

# FORTITUDINE

BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

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2009



HISTORY DIVISION'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY  
COMMANDANT HENDERSON'S SWORD  
MARINES AT JOHN BROWN'S RAID





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Gregory A. Macheak

### Marine Corps History Division

3078 Upshur Road

Quantico, Virginia 22134

Telephone (703) 432-4877

<http://www.history.usmc.mil>

[history.division@usmc.mil](mailto:history.division@usmc.mil)

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Motto of the United States Marine Corps in the 1812 era

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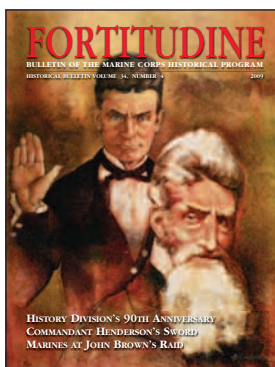
*"We can only know who we are by being certain of  
who we have been."*

Gen Leonard F. Chapman Jr.  
24th Commandant of the Marine Corps

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Memorandum from the Director: History Division Celebrates 90 Years</i>	
<i>Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer</i> .....	3
<i>"At All Times Ready": Marines at John Brown's Raid</i>	
<i>Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer</i> .....	4
<i>Harpers Ferry: Last Action of "Henderson Era"</i>	
<i>Michael E. Krivdo</i> .....	7
<i>National Museum of the Marine Corps: Colonel Archibald Henderson's Presentation Sword</i>	
<i>Beth L. Crumley</i> .....	11
<i>National Museum of the Marine Corps: Combat Artist: Commander Perin Gregory A. Macheak</i> .....	16
<i>In Memoriam: Passing of Generals Cooper and Karch, Medal of Honor Recipients Pope and Wahlen, and TV Personality Ed McMahon</i>	
<i>Robert V. Aquilina</i> .....	17
<i>Celebrating 90 Years of Collecting, Preserving, and Promoting of Marine Corps History</i>	
<i>Annette D. Amerman</i> .....	19
<i>Book Review: In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan</i>	
<i>LtCol Gregory C. McCarthy</i> .....	26
<i>Histories Branch: Major General Bolden to Head NASA</i>	
<i>Dr. Thomas M. Baughn</i> .....	27

*Errata:* Jack Shulimson, LtCol Leonard A. Blasiol, Charles R. Smith, and Capt David A. Dawson. *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year 1968* (Washington D.C: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1997). On page 293, first column, second paragraph, the two references to "Company I" should read "Company L."



**About the Cover:** The drawing of a younger and older John Brown was created with fine art colored pencils blended with a natural turpentine substitute (natural Turpenoid) in an essentially complementary color scheme of muted reds and greens. The support is primed canvas mounted on masonite.

Amy V. Lindenberger, CPSA <[www.civilwarfineart.com](http://www.civilwarfineart.com)>

This bulletin of the Marine Corps historical program is published for Marines, at the rate of one copy for every nine on active duty, to provide education and training in the uses of military and Marine Corps history. Other interested readers may purchase single copies or four-issue subscriptions from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office. The appropriate order form appears in this issue.

## History Division Celebrates 90 Years



Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer

By the time of publication for this issue of *Fortitudine*, History Division should be moved into its new home. It is a brick building across the street from our modular one in which History Division has been housed for the last four years. History Division will occupy the first floor of the building, which includes a spacious atrium that the National Museum of the Marine Corps will help decorate with artifacts befitting the heritage of the Corps. History Division's mailing address will change from 3079 Moreell Avenue to 3078 Upshur Avenue. The staff's phone numbers and email addresses will remain unchanged. History Division will share the building with the Staff Non-Commissioned Officer Academy and Enlisted Professional Military Education programs, which will still be operating on the second floor of the building.

During the past few months, History Division has published several occasional papers on the Marine Corps advisory effort in Vietnam, *Marine Advisors with the Vietnamese Marine Corps*, by Charles D. Melson, Chief Historian, and Wanda J. Renfrow, and *Marine Advisors with the Vietnamese Provincial Reconnaissance Units, 1966–1970*, by Colonel Andrew R. Finlayson, and on close air support during the battle for Khe Sanh, Vietnam, *Close Air Support and the Battle for Khe Sanh*, by Lieutenant Colonel Shawn P. Callahan. Also, Dr. Nathan S. Lowrey's monograph, *Marines in Afghanistan, 2001–2002*, has been completed and is scheduled for publication. History Division recently published a battle study on an-Nasiriyah by Colonel John R. Andrew Jr. Nearing completion is an oral history anthology on the "Awakening" in al-Anbar Province, Iraq, compiled

by Colonel Gary W. Montgomery, Chief Warrant Officer-4 Timothy S. McWilliams, and Lieutenant Colonel Kurtis P. Wheeler. The anthology will be published in two volumes, with one focusing on the perspectives of leaders in the Marine Corps and U.S. Army regarding the "Awakening," and the other focusing on the perspectives of Iraqis. The Field History unit collected this information in record time thanks to the efforts of Major General John F. Kelly and Colonel Bradley E. Weisz. We hope to continue our collection efforts this year thanks to Major General Richard T. Tryon and his II Marine Expeditionary (Forward) staff.

The Marine Corps University Press has been busy these last several months also. Dr. Paula Holmes-Eber, Dr. Patrice M. Scanlon, and Ms. Andrea L. Hamlen of Marine Corps University have just completed a sequel, *Applications in Operational Culture: Perspectives from the Field*, to a successful book, *Operational Culture for the Warfighter*, by Dr. Barak A. Salmoni and Dr. Holmes-Eber, published by the press in 2008. Another press publication nearing completion is, *The Iranian Puzzle Piece: Understanding Iran in the Global Context*, by Dr. Amin Tarzi, a faculty member of Marine Corps University, who collected and edited these papers from a symposium in 2008. Finally, work is proceeding apace on the inaugural edition of the *Marine Corps University Journal*. The journal is intended as a forum for scholars of national security affairs, and in the future, we hope to highlight the work of faculty from the Marine Corps University. The first edition will include substantive articles on a wide array of topics ranging from the torture of prisoners to

obtain intelligence and the growth of "feral cities" and their potential future impact on U.S. national security. This edition should be hitting the streets by late 2009.

History Division welcomes our new Marine Corps University president, Major General Robert B. Neller. He earned his bachelors degree in history and speech communication from the University of Virginia in 1975 and his masters degree in Human Resource Management from Pepperdine University. Serving as an infantry officer for his entire Marine Corps career, he attended the Advanced Armor Officer Course at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He commanded the 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion and deployed with this unit to Somalia in 1992. After service overseas at the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy, and a tour on the staff of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium, he transferred to the 2d Marine Division and given command of the legendary 6th Marine Regiment. He later served as the division's G-3. Selected for Brigadier General in March 2001, he was later assigned as the Deputy Commanding General for Operations, I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Following his promotion to Major General, he assumed command of the 3d Marine Division in June 2007.

This year has been special for the Marine Corps University and History Division because both of them celebrated their anniversaries. The Marine Corps University celebrated its 20th and the History Division celebrated its 90th. This issue of *Fortitudine* includes a pictorial essay about the 90-year story of History Division. □1775□

# “At All Times Ready”: Marines at John Brown’s Raid

by Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer  
Director

This year marks the sesquicentennial of John Brown’s raid on the U.S. arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, during two bloody days in October 1859. Brown’s raid was historically significant for several reasons: (1) it was one of the more significant domestic terrorism events to have taken place on U.S. soil; (2) it was one of the first times, but certainly not the last, when Marines would be asked to quickly respond in a national military emergency; (3) it firmly established a tradition in the minds of most Americans (and perhaps the Marines also) that Marines are shock troops who can be given tough assignments on short notice.

Going into harm’s way for the 19th century Marine Corps was nothing new. Marines had long manned the frigates of the Navy and had previously fought in regional conflicts such as the Seminole War (1836) and the Mexican War (1846–48). However, in each instance, they had been given more time to equip and prepare for combat. Even so, Marine Commandant Archibald Henderson had been able to rapidly organize a 400-man battalion in just 10 days for the Seminole War. But the Marines going to Harpers Ferry in 1859 were not even afforded the luxury of a single day to get ready.

By 1859, Brown already had a national reputation. In the South, he was reviled as a terrorist and murderer. In northern abolitionist circles, he was hailed as a man of righteous action. An intensely religious man, Brown was a violent opponent of slavery and was convinced that he had been sent by God to do something about it. Brown got his opportunity to strike a blow against slavery when the territory of Kansas was in the throes of deciding whether it wanted to enter the Union as a slave or free state. In October 1855, following the sacking of Lawrence, Kansas, by proslavery Missouri “border ruffians,” Brown and his men used broadswords to hack to death five proslavery men. Forced to flee Kan-



Department of Defense

*Lt Israel C. Greene led the 12 Marines who broke into the engine house at Harpers Ferry and captured Brown. Greene used his sword to subdue Brown, but did not kill him. Greene resigned from the U.S. Marine Corps at the outset of the Civil War and joined the Confederate States Marine Corps, rising to the rank of major. This painting shows Greene in his Confederate States Marine Corps uniform.*

sas, he ended up for a short time in Chatham, Canada, where he began planning yet another attack—this time against the sleepy mountain town of Harpers Ferry.

Just after midnight on 17 October 1859, Brown and 18 men crossed the bridge spanning the Potomac River that led into town. However, it was not long before Brown was surprised by the approach of an eastbound train. Not anticipating this turn of events, he stopped the train. Heyward Shepherd, a free African American and railroad employee, went onto the bridge to investigate. Seeing armed men on the bridge, Shepherd fled toward the train and was mortally wounded by rifle fire. For reasons unknown, Brown allowed the stopped train to continue through Harpers Ferry, thereby sealing his own fate, for the train crew alerted local authorities in Frederick, Maryland, about the

insurrection they had just encountered.

During the night, Brown sent raiders to round up local slave owners, including Lewis W. Washington, the great-grand nephew of George Washington, and liberated the few slaves they could find in the area. By 0400 on 17 October, Brown had herded about 40 hostages into the engine house and a nearby outbuilding on the arsenal grounds.

By daylight of 17 October, while Brown and his men traded shots with armed locals in and around the arsenal, Secretary of War John B. Floyd and Secretary of the Navy Isaac Toucey discussed the situation at Harpers Ferry. There were no Army troops within miles of the national capital. The closest were artillerymen at Fort Monroe in the far southeast corner of Virginia. However, Toucey knew that the Marines maintained a barracks at 8th and I Streets, Washington, D.C., and guarded the Washington Navy Yard. He immediately sent a clerk over to meet with Marine Commandant John Harris, who ordered Lieutenant Israel C. Greene to take 86 Marines to Harpers Ferry. Greene had his Marines ready to go within two hours, and they were on a train headed north by 1530.

Meanwhile, the governors of Virginia and Maryland (both slave states at the time) sent militia units toward Harpers Ferry. The first of these units arrived just before 1100. Concerned that there was no senior leadership above the rank of lieutenant to take charge of the situation at Harpers Ferry, Secretary Floyd requested the services of Colonel Robert E. Lee, U.S. Army, then on leave at his home in Arlington, Virginia. Secretary Floyd ordered Colonel Lee to proceed with all possible dispatch (Lieutenant James Ewell Brown “Jeb” Stuart, U.S. Army, accompanied him as his aide) to Harpers Ferry, take command of the Marines, and restore order as quickly as possi-



ble. As a further precautionary measure, Commandant Harris detailed Marine Corps Paymaster Major William W. Russell to accompany Lieutenant Greene. Since he was a staff officer, Russell was ineligible to command troops in the field, but Harris believed Russell's more judicious temperament might assist Greene in the crisis.

**B**ecause the Marines had moved out so quickly, their train was 30 minutes ahead of the one carrying Colonel Lee and Lieutenant Stuart. Secretary Floyd wired ahead and ordered Greene to wait for Lee, and Greene thus halted his train at Sandy Point, Maryland, just a few miles outside of Harpers Ferry. By the time Lee was able to link up with Greene, it was nearly 2300. Meanwhile, inside the town, a day-long firefight had taken place between Brown, now barricaded inside the engine house, and the local militia forces. A number of raiders and townsmen had been killed during the day, including the popular mayor, Fountaine Beckham. In response to Beckham's death, captured

raider William Thompson was murdered by an enraged mob, which dumped his body into the Potomac.

Lee ordered the Marines to cross the Potomac River bridge at 2300 on 17 October and relieve the militia forces. However, what Greene found was chaos. Armed townspeople, some drunk, roamed about the arsenal grounds firing their weapons; nervous militiamen stood in formation just out of range of gun shots from the building; and curious spectators peered around buildings to gawk at all the activity. Lee told the Marines to clear the area of the townspeople and ordered the militia to pull back from the engine house, replacing them with the more disciplined Marines.

**A**s day broke on 18 October, Lee, not exactly sure who was inside the engine house, drafted an immediate surrender demand "to the person in charge of the insurgents." He ordered Stuart to deliver the ultimatum to the engine house door and to not negotiate with the insurgent leader. In the meantime, Lee ordered

Greene to form a storming party to take the engine house by force, anticipating that his surrender demand would be rejected. Greene formed two squads of 12 Marines apiece. Each squad member was armed with the Model 1842 musket and a socket bayonet about 18 inches long. Greene ordered the Marines' weapons to remain unloaded out of fear of hitting hostages and decided to take the engine house in a bayonet assault. Greene selected three stout Marines and equipped them with sledgehammers to batter down the heavy wooden engine house doors.

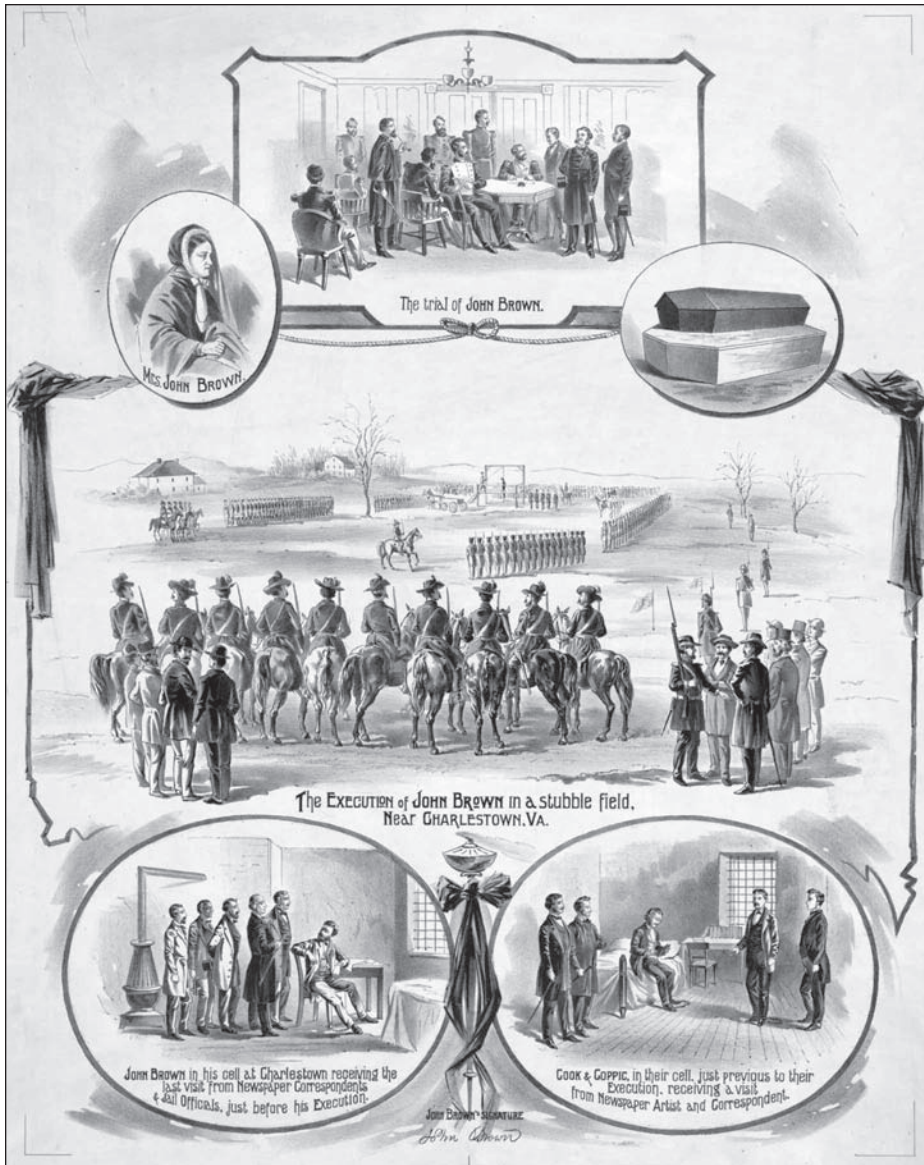
As Lieutenant Stuart approached the engine house, Brown cracked the center door open and pointed a carbine at Stuart's chest. Stuart delivered the note and immediately recognized Brown. Stuart had previously served at Fort Riley, Kansas, and was well acquainted with Brown's activities there. As anticipated, Brown asked Stuart to agree to surrender terms, and after a short while, Stuart abruptly broke off the discussion and waved his cap—the signal for the Marines to begin their assault. Brown slammed and bolted the door. With a shout, the three hammer-wielding Marines began battering the center wooden door. To Greene's chagrin, the door proved impervious to the repeated blows, and after about three minutes, he ordered the Marines to stop. Spying a heavy ladder nearby, Greene instructed the first assault squad to use it as a battering ram, and on the second blow, the lower right hand panel on the door gave way. Greene, Russell, and several armed Marines of the first squad dove through the opening. Greene charged through the engine house armed only with a light military saber. (Contrary to popular belief, Greene's sword was not the mamaluke hilt dress sword that Marine officers have carried since the time of Archibald Henderson.)

**I**nside the engine house, it was pandemonium. Greene later reported that due to the gun smoke, cries of the hostages, and the shrieks of the wounded and dying, he had a hard time initially locating Brown until hostage Lewis Washington rushed up

*The picture below shows the engine house where John Brown and his compatriots made their last stand against the Marines under the command of Lt. Greene.*

Library of Congress





Library of Congress Photo

The above collage shows events surrounding John Brown's execution by hanging in Charlestown, Virginia (now West Virginia). The governor of Virginia had accepted the offer of assistance from the superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute, who provided a contingent of approximately 85 upperclassmen cadets for security. One of the officers present at the execution was Maj Thomas J. Jackson, later known as "Stonewall" Jackson of Civil War fame.

to him and pointed Brown out. Brown had reloaded his carbine and had just shot and mortally wounded Private Luke Quinn in the abdomen. Rushing Brown, Greene slashed at Brown's head with a glancing blow that cut into his neck. Brown fell on his side, and Greene attempted to run Brown through with the point of his saber. Catching the saber tip on Brown's leather cartridge belt, the sword bent in half. Not to be stopped, Greene then repeatedly bashed Brown's head with the hilt of his saber, knocking him unconscious. Greene reported

that his Marines "came rushing in like tigers. They bayoneted one man skulking under the engine, and pinned another fellow up against the rear wall, both being killed instantly." Greene also noted that once he and his men had entered the engine house, only Brown showed any more fight. Once Brown was subdued, Greene ordered his Marines to "spill no more blood." Marine casualties for the entire assault were one man killed (Private Luke Quinn) and one man slightly wounded (Private Matthew Rupert). Private Quinn was later

buried in the Catholic cemetery in Harpers Ferry. Thirteen hostages were released. In all, 17 people lost their lives during the course of the raid (two slaves, three townspeople, one slave owner, one Marine, and ten of Brown's insurgent party).

After securing the prisoners, around 1200 on 18 October, Lee sent Stuart along with a few Marines to the Kennedy farm in Maryland, the place from which Brown and his men had begun their raid. There Stuart found weapons and military supplies that Brown had intended to give to liberated slaves. Lee wrote up his official report on the incident and sent it back to Washington in the hands of Major Russell. The next day, Lee was informed by a local farmer of another insurrection in Pleasant Valley, Maryland, near the present-day location of Camp David. Lee, Stuart, Greene, and 25 Marines arrived there only to find it was a false alarm. On 20 October 1859, Greene and his Marines returned to their barracks at 8th and I Streets.

In his report to the Adjutant General's office, Colonel Lee wrote that "I must also ask to express . . . my entire commendation of the conduct of the detachment of Marines, who were at all times ready and prompt in the execution of any duty." It was a fitting tribute, and one that firmly established the Marine Corps as a national force in readiness—a mission that the Corps continues to carry on down to the present day.

Brown and a few of his surviving raiders were indicted on charges of treason and murder and hanged on 2 December 1859. Virginia Military Institute cadets under the command of Major Thomas J. Jackson witnessed his execution. It would not be long before Lee, Stuart, Jackson, and even the redoubtable Greene were fighting against the very federal government they had so recently sought to defend against the wrath of Brown. While John Brown remains a figure of controversy, it is clear that his raid at Harpers Ferry was part of the tinder that set off the most destructive war ever experienced on the continent of North America. □1775□



# Harpers Ferry: Last Action of “Henderson Era”

by Michael E. Krivdo

The Marines that stormed the engine house and killed or captured John Brown's raiders on the morning of 18 October 1859 were competent, well-trained, and disciplined, and they displayed a level of professionalism that had taken decades to achieve. When directed to provide forces to counter Brown's threat, the Marines quickly and efficiently organized and equipped a detachment and dispatched it within hours of notification. The detachment's commander, First Lieutenant Israel C. Greene, analyzed the incomplete intelligence on the threat and developed plans. For example, Greene brought two three-inch howitzers with his unit in the event that the enemy force proved larger than the sketchy information indicated. Greene also functioned well with the

overall commander of the operation, Army Brevet Colonel Robert E. Lee. Greene organized his men for the mission, detailing specific tasks for them and supervising their preparations and rehearsals, and then led the assault into the engine house. As for the Marines, the fact that the assault element unflinchingly obeyed the order to breach Brown's "fort" without ammunition (to keep from hitting hostages) is proof enough of their courage, professionalism, and confidence in their leaders. These qualities did not come about overnight, but were the product of several decades of reforms and initiatives that slowly, yet firmly, shaped the Marine Corps into an organization that could capably meet challenges such as Harpers Ferry; and that Corps was very much the product of Archibald Henderson.

Although Archibald Henderson, fifth Commandant of the Marine Corps, had died in office nine months before the Harpers Ferry incident, he had laid the foundation for the Marines' involvement through initiatives first instituted by him over the preceding three decades. Without Henderson's insistent and tireless efforts to seek a larger, expanded role for the Marine Corps within the military establishment, it is unlikely that the Secretary of War or other command authority would have ever considered the Marines for such a complex and sensitive assignment. In the Marine Corps that Henderson inherited in 1821, such a mission would have been inconceivable.

Within days of assuming command over what many described as a weak, disorganized, and somewhat demoral-

*John Brown, at the bottom right of painting, regained consciousness after a head wound inflicted by Lt Israel Greene, during the battle at the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in October 1859.*

National Museum of the Marine Corps





ized organization, Henderson placed into action reforms designed to counter critics and to reshape the Marine Corps into a valued military organization. Previous commandants had exercised limited control over their Marines; the day-to-day decision-making resided either in the hands of the secretary of the navy or rested in the authority of ships' captains and navy yard commanders. Rarely did Marine commandants dare to "rock the boat" by challenging that arrangement. Henderson countered this trend, first by daring to select his own officers to fill critical staff billets that gave him the means to exert tighter control over the organization. Second, he issued orders and guidance to the commanders of Marine detachments and barracks to report directly to him and to discontinue the previous practice of reporting to the secretary or through the Navy chain-of-command. Third, Henderson reached out to Navy commanders and solicited their advice regarding the importance of Marines within the Navy mission. Fourth, he enhanced training for new Marines and instituted reforms to improve their quality of life. Through each of these actions Henderson gained the ammunition to diplomatically and intelligently fight opponents of the Corps and new insights to increase the overall effectiveness of the organization.

Henderson understood that the roles and missions of the Marine Corps extended beyond the basic tasks of helping impose order and discipline on board ships and guarding Navy yards. A devout believer that the Marine Corps served as the "military arm of the Navy," he remained keenly interested in increasing the value and relevance of Marines in what were termed "landing party operations," which became increasingly important and more frequently executed during his tenure. Henderson seized every opportunity to strengthen the Marine Corps' position in these early amphibious operations, eventually gaining an organic artillery capability that drastically increased the shore-based firepower of Marines fighting as part of a naval operation.

Henderson sought out increased



National Museum of the Marine Corps  
*Brevet BGen Archibald Henderson,  
 fifth commandant of the Marine  
 Corps.*

opportunities to serve with the Army in operations ashore, something that no previous commandant had envisioned or desired. Henderson's intent was twofold: to make the Corps more valuable as a force in readiness for budget-conscious political leaders and to expand opportunities for both training and employing Marines outside of their traditional naval roles. Henderson succeeded in this effort and gained a great dividend by making the Marine Corps more relevant and valuable to the nation. Importantly, Henderson's volunteering

the Marine Corps to serve with the Army during the Creek and Second Seminole Wars helped to convert President Andrew Jackson, the former Army general who in 1829 argued before Congress to merge the Corps with the Army, into a supporter of the Marines. Moreover, Henderson's volunteering a Marine battalion in 1836 for service with the Army, fighting Indians in the South, yielded another benefit that has not frequently been discussed. Faced with an acute shortage of officers, many Marine officers gained the rare opportunity to either command regular Army units in combat or serve as high-level staff officers. As a consequence, the Marine officer corps gained invaluable experience and skills that would not have been possible without the service with the Army of the South. Henderson himself served as a commander of an Army brigade in what historian John Mahon has called "the most active zone of combat" in the war. These operations also yielded an important second benefit: They formed the foundation for a rich and colorful common history that helped promote a sense of *esprit de corps* in the ranks.

The Marine Corps' timely and successful service in the Second Seminole War opened the door for similar operations in the future. It also

*Marines, patrolling the swamps of Florida, sought Seminole Indians who were resisting relocation to the west of the Mississippi River by fighting a guerrilla war.*

National Museum of the Marine Corps





justified Henderson's long-standing (and frequently criticized) practice of maintaining a few officers and enlisted men in Washington, D.C., to serve as headquarters staff for forming a battalion in contingencies. This staff produced other important benefits by educating and evaluating all new Marine officers in the military arts before shipping them off to their distant posts. The headquarters staff served two functions: It trained officers for the rigors of duty at sea and afforded Henderson and his trusted officers the opportunity to get to know each and every officer in the Marine Corps despite its decentralized employment scheme. Through this common training, the headquarters staff managed to instill common Marine Corps' customs and traditions into new officers who only months before had been civilians with little knowledge of military life.

During the Mexican War, Henderson gained a significant increase in the manpower of the Corps and again formed a battalion for service in the invasion of Mexico. Because the Mexican navy was weak and the possibility of engagements at sea unlikely, Henderson reallocated Marines from shore duty to fill the new battalion. Unfortunately, the battalion did not arrive in Mexico until three months following the Army's amphibious landing at Veracruz, but the battalion subsequently participated with General Winfield Scott's forces as it fought into "the Halls of Montezuma" in Mexico City. In the Pacific, Marines, serving as the nucleus of landing parties, seized several major cities up and down the coast, helping to gain control of California for the United States. Significantly, Marines, from ships stationed off San Diego, participated in the rescue of Army Brigadier General Stephen W. Kearny's overland force and later formed another *ad hoc* battalion under Lieutenant Jacob A. Zeilin (the future seventh commandant) that seized Los Angeles. Henderson's Marines were proving themselves adept at operating amphibiously.

Although peacetime meant shrinking to its prewar manpower limits, the



National Museum of the Marine Corps

*On 6 December 1846, Capt Gillespie, with 39 men and a four-pounder cannon, joined Gen Kearny's forces to engage the Californians. Gillespie, Kearny, and 18 men were wounded and nine were killed before the Californians withdrew.*

Marine Corps now possessed a wealth of institutional knowledge and experience in both landing party operations and in fighting ashore as part of larger combat formations. And in the 1850s, the Marines were called on more frequently to put their new skills to the test. In addition to being tasked on at least five occasions to quell domestic civil disturbances (another new mission not undertaken until Henderson's tenure), Marines also exercised their new skills and weaponry in a dozen instances that involved the employment of landing parties on foreign shores. Although some of the situations required nothing more than a show of force to resolve the situation, others required combat action. In addition to at least nine armed landings throughout Central or South American countries, Marines also participated in two punitive landings in Fiji and two more prolonged engagements in China (1854 and 1856).

The 1856 operation in China is indicative of just how far Marine participation in landing operations had advanced in the "Henderson Era." As part of the escalation of violence in Canton that accompanied what came to be known as the Taiping Rebellion, the American consul requested security support from the Navy's East India Squadron. On 14 November, Marine Brevet Captain John D. Simms commanded a landing party of approxi-

mately 60 Marines and 60 sailors, the first recorded instance of a Marine being placed in charge of such an unit. After landing, the Chinese granted a cease-fire, but soon violated it by firing several times on U.S. naval ships from a series of forts that guarded the approach to Canton. Angered by the cease-fire violations, the commodore of the squadron, Captain James F. Armstrong, launched an attack on the forts. On 20 November, with naval gunfire from the USS *Portsmouth* and USS *Levant* firing over their heads, a sizeable landing party of about 300 sailors and Marines rowed ashore and attacked each fort sequentially from the relatively unprotected landward side. Simms led an assault party of approximately 50 Marines and sailors and overran the Chinese on the first fort, forcing some to swim their way to safety. When the Chinese regrouped and tried to retake the fort by massed counterattack, their human waves were scattered by the combination of a determined defense by the Marines and the firepower of two howitzers that the landing party had brought from the ships for just that purpose. Henderson's long push for artillery training for Marines and organic artillery pieces for landing parties had borne fruit.

Simms successfully repeated the procedure the next day on the second fort and then seized the third by that



same evening. On the morning of 22 November, the Americans placed all of the captured enemy cannon and the two howitzers into action, firing against the last Chinese fort while Simms' assault party moved to take it. On arriving at the fort, the Americans found the position booby-trapped but abandoned. In three days of action, the naval force had seized four granite fortresses and killed over 500 Chinese troops and suffered 10 killed and 32 wounded. After the Marines and sailors demolished the forts with explosives, the Chinese government issued an apology for provoking the incident in the first place.

The 1856 operation validated Henderson's earlier insistence on providing Marines with adequate training in artillery tactics and acquisition of organic artillery to support the landing party ashore. Furthermore, contrary to Millett's assertion that "Commandant Henderson made no great issue of the [1856 Barrier Fort operation]," Henderson specifically cited the operation as a rationale to support his argument for the authority to send Marine officers to the U.S. Military Academy's course of instruction for light and heavy artillery. His argument proved persuasive because in 1857, Lieutenant Israel Greene, the same officer who would soon command the Harpers Ferry response force, became the first Marine to attend that course.

Although the actual number of Marines involved in the battalion deployments was relatively small, their performance and achievements helped capture the imagination of the public and military alike, and some leaders began to honestly consider the potential for the future of the Corps. Slowly, but with increasing frequency, senior Navy leaders became more receptive to Henderson's concepts and ideas, and some even began corresponding with him regarding their thoughts on the place of Marines in modern naval warfare. For example, Navy Captain David G. Farragut wrote Henderson in 1852, stating that Marines were needed afloat not only to maintain discipline on ship, but "for the important duty of landing to act against the enemy, when they become

the *nucleus* and in fact, the chief reliance of the Commanding Officer for the formation of landing forces." In a remarkable turnaround, the Board of Navy Commissioners, a group whose majority argued in 1830 "that Marines are not a necessary component part of the crews of our vessels-of-war," by 1842 would help argue before Congress that "on board ship they [Marines] are absolutely indispensable." Such a sea change in the opinion of the naval establishment is remarkable, and the credit properly rested on Henderson's shoulders.

In light of this growing support for Henderson's ideas on deploying units of Marines trained for combat ashore, it is not surprising that when President James Buchanan dispatched a force to Paraguay in 1858 to demand a "redress for an insult to our flag and for injuries to our citizens," a Marine battalion trained in "drill both for the use of the musket and of light and heavy artillery" accompanied the naval force. Being composed of "19 vessels, carrying 200 guns and 2,500 men, well supplied with ammunition, small arms, and whatever was necessary to its success," the naval force represented the largest deployment of American military power since the Mexican War and was truly expeditionary in every sense of the word. On its arrival in Paraguay, the force simply overwhelmed the nation and brought about a quick resolution to the crisis, a testament to the principle of naval presence. Unfortunately, Archibald Henderson did not live to see the fruits of that labor; the "grand old man of the Marine Corps" died while taking his afternoon nap on his sofa in the commandant's quarters in Washington.

Nonetheless, "Henderson's Era" continued for some time past his death, sustained through the spirit and actions of the men he had helped train. The Marines, who fought John Brown's raiders nine months after their commandant's death, owed their training, discipline, traditions, and proficiency to the systems, procedures, and infrastructure placed in service by Henderson. The fifth commandant was also responsible for establishing the early precedents for working

alongside the Army, and this cooperation fostered the atmosphere of professionalism and mutual respect that gave Colonel Robert E. Lee, as senior commander, the confidence to employ the Marines in that difficult and politically sensitive operation. Tellingly, militia units from both Virginia and Maryland, although first on the scene at Harpers Ferry, deferred to the Marines the complex tasks of recovering the hostages and capturing Brown's raiders. Equally important, Greene personally expressed great confidence in his men's ability to successfully accomplish the mission and was not disappointed.

At the highest levels of the Corps, although, some indicators arose that suggested the new Commandant, Colonel John Harris, did not embrace these nontraditional operations as enthusiastically as Henderson did. Although outwardly Henderson's initiatives remained in effect, Harris had already begun to relax command pressure to maintain the momentum that Henderson had established. As Allan R. Millett describes the situation, "Henderson's death removed an important force for efficiency in the officer corps." Harris proved to be timid in his dealings with both higher and subordinate commanders, and he expressed interest in returning to more traditional roles for Marines despite growing evidence that changes in naval technologies and tactics made some of those duties obsolete. When the call came down from the War Department for Marines to respond to the Harpers Ferry situation, Harris' contribution was minor.

Harris' own official correspondence provides the most convincing evidence that he was not keen about pursuing some of Henderson's initiatives. Interestingly, in his first annual report to the Navy secretary, written only three weeks after the successful conclusion of the events of Harpers Ferry, Harris includes *not one word* about the action at Harpers Ferry. Where Henderson would have used the success as a springboard to gain some improvement or initiative to better the Corps, Harris instead moves on to another point that gives insight into



his concerns. After a discussion on the state of the various barracks, he states that “from want of accommodations and of numbers we find it impossible to instruct the men as infantry and as light and heavy artillery.” Henderson had consistently placed his centralized training effort above everything else, even if it meant temporarily shorting detachments on board ship. Harris, it seemed, had different priorities for his Marine Corps.

These differences continued to grow and became even more apparent with the outbreak of the Civil War. Whereas previous examples suggested that Henderson would have relished the chance to pursue the opportunities brought about by the war, Harris seemed to shrink from the challenges. Rather than seek chances to increase Marine Corps participation in the amphibious operations undertaken during the war, Harris instead felt more comfortable with fielding small detachments for service on board the

new ships of the Navy, seemingly ignoring the fact that steam-powered ironclad ships, armed with long-range naval artillery, had little use (or room) for Marine marksmen in the rigging. Finally, in the wake of the Marine Corps’ disappointing experiences at the First Battle of Bull Run in July 1861, Harris asked the secretary of the Navy to see if he could help divorce the Marine Corps from further service with the Army altogether. The “Henderson Era” was truly over.

In any event, the evidence supports the hypothesis that the Marines at Harpers Ferry in October 1859 owed their training, weaponry, armaments, equipment, and proficiency to the efforts of Commandant Henderson. Under his tutelage, Greene became the first Marine officer to attend a formal course of instruction at West Point, and he also became Henderson’s Instructor of Artillery at Headquarters, responsible for the training of new officers and men in

tactics and skills they needed for duties both afloat and as members of landing parties. Through that experience, Greene and his noncommissioned officers had been infused not only with the skills to fight, but also with a sense of *esprit de corps* and a shared history of tradition and customs born in the “Henderson Era.” Greene and his men also understood that the continued good reputation of their Corps, a standing that had been meticulously built up over the years under the careful tutelage of their long-standing commandant, rested in their hands. Finally, the Harpers Ferry mission itself seems lifted from the Henderson playbook; it involved a nontraditional, high-profile assignment with the Army, yet the Marine Corps would bear the brunt of the fight. Henderson had long seized on every opportunity to showcase the capabilities of his Marines, and he would certainly have been proud of their performance in this action. □1775□

## *National Museum of the Marine Corps*

# Colonel Archibald Henderson’s Presentation Sword

by Beth L. Crumley

Assistant Ordnance Curator

One of the most intriguing items, held in the edged weapons collection of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, is a presentation sword made by the Ames Sword Company and given by the State of Virginia to Colonel Archibald Henderson in 1841. While Henderson’s legacy as Commandant of the Marine Corps, a position he held for 38 years (1820–1859), is well known, details of his early service are sometimes forgotten. As a captain of Marines aboard the USS *Constitution*, Henderson distinguished himself during the battle with HMS *Cyane* and HMS *Levant* and received the sword for his actions.

A native of Dumfries, Virginia, Henderson was appointed a second lieutenant on 4 June 1806. In less than a year, he commanded the Marine detachment aboard USS *Wasp*. By December 1807, he had transferred to the USS *Constitution*. Assignments ashore followed, including billets at

the Marine Barracks, New York, and Charleston, South Carolina, where his Marines were assigned to gunboats then engaging pirates along the U.S. coast. Appointed to the rank of captain in 1811, Henderson spent the first fifteen months of the War of 1812 ashore, commanding the Marine Barracks at Charlestown, Massachusetts.

Henderson’s frustration at not being more directly in the fight was mounting. He had already approached the Army regarding an interservice transfer, an effort for which he had been rebuked by Paul Hamilton, Secretary of the Navy. A letter, written in May 1813 to his brother John, clearly showed Henderson’s dissatisfaction with his assignment and his intent to resign his commission at the end of the war if he was not promoted. In June, fate intervened and Henderson was ordered to return to sea and command the Marine detachment aboard *Constitution*.

By the time Henderson reported for duty on 9 September 1813, the exploits of the *Constitution* were already the stuff of legend. In August 1812, in a 30-minute engagement, the crew of the *Constitution* shattered HMS *Guerriere* and was given a heroes’ welcome upon their return to Boston. Four months later, the frigate HMS *Java* was captured and burned off the coast of Brazil. Henderson feared he had already missed much of the action.

The eighteenth of December 1813 dawned fair and clear. The *Constitution*, under the able command of Captain Charles Stewart, sailed from Boston Harbor for the West Indies. There she preyed on British vessels, capturing the *Lovely Ann*, *Phoenix*, and *Catherine* and burned the schooner HMS *Pictou*. In March 1814, a cracked mainmast and an appearance of scurvy among the crew forced



Stewart to sail for Boston. Spotted and pursued by the British frigates HMS *Junon* and *Tenedos*, Stewart managed to evade the British ships by ordering stores and provisions thrown overboard. On 17 April, the *Constitution* anchored in Boston Harbor to the cheers of thousands. Although orders were issued in May for Stewart to sail, a British blockade prevented *Constitution's* departure until 17 December 1814. Once again, Henderson feared that in his time ashore he had missed the action.

On 20 February 1815, *Constitution* sailed near the Portuguese island of Madeira in the mid-Atlantic, steering southwest with a light breeze. It was a quiet morning until shortly after noon when the lookout atop the frigate's main masthead spotted a sail off the

starboard bow. Another sail was reported off the port bow. The first ship changed course and was heading directly toward *Constitution*. The ship's log recorded the event:

At 1 discovered a sail two points on the larboard bow-hauled up and made sail in chace-at ½ past 1 made the sail to be a ship's at ¾ past 1 discovered another sail ahead-made them out at 2 p.m. to be both ships, standing close-hauled, with their starboard tacks on board.

The vessel approaching from the starboard flew signal flags, which could not be answered. Realizing *Constitution* was not friendly, the unknown ship turned westward, sailing away.

The chaplain on board the USS

*Constitution*, Asshelon Y. Humphreys, wrote the following passage in his journal: "As we were now in direct track for craft bound from the Mediterranean to Madeira and felt assured that none but men of war would manoeuver in this way and were not mistaken." The ships were, indeed, men of war: the HMS *Cyane* and HMS *Levant*.

Stewart ordered all sails hoisted and the bow guns to fire, hoping to bring the ships to battle. With the chase on, the main royal mast of *Constitution* snapped, forcing Stewart to slow his pursuit and make repairs. Within an hour, the mast was repaired, a testament to the skill of the men on board the *Constitution*. Stewart's after-action report stated that as the distance closed between *Constitution*

*Capt Henderson's Marines provided "lively and well-directed fire" during Constitution's battle with Cyane and Levant.*

Navy Art Collection



and the enemy ships, his crew “commenced firing on the chase from our two larboard bow guns; our shot falling short, ceased firing.”

Still about four miles from the British vessels, Stewart cleared *Constitution* for action, determined to engage the enemy. The 34-gun *Cyane* and 21-gun *Levant* “passed within hail of each other, and hauled by the wind on the starboard tack, hauled up there [sic] courses and prepared to receive us.” Shortly before six, the two ships went to fighting sails and formed up, sailing westward, 100 yards apart, with *Cyane* astern of *Levant*.

Stewart ordered the Stars and Stripes raised, and both British ships also hoisted their flags. From Stewart’s report on the action, *Constitution* continued to close and

ranged up on the starboard side of the sternmost ship, about 300 yards distant, and commenced the action by broadsides, both ships returning our fire with the greatest of spirit for about 15 minutes, then the fire of the enemy beginning to slacken, and the great amount of smoke under our lee, induced us to cease our fire to ascertain their positions and conditions.

Captain Henderson, commanding the Marine detachment, later testified that the range was “so close that the Marines were engaged almost from the beginning of the action.” Even at this early date, Marine marksmen were known to be among the best in the world. Posted high in the ships’ rigging, their mission was to fire upon the enemy’s officers and gunners. Their fire was deadly, and in this particular battle, was key to victory.

*Constitution* had drawn parallel with *Levant*. *Cyane* had moved starboard to close the range and was in position to rake *Constitution*’s stern with her carronades. In a brilliant example of seamanship and naval tactics, Stewart ensured victory over both vessels. He ordered a full broadside into the smoke and toward the *Levant*, then “braced aback our main and mizen and topsails, and backed astern under the cover of smoke abreast the

sternmost ship, when action was continued with spirit and considerable effect.” *Cyane* was heavily damaged. *Levant* reappeared through the smoke and turned to starboard in an attempt to gain a raking position across *Constitution*’s bow. Stewart ordered the ship hard to port and delivered a raking broadside to *Levant*’s stern. Heavily damaged, *Levant* disappeared into the darkness. *Constitution* continued its turn to port to come under *Cyane*’s port quarter and stern. *Cyane*’s log documented the damage:

Tried to get the *Cyane* before the wind to close her but could not, owing to the state of the rigging and situation of the sails, they lying flat aback and driven so entangled in the wreck of the mizen mast . . . totally unmanageable with most of the standing and all the running rigging shot away, sails much shot and torn down . . . A number of shot in the hull and nine or ten between wind and water. Six guns disabled by the enemy’s shot . . .

Outgunned, outmaneuvered, and unable to flee, HMS *Cyane*, under the command of Captain Gordon Thomas Falcon, struck her colors, fired one of her carronades leeward, and yielded.

Stewart quickly ordered a crew of 15 Marines, under the command of First Lieutenant Beekman Hoffman to take control of the vanquished vessel. With *Cyane*’s officers on board, the American ship went in search of *Levant*. The smaller ship had made a sweeping turn to port and was returning to fight. As *Levant* sailed out of the darkness, the two ships passed within 50 yards and exchanged broadsides. The *Levant* began to flee. *Constitution* followed, firing her bow guns. Unable to return fire and the ship’s deck looking like “a perfect slaughterhouse,” Captain George Douglas struck his colors in defeat. The battle was over.

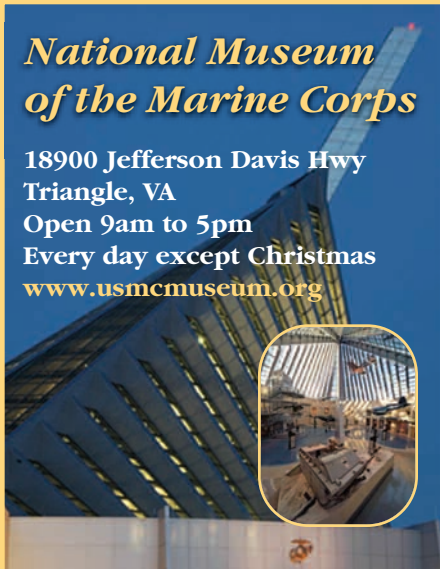
Captain Stewart reported American losses during the battle as 3 killed, 12 wounded. A muster roll signed by Captain Henderson reported Privates William Horrell and Antonio Farrow “killed in action with his Britannic Majesty’s Ships *Cyane* and *Levant*, 20

February 1815.” Four of the wounded were Marines.

In a general order, dated 23 February 1815, Captain Stewart offered “his thanks to the officers, seamen, ordinary seaman, and Marines” for “their gallantry, order, and discipline displayed.” To Captain Henderson and First Lieutenant William H. Freeman, Stewart specifically noted that he owed “his grateful thanks for the lively and well-directed fire kept up by the detachment under their command.”

This single engagement by the *Constitution* benefitted Henderson greatly. He was awarded \$400 in prize money and a silver medal, ordered by Congress, to commemorate the battle. (That medal is currently housed at the Commandant’s House, Marine Barracks, 8th and I Streets, Washington, D.C.) Of greater importance to Henderson, however, was his brevet promotion to major, dated August 1814. Six years later, Navy Secretary Smith Thompson appointed Archibald Henderson “Lieutenant Colonel Commanding and Commandant, United States Marine Corps.”

In the 1830s, South Carolina and New York began honoring their native sons who had distinguished themselves in the War of 1812. Virginia followed suit and authorized the purchase of a number of presentation swords. *The Army-Navy Chronicle*, Vol. VIII of 1839, made the following notation:



**National Museum  
of the Marine Corps**  
18900 Jefferson Davis Hwy  
Triangle, VA  
Open 9am to 5pm  
Every day except Christmas  
[www.usmcmuseum.org](http://www.usmcmuseum.org)



On Friday last, Mr. Ratcliffe offered a joint resolution in the House, voting a sword to Col. Henderson, the gallant commander of the Marine Corps of the United States, who so distinguished himself in the late war with Great Britain at sea. The resolution was unanimously adopted in the House, and on Saturday, the following day, passed unanimously in the Senate. Col. Henderson particularly distinguished himself on board the frigate *Constitution*, as Captain of Marines, when that vessel engaged and captured the British sloops of war *Cyane* and *Levant*.

The Ames Sword Company of Massachusetts had gained a sterling reputation for the craftsmanship of magnificent presentation swords, which were used as tokens of esteem, given by a grateful nation, a state legislature, or local citizens. Crafted of

gold and silver, they were ornate, beautifully engraved, and often bejeweled. When the State of Virginia authorized the purchase of presentation swords to be given to its native sons, Nathan Peabody Ames hoped to obtain that commission. In January 1839, Ames travelled to Washington, D.C., and met several Army and Navy officers who examined a number of different presentation swords. Exhibition of a sword crafted by the Ames Sword Company in honor of Lieutenant David Turner, USN, proved instrumental in obtaining the contract. Virginia commissioned seven swords at a cost of \$600 each. In May, two additional swords were added to the contract. Of the nine recipients, Henderson was the only Marine to be honored.

The swords were designed by Captain Washington Hood of the U.S. Topographical Engineers. Each sword features a solid gold hilt with a fouled anchor in a medallion on the grip. The large langet, an extension of the cross

*The reverse of the sword with inscription.*

Kathy Reeseey



Kathy Reeseey

*The solid gold hilt of the sword, depicting Virtue's victory over Tyranny.*

guard, carries the State Seal of Virginia: Virtue, with sword in hand, her foot on the prostrate figure of Tyranny, whose crown lies nearby. The words *Sic Semper Tyrannis* (thus always to tyrants) is inscribed above.

The sword designed for Henderson had the same features as described above for all nine swords but also had the following inscribed on the langet of the reverse side:

Presented by the State of Virginia to Col. Archibald Henderson of the Marine Corps of the U.S. in testimony of the high sense entertained by his native state of his gallantry & good conduct in the capture of the *Cyane* & *Levant* by the frigate *Constitution* on the 20th Feb. 1815 & of his patriotic service generally during the late war with Great Britain.

A presentation sword demanded close attention to the details of workmanship. In the 1830s, swords of the finest quality might feature two or three etched panels, featuring floral patterns, alternating with patriotic motifs. These designs were carefully sketched and entrusted to the Ames engravers. The sword designed for Henderson was ornately engraved. A close examination of the front of the



Kathy Reeseey

*The sword and scabbard presented to Col Henderson.*

blade reveals the name of the sword's designer, "Captain Washington Hood, U.S. Topographical Engineers." A federal style eagle, typical of the Ames Sword Company, carries a banner in its beak upon which the motto *E Pluribus Unum* is inscribed. Above the eagle is a sunburst pattern. Also on the front of the blade is an array of arms: two snakes intertwined with a shield and an eagle-pommeled sword. Engraved on the reverse of the blade is another eagle with its wings inverted. A second collection of weapons is depicted, including a helmet, an eagle-pommeled sword, and two crossed naval cannon. The name "N. E. Ames, Springfield" is clearly visible.

The swords were completed by 1841. Virginia Governor Thomas Walker Gilmore of Virginia set 22 February, George Washington's birthday, as the date for presentation. The city of Richmond hosted the event. Newspapers of the day carried word of the festivities, even remarking on the "heavy traffic" seen in the city. *The Southern Literary Messenger* devoted several columns to the event and described the festivities in great detail:

With the exception of the welcome given to the good Lafayette, it is probable that the Metropolis of Virginia was never graced with a more imposing assemblage, nor the scene of more interesting ceremonies, than occurred on 22nd February, 1841, the birthday of the father of this Country . . . As it happened, General Harrison, the President-elect of the United States, and John Tyler, the vice-president elect were both present on the occasion. The military of the city, in their best and most brilliant array, added splendor to the spectacle; and the Metropolitan fair, by their presence and their charms, were not backward in giving life and animation to the scene . . . Col. Henderson, the present commander of the United States Marine Corps, is the last in order on the roll of honor, but by no means last in the consideration of those who know him, and know how to appreciate the sterling qualities for which his is

distinguished . . . it is no idle compliment to say, that Col. Henderson richly deserved the chaplet, which the gratitude of his native state has entwined around his brow.

Though Henderson was not in attendance at this grand event (his brother John had recently died), he kept the sword throughout the remainder of his tenure as Commandant of the Marine Corps.

General Archibald Henderson died on 6 January 1859. Four days later, *The Evening Sun* described Henderson's funeral:

The deceased was laid out at the General's quarters in a mahogany coffin . . . Arranged upon the coffin were the cap, coat and equipments worn by the deceased during his life; the sword being a magnificent weapon presented to the General while a colonel by the State of Virginia.

Since 1954, the sword presented to Colonel Archibald Henderson has been part of the edged weapons collection of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, generously donated by his great-great-granddaughter, Mrs. Kenneth T. Gordon. Following conservation, this rare and beautiful sword is scheduled to go on display in 2010, when the museum opens three new galleries covering 1775 through the end of World War I, another fitting tribute to "The Grand Old Man of the Marine Corps."

□1775□

*The tablet on the scabbard depicts the three ships in battle.*

Kathy Reeseey





## *Combat Artist: Commander Perin*

*by Gregory A. Macbeak  
Editor for Fortitudine*

This month Fortitudine features combat artist, Commander Monica Allen Perin, USNR, who was one of the four combat artists whose works were shown at the Navy Art Gallery from September 2008 until February 2009.

From an early age, Perin liked to do art: “I can't remember a time that I didn't like to draw or paint, or just plain work with my hands.” She was trained at the California College of Arts and Crafts and illustrated a book of poetry as her first professional work. She continued with her artistic training at Texas A&M University and the Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York where she received a masters degree in decorative arts in 1993.

During her time as a combat artist, Perin has been to far away places including Crete, Italy, Sarajevo, and Zagreb. While at Zagreb in 1995 she entered the Navy Combat Art Program. Her recent work for the program has included “documenting sailors returning from Iraq, which took me to Bethesda Naval Hospital as well as Walter Reed Army Hospital in D.C.”

Perin's favorite picture is called *Priority Mail* (shown below). Perin stated that “I draw in pencil and paint in transparent watercolor on at least 300 gram paper up to 600 grams which resembles old fashioned egg cartons . . . less chance of buckling.”

Perin lives in the south of France, and besides teaching watercolor classes in Italy, she also paints frescos throughout Europe and the United States. □1775□



*Cmdr Perin*

### *Priority Mail*



# Passing of Generals Cooper and Karch, Medal of Honor Recipients Pope and Wahlen, and TV Personality Ed McMahon

*by Robert V. Aquilina  
Reference Historian*

**L**ieutenant General Charles G. Cooper, a distinguished combat veteran of two wars, died 26 April 2009 in Bethesda, Maryland, at the age of 81. The Clarksdale, Mississippi, native was commissioned a Marine second lieutenant upon graduation in June 1950 from the U.S. Naval Academy, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering. During the Korean War, he served as a rifle platoon commander with the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, was seriously wounded in June 1951, and hospitalized until November 1951. For his service in Korea, he was awarded the Silver Star Medal and two Purple Heart Medals. Upon his return to full duty in 1953, he was assigned duty as inspector-instructor of a Marine Corps Reserve rifle company in Columbia, South Carolina. He subsequently served in a variety of duty assignments with the 4th Marines at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, including rifle company commander, weapons company commander, anti-tank company commander, and as regimental assistant operations officer. During the early 1960s he completed several courses at the Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico before being ordered to Okinawa for service with the 9th Marines. He returned in 1963 to the United States and was assigned duty as Marine aide to the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C. He assumed command of the 2d Battalion, 8th Marines, in December 1965 and subsequently became the landing force commander for Landing Force CARIB 4-66. After attending the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, he deployed to the Republic of Vietnam and was initially assigned as secretary to the general staff, III Marine Amphibious

Force. He later served in Vietnam as commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, and participated in a series of combat operations south of Da Nang. For this service he was awarded the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star. He returned to the United States in August 1970 and was assigned from 1973-75 as commanding officer of the Marine Barracks at 8th and I Streets Washington, D.C. He was promoted to brigadier general in June 1975 and became the legislative assistant to the commandant of the Marine Corps. Promoted to major general in July 1977, he was assigned as the commanding general, 1st Marine Division, at Camp Pendleton. Simultaneously, he commanded I Marine Amphibious Force, one of the Corps' largest air-ground task forces. In August 1979, General Cooper assumed command of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego. He subsequently assumed duty as the commanding general, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, in June 1981 and served in this capacity until July 1982. He was promoted to lieutenant general in August 1982 and assigned duty as deputy chief of staff for manpower, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C. His last duty assignment was as commanding general, Fleet Marine Force Pacific/Commander, Marine Corps Bases, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii. He served in this capacity from June 1983 until his retirement from the Marine Corps on 1 August 1985.

**Brigadier General Frederick J. Karch**, who led the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade in the March 1965 landing in Vietnam and was a veteran of the Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima campaigns in World War II, died 23 May 2009 in

Arlington, Virginia, at the age of 91. The Carmi, Illinois, native was commissioned a Marine second lieutenant upon graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy in June 1940. He was serving in Iceland at the time of the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In July 1942, he joined the 12th Marines, 3d Marine Division, serving as a battalion executive officer until February 1943. From February until September 1943, he served as commanding officer, 1st Battalion, 14th Marines, 4th Marine Division. During the remainder of World War II, he served as operations officer of the regiment and took part in the Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima campaigns. For meritorious service during these campaigns, he was awarded the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star Medal, both with Combat "V." A variety of post-war assignments included duty as chairman of the board of review, Discharges and Dismissals in Washington, D.C.; instructor at the Artillery Section, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia; and from 1949-51, as a member of the directing staff of the Canadian Army Staff College. During the Korean War, he served as commanding officer of the 4th Battalion, 10th Marines, 2d Marine Division, and later became regimental executive officer and assistant G-1 (personnel) of the division. He later served as secretary to the Joint Landing Force Board at Camp Lejeune and in 1955 was transferred to the United Nations/Far East Command, Tokyo, Japan. He served there until 1957 as chief of the intelligence plans section and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal and promoted to colonel. He completed the Senior Course at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, in June 1958 and then



served consecutively until July 1961 as commanding officer of the 10th Marines and assistant chief of staff (G-3) of the 2d Marine Division. Upon graduation from the Army War College in June 1962, he was assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps and was promoted to brigadier general in July 1964. General Karch was serving as assistant division commander of the 3d Marine Division on Okinawa, when he was ordered to Vietnam in February 1965 as commanding general, 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of his second Legion of Merit with Combat "V" for exceptionally meritorious service in preparing for and directing the landing of the first major U.S. combat unit in the Republic of Vietnam. In May 1965, he resumed his duties on Okinawa as assistant division commander of the 3d Marine Division. His last duty assignment was as director, Command and Staff College, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, from December 1965 to June 1967. General Karch retired from the Marine Corps on 30 June 1967.

**Major Everett P. Pope**, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry on Peleliu in September 1944, died 16 July 2009 at the age of 90. A native of Milton, Massachusetts, Pope was a June 1941 graduate of Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, graduated magna cum laude with honors in French, and was designated a Phi Beta Kappa. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve on 1 November 1941. He trained at Quantico, Virginia, and New River, North Carolina, prior to deploying overseas in June 1942 with the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines. On 7 August 1942, he participated as the leader of a machine gun platoon in the landing and subsequent campaign on Guadalcanal. In 1943, his unit was transferred to Melbourne, Australia. He again participated in combat with the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, from December 1943 to April 1944 in the New Britain campaign. From 12–30 September 1944, he took part in the assault and capture of Peleliu during which he

earned the Medal of Honor and the Purple Heart. While serving as the commanding officer of Company C, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, Captain Pope and his company set out on 20 September to storm a steep, barren coral hill protruding from the face of Suicide Ridge. Although successful, the Marines suffered grievous casualties and were forced to hold the hill throughout the night. By sunrise, the Marines were beating off the enemy with bare fists and hurling ammunition boxes. When daylight brought a renewal of deadly enemy fire, Captain Pope and the surviving eight riflemen were ordered to withdraw. In the words of his Medal of Honor citation, his valiant leadership against devastating odds during the bitter fighting on Hill 154 reflected the "highest credit upon Captain Pope and the United States Naval Service." Following the war, Major Pope returned home to Massachusetts and later commanded the 2d Infantry Battalion, USMCR, in Hingham, Massachusetts. He was recalled to active duty in August 1950 during the Korean War and served until September 1951 as executive officer of the 3d Battalion, 2d Marines, at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He was then released to inactive duty, and shortly thereafter, resigned his commission in the Marine Corps.

For many years, he served as president and CEO of the Workmen's Co-Operative Bank in Boston and was an active member on governing boards at his alma mater, Bowdoin College.

**Major George E. Wahlen**, U.S. Army, who received the Medal of Honor while serving as a navy hospital corpsman with the 5th Marine Division during World War II, died 5 June 2009 in Salt Lake City, Utah, at the age of 84. Born 8 August 1924 in Ogden, Utah, Wahlen enlisted in the Naval Reserve as an apprentice seaman on 11 June 1943 at the Navy Recruiting Station, Salt Lake City, Utah. He subsequently attended training at the Naval Hospital Corps School, San Diego, and was advanced to hospital apprentice first class on 1 November 1943. After advancement to pharmacist's mate

third class on 1 December 1943, he was assigned to the Field Medical School Battalion, Fleet Marine Force, Camp Elliott, San Diego. He joined the 2d Battalion, 26th Marines, 5th Marine Division, at Camp Pendleton, California, in February 1944 and landed with the unit on 19 February 1945 at Iwo Jima. Seven days later he was seriously wounded during a bitter firefight but remained on the battlefield, continuing to assist his wounded comrades. On 2 March, he was wounded once more but refused evacuation and continued unhesitatingly to aid wounded Marines on the battlefield. He was finally evacuated and ultimately sent back to the United States for treatment of his wounds. On 5 October 1945, he was presented the Medal of Honor by President Harry S. Truman. Pharmacist's Mate Second Class Wahlen was honorably discharged on 19 December 1945 from the Naval Reserve in San Pedro, California. Three years later, he was commissioned an officer in the Medical Service Corps, U.S. Army. He served tours in both Korea and Vietnam before his retirement from the Army on 11 August 1969.

**Ed McMahan**, who was perhaps best known for his role as Johnny Carson's sidekick on *The Tonight Show*, died 23 June 2009 in Los Angeles, California, at the age of 86. The Detroit, Michigan, native grew up in Lowell, Massachusetts, and enrolled at Boston College. He entered the Navy's V-5 training program and was commissioned in the Marine Corps, earning his pilot's wings in 1944. During World War II, he was stationed at Lee Field, in Green Cove Springs, Florida, where he served as a test pilot and instructor. He was recalled to active duty during the Korean War and received six Air Medals for flying 85 missions over North Korea in unarmed observation planes. He remained active in the Marine Corps Reserve and eventually retired as a colonel in 1966. In 1982, he was named a brigadier general in the California Air National Guard. In 1985, he hosted a Public Broadcasting documentary, *Return to Iwo Jima*, produced by Arnold Shapiro. □1775□



MARINE CORPS ORDERS,  
NO. 53 (Series 1919).

HEADQUARTERS U.S. MARINE CORPS,  
WASHINGTON, September 8, 1919.

592. (1) The Historical Section of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department has been established at these headquarters. The duties of this Section are as follows:

- (a) To establish Historical Archives which shall be the depository for all material of a historical nature—that is, material from which administrative value has disappeared.
  - (b) To prepare a History of the United States Marine Corps for the period of the War with the Central Powers.
  - (c) To revise and bring up to date the History of the Marine Corps.
- (2) Officers and enlisted men of the Marine Corps are requested to co-operate with the work of the Historical Section by bringing to its attention any matters of historical interest which they may consider is not in its possession.

593. Paragraph 492 is amended, and the accompanying page 406 will be substituted for page of same number, Marine Corps Orders.

By order of the Major General Commandant:

CHARLES G. LONG,  
Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps.



## Celebrating 90 Years of Collecting, Preserving, and Promoting of Marine Corps History

by Annette D. Amerman

On 8 September 2009, the Marine Corps History Division celebrated its 90th anniversary. After the end of World War I, Commandant George Barnett saw the need to collect, preserve, and write the history of the Corps. He ordered the creation of the Historical Section in the Department of the Adjutant and Inspector with Order Number 53 and selected Major Edwin North McClellan to be the first Director of Marine Corps history.

Today, field historians are collecting historical documentation in Afghanistan; reference historians are assisting researchers, issuing certificates of Lineage and Honors, administering the Commemorative Naming Program, and digitizing archived historical data; oral historians are collecting the personal accounts of Marines; and historical writers are writing books or official histories about Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan, in the frigate Navy, and in Operations Desert Shield and Storm.

The history of the Marine Corps is also being done by the National Museum of the Marine Corps and the Archives and Special Collections, Gray Research Center, who as co-partners with the History Division, continue to collect, preserve, and promote the history of the Marines from 1775.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

On behalf of all Marines, I want to congratulate the Marine Corps History Division on 90 years of dedicated service to our Corps. Pulitzer Prize-winning author David McCullough once said, "History is a guide to navigation in perilous times. History is who we are and why we are the way we are." Preserving our history is vital to the Marine Corps — so that we are able to understand and carry our Corps' traditions as well as navigate the battlefields of tomorrow using the knowledge and experience of those who have gone before us.

In 1919, Commandant Major General George Barnett established the Historical Section, Adjutant and Inspectors Department, Headquarters Marine Corps. Though it has since been renamed the Marine Corps History Division, its mission remains the same — to compile and record anything of historical significance to the Marine Corps and write our Corps' official history. Since its inception, the History Division has deployed field historians to locations around the globe to gather and preserve historical information on our Corps. Staff members have researched, written, and published more than 350 official histories, from Commandants to Privates. For this, we extend our sincere gratitude to all who have been a part of this effort.

As we celebrate the anniversary of the History Division's establishment, let us reflect on the important role history plays in our Corps and the remarkable legacy that this Division has documented and preserved through the past nine decades. On behalf of all Marines, I extend deepest appreciation to all who have contributed to the mission of the History Division over the years and to all who continue to dedicate their time and efforts to preserving the history of the Marine Corps! Thank you for 90 magnificent years, and keep up the excellent work!

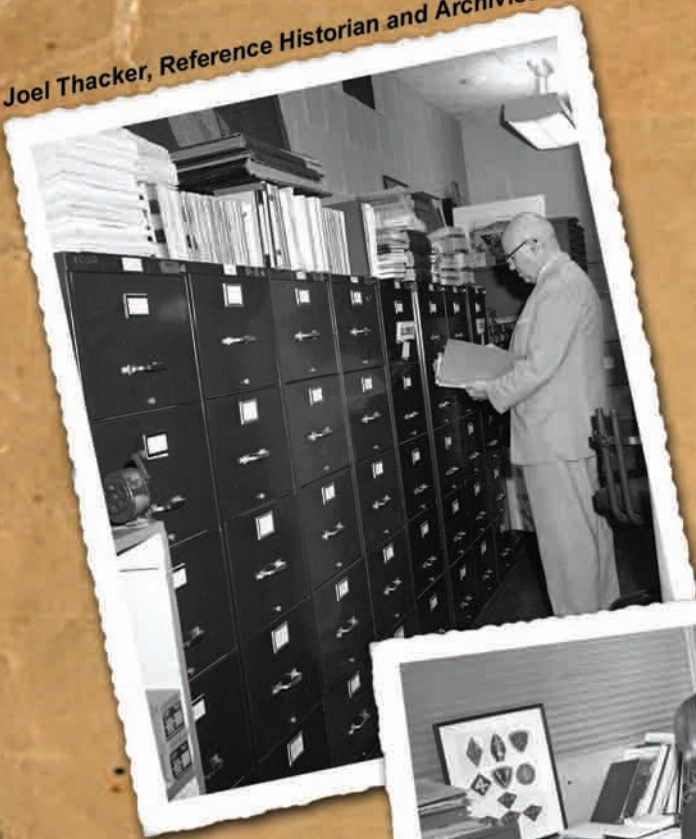
Semper Fidelis.

James T. Conway  
General, U.S. Marine Corps





*Joel Thacker, Reference Historian and Archivist*



*Joyce Bonnett,  
Head of Archives*

*Gabriella "Gay" Neufeld Santelli  
Reference Branch Head*



*Lynn Montross, Historian, with  
Commandant Randolph McC. Pate*

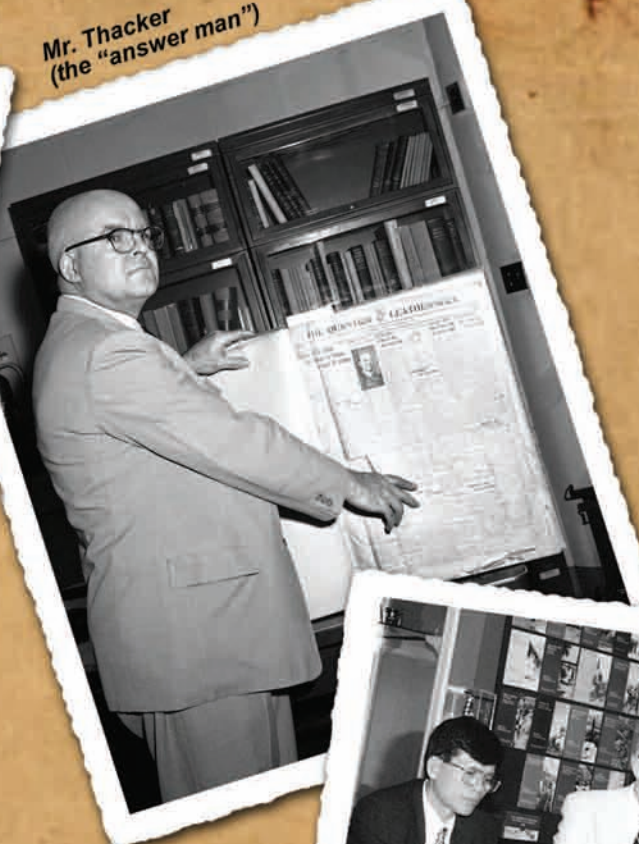


*Henry "Bud" Shaw, Chief Historian, with  
Commandant Wallace M. Greene Jr.*



# 90 Years in Pictures

Mr. Thacker  
(the "answer man")



Benis "Ben" Frank, Oral Historian  
and Chief Historian



Col John Ripley, Director, with  
visiting Vietnamese military historians



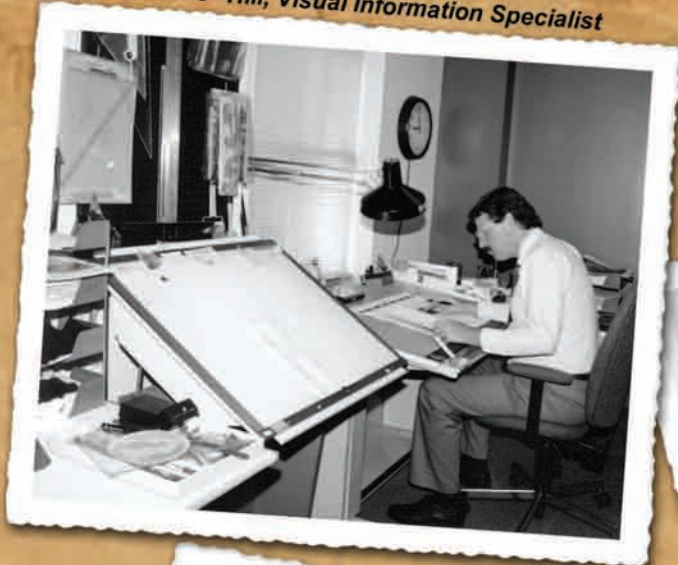
LtCol Gordon Gayle, Director



Maj John Quinn, Historical Writer



*William "Steve" Hill, Visual Information Specialist*



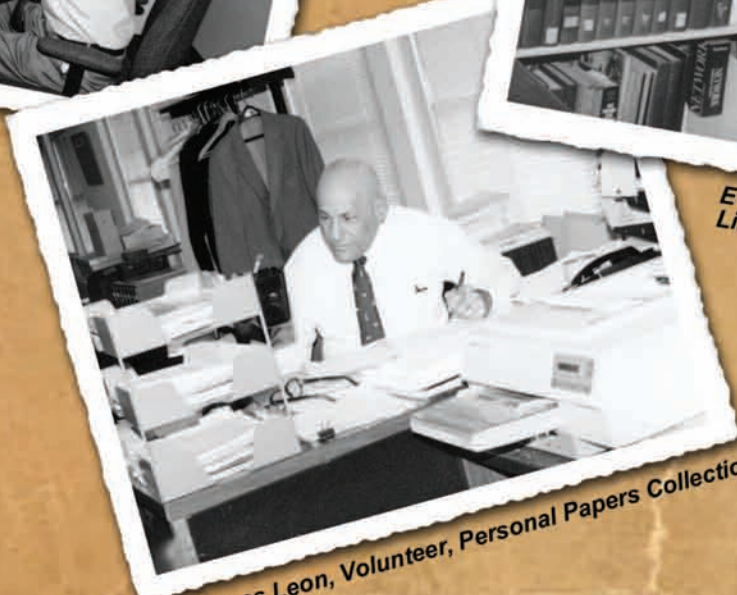
*Mr. Shaw*



*Charles "Rich" Smith,  
currently Senior Historian*



*Evelyn "Evy" Englander,  
Librarian of the Corps*

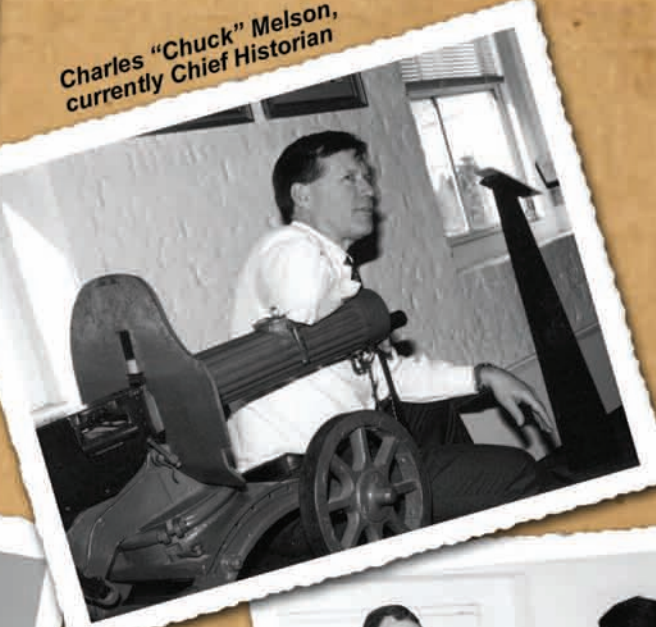


*Col James Leon, Volunteer, Personal Papers Collection*

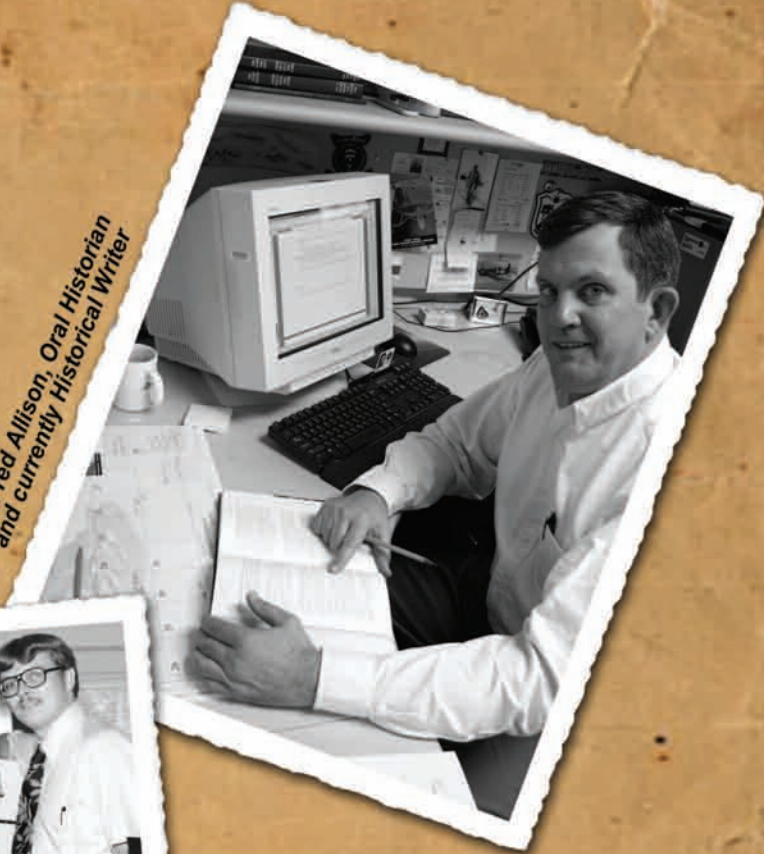


# 90 Years in Pictures

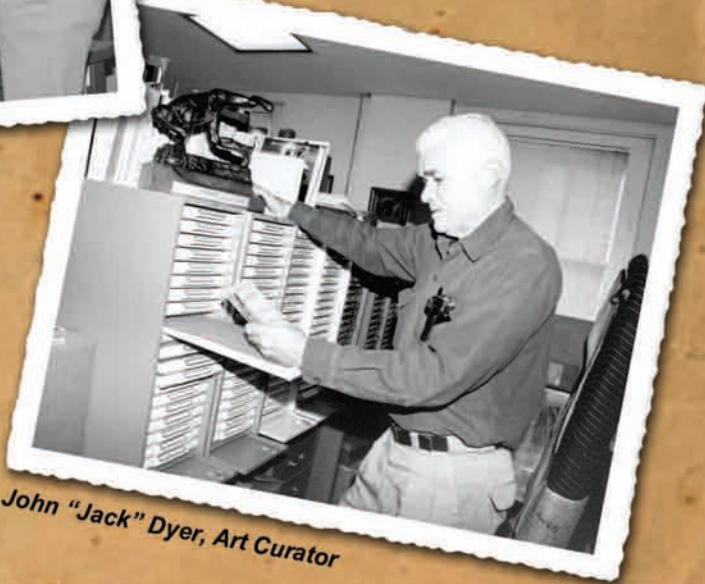
Charles "Chuck" Melson,  
currently Chief Historian



Dr. Fred Allison, Oral Historian  
and currently Historical Writer

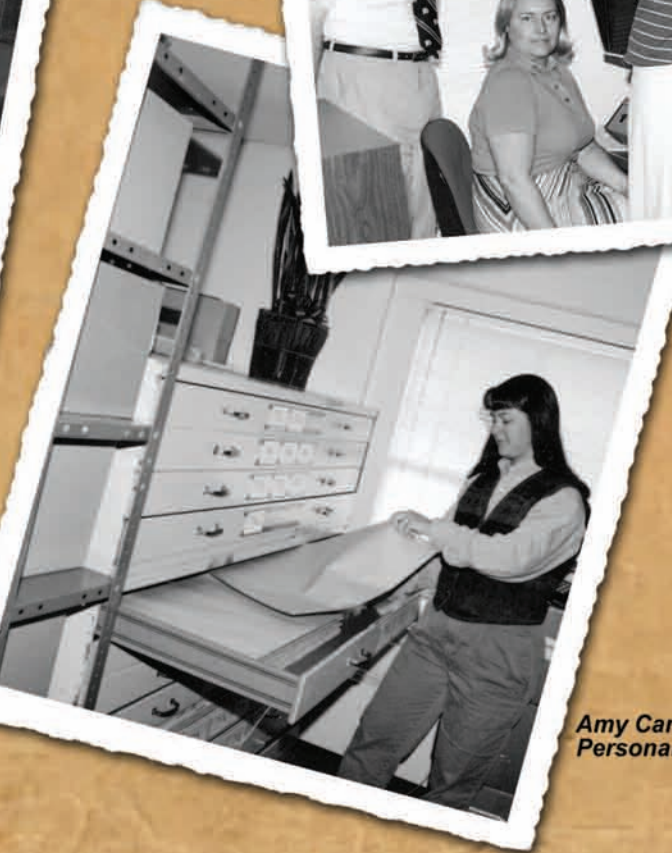


Reference Section Staff (left to right):  
Martin Gordon, Gay Neufeld Santelli, Judy Cribbes,  
and Danny Crawford (just retired)



John "Jack" Dyer, Art Curator

Amy Canton Cohen,  
Personal Papers Collection





# Directors of History



**Maj Edwin N. McClellan**  
8 September 1919–31 May 1925



**Maj Edward W. Sturdevant**  
1 June 1925–15 August 1928



**Capt Lucian W. Burnham**  
18 August 1928–31 July 1929



**Mr. James C. Jenkins**  
(Admin Assistant-in-Charge)  
1 August 1929–September 1929



**Capt Jonas H. Platt**  
27 September 1929–19 June 1930



**Col Clyde H. Metcalf**  
5 October 1942–15 April 1944



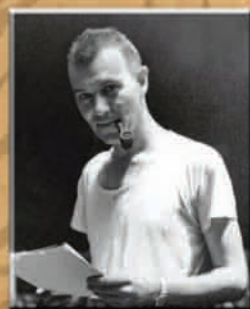
**Capt Phillips D. Carleton (Acting)**  
16 April–2 May 1944



**Col John Potts**  
3 May 1944–2 January 1946



**Col Howard N. Kenyon**  
3 January 1946–15 October 1946



**LtCol Ellsworth N. Murray**  
15 October–20 December 1946



**Maj Hubard D. Kuokka**  
25 July–17 August 1959



**Maj Gerald Fink**  
18 August 1959–7 January 1960



**Col William M. Miller**  
8 January 1960–31 July 1961



**Col Thomas G. Roe**  
1 August 1961–30 June 1962



**Maj John H. Johnstone (Acting)**  
1 July–8 November 1962



**Col Michael F. Monigan**  
4 January 1996–11 July 1999



**Col John W. Ripley**  
12 July 1999–31 August 2005



**Mr. Charles D. Melson (Acting)**  
1 September 2005–8 January 2007



# Division



**Maj Edwin N. McClellan**  
20 June 1930-2 March 1933



**Capt Harry A. Ellsworth**  
3 March 1933-30 August 1934



**Maj Alphonse DeCarre**  
31 August 1934-5 February 1935



**Maj (LtCol) Clyde H. Metcalf**  
8 February 1935-31 December 1938



**Mr. James C. Jenkins**  
(Admin Assistant-in-Charge)  
1 January 1939-4 October 1942



**LtCol Robert D. Heintz Jr.**  
21 December 1946-12 June 1949



**LtCol Gordon D. Gayle**  
13 June 1949-13 August 1951



**LtCol Francis O. Hough**  
14 August 1951-8 June 1952



**LtCol Harry W. Edwards**  
9 June 1952-17 July 1955



**Col Charles W. Harrison**  
18 July 1955-24 July 1959



**Col Joseph F. Wagner Jr.**  
9 November 1962-31 August 1963



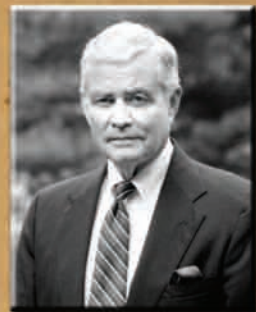
**LtCol Richard J. Schening**  
1 September-14 November 1963



**LtCol (Col) Frank C. Caldwell**  
15 November 1963-30 November 1970 (7)



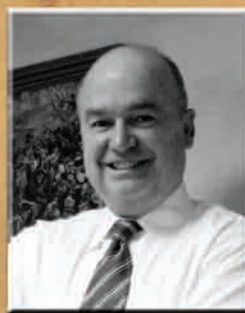
**BGen Edwin H. Simmons**  
1 December 1971-1 July 1978



**BGen Edwin H. Simmons**  
October 1978-3 January 1996



**Col Richard D. Camp Jr. (Acting)**  
9 January 2006-10 December 2006



**Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer**  
11 December 2006-Present





# In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan

by LtCol Gregory C. McCarthy

Seth G. Jones. *In The Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*. W.W. Norton, 2009.

Seth Jones of RAND is an academic observer of and frequent visitor to Afghanistan. His new book, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan* is an in-depth historical narrative coupled with contemporary quotes from his many interviews and observations from time there. The book makes the case that the United States got more than it bargained for in its 2001 invasion of Afghanistan and that the many difficulties of the U.S. since have followed a long tradition of futility in this landlocked South Asian country.

The title is slightly misleading. If Afghanistan has been ungovernable since 330 BCE, then our national leaders are less culpable for failing to pull off such a Herculean task in the last decade. Despite discussions of 19th century British troubles and Alexander the Great's difficulties in that region, the author's real objection is to U.S. operations in Afghanistan since 2005. Jones cites missed opportunities and an unnecessary war in Iraq preoccupying the Bush administration in the critical early days of occupation. But his own narrative indicates that Afghanistan was relatively placid from 2002–05. Remarkably, there were fewer than 10 total suicide bombings from 2001 to the end of 2004. He ably retells the story of a slowly unfolding insurgency (in contrast to Iraq's), but an even slower response.

The author persuasively argues that the U.S. failed to establish capable governing institutions following the hasty collapse of the Taliban government in late 2001. After 9/11, U.S. forces quickly raced through the major cities, but only about one-fourth of Afghanistan lives in urban areas. If the Rumsfeld Doctrine (deploy with a "light footprint") failed, the author indirectly

makes the case that it failed first in Afghanistan, then in Iraq. At the time, Pentagon planners anticipated a rapid collapse of the central government followed by a quick handoff in both countries. The planners were half right—bad strategy but not bad faith.

Similarly, Jones highlights the irony of President George W. Bush getting elected on a promise to eschew nation building and then embarking on the two biggest such projects since the postwar Marshall Plan. What the Bush administration belatedly discovered is that some nation building is in the

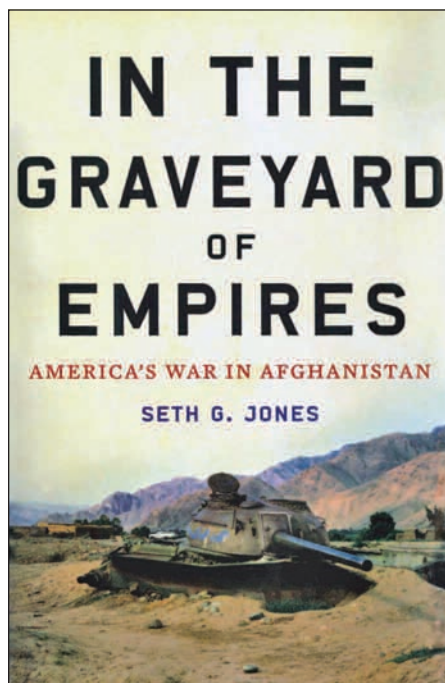
Taliban rule (most of the 1990s). Since both forces were mortal enemies of the U.S., Afghanistan became an international battleground.

The author discusses the decentralized nature of the tribes and suspicion of the central government that is a strong contributor to the challenge of governance in Afghanistan, but Islam is the unifying force that drives the insurgency. Perhaps surprisingly, the author finds that ethnicity is not that strong a factor.

The counterinsurgency mantra of "clear, hold, build" has failed miserably in America's eight years in Afghanistan. While U.S. forces can clear with blinding speed, subsequent steps involve great difficulty. Jones quotes an unnamed Western ambassador who states that "we can clear territory but we can't hold it." (p. 254)

Perhaps his most significant contribution, which Jones quickly dispenses with, is his study of insurgencies. His data indicate that successful insurgencies last 11 years, successful counterinsurgencies last 14 years. If this pattern is applied to Afghanistan, the U.S. must prevail in the critical period between 2012 and 2015, which will be unwelcome news to impatient decision-makers and probably the American public.

Jones strongly criticizes Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency for continuing to covertly assist al-Qaeda and in fomenting instability in Afghanistan. The author correctly faults Afghanistan for accepting endemic corruption, incompetence, and narcotics trafficking. Overall, however, the book mostly lets Afghans off the hook. President Hamid Karzai has led from virtually the beginning and bears more blame than Jones (and many others) assign. Finding suitable Afghans to turn the country over to remains as daunting in 2009 as eight years ago. Jones argues that well-trained police are the key to this



national interest. But American ability at this activity is still a work in progress, and no single government agency has anything close to a monopoly on planning or directing this endeavor.

Jones posits that Afghanistan was only governed well in the last many years by the former king, Zahir Shah, who ruled from 1933 until being overthrown by a coup in 1973. Since then, Afghanistan has been buffeted by both Soviet occupation (1979–89) and



process, but this is impossible without a permissive environment which is still elusive.

He also seems to flinch from what his study tacitly suggests: a dramatic increase in troop strength. Near the book's conclusion (p. 320), he cites the Army's 2006 counterinsurgency manual that recommends 20 troops for 1000 inhabitants, which would require 650,000 troops, roughly *ten times greater than* what is currently present. Nominal troop strength is not the whole story, either. The author tells the story of numerous North Atlantic Treaty Organization partners' maddening caveats, i.e., self-imposed limits on use of force. France, Germany, Italy,

and Spain are so risk-averse that their forces are never engaged in the way that American, British, Canadian, and Dutch forces regularly are. The size of the troops and the continuing fighting there will likely continue to be hamstrung by political fatigue in Western capitals. The book strongly suggests that just such a massive display of force is what would be required to hold and build in Afghanistan.

An unsatisfying situation remains, and difficult questions persist. General Stanley A. McChrystal, who took command in June 2009, abruptly described the situation as a "stalemate." How to measure success, how quickly to turn over security functions, how much

force to use, how far to pursue terrorists, and similar questions are raised by Jones and continue to vex senior leaders. From the beginning, the mission has been plagued by ill-defined victory—no end state that is both achievable and desirable.

Jones covers ground familiar to most followers of the conflict, including great detail on specific battles and controversies of the last several years. Unfortunately, he leaves only ten pages for his proposed solutions. This book will be useful to readers who want greater depth and background on the Afghan conundrum. It is a strong historical study with a less compelling prescriptive conclusion. □1775□

## *Histories Branch*

# Major General Bolden to Head NASA

by Dr. Thomas M. Baughn  
Historian

President Obama selected Major General Charles F. Bolden Jr. to be the new administrator of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). That achievement is remarkable since his life progressed in a decidedly different direction than his goals. During an interview with Dr. Fred Allison of the Marine Corps History Division, Bolden summarized that contrast: "So I was not going to be a Marine. I was not going to fly airplanes. I was going to go to grad school, become an electrical engineer and make money. I wanted to be a frogman . . . [but] I had no intention of staying in the Navy longer than the required five years." Bolden wanted "to go back to graduate school, get a degree in electrical engineering and make money." He achieved that one goal of earning money, but otherwise, he failed to avoid the things he said he had no intention of doing.

Bolden voiced some of the same sentiments in a 6 January 2004 interview at NASA in which he described his early perceptions: I "fell in love with the [military] uniform; fell in love with the fact that they seemed to get all the good-looking girls." He continued to say that "I was not going to be a Marine, because I thought they were a little different, and I was not going to



fly airplanes, because that was inherently dangerous. And my mom had always—I tell people, 'My mother did not raise a fool.'" He in fact made a career of flying airplanes and piloted two different space shuttles into space (*Columbia* and *Discovery*) and commanded two other Shuttle missions.

Bolden stayed in the Marine Corps, flying an Northrop-Grumman A-6 during the Vietnam conflict with Marine Attack Squadron 533, stationed in Nam Phong, Thailand. He became a test pilot in 1979. Only a few test pilots have ever become astronauts, and true to his character, Bolden proved to have what it took to become an astronaut. In addition to piloting and commanding shuttle missions, he accepted the

unenviable task of safety officer after the *Challenger* disaster. After his distinguished service to NASA (14 years), he took an opportunity to return to the Marine Corps. He served as the deputy commanding general of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Forces in the Pacific and the forward commanding general of that unit in Operation Desert Thunder in Kuwait. He felt his last assignment before retirement was "the most rewarding thing I'd ever done in my life." He was the commanding general of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Air Station in Miramar, California, and is credited with honing the unit for the Iraq War.

In one last twist of fate, Bolden is the first African-American administrator of NASA. Recognizing the irony of becoming an astronaut, Bolden remembered what he had thought back in the 1970s: "I knew who astronauts were, I knew what they did, but not in my wildest imagination could somebody like me become an astronaut, because they were all white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, all test pilots, all about five-foot-ten. They all looked alike. And I was none of those." Though Bolden didn't fit the profile of an astronaut in the 1970s, the times changed to where a black Marine became an astronaut and an administrator of NASA. □1775□



