harbor: "It crushed two enemy fleets at once, receiving their surrenders only four months apart. It brought our land-based air power within bombing range of the enemy, and set our ground armies on the beachheads of final victory. It performed the multitude of tasks necessary to support these military operations. No other navy at any time has done so much." (National Archives)



INDEX

Figures in **bold** refer to illustrations.

- Ainsworth, Walden Lee **48**
air power 4, 8, 12, 24-25, 32, 53-54
Arnold, General Henry Harley "Hap"
(1886-1950) 6, 19
Atlanta, USS **26, 27**
- Bradley, General Omar Nelson
(1893-1981) **47**
Bulkeley, Lieutenant-Commander John D.
B2, 58, 59
Burke, Commodore Arleigh **C2, 59**
- Callaghan, Rear Admiral Daniel 27
Cape Esperance, Battle of, 1942 26-27
Cape Gloucester, Battle of, 1943 56
Casablanca Conference, 1943 7
Chief of Naval Operations 3, 45
Churchill, Winston (1874-1965) 7, **43**
Coral Sea, Battle of the, 1942 10, 15,
16, 22
- Devereaux, Major James **B1, 58-59**
Doorman, Admiral K. W. 12
- Eastern Solomons, Battle of the, 1942 16,
19, 22
Enterprise, USS 16, 19, 22
- Fletcher, Frank Jack (1885-1973) **E2**,
14-16, **15, 20, 61**
France, invasion of, 1944 **45, 46, 47, 47-48**
- Gallery, Rear Admiral Daniel V. **H1, 62**
Geiger, Roy Stanley (1885-1947)
52-54, **53**
Ghormley, Robert Lee (1883-1958) **E1-2**,
18-20, **19, 61**
Guadalcanal campaign, 1942-43 **E, 13**,
16, 19, 20-21, **21, 22-23, 24-25, 26-27**,
28, 29, 32, 49-50, 53-54, 61
Guam, invasion of, 1944 22, 54, 56
- Hall, Admiral John **45**
Halsey, William Frederick, Jr (1882-1959)
F1, 7, 10, 12-14, 13, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24,
28, 29, 61
Hart, Thomas Charles (1877-1971) **11**,
11-12, **12**
Hayler, Robert Ward **48**
Hornet, USS **15, 32, 41**
- insignia **B5, B7, E4, F4, G5, H2, H4, 59**,
61, 62
intelligence 10, 46
inter-service rivalry 7, **49, 50, 52**
Iwo Jima, battle of, 1945 22, 50, 52, **63**
- Japanese forces 8-9, 11-12, 15, 16, 17, **21**,
24, 25, 28, **41**
kamikaze attacks 25, 30, **32**
losses to submarines **31, 31-32**
surrender 14, 54, **63**
- Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) 3, 4, 6, 44
- Kennedy, Lieutenant John Fitzgerald
(1917-63) **59**
Kimmel, Admiral Husband Edward
(1882-1968) **B3, 4, 4-5, 5, 59**
King, Admiral Ernest Joseph (1878-1956)
3, **A3, 4, 5-9, 6, 7, 8, 8-9, 19, 46, 49**,
58, 60
- Kinkaid, Thomas Cassin (1888-1972) 22
24, **23**
Kirk, Alan Goodrich (1888-1963) **H3, 45**,
46, 46-49, 47, 62
Krueger, General Walter (1881-1967) **23**
Kwajalein Atoll, attack on, 1942 10-11,
12, 22
- Leahy, Admiral William Daniel
(1875-1959) **A1, 3, 43, 43-44, 58**
Lee, Willis Augustus, Jr (1888-1945) 13,
27-30, **28, 29**
Lexington, USS **12, 15**
Leyte campaign, 1944 14, 24, 25, 42
Lockwood, Charles Andrews, Jr
(1890-1967) **C1, 30, 30-32, 31, 59**
Low, Admiral Francis **H2, 62**
- MacArthur, General Douglas (1880-1964)
4, 13, 23-24, 56
McCain, John Sidney (1884-1945) **F2, 24**,
24-25, **25, 50, 61**
McClusky, Lieutenant-Commander
Clarence Wade, Jr **D3, 61**
Marianas campaign, 1944 18, 29-30, 42
Marshall, General George Catlett
(1880-1959) 7, 44
Marshall Islands campaign, 1943
10-11, 41
medals and decorations **B6, C1, G3-4**,
59, 62
Merrill, Aaron Stanton **48**
Midway, Battle of, 1942 **D, 10, 10, 15, 16**,
17, 22, 32, 60-61
Missouri, USS **32**
Mitscher, Marc Andrew (1887-1947) **D1**,
24, 32, 32, 41-42, 60, 60
Morton, Lieutenant-Commander Dudley
C3, 59-60
- Navy, Secretary of the 3
Nimitz, Admiral Chester William
(1885-1966) **A2, 4, 7, 7-8, 9, 9-11, 16**,
17, **18, 19, 22, 31, 51, 53, 58, 60**
- Okinawa campaign, 1945 14, 22, 52, 54,
56, **57**
Operation Torch 47
- Pacific Theatre of operations 7-8, 9
division of command 4, 7, 8-9
Pearl Harbor 4, 9, 17
investigations 5, 42, 46
Japanese attack on, 1941 3, 5, 45-46
Peleliu, invasion of, 1944 54
Philippines, the 11, 11-12, 14, 24
presidential role 3
Puller, Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis **G3, 62**
- rank, insignia of **A2-3, C3, D2, 58, 60, 61**
Roosevelt, President Franklin Delano
(1882-1945) 3, 4-5, 6, 11, 43, **43, 44**,
45, 46, **58**
- Saipan Island, invasion of, 1944 22, 51-52
Santa Cruz Islands, Battle of the, 1942
15, 22
Saratoga, USS 12, 16, 19, 32
Savo Island, Battle of, 1942 19, 20, 26
Scott, Norman (1889-1942) 25-27, **26, 27**
Shepherd, Lemuel Cornick, Jr
(1896-1990) 55-57, **56, 57**
- Sicily, landings on, 1943 47
Smith, General Holland McTyeire (1882
1967) **G1, 11, 17, 21, 22, 51, 51-52, 52**,
53, 61, 62
Smith, Julian Constable (1885-1975) 54
55, **55**
Solomon Islands campaign, 1942-3 7, 10,
13, 15-16, 19, 21-22, 41, 54
Spruance, Admiral Raymond Ames
(1886-1969) **D2, 11, 14, 16-18, 17, 18**,
22, 26, 52, **53, 60, 61**
Stark, Admiral Harold Raynsford
(1880-1972) 3, 5, 19, 44-46, **45, 47**
strategy 9-10, 10-11, 44, 45
Sutherland, General Richard (1893-1966)
23
- Tarawa, battle of, 1943 8, 8, 22, 51,
54-55, **55**
Thatch, Commander John **F3, 61**
Tinian Island, invasion of, 1944 22, 52
Turner, Admiral Richmond Kelly
(1885-1961) **G2, 11, 16, 20, 20-22, 21**,
27, 46, **49, 55, 61-62, 62**
- uniforms and dress **A3, B2, D2, E1-2, H1**,
58, 59, 61, 62
aviation branch **D1, D3, F, 60, 61**
buttons **A3, B4, C2, D2, 58, 59, 61**
full dress **B3, 59**
headdress **B2-3, F1-2, H1-2, H4, 59**,
61, 62
overcoats **H3, 62**
service dress **A1, C1-2, H2, 58, 59, 62**
submariners **A2, C3, 58, 59-60**
USMC **B1, E3, G1, G3, 58-59, 61, 62**
US Army 51-52
US Marine Corps **B7, 4, 50-51, 59**
1st Marine Aircraft Division 53-54
1st Marine Amphibious Corps 50, 54
1st Marine Division **E4, 49-50, 56, 61**
2d Marine Division **G5, 54-55, 62**
casualties 50, **52, 55**
at Iwo Jima **63**
uniforms and dress **B1, E3, G1, G3**,
58-59, 61, 62
US Navy 3, 4, 8, 9, 45, **63**.
see also individual ships
3d Amphibious Force 42-43
3d Fleet 18
7th Fleet 18, 23-24
aircraft carriers 4, 6, 9-10, 13, 14, 19
aviation personnel **D1, D3, F, 4**,
60, 61
submariners 9, 12, 30-32, **31**
- Vandergrift, Alexander Archer
(1887-1973) **E3, 20, 27, 28, 49, 49-51**,
50, 53, 53, 54, 61
Vera Cruz, occupation of, 1914 4, 14, 27,
42, 49, 54
- Wake Island **B6, 14-15, 59**
Washington, USS **29**
Wasp, USS 19, 26
Wilkinson, Theodore Stark (1888-1946)
42, 42-43
Wright, Rear Admiral Carleton 23
- Yalta Conference, 1945 **43**
Yorktown, USS 10, **10, 15**

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