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ALL ABOUT HISTORY

D-DAY

HOUR BY HOUR

How Allied forces turned the tide of WWII on the beaches of France

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FUTURE
ISSUE 143

THE GREAT POWER COUPLE
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Invasion troops aboard an American Landing Craft Infantry (LCI) vessel, already wearing their life jackets, in June 1944

Welcome

We wanted to approach D-Day a little differently this issue to mark the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Beach landings. In the past we've dealt with some of the key figures of the day, looked at the contributions made by different services, highlighted the roles of forgotten heroes and looked at the invasion from a German perspective. I recommend subscribers take advantage of their access to our digital back issues and give those a read (issues 78 and 79). For this issue we thought we would concentrate on Operation Neptune itself; the blow-by-blow account. How did the day play out? Where was progress made and where did the Allies stall? Was D-Day considered a success?

We welcome Mark Simner as our guide, giving us our hour-by-hour account of the landings and the key confrontations that took place. It's an illuminating account that really helps bring the events of the day to life. For even more D-Day coverage, I would also recommend checking out our sister magazine *History Of War* and its special issue. Back to this issue, we learn about one of history's great power couples, investigate the first detective (who was originally a criminal), and unpick the myths of the Aztecs, to name just a few of our features. Lots to be getting on with, so I hope you enjoy the issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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ALL ABOUT HISTORY

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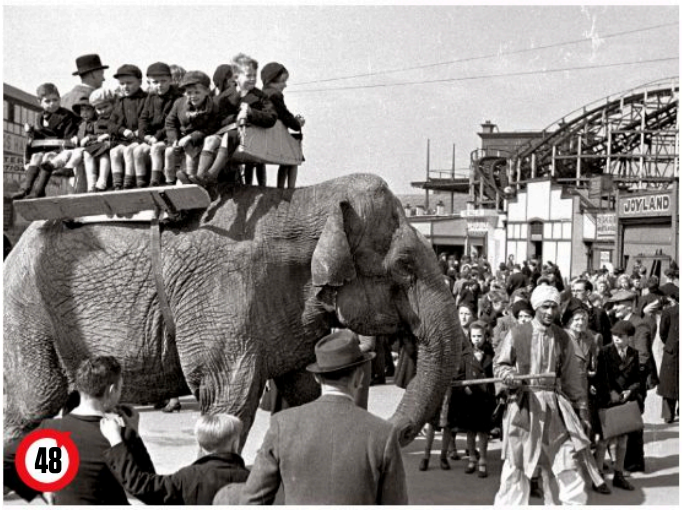

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Main image: © Getty Images

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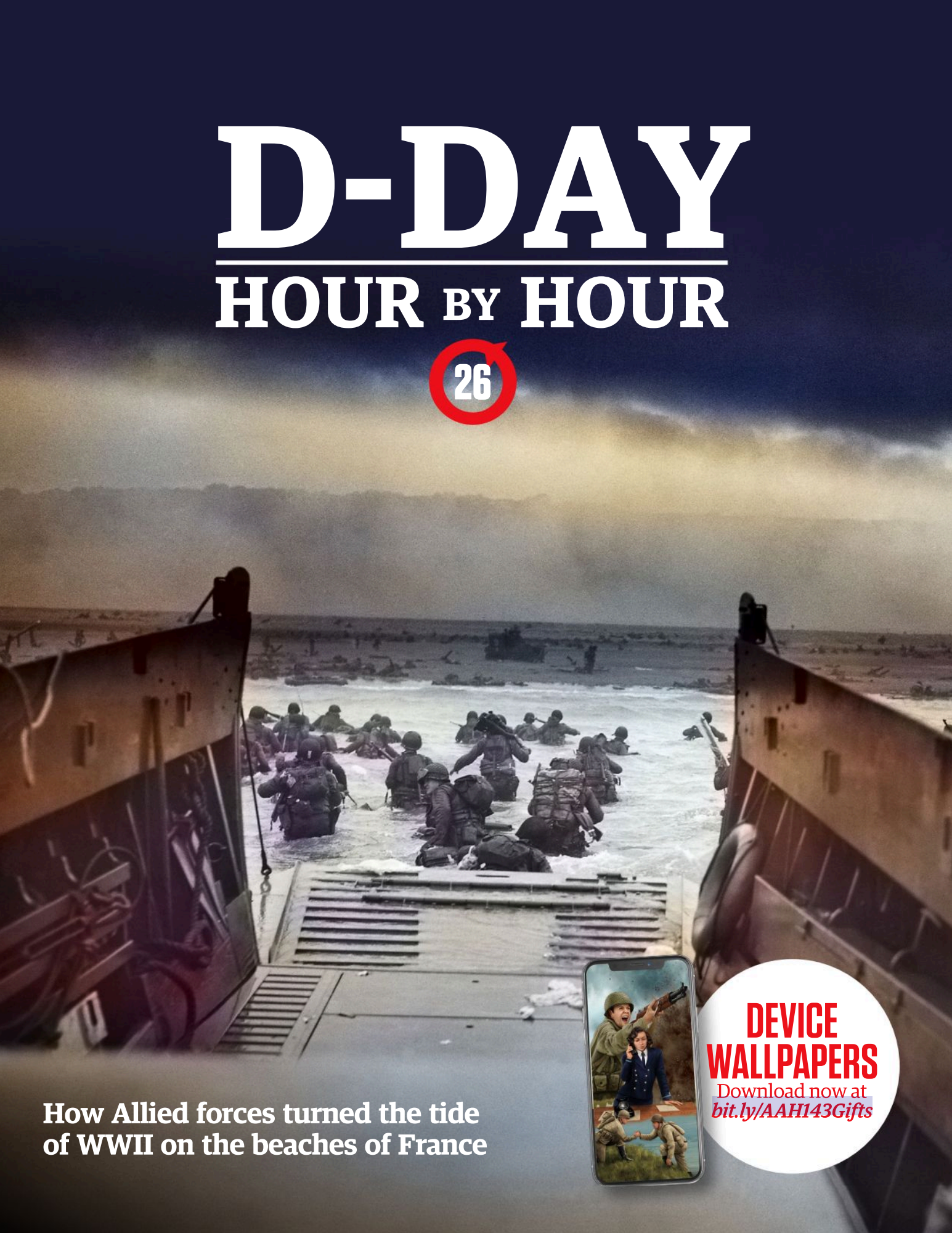

How Allied forces turned the tide of WWII on the beaches of France

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Defining Moments

© Getty Images

29 May 1953

HILLARY AND NORGAY REACH EVEREST'S SUMMIT

Sherpa mountaineer Tenzing Norgay and New Zealand explorer Edmund Hillary became the first two people to reach the summit of the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest, at 11:30am on 29 May 1953. The pair were just two of a number of mountaineers who were part of the ninth expedition that attempted to be the first to scale Everest. The news of the summit reached the UK on the day of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, and the members of the Himalayan expedition were later awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal.

© Getty Images

17 May 1954

SCHOOL SEGREGATION OUTLAWED IN USA

In a significant victory for the burgeoning civil rights movement, the US Supreme Court ruled that the racial segregation of children in schools was unconstitutional. The verdict was reached after the landmark Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka case, in which Oliver Brown took legal action when his daughter, Linda, was denied admission to Topeka's white schools. The ruling outlawed racial segregation in American public schools, though the subsequent desegregation of schools was not an easy process.

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ALL ABOUT

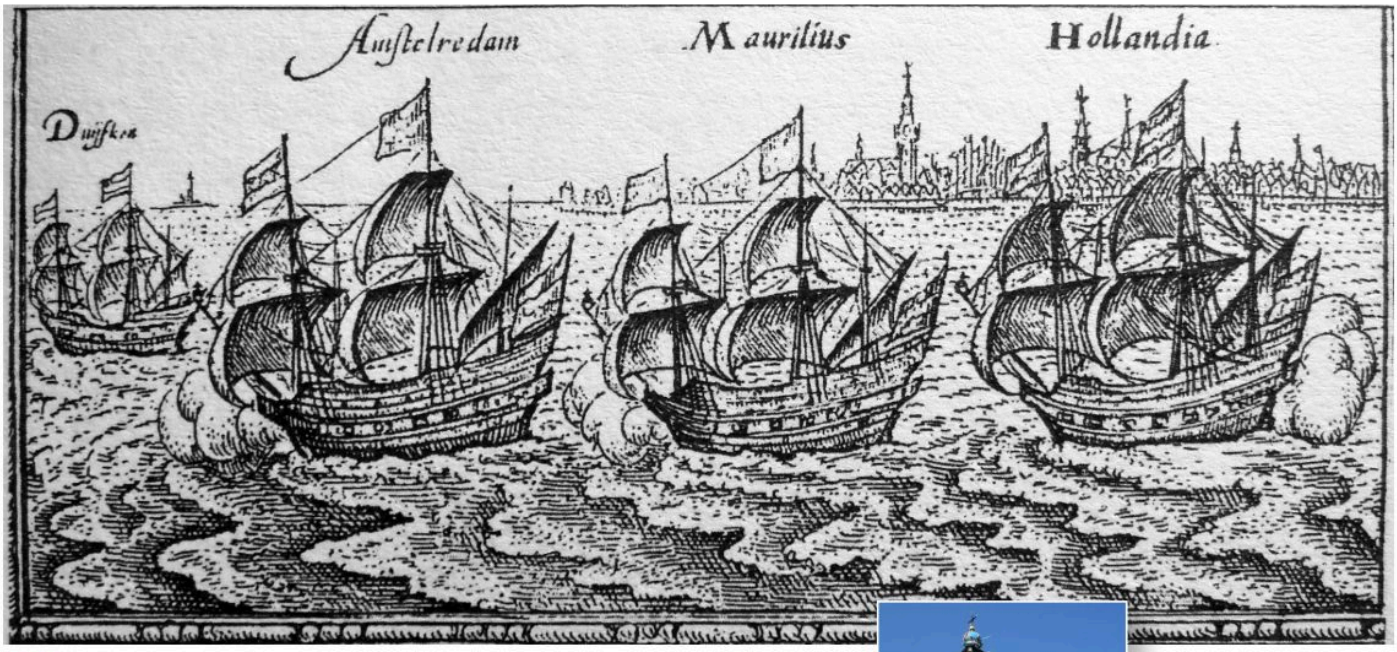
THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE

We explore the impact of the artistic and cultural revolution that emanated from the Netherlands in the 17th century

Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Emily Staniforth & Callum McKelvie

Key Events



1595 VOYAGE TO THE EAST INDIES

Brothers Cornelis and Frederik de Houtman lead the first Dutch trading expedition to the East Indies. They land the following year and establish trade with Bali, Java and Sumatra. They return in 1596 with spices including pepper, mace and nutmeg.

LEIDEN UNIVERSITY 1575

The first university of the Netherlands is established by William of Orange in Leiden. The university becomes a hub of learning, education and discovery during the Golden Age.

HOUSE OF ELZEVIR 1583

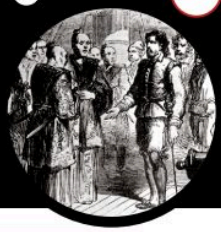
The Elzevir family in Leiden publish their first book. They become prolific Dutch publishers and booksellers, printing learned books throughout the Golden Age.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE WESTERKERK BEGINS 1620

Designed by Hendrick de Keyser and built by his son Pieter, the Westerkerk is one of the first and most important Protestant churches erected in Amsterdam.

UNION OF UTRECHT 1579

The Union of Utrecht unites the northern states of the Low Countries (the Netherlands) to establish the Dutch Republic. The Republic opposes Spanish Habsburg rule.

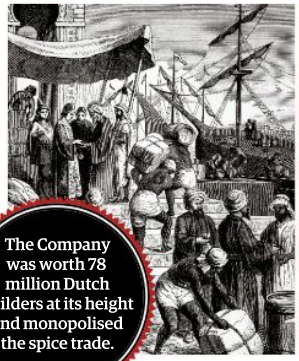


ARRIVAL IN JAPAN 1600

The ship De Liefde is the first Dutch vessel to arrive in Japan. Captained by English sailor William Adams, the arrival marks the beginning of Dutch trade with the Japanese.

BIRTH OF REMBRANDT 1606

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn is born in Leiden. He grows up to become one of the leading artists of the Dutch Golden Age.



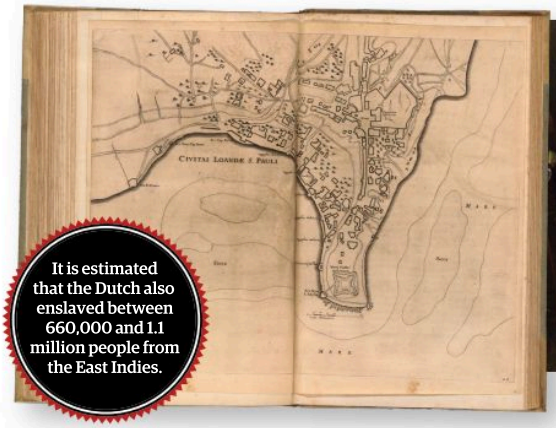
The Company was worth 78 million Dutch guilders at its height and monopolised the spice trade.

1602 DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY

The Dutch East India Company is formed to take advantage of the spice trade in Asia. It becomes a powerful asset to the Netherlands, and has the power to go to war and colonise. It operates until it is dissolved in 1799.

1641 CONQUEST OF ANGOLA

The Dutch defeat the Portuguese to take Angola, one of a series of African conquests made by the Dutch. They engage heavily in the transatlantic slave trade, reportedly enslaving around 600,000 African people who are taken to the Americas.



It is estimated that the Dutch also enslaved between 660,000 and 1.1 million people from the East Indies.

1644 BANQUET STILL LIFE

Adriaen van Utrecht paints his *Banquet Still Life*, which is now on display at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. The work is indicative of the popularisation of still life paintings (paintings depicting items from everyday life) during the Dutch Golden Age.

1665 GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

Johannes Vermeer paints his most famous work entitled *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. The portrait of an imagined woman wearing a turban and pearl earring now resides at the Mauritshuis museum, and displays the artist's mastery of light.

NEW AMSTERDAM c.1624

A Dutch colony on Manhattan Island in the Americas build the town of New Amsterdam. In 1664, the colony is taken over by the English who rename it New York.

THE NIGHT WATCH 1642

Rembrandt paints *The Night Watch* for the headquarters of Amsterdam's civic guard. The huge work is a masterpiece in the use of light and shade. (See page 17 for more details.)

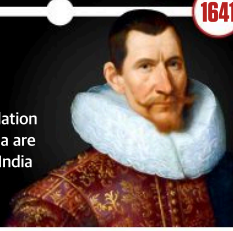
ANGLO-DUTCH WARS 1652

The first of four conflicts over sea trade and overseas colonies begins between the Dutch and English. The naval conflicts continue intermittently until 1784.

1641 — 1644 — 1648 — 1665 — 1672

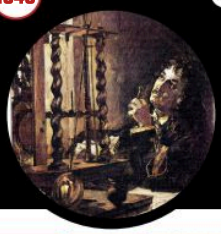
BANDA ISLANDS MASSACRE 1621

Over 90 per cent of the population of the Banda Islands, Indonesia are massacred by the Dutch East India Company to secure a Dutch monopoly on the spice trade.



AMSTERDAM TOWN HALL 1648

Architect Jacob van Campen begins to build Amsterdam's new town hall on Dam Square. The building now functions as a royal palace.



PENDULUM CLOCK INVENTED 1656

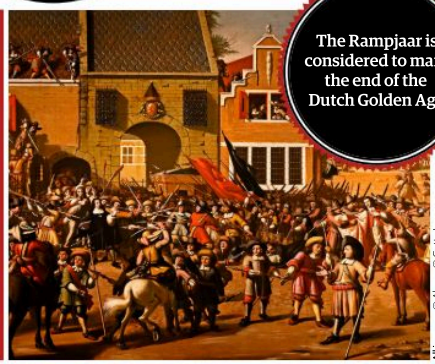
Christiaan Huygens, a scientist from The Hague, invents the first pendulum clock inspired by Galileo's work on pendulums. He patents the device the following year.

1648 PEACE OF WESTPHALIA

The Peace of Westphalia treaty brings the Eighty Years' War, between the Dutch and the Spanish, to an end. The conflict had started when Dutch states rebelled against Spanish rule and ended with Spain's acknowledgement of the Dutch Republic's independence.

1672 RAMPJAAR

The Rampjaar, or Disaster Year, occurs in the Netherlands. In 1672, the Dutch Republic is at war with France, England, Cologne and Münster. Much of the Republic is occupied by foreign powers and the Dutch economy never quite recovers.



The Rampjaar is considered to mark the end of the Dutch Golden Age.

CITIZENS' HALL

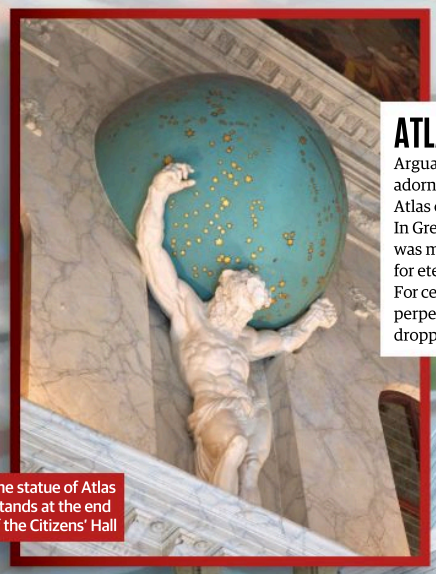
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
1648 – present

Amsterdam in 1648 was a capital city still recovering from a long war. 80 years of conflict had come to an end when the Dutch Republic was recognised by the Spanish as independent. Embracing their newfound independence and position as a growing and prosperous trade centre, the Dutch decided to build a new Town Hall that would be accessible for all Dutch citizens. Within this new administrative building, the impressive Citizens' Hall was built as a grand central room.

The architect of the Town Hall was Jacob van Campen, who had already designed a number of other important buildings in the Netherlands. In designing the central Citizens' Hall, van Campen relied heavily on symbolic imagery to put across the concept he wanted to convey: that Amsterdam was at the centre of the universe. The Citizens' Hall is thus elaborately decorated with maps, sculptures and paintings all chosen to emphasise the Dutch Republic's impact on the world during the new Golden Age.

The Citizens' Hall has remained largely unchanged since it was first built, despite the Town Hall building in which it sits being turned into a palace by King Louis Napoleon Bonaparte in 1808. When Louis Napoleon decided to use the building as his primary residence in Amsterdam, he prioritised making the vast building more comfortable and fit for a king. The dungeons of the Town Hall were turned into wine cellars and he added a balcony to the outside of the building.

Despite Louis Napoleon's tenure as King of Holland being brief, the change in function of the building from town hall to royal palace endured. It is still used to this day for state occasions by the Dutch royal family, who use the Citizens' Hall, in all its Golden Age glory, as the setting for grand state banquets.



The statue of Atlas stands at the end of the Citizens' Hall

ATLAS

Arguably the most prominent statue that adorns the walls of the Citizens' Hall is of Atlas carrying the heavens on his shoulders. In Greek mythology, Atlas was a Titan who was made to hold the weight of the sky for eternity as a punishment from Zeus. For centuries, the people of Amsterdam perpetuated the story that if Atlas ever dropped the heavens, Amsterdam would fall.

NAPOLEONIC CHANGES

When Louis Napoleon Bonaparte took over the Town Hall as his royal palace in Amsterdam in 1808, he made many changes to the interior of the building. He added chandeliers and carpets, and also moved comfortable and expensive furniture into the rooms. However, he left the Citizens' Hall largely untouched, respecting the integrity of the building's 17th-century design.

Marble corridors off the Citizens' Hall are no less impressive or highly decorated than the hall itself

A CENTRAL SPACE

The Citizens' Hall stands as the central room in the modern day palace, with corridors around the hall leading the way to a number of rooms that surround the impressive space. These rooms originally served as administrative offices and bases for the magistrates and officials of the Golden Age, but have since been repurposed as luxurious state apartments.

JACOB VAN CAMPEN

Dutch architect Jacob van Campen (1596-1657) was already experienced in designing stunning buildings of importance in Amsterdam before he took on the new Town Hall. It took over ten years for van Campen's design to be built and completed, and despite the change in function for the Town Hall he designed, the building and the Citizens' Hall in particular still stand as one of the finest examples of his work.

INTERIOR COURTS

Two indoor courts flank the Citizens' Hall on either side. These open spaces within the palace allow natural light to flow into the vast space of the Citizens' Hall, through the numerous windows that line the room. The inclusion of these courts create a light and airy atmosphere despite the central and enclosed position of the room inside the wider building.

DUTCH CLASSICISM

The Town Hall's architect, Jacob van Campen, helped to introduce the style of Dutch classicism to the Netherlands during the Golden Age. Dutch classical architecture was heavily influenced by Italian Renaissance and Mannerist architecture, and van Campen found inspiration in these styles when designing the Citizens' Hall. His use of classical imagery is very much in keeping with the classical revival trends popular during the Italian Renaissance.

THE FOUR ELEMENTS

Sculptures carved into the walls of the Citizens' Hall represent the four elements: Earth, Water, Fire and Air. In the carving portraying Earth, a personified woman is shown breastfeeding a baby while surrounded by a number of animals including a dromedary camel, a monkey and a lion. Earth also wears a crown in the shape of city walls.

The Amsterdam Maiden's symbolic central position enables her to 'watch over' the entire Hall

THE AMSTERDAM MAIDEN

Situated on the opposite side of the Citizens' Hall to Atlas, a statue of the Amsterdam Maiden watches over the comings and goings of the building and also the world, which is depicted in the maps on the floor. During the Golden Age, Amsterdam was a major trading centre, with ships heading out across the world from its port. The Amsterdam Maiden thus surveys the world in the Citizens' Hall just as the merchants and sailors travelling from Amsterdam did.

Just one of the three maps that are engraved into the marble floor of the Citizens' Hall

MAPS

The vast marble floor space of the Citizens' Hall has three huge maps carved into it. One shows the western hemisphere, one the eastern hemisphere, and the last depicts the stars and constellations of the northern sky. Each map measures over 20 feet in diameter.

The Royal Palace of Amsterdam, which houses the Citizens' Hall, still stands in Dam Square

IMPORTANCE

Initially built as a Town Hall for the city, van Campen's design was built in Dam Square in the centre of Amsterdam. It became an integral part of Amsterdam's legal, economic and justice systems, housing the mayor's office, tax office, criminal and magistrates court, police office, prison and bank. Therefore, in many ways, the Citizens' Hall at the centre of the Town Hall was situated right at the heart of Golden Age Amsterdam.

WOMEN'S GOLDEN AGE FASHION

Netherlands
c.1600 – 1650

EVER-CHANGING FASHION

Fashion for Dutch women during this period was constantly changing and was heavily influenced by the trends that were being seen in France, England, Italy and Spain. This depiction of female fashion fluctuated and changed throughout the decades as certain garments became outdated and others became popular.

VLIEGER

Worn over a dress, the vlieger was a floor-length sleeveless cape that was popular among the upper classes of 17th century Holland. A vlieger like this one would usually have been worn by married women only, and were often dark in colour. They were worn open to expose the dress underneath.

RUFF

While the ruff was becoming less fashionable throughout wider Europe, it remained popular among women in the Netherlands who continued to wear ruffs alongside newer outfits that were more in keeping with the evolving fashion of neighbouring countries. 'Cartwheel ruffs' worn by Dutch women during this time were large and exaggerated versions of smaller ruffs from elsewhere in Europe.

SLEEVES

As the vlieger was sleeveless, separate sleeves would have to be attached to the cape-like gown. These sleeves were pinned or laced onto the outer garment, and could either match the colour and design of the vlieger, or could match the dress that was being worn underneath it.

LACE

An incredibly popular material across Europe in the 17th century, lace was used to make a variety of accessories and to adorn clothes in the Netherlands. Influenced by French fashion, lace cuffs, collars, ruffs and handkerchiefs were all desired accessories for an upper-class Dutch woman.

STOMACHER

Stomachers in early 17th century Europe were prominent and intricately designed. A separate piece of clothing to the dress they were attached to, stomachers would have been pinned or laced into the neckline of an outfit. Triangular-shaped stomachers are frequently seen in Dutch portraits from the Golden Age.

DARK COLOURS

In many portraits of Dutch women from the Golden Age, the subjects of the painting are depicted wearing black, or at least dark, colours. During the 17th century, black was an expensive coloured dye, and thus wearing it for your portrait was a signal of one's wealth. Black remained a popular colour in the Netherlands throughout the Golden Age.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

REMBRANDT'S THE NIGHT WATCH

One of the Golden Age's most celebrated works has a long history full of mystery and intrigue

Netherlands, 1642

Easily one of the most famous masterworks of the Dutch Golden Age, Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* has an enigmatic and mysterious reputation, thanks in part to its bizarre and fascinating history. The painting was completed in 1642 and shows a group of civic guardsmen, also known as the Schutterij, a civilian force designed to protect a town from attack. The Rijksmuseum specifies that the painting was even commissioned for display in one of the Schutterij's headquarters. *The Night Watch* depicts the commander, Captain Frans Banning Cocq, giving his company the order to move out.

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (better known simply as Rembrandt) is remembered as one of the Golden Age's key figures and, at the time, was one of the Netherlands' most famous artists. Among his other noted works are paintings such as *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (1663-1669) and *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp* (1632). However, despite his fame, he would end his life in poverty. Following the economic depression of the 1650s, Rembrandt was forced to sell his own personal collection of paintings and even his beloved wife's tomb. In 1669, Rembrandt died and was buried in a pauper's grave.

Perhaps due to his unhappy end, many myths have formed concerning Rembrandt and his most famous work. One particular legend states that upon first viewing it, the members of the Schutterij were appalled. They demanded changes be made and when Rembrandt refused, they simply withheld payment.

Despite becoming known as *The Night Watch*, this is not in fact the painting's real name. It earned its nickname from the belief that, due to the painting's dark colours, Rembrandt was portraying a night scene. It was only following the end of World War II, and the painting's return to Amsterdam following its evacuation, that restorers discovered thick layers of varnish coating the masterwork. Painstakingly, they set about removing these and uncovered a rich tapestry of colours beneath.

Those wishing to view *The Night Watch* for themselves can do so by visiting the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam where it is on permanent display.

RIGHT *The Night Watch* on display at the Rijkesmuseum

THE MISSING PIECES

In 1715, four pieces were removed from the left side of the painting so that it could fit through the door of the Amsterdam city hall. While they remain missing, the Rijksmuseum has attempted to recreate them using AI.

ATTACK THE WATCH!

Over the years Rembrandt's masterwork has been attacked several times. In 1911 and 1975 attempts were made to slash the portrait, but the most vicious attack occurred in 1990 when an escaped psychiatric patient sprayed it with what was thought to have been sulphuric acid.

MASCOT

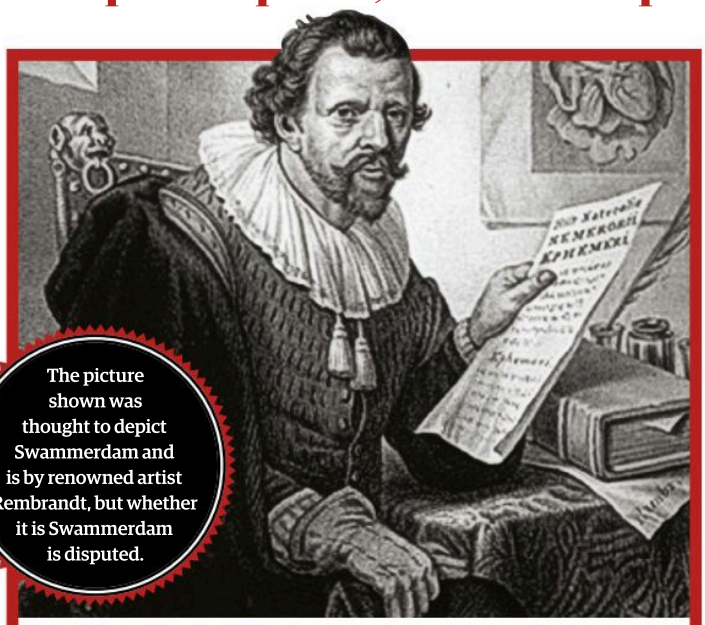
In the centre of the painting is a young girl dressed in fine garments of gold. Most unusually, however, she is shown wearing a dead chicken hanging from her waistband. She is thought to be a company mascot, the chicken used on the company's Coat of Arms.

A FIRED SHOT

According to the Rijksmuseum, the painting shows three stages of a weapon's use. On the left, eagle-eyed viewers will note a soldier loading a weapon, in the centre another soldier is firing his and on the right the rifle is being cleaned after use.

GREAT THINKERS OF THE GOLDEN AGE

We explore ten of the Dutch Golden Age's scientists and philosophers, and the impact of their work



The picture shown was thought to depict Swammerdam and is by renowned artist Rembrandt, but whether it is Swammerdam is disputed.

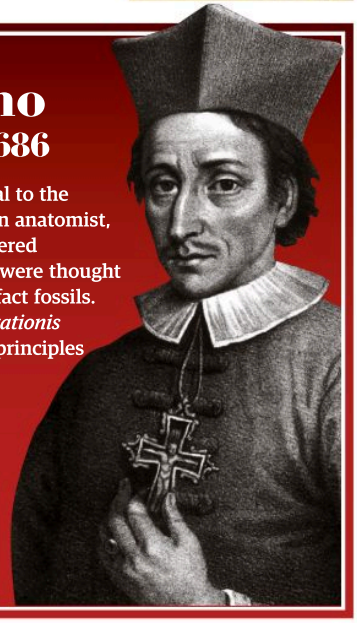
Jan Swammerdam
Dutch, 1637 – 1680

Jan Swammerdam is best remembered for his investigations into the world of all things creepy and crawly and is considered to have been one of the first great microscopists. Towards the end of his life, Swammerdam met mystic Antoinette Bourignon and abandoned his scientific explorations for more spiritual pursuits. Swammerdam would return to the sciences towards the end of his life, spending his final years desperately trying to complete a manuscript. Over 50 years after his death, in 1737, his work was finally translated and published as *The Bible of Nature*.

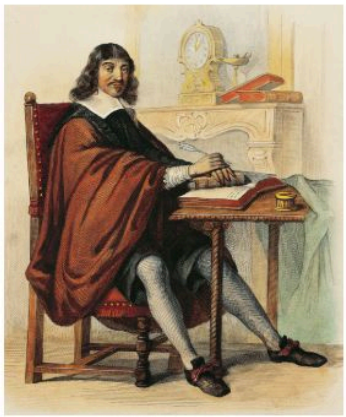
JAN LEEGHWATER
DUTCH, 1575 – 1650

While Leeghwater's accomplishments might not seem as grand as some of his contemporaries featured here, he was a pioneer in his field of hydraulic engineering. He was purportedly heavily involved in the draining of several lakes, most notably the Beemster Polder (a low-lying piece of land surrounded by dykes). Due to his perceived importance in this area, in the 19th century a pumping station was named after him.

Nicolas Steno
Danish, 1638 – 1686



Steno is considered instrumental to the founding of palaeontology. As an anatomist, he dissected a shark and discovered remarkable similarities to what were thought to have been natural stones, in fact fossils. In 1669, Steno published *Dissertationis prodromus* laying out both the principles of crystallography and also the stratigraphic principle, the idea that the earth is made up of various rock layers. However, Steno's career was brief. In 1667 he chose to dedicate his life to god. Becoming a devoted Roman Catholic, he instead worked as a bishop.



RENE DESCARTES
FRENCH, 1596 – 1650

Despite his birth in La Haye, France, Rene Descartes quickly became regarded as one of the key figures in the Dutch Golden Age and spent much of his life living in the Netherlands. Descartes has often been referred to as 'the father of modern philosophy' but his achievements were not limited to this field alone. He was also highly regarded for his advancements in mathematics, introducing the world to algebraic geometry.

REGNIER DE GRAAF
DUTCH, 1641 – 1673

A noted anatomist, de Graaf became known for his work on both the male and female reproductive systems. In particular, he is known for his discovery of the Ovarian Graafian Follicles, named in his honour. He was also one of the first to use the term 'ovary' in his descriptions. De Graaf's accomplishments were remarkable for someone so young and unfortunately he died when he was only 32 years old. The cause of his premature demise remains unknown.

Snell's law of refraction initially went unpublished and only surfaced 80 years later in 1703.

Willebrord Snellius
Dutch, 1580 – 1626

The son of a mathematical scholar, from a young age Willebrord Snellius began to demonstrate his own capability in the same field. By age 20, he was teaching at the very same university as his father and by the age of 33 took over from him as Professor of Mathematics. However, Snellius is best remembered for his innovations. This included being the first to accurately measure the circumference of the earth using triangulation, not to mention his experiments regarding refraction. The law of refraction was subsequently named Snell's law in his honour.

Christiaan Huygens
Dutch, 1629 – 1695

Huygens' most lasting contribution to science was his work on centrifugal force and wave light theory, as well as his discovery of the rings of Saturn. Unfortunately, Huygens theories on light were ignored for over a century. During this period, more scientists believed in Isaac Newton's corpuscular light theory and Huygens' work was dismissed. As well as his work on various scientific theories, Huygens was also an inventor, including creating the Aerial Telescope. It was following his creation of several telescopes that he was able to discover the rings, as well as be the first to spot the planet's moon, Titan.

In 1657 Huygens invented the first pendulum clock, helping increase the accuracy of timekeeping.

ANTONIE VAN LEEUWENHOEK
DUTCH, 1632 – 1723

In 1676, Antonie Van Leeuwenhoek revolutionised the sciences, practically inventing microbiology, when he became the first to discover bacteria. However, van Leeuwenhoek had never attended university and had no formal education as a scientist. At age 38 he had built his first microscope and showed obvious talent as a researcher. Despite this lack of formal education, others were interested in his work, not least of all The Royal Society who corresponded with van Leeuwenhoek over many years.

Carolus Clusius
French, 1526 – 1609

Born Charles de l'Écluse, Carolus Clusius was a noted botanist who was particularly instrumental in introducing the potato to Europe. Clusius had been gifted two potatoes by Philippe de Sivry. Clusius provided the world with one of the first written descriptions of the potato, in which he himself claimed to enjoy the plant and purportedly eating them alongside roasted pheasant. Clusius was also very fond of tulips and when he taught at Leiden University later in life, he planted his tulips there in a botanical garden. This garden is considered instrumental to the creation of the Dutch tulip industry.

ANNA MARIA VAN SCHURMAN
DUTCH, 1607 – 1678

Anna Maria van Schurman is remembered for her defiant views on the role of women. Studying at Utrecht University, she was the first female student in the Netherlands, and believed in the right of women to receive an education, advocating for this in her writing. An accomplished artist, poet, writer and philosopher, van Schurman was fluent in 14 different languages. Later in life, she was also an important figure in the Labadist religious movement.

Q&A

ART OF THE GOLDEN AGE

Author and art historian Susie Hodge explores the creative accomplishments of the Dutch art movement

How did the cultural and economic prosperity of the Dutch Golden Age influence art?

What has become commonly known as the Dutch Golden Age was a period that lasted roughly from 1588 to 1672 when the Dutch Republic was the most prosperous nation in Europe. Trade flourished and cities thrived, and the new wealth created confidence, which in turn led to wonderful achievements especially in the arts and sciences.

Independence from Spanish Catholic rule by seven Dutch provinces (who became the Dutch Republic) made the Dutch Golden Age possible. An influx of trade boosted commerce, leading to the rise of a large middle and merchant class. The new prosperity and social mobility inspired a collective consciousness, nurturing a sense of national pride and identity, and it unleashed a creative storm. From 1600 to 1680, it is estimated that more than four million paintings were produced as the middle classes celebrated their wealth, their identities and Dutch life now that they were free from the oppressive Spanish rule. They became enthusiastic patrons of the arts, and because they departed from traditional models of patronage, there were profound implications for artists, who had almost unrestricted access to creative expression. This new market for art for civilians contrasted with the government and church-sponsored art that characterised much of European art history. It was a unique economic and cultural climate that led to unprecedented artistic production and innovation.

The Dutch Republic also rejected Catholicism in favour of Calvinism. Because Calvinism forbade religious imagery in its churches, the market for religious paintings practically vanished, but was replaced by secular art that included genre scenes, portraiture, landscapes and still life. This shift helped set Dutch art and culture apart from other European countries.

What styles of painting were influenced?

The Dutch Reformed Church and a rising sense of Dutch nationalism encouraged artists to take independent directions, developing an emphasis on secular subjects that were rendered not with Catholic grandeur, but exploring everyday life and realism. Most Dutch paintings were fairly small, created to be placed on the walls of homes owned by the newly prosperous. So painting was the main art form that was in demand, and the types of paintings people wanted resulted in certain genres (categories) becoming popular.

Landscape paintings focused on the unique characteristics of the Dutch landscape and Dutch values. Windmills, rural villages, cities, cloudy skies and seascapes were usually painted from ground level as if viewers were actually in the scene.

Genre painting describes works of art that depict aspects of everyday life, most often involving ordinary people

Susie Hodge is the author of over 150 books on the subjects of art and art history and has made regular TV appearances. Among her works are titles such as *The Short Story of Art*, *50 Art Ideas You Really Need to Know* and *The Master Painters of the Dutch Golden Age*.

Headshot photo courtesy of: © Susie Hodge

involved in common activities. Generally the figures in a genre painting are not identified and the works included single figures, peasant families, women working in the home, and market scenes or festivities. Many genre paintings illustrated Dutch proverbs.

Religious imagery was not required for the Protestant churches, so genre scenes became vehicles not just for representing 17th-century Dutch people and culture, but also moral and Christian messages.

With so many new patrons, as many as one million Dutch portraits were produced during the 17th century. Dutch portraiture was also innovative. Many showed their sitters in active, naturalistic or sometimes even humorous situations. Group portraiture was popular too. Advancements in portraiture spread beyond the Dutch Republic, influencing artists across Europe.

Still life painting, known as *stilleven* in Dutch, explored and evoked the abundance of goods that were arriving from overseas. Flowers, presented with scientific accuracy, were among the most popular themes. Painters also demonstrated remarkable skills in capturing lifelike effects of light, textures and patterns.

These still life depictions often symbolised other meanings, such as the transience of life in rotting fruit, wilting flowers, skulls or musical instruments with broken strings. These became known as 'vanitas' paintings.

BELOW LEFT The Mauritshuis at The Hague contains a large number of Golden Age works

BELOW A self-portrait by Judith Leyster, one of the few female artists of the Dutch Golden Age

Who are some of the Dutch Golden Age key artists?

More than a thousand artists worked during the Golden Age, far more than I can talk about here! Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-69) is widely considered one of the greatest portrait painters in history, and a master of observation and chiaroscuro. Jan Vermeer (1632-75) went almost unnoticed during his lifetime and unfortunately was forgotten for years after his death. He is interesting because he was fascinated by the use of light. Jan Steen (1626-79) added humour to genre scenes without romanticising the life of ordinary people. His paintings reflect the real disorganisation of everyday life, rather than idealised imagery.

Jacob van Ruisdael (1628-82) is considered the most important landscape painter in the Netherlands in the 17th century who portrayed nature as a metaphor for the darker aspects of human psychology. Finally there's Judith Leyster (1609-60), an accomplished genre painter and one of the few female artists of the Dutch Golden Age.

How do the works of the Dutch Golden Age fit in with the overall Baroque movement?

The Dutch Golden Age is categorised as being part of the much larger Baroque art movement elsewhere in Europe. While the Dutch Baroque focused on everyday life, genre scenes, still lifes and portraits and explored intricate details, other Baroque art in countries such as Italy and Spain frequently depicted religious scenes, emphasising drama, grandeur and idealisation.

Dutch Baroque – or Golden Age – artists created a sense of realism, while Baroque artists elsewhere created theatrical effects. Dutch Baroque artists were commissioned by the wealthy middle classes, while other Baroque artists were usually commissioned by the church or nobility. All Baroque art employs strong contrasts of light and shadow (chiaroscuro).

Overall, the Dutch Golden Age and the Baroque movement overlapped, with Dutch artists embracing Baroque elements while infusing their own unique perspectives into their artworks. The result was art in the Netherlands celebrated both the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of Dutch life, while most Baroque art elsewhere celebrated mainly the extraordinary.

DUTCH GOLDEN AGE ARCHITECTURE

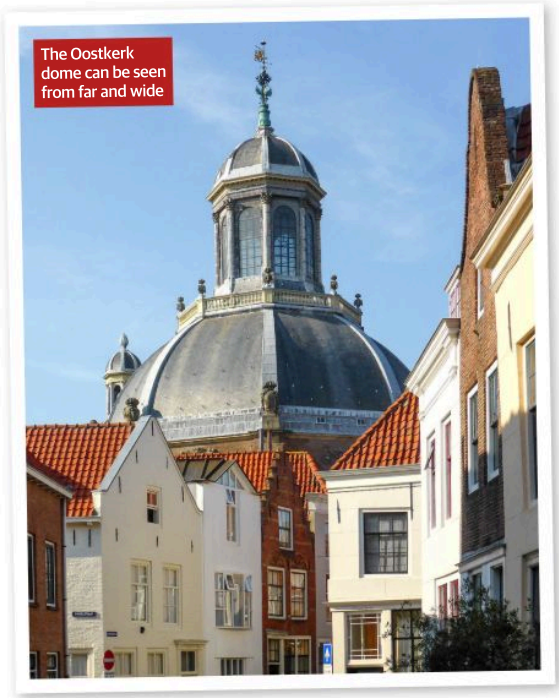
From royal palaces to grand cathedrals, five must-visit architectural triumphs of the Dutch Golden Age

1 OOSTKERK
MIDDELBURG, NETHERLANDS

Visitors to Middelburg will immediately notice a particularly beautiful dome on the horizon. Built between 1648 and 1667, Oostkerk is a Protestant church noted for its distinct dome as well as its unique octagonal shape. The pulpit was placed centrally and according to William Brereton in *Travels in Holland*, the intention was for the churchgoers to be able to "see as well as hear the minister". This amazing building was the combined creation of Bartholomeus Drijfhout and Pieter Post, the latter a noted architect and artist of the Golden Age.

According to Hugh Dunthorne in his book, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt*, the design of the Oostkerk church, as well as others in the Netherlands, proved particularly inspiring to a number of British architects, with many imitating the unique shape in their own designs. Oostkerk is no longer used as a functioning church but instead since 2019 has been used by the Oostkerk Foundation to host exhibitions and concerts. The church and its famed dome have been the subject of a number of restoration projects and can be visited by tourists.

Guided tours of the Oostkerk are available from 5 May to 23 October and can be booked online. €7.50 adult ticket.


The Oostkerk dome can be seen from far and wide

2 MAURITSHUIS
THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS


The picturesque Mauritshuis at sunset

Not only a historic example of Golden Age architecture, the Mauritshuis is also where visitors can view a number of artistic masterworks of the Golden Age. Jacob van Campen designed this impressive home for Johan Maurits in 1633 and construction was completed over ten years later in 1644. Maurits was the governor of Dutch Brazil where he played an integral role in the transatlantic slave trade. In 2017, the museum became the centre of a controversy when it removed a bust of Maurits from its central lobby. As well as the Netherlands' art history, the museum in recent years has sought to explore the legacy of the man from whom it takes its name.

Since the late 18th century, Mauritshuis has become a home for an impressive collection of Dutch art. Among the 800 paintings visitors can see at the Mauritshuis are a large number of Dutch Golden Age works, many of which come from the collection of Prince William V of Orange-Nassau. Masterpieces on display include Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, Frans Hals' *Laughing Boy* and Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

The Mauritshuis is open from 10am to 6pm Tuesday to Sunday, and 1pm to 6pm on Mondays. Standard adult tickets cost €19.50.


The Royal Palace, surrounded by tulips for National Tulip Day

3 ROYAL PALACE AMSTERDAM
AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Arguably the highlight of the Dutch Golden Age's architectural achievements, The Royal Palace at Amsterdam was originally commissioned in 1648 to be a new City Hall. The architect chosen for this task was Jacob van Campen, who was noted for reintroducing classical styles to Dutch architecture, and the palace is widely considered his masterpiece.

Originally among its decorations, the palace included a painting by Rembrandt entitled *The Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis*. However, at some point the painting was removed and now only a fragment, cut down from the original, remains. Why such a masterpiece was taken down from the palace walls remains a mystery.

For centuries the palace continued to function as the main administrative centre of Amsterdam (despite a brief period as a royal palace in 1768), but it was not until 1808 when Louis Napoleon chose the building as his royal abode, that it was fully redecorated. The building would permanently be turned over for royal use in 1818.

Situated on Dam Square at the very heart of the city, the palace continues to be used as a place for official state visits, royal weddings, as well as allowing tourists to wander its majestic halls and take part in guided tours. The palace also celebrates the work of contemporary artists by hosting an autumn exhibition of works by young upcoming painters.

Open 10am to 5pm, and 10am to 6pm in the summer. Adult entry costs €12.50. Opening dates vary, please check before travelling.


The exterior of the grand palace at Het Loo

4 HET LOO PALACE
APELDOORN, NETHERLANDS

Built for William of Orange between 1684 and 1686, the Het Loo Palace is one of the most impressive structures of the Dutch Golden Age. It was intended to be a retreat for William, nestled deep in the wooded countryside and far away from the courtly world. The area was chosen as, according to Michel van Maarseveen, the current managing director when interviewed for *The Guardian*: "It was a very good hunting ground" and the land "enabled him to build huge waterworks in the garden. The palace was regarded as a sort of paradise."

Between 1976 and 1982 the palace underwent extensive renovations and in 2023, a further €171 million renovation and extension saw the construction of a large underground museum. Here visitors can explore a permanent exhibition on the House of Orange and their connection to the Het Loo Palace. Although the palace has been given over for public use, parts are still closed yearly by King William for hunting.

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm. A standard adult ticket costs €19.50.

5 WESTERKERK
AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

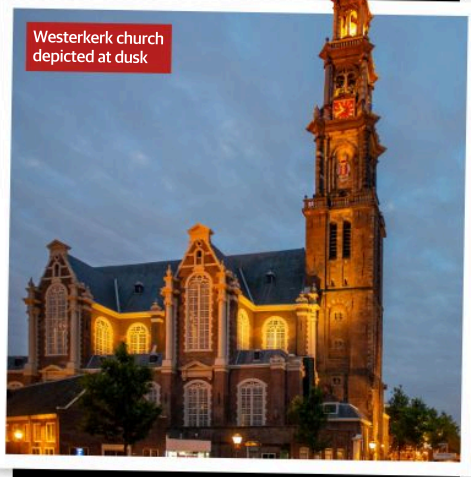
Visible from many parts of Amsterdam is the awe-inspiring sight of the Westerkerk church. Built between 1620 and 1631, Westerkerk was one of the first Protestant churches built within the city, and with a tower that is 85 metres tall, it is the largest church of its kind in the Netherlands.

While tourists can now view the church's beautiful organ, this was not installed until 1681 due to the Dutch Protestants of the time dictating that music should not be a part of church ceremonies. The organ first played on Christmas Day 1686 and proved extremely popular. The artist Gerard de Lairesse decorated the organ's shutters, showing such biblical figures and Old Testament scenes as the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon.

Over the succeeding centuries, the Westerkerk church continued to be of importance. It frequently occurs in the diaries of Anne Frank, being near the house where she was hidden in the attic. A statue in her honour can be found just outside the church. In 1966 Westerkerk was chosen as the site of the wedding of Queen Beatrix, due to the usual site for royal weddings being unavailable.

Visitors to the church may also wish to walk through the churchyard, where the famed Golden Age painter Rembrandt is buried. While the exact site of his grave is unknown, a plaque has been placed there in his honour.

Open Mon to Fri 11am to 3pm. Free entry. Please check before visiting.


Westerkerk church depicted at dusk

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How Allied forces turned the tide of WWII on the beaches of France

Written by Mark Simner

In March 1942, Adolf Hitler issued Führer Directive 40, calling for the building of an 'Atlantic Wall' to guard against an expected Allied seaborne invasion from England. Over the coming months, supplies of astronomical proportions of steel, concrete, and other materials were used to bolster the defences of

D-DAY HOUR BY HOUR

German-occupied Scandinavia and Continental Europe. Many thousands of slave labourers and people from the occupied territories, as well as workers from the German Organisation Todt were drafted in to complete the ambitious project. A number of the troops manning these defences would similarly be men from occupied Europe who were pressed into service.

Adolf Hitler's fears were well founded and a little over a year later, the Allies began to plan just such an invasion. They had been under pressure from Soviet leader Joseph Stalin to open a second front but instead had focused their efforts on other theatres of the war. However, it was only a matter of time before the Allies felt themselves ready to launch what remains the largest seaborne invasion in history. By the middle of 1944 the moment had come. It was time for the Allies to begin the liberation of Western Europe from the Nazis.

After much intense planning and preparation, Operation Overlord, the codename for what would become the Battle of Normandy, commenced on 6 June 1944. The actual seaborne and airborne landings in Normandy were codenamed Operation Neptune. Today we refer to that fateful day as 'D-Day', and the following is how the key events unfolded hour by hour. ▶

Illustrations throughout by Kevin McGivern

HOUR 06:00

As the clock turned 06:00, 270 USAAF B-26 Marauder bombers unleash their payloads on targets along the Normandy coast. Unfortunately, Allied bombing was not always as effective as was hoped. Historian James Holland explains in his book *Normandy '44*: "plenty of bombs had still fallen on and around beaches, but they had not destroyed the thick casements and, because of the drop delay to avoid hitting their own forces, even more bombs had landed inland, beyond the immediate crust of the German defences." For those in the initial assault waves, it was going to be a brutal day.

As the bombs fell, British sappers of the 3 Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers and Canadian paratroopers blow up the bridge over the River Dives at Robehomme. The paratroopers had lost their charges during their jump but nevertheless had managed to improvise.

At 06:02, the German 352nd Infantry Division reports ships offshore and vessels gathering off Grandcamp. The 709th Infantry Division similarly reports at 06:15 that Allied paratroopers are in Sainte-Mère-Eglise. Additional reports begin to flood into German HQs.

Opposite Omaha Beach, an Allied bombardment comes to an end at 06:27. Two minutes later, amphibious tanks of the 743rd Tank Battalion land at Dog Green and Dog White sectors. They are quickly followed by the first assault wave of infantry from the 116th Regiment, US 29th Infantry Division at 06:35. A second wave from the same regiment storms ashore moments later.

Meanwhile, around 06:31 at Utah, the 2nd Battalion of the 8th Regiment, US 4th Infantry Division begins landing at Uncle Red. They are followed by other elements of the regiment four minutes later and 32 amphibious tanks from the 70th Armored Brigade. Only 28 make it ashore.

Over on the opposite Allied flank, at 06:30, German general Edgar Feuchtinger orders an attack on the British 6th Airborne's bridgehead over the Orne River. Lightly armed British paratroopers are soon to face German armour from the 21st Panzer Division.

At 06:52, the German 352nd Artillery Regiment signals it has seen around 60 to 80 landing craft approaching Colleville-sur-Mer. The Maisy and Marcouf batteries come under fire from Allied warships.

"OPERATION OVERLORD'S AIM WAS TO ESTABLISH A LARGE-SCALE BRIDGEHEAD ON THE CONTINENT"

ABOVE Men of the US 101st Airborne shortly before taking off on D-Day. American and British airborne forces played a vital role in seizing key sites

BELOW Senior Allied commanders, including Dwight D Eisenhower (centre) and Bernard Montgomery (third from right), finalise plans for Operation Overlord at SHAEF HQ, London, in May 1944

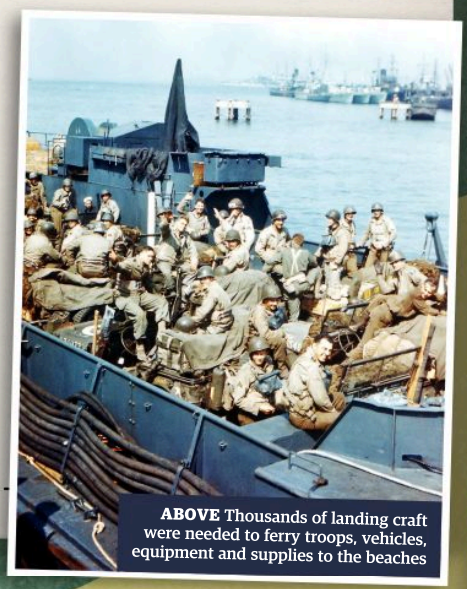
HOUR 07:00

An 88mm gun is destroyed at 07:10 at Widerstandsnest 61 (WN61), a German strongpoint on Omaha. The destruction is attributed to either Allied naval gunfire or a Sherman tank commanded by Staff Sergeant Turner Shepard of the 741st Tank Battalion. A minute later, Colonel James Earl Rudder's Rangers land at Pointe du Hoc. They are 41 minutes late due to navigational errors and sea currents.

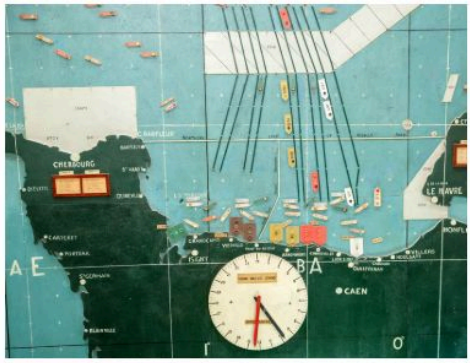
As the savage fighting for Omaha and Utah rage, a rocket barrage fired from specially equipped landing craft commence battering the coastal defences along Gold Beach at 07:15. Five minutes later the roar of naval guns that have been bombarding German defences across Gold, Juno, and Sword dies away and tanks of the 22nd Dragoons begin going ashore at Sword. These are in turn followed by specialised mine-clearing tanks that go to work on sections of Gold, Juno and Sword. At 07:25, the British 50th Infantry Division, led by Major General Douglas Graham, storm ashore at Gold, while AVRE tanks of the 5th Assault Regiment, RE land at Sword.

Joining the assault at 07:32 are men of the Free French *1er Bataillon de Fusiliers Marins Commandos*, under command of Captain Philippe Kieffer, who land at Colleville-sur-Orne. The French commandos would have a hard time of it on D-Day. As Holland explains in *Normandy '44*: "Of the 177 men in Kieffer's two troops, only 114 made it across the beach, and although fortunately most of those hit were wounded rather than dead, almost a third were now *hors de combat*."

Back at Omaha, landing craft LC1 91 is hit at 07:40 by either German artillery or a mine, instantly killing 73 soldiers. US Rangers continue their assault of Pointe du Hoc, establishing a temporary headquarters in a crater in front of an anti-aircraft bunker. Other Rangers prepare to land at Dog Green and Dog White sectors at Omaha, while the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division under Major General Rodney Keller wades ashore at Juno at 07:45. ▶



ABOVE Thousands of landing craft were needed to ferry troops, vehicles, equipment and supplies to the beaches



ALLIED STRATEGY

Overlord, Neptune, and Bodyguard: the Allied planning of the liberation of Western Europe

Allied planning for what would become known as the Battle of Normandy commenced in 1943. It would be given the codename of 'Operation Overlord' and its aim was to establish a large-scale bridgehead on the Continent, from which the Allies would eventually liberate Western Europe from years of German occupation.

Shortly after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, Stalin began to push his Western Allies to open a second front in Europe in order to relieve pressure on his own beleaguered forces. Almost a year later, both the United States and the Soviet Union agreed on the urgency to open this second front. However, Churchill persuaded Roosevelt to wait until the Allies were strong enough to mount such a large-scale operation.

Much to Stalin's anger, the Allies instead turned their attention to a series of campaigns in North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the subsequent invasions of Sicily and Italy. Nevertheless, by the middle of 1944, the Allies felt ready to launch their long-awaited landings in North-Western Europe.

In addition to the troop and equipment buildup for the coming invasion, the Allies launched an ambitious deception operation codenamed 'Bodyguard'. The Allies knew the Germans would be expecting the invasion, and so they adopted what later proved to be a successful strategy to mislead the Germans as to the time and location of the landings.

The first phase of Overlord would be codenamed 'Operation Neptune', which involved the actual landing of vast numbers of troops, equipment and supplies along the Normandy coast. What is often referred to today as 'D-Day' remains the largest seaborne invasion in military history. Although the Allies did not achieve all their objectives on D-Day, it paved the way for the eventual liberation of Western Europe.

HOUR 08:00

The Allies continue to pour troops onto the landing beaches. Four battalions of US infantry are now ashore at Utah, while the 5th Battalion of the Rangers, originally intended for Pointe du Hoc, land at Omaha. It becomes alarmingly apparent that all the tanks destined to come ashore at Fox Green sector have failed to make it, having sunk before reaching the beach. Nevertheless, US troops scramble under fire to the top of the sand dunes opposite WN60.

At 08:19, the German 916th Grenadier Regiment reports with some disbelief that Allied troops are scaling the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc with ropes and ladders. As Antony Beevor writes in his book *D-Day: The Battle for Normandy*: "Once the boats were in position under the cliff, rocket-fired grappling irons invented by British commando forces were used. Many fell short, partly because the ropes were heavy from sea water, but several took hold and the first men began to scale the cliff. Some London fire brigade ladders were also used. The Germans could not believe that the grappling irons were coming up from the landing craft under the cliff. The 352nd Infantry Division headquarters were informed that from warships on the high sea the enemy is firing special shells at the cliffs from which a rope ladder is falling out."

On Gold, the 7th Battalion of the Green Howards, 50th (Northumbrian) Infantry Division, comes ashore around 08:20. No.4 Commando of the 1st Special Service Brigade also arrive on Sword.

Someone present at Sword may have witnessed some rather interesting and surreal sights. Holland explains in *Normandy '44*: "The assault on Sword Beach seems to have attracted some eccentrics. One company commander in the first wave had spent the run to the shore reciting key passages of *Henry V* through a megaphone, while Lord Lovat insisted on wearing his beret rather than a helmet and was equally adamant that his own personal piper should play the bagpipes as they landed. It all helped with the *esprit de corps*."

Meanwhile at Omaha, US troops come under fire from the Maisy batteries, but at 08:25 some manage to infiltrate WN62. Others attempt to assault WN61. However, at 08:30, a temporary halt to the landings at Omaha is made due to lack of space on the beach. US troops then find themselves facing a German counterattack by 915th Grenadier Regiment, who attempt to push the Americans back from WN60. Nevertheless, WN70 is in Americans' hands by 08:45, and the upper casemate of WN62 is destroyed.

BELOW The sinking of the US navy minesweeper USS Tide off Utah Beach in June 1944

HOUR 09:00

By 09:00, the Rangers at Pointe du Hoc have fought off a counterattack by the German 916th Infantry Regiment, while at Omaha, men of the US 1st Infantry Division silence WN60. Five minutes later, Canadian troops begin wading ashore at Mike Red at Juno.

At 09:15, men of 3rd Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers blow up the railway bridge at Bures over the River Dives. The Germans now realise they have lost WNs 65, 68, and 70 to Allied troops.

The Allies feel it is time (at 09:17) to officially announce the invasion: "Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France."

Despite the high risk to Allied troops ashore, a naval bombardment of German positions around Omaha commences at 09:20 after a request by General Clarence R Huebner, commander of the US 1st Infantry Division. This bombardment lasts 28 minutes and silences the German battery at Longues-sur-Mer.

At Ouistreham (Sword) amphibious tanks of the 13th/18th Hussars open fire on the Casino bunker at 09:25. This allows Kieffer's Free French commandos to assault and take the stronghold. Hermanville is liberated by men of the South Lancashire Regiment at 09:30. Around the same time at Juno, Bernières is liberated by the Canadian North Shore Regiment and the Queen's Own Rifles.

BELOW A modern aerial view of Pointe du Hoc showing the geographical difficulties faced by US troops sent to assault it. Bomb craters can still be seen

ABOVE American soldiers inside a landing craft heading for Omaha Beach on 6 June 1944. An estimated 2,400 Allied troops became casualties on Omaha alone

HOUR 10:00

At Omaha, several hundred men of the 1st Battalion of the 116th Regiment climb over a cliff and reach Vierville-sur-Mer while others silence WN64. At 10:15, German batteries are put out of action by naval shelling, including several guns at WN62 and several more at Pointe de la Percée some 15 minutes later.

Feuchtinger orders his counterattack with tanks against the British 6th Airborne Division along the River Orne sometime after 10:00. At around this time, Hitler finally wakes up to be faced with the news of the Allied landings. It is said he responds with glee, believing the Allies would be smashed.

At 10:30, US troops take WN65 located at the junction between Easy Green and Easy Red. 21st Panzer Division is ordered to move west of the Orne Canal.

"ONE COMPANY COMMANDER... SPENT THE RUN TO THE SHORE RECITING KEY PASSAGES OF *HENRY V* THROUGH A MEGAPHONE"

HOUR 11:00

At 11:00, the American destroyer USS Thompson shells the German radar station at Pointe de la Percée. Leading elements of the 5th Rangers reach Surrain, south of Colleville-sur-Mer, about 20 minutes later. With US troops now on the heights of St. Laurent-sur-Mer, the German 352nd Infantry Division counterattacks at 11:27. At 11:45, the 1st Battalion of the 18th Infantry Regiment, US 1st Infantry Division lands at Omaha. ▶

ABOVE The USS Nevada bombards German positions at Utah. Although this photograph depicts an American battleship, the majority of naval vessels and personnel on D-Day were provided by the Royal Navy

HAM AND JAM: OPERATION DEADSTICK

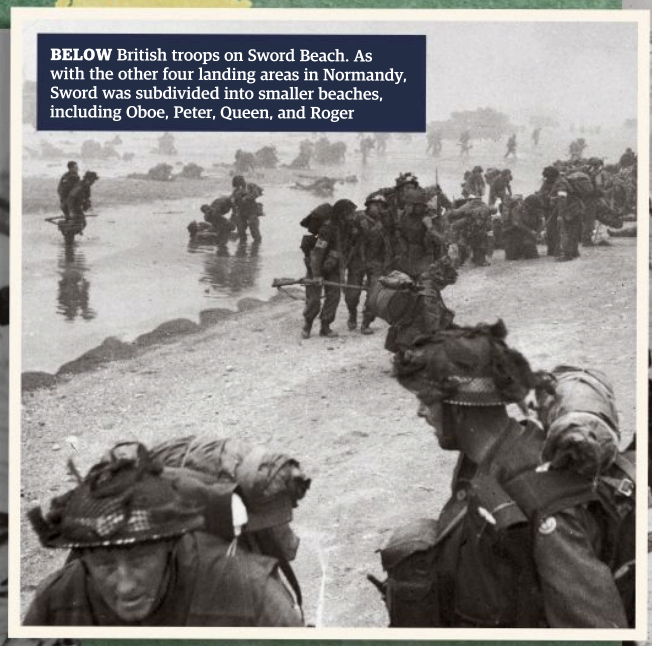
The audacious airborne landing mission to capture two vital bridges and secure the Allied left flank

The outline plan of Operation Deadstick was aptly described by General Richard "Windy" Gale: the assaulting glider troops were to "capture intact the two bridges of the Orne and the canal of Caen, Bénouville and Ranville ... The capture of these two bridges ... is based essentially on the surprise effect, the mission execution speed and the determination to overcome. Counter-attack will be expected and we will have to hold our positions until the arrival of the changing troops." Its aim was to secure the left flank of the Allied invasion force on D-Day. The task was given to the British 6th Airborne Division.

At 22:56 on 5 June 1944, six Horsa gliders towed by Halifax bombers took off into the night. Aboard the gliders was 'D' Company, 2nd (Airborne) Battalion of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry under the command of Major John Howard. Three of the gliders were bound for the bridge at Bénouville, which was codenamed 'Euston I' but known as 'Pegasus Bridge'. In a feat of incredible flying, the pilots landed the gliders within a mere 50 metres of the bridge. Two of the other three gliders intended to seize the bridge of Ranville (codename 'Euston II') landed within 150 metres, but the third landed 12km away. Nevertheless, both bridges were taken intact after a short and sharp fight with light casualties to the assaulting force.

Once both bridges were secure, the signal 'Ham and Jam' was sent via carrier pigeon. 'Ham' indicated the bridges were captured, while 'Jam' denoted they were intact. Reinforcements arrived later to strengthen control of the bridges. Thanks to careful planning and a degree of good luck, the audacious operation was a complete success, and it afforded a key point in the vital protection the Allies needed for their left flank.

BELOW Troops from the 48th Royal Marines land at Juno Beach



BELOW British troops on Sword Beach. As with the other four landing areas in Normandy, Sword was subdivided into smaller beaches, including Oboe, Peter, Queen, and Roger

HOUR 12:00

American paratroopers of the 101st Airborne have gained control of four key causeways (beach exit routes) at Utah, while men of the 2nd Battalion, 8th RCT enter Pouppeville. Paratroopers of the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment also arrive at the village of Angoville.

At Pointe du Hoc, the remaining Germans in an observation post surrender to the Rangers. This allows the Rangers to issue the signal "Mission completed" but that they were in "Urgent need of ammunition and reinforcements. Many losses."

Meanwhile, in England, Prime Minister Winston Churchill addresses the House of Commons. He tells fellow MPs that Rome is liberated and that Allied troops have landed in Normandy.

At 12:02, Lord Lovat's 1st Special Service Brigade arrives at Bénouville Bridge (Pegasus Bridge). The bridge has been courageously held for hours by glidermen of the British 6th Airborne led by Major John Howard. The always colourful and swashbuckling Lovat apologises to Howard for being 2 minutes and 30 seconds late.

Progress at Omaha continues. US troops reach the church at Colleville-sur-Mer at 12:14, while elements of the 18th Regiment, 1st Infantry Division also begin to advance on the commune a few minutes later.

HOUR 13:00

WN72 near Vierville-sur-Mer at Omaha is occupied by US troops, while at Sword the 1st Suffolk Regiment assaults a strongpoint known as 'Morris' south of Colleville-sur-Orne. Meanwhile, the Germans launch an assault on WN21 (known by the British as 'Trout'), which is being held by men from 41 Commando, Royal Marines.

At 13:30, Allied bombers begin bombing of the city of Caen. The city will sustain horrific damage on D-Day and beyond. General Omar Bradley, aboard the USS Augusta, receives the encouraging signal, "Troops previously stopped on beaches Easy Red, Easy Green, Fox Red, progress on heights behind beaches."

"THE ALWAYS COLOURFUL AND SWASHBUCKLING LOVAT APOLOGISES TO HOWARD FOR BEING 2 MINUTES AND 30 SECONDS LATE"

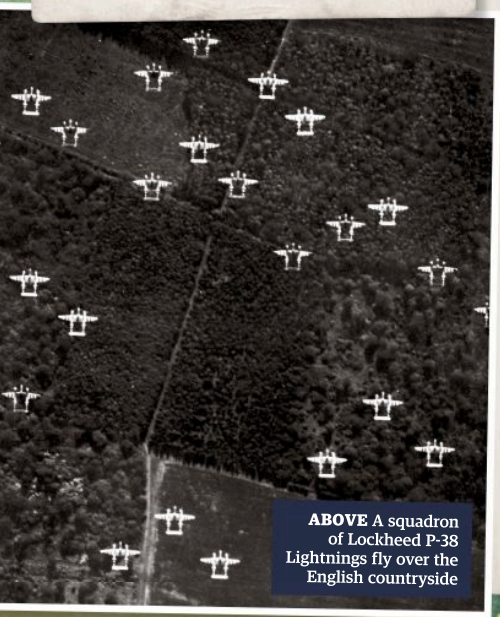
ABOVE Airspeed Horsa gliders on landing fields around Ranville used by the British 6th Airborne Division on D-Day

BELOW German POWs are escorted along the beach following D-Day

HOUR 14:00

At around 14:00, the remaining German defenders of the 84th Werfer Regiment from the battery on the western flank of Pointe du Hoc abandon their posts. Guns of the USS Harding hit and destroy the church belltower at Vierville-sur-Mer at 14:13, believing it was being used by German artillery observers.

Périers-sur-le-Dan, south of Sword Beach, is liberated by the Staffordshire Yeomanry at 14:25. Fighting here has been particularly brutal. At 14:58, German troops from the 352nd Artillery Regiment report that the Allies are in full control of Colleville-sur-Mer.



ABOVE A squadron of Lockheed P-38 Lightnings fly over the English countryside

HOUR 15:00

German troops from 916th Grenadier Regiment launch counterattacks against the Americans holding WN62a, WN62b, and WN64 at Omaha. However, by 15:26, it becomes clear the counterattacks have failed.

The Gestapo begin murdering 80 French resistance fighters being held at Caen prison. The first killings commence at 10:00 and carry on into the afternoon.

At 15:30, the British gain control of the Ouistreham port. 15 minutes later, the 2nd East Yorkshire Regiment and tanks from the 13th/18th Royal Hussars commence an assault of WN14.

HOUR 16:00

US paratroopers from Able Company, 505 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne, find themselves under German counterattack at La Fière near Ste-Mère-Église. At Gold Beach, the 1st Battalion, Royal Hampshire Regiment take WN35 at Le Hamel, while Biéville, south of Sword, is liberated by the Shropshire Regiment.

Meanwhile, the city of Caen is again heavily blasted by Allied aircraft. At 16:20, 25 tanks from 21st Panzer Division counterattack near Périers-sur-le-Dan.

HOUR 17:00

The bell tower of the Church of St-Laurent-sur-Mer is destroyed by US naval fire. The tower was being used by German snipers. At Omaha, men of the 5th Rangers and 116th Regiment storm WN73.

The Headquarters of the 352nd Infantry Division receives a message from the 916th Grenadier Regiment at 17:10. They are told St-Laurent-sur-Mer is now in Allied hands.

At 17:30, Free French General Charles de Gaulle begins a broadcast over BBC radio. He makes his now famous 'The Supreme Battle is Engaged!' speech. ▶

WIDERSTANDSNESTER

Read any book on the Normandy landings and Widerstandsnest will be mentioned. What are they?

The German term Widerstandsnest translates into English as 'nest of resistance' or 'resistance nest'. Widerstandsnester were a string of strongpoints built by the Germans along the Atlantic Wall, stretching from the mouth of the Orne in the east to La Hougue on the Cotentin Peninsula in the west. In books and documents, they are usually abbreviated to 'WN' along with a number – i.e. 'WN61' – to denote their location. They were often built from concrete and reinforcing steel by Organisation Todt and equipped with a variety of armaments.

Although many Widerstandsnester were either destroyed or have otherwise long since suffered from decay, several remain today in good condition and can be visited. An example includes WN48, located less than a kilometre north of the village of Longues-sur-Mer in Normandy. Known as the Longues-sur-Mer battery, WN48 was a coastal battery built on cliffs between Omaha and Gold beaches. Damaged by Allied naval fire on D-Day, the strongpoint was captured by the British on 7 June 1944. It is the only Normandy battery to retain several of its original guns.

"IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 156,000 ALLIED TROOPS LANDED ON THE BEACHES ON D-DAY, WITH 23,400 DROPPING IN FROM THE SKIES"

ABOVE Landing craft offloading troops, vehicles and supplies in Normandy, offering a glimpse into the enormous logistical undertaking of the operation

HOUR 18:00

The remaining German defenders at Nan Red sector at Juno surrender. At Sword Beach, men of the 2nd East Yorkshire Regiment begin an assault of WN12 ('Daimler') at Ouistreham.

At 18:25, German 914th Regiment receives orders to counterattack at Pointe du Hoc. Five minutes later, the US 26th Infantry Regiment, US 1st Infantry Division, begin landing at Omaha.

The church tower at Vierville-sur-Mer is again hit by US naval fire at 18:54.

HOUR 19:00

Bitter fighting between US and German troops continues at Omaha. At 19:25, the Germans launch their counterattack against the US Rangers at Pointe du Hoc. At 19:40, German artillery commence shelling Omaha beach at Colleville-sur-Mer, causing significant casualties among the Americans.

HOUR 20:00

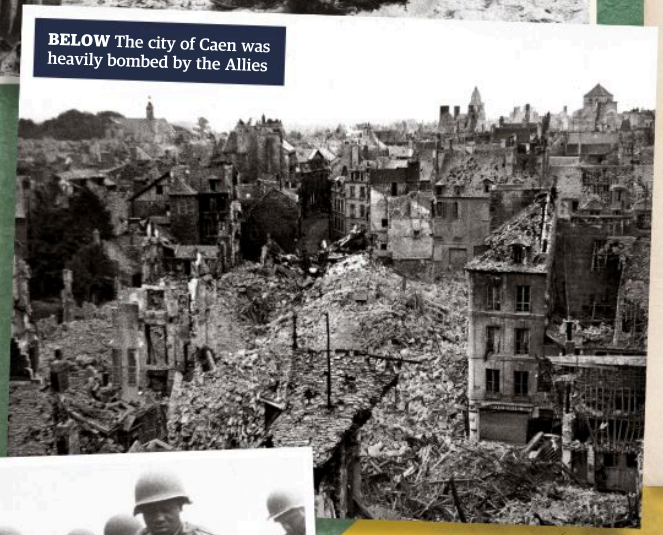
At Lion-sur-Mer, half a dozen German tanks of the 192nd Panzer Grenadier Regiment manage to break through but shortly afterwards retire. South of Sword, the men of the 1st Suffolks are still assaulting the Hillman strongpoint, which is being staunchly defended by German 736th Grenadier Regiment.

Beevor describes the difficulties that were faced by the British assaulting Hillman in *D-Day: The Battle for Normandy:* "Spread out over 400 yards by 600 yards, it had 'deep concrete pillboxes and steel cupolas with a complete system of connecting trenches'. Lacking the planned naval gunfire support, because the forward observation officer had been killed, the 1st Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment faced a terrible task crossing minefields and barbed wire covered by artillery and machine guns."

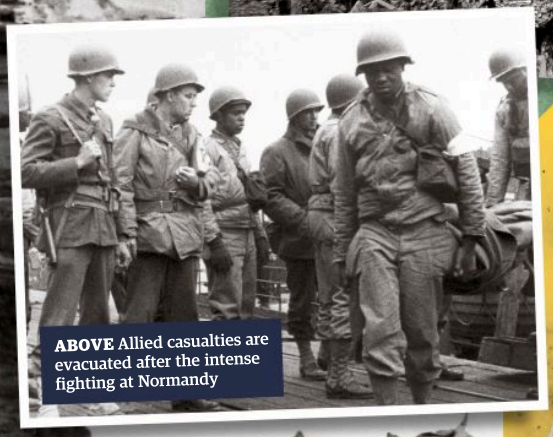
Meanwhile, Free French commandos reach Le Hauger, and at 20:15 the 1st Suffolks finally manage to storm Hillman. They are supported by tanks from the 13th/18th Hussars.

At 20:51, the remaining elements of the British 6th Airborne Division land at Ranville and north-west of Bénouville in Operation Mallard. Four minutes later, US Waco and Horsa gliders commence landing at Hiesville sector in Operation Elmira.

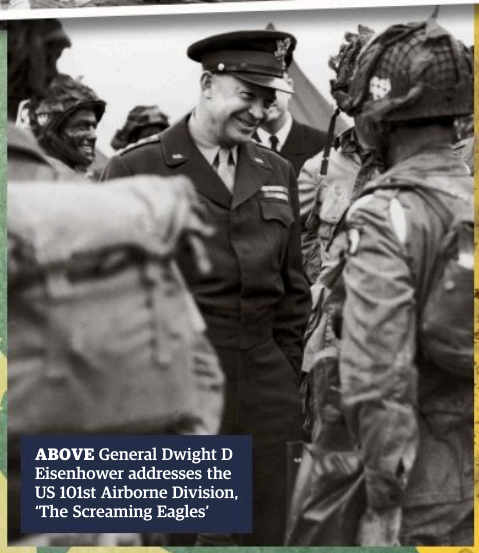
BELOW Many troops in German uniform were in fact men from occupied European countries who had been pressed into military service



BELOW The city of Caen was heavily bombed by the Allies



ABOVE Allied casualties are evacuated after the intense fighting at Normandy



ABOVE General Dwight D Eisenhower addresses the US 101st Airborne Division, 'The Screaming Eagles'

HOUR 21:00

The counterattack launched by 21st Panzer Division south of Juno comes to an end in failure. A party of 24 Rangers from the 5th Battalion reach the battery at Pointe du Hoc.

At 21:30, Rommel finally arrives at La Roche-Guyon from Germany. By this time, the various German counterattacks launched during the day have all been repulsed.

HOUR 22:00

The city of Caen suffers yet another bombing raid by Allied bombers. At 22:30, the town of Tailleville, which was being held by the 736th Grenadier Regiment, is liberated by Allied troops. The area of Arromanches is similarly liberated by the 1st Royal Hampshires.

HOUR 23:00

40 German soldiers of the 914th Infantry Regiment launch a counterattack against the Rangers at the Pointe du Hoc Battery. Although they are eventually pushed back, the 914th inflicts a heavy toll on the Americans on D-Day.

AN INCOMPLETE TRIUMPH

It is estimated that 156,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches on D-Day, with 23,400 dropping in from the skies. Senior Allied commanders had feared another Gallipoli and high casualties or even a total disaster. Mercifully, Allied losses were relatively light given the size of the operation. Total Allied casualties stood at an estimated 10,000, of which 4,400 were killed. German casualties are estimated at 4,000 to 9,000. Added to these figures are an uncertain number of French civilian casualties, mostly from the Allied bombing of Caen.

By the end of the day, the Allied line stretched for about 80 kilometres (50 miles) from the positions of the British airborne troops in the east and US forces at Utah in the west. However, it was not a continuous line and the Allied position was a precarious one.

Nor had the Allies achieved all their objectives for the first day of the invasion. The city of Caen was still in German hands, as was the airfield at Carpiquet. The Americans had not advanced as far as they had hoped at Pointe du Hoc, Omaha and Utah. Nevertheless, the day had still been a successful one and the Germans had been unable to throw the Allies back into the sea.

As Max Hastings writes in his book *Overlord: D-Day and the Battle for Normandy 1944*, "No disappointment or setback could mask the absolute Allied triumph of establishing themselves ashore on D-Day. But the failure to gain Caen was a substantial strategic misfortune ... But with 21st Panzer solidly established around Caen, it is impossible to believe that the British could have reached the city without running into deep trouble."

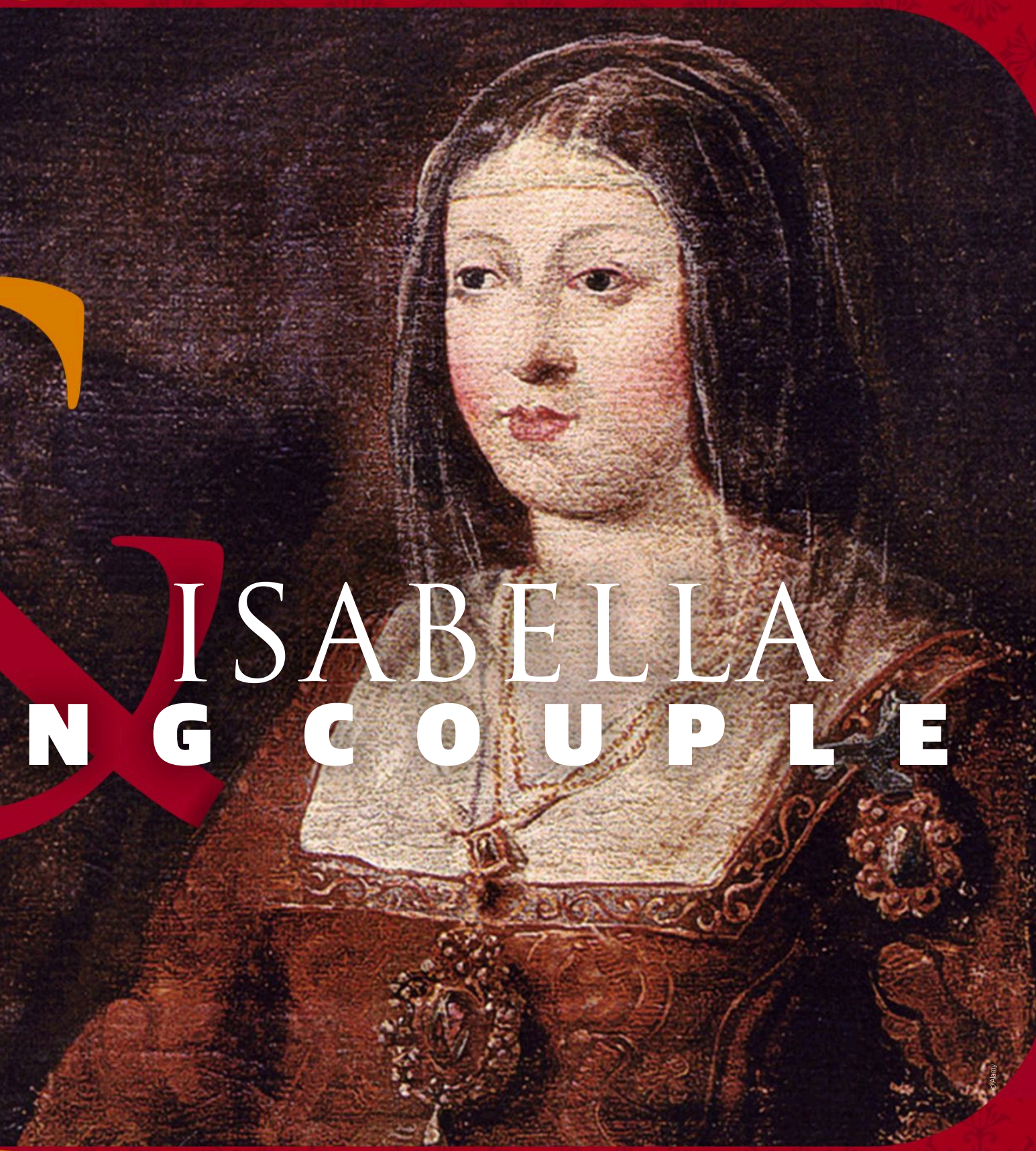
D-Day was the first important step in the liberation of Western Europe. Nevertheless, there would be many more bloody battles ahead, including the push to capture Cherbourg, the bitter fighting in the hedgerows, the battle of Caen, the battle of the Falaise Pocket, not to mention the eventual liberation of Paris.

FERDINAND & A UNIFYI

How the powerful and ambitious monarchs united Spain and ruled over a Catholic Age

Written by Emily Staniforth

It is rare in medieval history that a queen would overshadow her royal husband. However, this has long been the case for Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon. Both monarchs of their own respective regions, and together a united king and queen of Spain, Isabella and Ferdinand each brought their own strengths to rulership. Isabella was a fearsome, fiercely religious, determined and politically astute queen. But, Ferdinand was also a talented politician and a skilled military leader, and together the two rulers were an unstoppable force. But how did this partnership come about, and what did the married monarchs achieve throughout their reigns?



ISABELA
NG COUPLE

LEFT The marriage of Isabella and Ferdinand created the first version of a unified Spain

BELOW Ferdinand inherited the throne of Aragon in 1479

BELOW RIGHT The surrender of Sultan Boabdil of Granada to Isabella and Ferdinand

A ROCKY START

Before the marriage of Isabella and Ferdinand in 1469, the land we now recognise as Spain was made up of a number of smaller kingdoms, each ruled by their own authority. The kingdom of Castile was by far the largest of these constituent kingdoms, with the Castilian monarchs being powerful figures in the Iberian Peninsula. Prior to the accession of Isabella I to the throne, Castile was ruled by her older half-brother Henry IV, with whom she shared a father. Henry's reign was a turbulent time for Castile, with Henry not being the most capable monarch the kingdom had seen. During his reign, the power of the crown and the unity of Castile deteriorated, while the power of the nobility rose.

The matter of the Castilian succession was also a troublesome issue, with the legitimacy of Henry's only child being called into question. Having had no children with his first wife of 13 years, and the marriage finally being annulled due to the fact that it was never consummated, Henry's second marriage to the Portuguese princess Joan resulted in the birth of a daughter, Joanna. The nickname given to the young princess and heir presumptive of the Castilian throne was "La Beltraneja", as many Castilians presumed she was actually the daughter of the nobleman Beltrán de La Cueva. The circumstances surrounding the annulment of Henry's first marriage had led to the king earning the nickname "the Impotent", and it was thus assumed that he could not be the father of Joanna. Facing opposition from the Castilian nobility, Henry decided to appoint his half-sister Isabella as the next in line to the throne over La Beltraneja. This decision was made upon the condition that Henry would choose a husband for Isabella, and at the time she accepted those terms.

Unfortunately for Henry, Isabella was a headstrong young woman who knew her own mind. At around the age of six, she had been betrothed to a boy called Ferdinand who was the son of the King of Aragon, a neighbouring kingdom. Though this engagement had been broken off, the connection between the pair endured despite them never having met one another. While Henry and his advisors were busy choosing a potential husband for the next monarch of Castile, Isabella had other ideas. In the years since the engagement had been dissolved, Ferdinand had become heir to the Aragonese throne after the suspicious death of his rebellious older brother, and having fought alongside his father and against his brother in a civil war, Ferdinand had gained impressive military experience. Isabella, at only 18 years old, could see the political potential in a union with 17-year-old Ferdinand, and the advantages that joining their two kingdoms together would have become too much to ignore. In 1469, the pair decided to take control of their own destinies and, without seeking Isabella's brother's permission, agreed to marry in order to create a new future for themselves and their respective principalities. But there was one problem with their plan - Isabella and Ferdinand were second cousins and needed a special dispensation from the Pope in order to wed. It would have been a difficult process to petition for a papal dispensation, but a document signed by Pope Pius II was obtained. Though this document allowed the wedding to go ahead, there remain doubts over its validity, as Pius II actually died five years before he supposedly signed it. It seems likely that Ferdinand's father, John II of Aragon, had some hand in forging the document, as he was all too aware of the significance and power that his son's marriage to Isabella would hold.

In order to marry without the knowledge of Henry IV, Ferdinand had to sneak into Castile, disguised as a servant. With Isabella stealing away from Henry's court, the young couple met up and married in secret in the city of Valladolid, marking the beginning of, arguably, the most powerful partnership in early modern Europe.

When Henry discovered that the marriage had taken place, he was furious. He made the decision to change his will and appointed his daughter as heir, displacing Isabella. But Isabella would not back down, and when Henry died in 1474, she ensured that she made it to the city of Segovia before Joanna, and

> "ISABELLA WAS A HEADSTRONG YOUNG WOMAN WHO KNEW HER OWN MIND"

had herself declared as Queen of Castile. Although this act was largely symbolic, and of course Joanna and her supporters were not going to take the move lying down, it signalled the start of a decisive reign for Isabella in which she would make a number of bold political statements and strive to achieve what she wanted. From 1475 to 1479, the War of the Castilian Succession raged as Joanna's forces fought those of Isabella and Ferdinand for the crown. Joanna married her uncle, King Afonso V of Portugal, who aided her struggle by supplying Portuguese troops. Successful political and military strategies were employed by Isabella and Ferdinand on land, but they experienced defeat by the Portuguese in naval warfare, and eventually the Treaty of Alcáçovas was signed. The outcome agreed that Isabella would keep the Castilian crown. In the meantime, Ferdinand's father had died and he had inherited the kingship of Aragon.

AS MONARCHS

Despite their turbulent beginnings as monarchs, the de facto unification of Spain that occurred due to the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella marked the start of a new era in the region. Both monarchs set about re-establishing royal authority in Castile and Aragon after years of the decentralisation of power. Isabella took the reins in handling domestic affairs for their joint kingdoms, while Ferdinand looked outwards, focusing on issues of foreign diplomacy. The way in which Isabella governed, however, established her image as an independent ruler, and it quickly became clear that in terms of ruling Castile, Ferdinand held a position as his wife's consort. Though they were a partnership in their marriage and in wider rulership, it was Isabella who called the shots in Castile. When they had married in 1469, Isabella had ensured that her new husband had signed a Marriage Concession in which he acknowledged that Castile was his wife's domain and not his. He had also agreed that the Spanish monarchy would rule from Castile, not Aragon. And while it is certainly true that Isabella appeared to be the most dominant of the two, Ferdinand was also an impressive king in many respects. He presided over Aragon, keeping his rule largely separate from his wife's in Castile despite the unification of the two realms.

His political capabilities were admired across Europe, with Machiavelli even mentioning Ferdinand in his notorious work *The Prince* as an example of an extraordinary ruler of the time. Having secured victory over Portugal in order to consolidate Isabella's position as Queen of Castile, Ferdinand also led armies in other important military engagements to great success, most notably in the war to claim Granada from the Moors.

THE RECONQUISTA

Arguably the most important development that happened during the reign of Isabella and Ferdinand was the Reconquista – the "reconquest" of Spain that reclaimed land from non-Christians. From the outset, Isabella and Ferdinand prioritised their own personal Catholic faith and wanted their kingdoms to reflect their religious beliefs. They wished to rule over a Christian kingdom, but

DISCOVERING THE NEW WORLD

How Isabella and Ferdinand funded Columbus' journey to the Americas

It wasn't only marriage contracts that helped to expand Ferdinand and Isabella's influence across the world. The year 1492 yet again marked an important milestone in their reign, and in the history of Spain and the wider world. Christopher Columbus, a Genoese explorer, had been attempting to secure a patron to finance a voyage. He wanted to prove that he could reach Asia by heading west from Europe, a route he believed may be possible rather than sailing around the African continent. Columbus struggled to secure backing from the Portuguese and the English, but when he turned to Isabella and Ferdinand, he found eager supporters. The Catholic monarchs wanted to ensure that Spain participated in the Age of Discovery that had begun with Portuguese expeditions, and to potentially spread their Christian influence outside of their own domain.

Setting out in 1492 to make his journey, Columbus and his crew were financed by Castilian money. Though he never made it to Asia, Columbus unexpectedly stumbled upon the Americas, landing in the Caribbean in October 1492. Columbus' journey to America paved the way for wider European exploration of the continent, and ultimately the colonisation of its land and people. After his second visit to the Caribbean, Columbus reportedly enslaved around 500 indigenous people and sent them to Spain as a gift for Queen Isabella. However, the reception of this gift could not have been what Columbus hoped for, as Isabella sent them back to their home. She was outraged that Columbus had enslaved them, as she viewed them as her own subjects given that Columbus had 'discovered' their land in the name of Spain. While on her deathbed, Isabella even edited her will to state that the people of the New World should be treated kindly.

FERDINAND AFTER ISABELLA

What did Ferdinand's life look like after the death of his wife?

In 1504, the mighty Queen Isabella died, leaving Ferdinand without his partner for the first time since he was a teenager. With a number of his children having died before his wife, Ferdinand's daughter Juana was set to inherit the Castilian crown upon her mother's death. However, it is believed that Juana suffered from some form of mental illness. Some historians have suggested she struggled with depression, while others have posited that she may have had a condition such as schizophrenia or bipolar. As a result of her mental health, she became known as Juana the Mad, and Isabella had foreseen that she may have faced difficulties if she inherited the crown. Juana's mother had stated in her will that if Juana was unable to rule, Ferdinand would rule as her regent. Whether or not Juana would have been fit to rule is an unanswerable question, but we do know that Ferdinand took on the regency of Castile.

In 1505, Ferdinand married the young Germaine de Foix, the niece of the King of France. This move allied him to the French, and gave him a son. Since his son with Isabella had died, Ferdinand likely hoped that this son could inherit the Spanish crown after his death. But, the young boy died only hours after he was born. When Ferdinand died in 1516, the Crown of Aragon passed to Juana, and she became Queen of both Castile and Aragon. Her husband, Philip, had died in 1506, and so Juana's son Charles reigned beside her as her co-ruler until her death. Charles, the grandson of Isabella and Ferdinand, became one of the most powerful figures in early modern Europe, with his titles including King of Spain, Holy Roman Emperor and Lord of the Netherlands.

they faced a problem in that the Iberian Peninsula was populated by a significant number of Jewish citizens, as well as being home to Moorish strongholds. Ferdinand and Isabella blamed corruption in the Catholic Church on Conversos (Jews who had converted to Catholicism to evade the persecution that had faced the Jewish population for centuries) and hatred towards the Conversos was rife, as it was a common belief that they were not true Christians and secretly continued to practise their Jewish faith. Partly as a result of this attitude towards Conversos, and in order to ensure that Castile embodied the united Christian kingdom they were striving for, Isabella and Ferdinand made the decision to establish the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in 1478. The Inquisition, notorious for its brutal techniques, was tasked with seeking out so-called heretics across Ferdinand and Isabella's territories. Appointing an Inquisitor General to oversee the torture and executions of thousands of perceived heretics, Isabella and Ferdinand presided over a reign of terror in which people lived in fear of being questioned, found out and killed. Conversos began to leave Spain en masse, hoping to find a safer life elsewhere.

In terms of Ferdinand and Isabella's religious mission, 1492 was the most important and significant year of their reigns. During their rule, the Moors that had long inhabited the Iberian Peninsula had become centred in Granada at the southern end of Spain, as the forces of the Reconquista pushed Muslims further

> "THE SPANISH MONARCHS VIEWED THEIR CHILDREN'S MARRIAGES AS STRATEGIC"

and further south. In Granada, Muslim life, art and culture flourished under the rule of the Sultans at the Alhambra Palace, posing a threat to the vision of Isabella and Ferdinand's Christian kingdom. From the 1480s, the pair made a decisive effort to claim the remaining lands held by Muslims, and with their sights set on Granada a war began. Isabella and Ferdinand's Christian armies faced the Muslim forces of Sultan Boabdil in a long and costly campaign until on 2 January 1492, Boabdil capitulated to the Catholic monarchs and Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, fell. The impact of this victory for Isabella and Ferdinand was devastating for the Moors in Spain, as many were forced to convert. The Moriscos (Muslims who had converted to Christianity) were never truly accepted into Christian Spain, and were eventually expelled from the country during the reign of Philip III in 1609.

Following the conquest of Granada, and having taken the advice of Inquisitor General Torquemada, Isabella and Ferdinand issued the Alhambra Decree on 31 March 1492, which gave the Jewish population of their kingdoms a choice.

TOP LEFT Isabella and Ferdinand met with Christopher Columbus to discuss his journey to the Indies

ABOVE A depiction of Jewish families fleeing Castile in 1492

BELOW Isabella had herself proclaimed Queen of Castile after the death of her half-brother

BELOW RIGHT Isabella and Ferdinand are buried together in the cathedral at Granada

Either they could convert to Catholicism, or they would be expelled from the region. The edict specified that Spanish Jews would have a few months to make their decision, and while many converted in order to remain in Spain, many others decided to hurriedly leave and emigrate. It is believed that around 40,000 Jews attempted to escape from Spain, with the Ottoman Empire a popular destination for those seeking refuge. However, even if they made it out of Spain, the reception awaiting the expelled Jews elsewhere was not always a welcome one. Though with the expulsion of the Jews the Catholic monarchs had, in principle, achieved the Reconquista, they still faced many religious challenges after 1492 dealing with the converted Jews and Muslims who remained in Spain. But, their bloody campaign had achieved its aims.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As well as achieving many of their domestic goals, Isabella and Ferdinand worked hard to secure the new united Spain a reputation as a powerhouse internationally. Throughout their marriage, Isabella had birthed seven children in total, five of whom survived childhood and as young adults served as important pawns in their parents' foreign policy plans. To secure political and familial alliances with the influential players of Europe at the time, the Spanish monarchs viewed their children's marriages as strategic, and had educated them all in the humanist fashion to prepare them for lives as rulers.

Their eldest daughter Isabella married Afonso, the heir to the Portuguese throne and grandson of King Afonso V, as had been agreed when Isabella and Ferdinand won the War of the Castilian Succession against Afonso V's Portuguese forces. Sadly this marriage ended when Prince Afonso died prematurely, and subsequently Princess Isabella was married to the next Portuguese heir, Prince Manuel. Isabella died giving birth to their son, Miguel de Paz, who also died before he was two years old. After Princess Isabella's death, Ferdinand and Isabella maintained their ties with the Portuguese royals by marrying another daughter, Maria, to her sister's widower. Manuel and Maria went on to become the King and Queen of Portugal and had ten children together. Ferdinand and Isabella's son, John, married a Habsburg princess, while their daughter Juana was matched with a Habsburg prince. Their youngest daughter, Catherine, more commonly remembered as Catherine of Aragon, helped Spain form an alliance with England when she was first married to Prince Arthur Tudor, before he died and she was married to his brother, Henry, the future King Henry VIII.

THE END OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Isabella I of Castile died in 1504, leaving behind a unified Christian Spain. Though her methods may have been brutal, she achieved exactly what she had set out to do and had done so despite a turbulent start to her reign, and as a female ruler in a time when men dominated European politics. Upon her death, Isabella's body was taken to Granada, a final and fitting symbol of her victory over the previously Muslim stronghold, where she was interred at a monastery. Ferdinand later joined her when he died in 1516, despite the fact that he had remarried after Isabella's death. Their bodies now lie together, entombed at the Royal Chapel at Granada, beside the tomb of their daughter Juana and son-in-law Philip, and the coffin of their infant grandson, Miguel da Paz.

Francois Vidocq

The First Detective

In 19th century Paris, one criminal-turned-detective pioneered many of the techniques used in modern-day crime solving

Written by Callum McKelvie

All images: © Getty Images

From Sherlock Holmes to Miss Marple, we all love stories of the eccentric master detective, solving crimes through clever deduction and superior wit. Yet the world's first modern investigator was himself something of a bohemian, founding a small team of like-minded individuals to take on the criminal underworld of 19th century Paris – Eugene Francois Vidocq. In the years that he worked for the Parisian police he claimed to have been responsible for the arrest of thousands of ne'er-do-wells, and is even credited with establishing the world's first private detective agency.

Of his adventures, much has been written and it is clear that he was not opposed to embellishing the facts with heavy doses of fiction too. As such, it is often difficult to separate the man Vidocq from his own self-created myth. Join us as we don our deerstalkers, grab our magnifying glasses and indulge in some investigating of our own to discover the true identity of the first detective?

Juvenile Delinquent

Given Vidocq's later impact on the world of criminology, you might be surprised to learn that his younger years were spent on the opposite side of the law. As the *Public Domain Review* eloquently put it, he was "the criminal who became a criminologist." He committed his first crime at the age of 13, stealing his wealthy parents' silver crockery, selling it and within a single day had spent the proceeds. Unbeknown to Vidocq, his father pulled a few strings to try his hand at harsh parenting. He had the boy arrested and forced to serve a ten-day prison sentence. But this did not dissuade the young Eugene Francois. Later, he used a feather coated in glue to lift coins from the cashbox in his parents' bakery. While his plan was successful, the young criminal considered it too much hard work for too little gain and obtained the skills of a blacksmith so that he could instead help himself to the entire cash register. According to Historian James Morton, his earnings were then quickly spent in a local bar.

Fleeing from home, he attempted to join a troupe of travelling performers. But this newfound career was short-lived when he was offered the key role of a 'South Sea cannibal' and ordered to finish his act by consuming a live chicken in front of his audience. Vidocq refused, deciding that perhaps a career in the army would be less traumatic. At the age of 16, he signed up and quickly found a taste for the foil, challenging 15 men to duels and killing two of his opponents. He frequently ▶

"He committed his first crime at the age of 13, stealing his wealthy parents' silver crockery, selling it and within a single day had spent the proceeds"

ABOVE A depiction of Vidocq during one of his many prison escapes, disguised in the hat and cloak of a guard

deserted and, at one point, even defected to the Austrians. It was perhaps inevitable that such a reckless loose cannon with little respect for authority would eventually find himself behind bars. At the age of 19, Vidocq served his first prison sentence after he discovered that his mistress had another lover, and had violently beaten him. The next 15 years of his life were spent either behind bars or fleeing from the law.

Jail bird

During his years of incarceration, he served time in the 'galleys', moored ships whose imprisoned occupants spent their days engaged in hard labour. But Vidocq was not a man who was going to simply accept his imprisonment, and he very quickly set about attempting to escape. Vidocq would later write that he had escaped from over 20 prisons and all of France's galleys through such ingenious means as donning a nuns' habit and simply walking out of the prison hospital in disguise. But at some point during Vidocq's cycle of incarceration and living on the run, something strange happened – he had a change of heart. The 34-year-old approached the French constabulary with the offer of becoming a police informer. He was soon sent back to prison, where for nearly two years he reported on the criminal activities of his fellow inmates.

So reliable was the information Vidocq provided to the police, that they quickly arranged for his 'escape' and placed him

on the streets. Of his informing, Vidocq would later state: "Not a single day went by that I did not make the most important discoveries; not a single crime went by which was committed or was soon to be committed of which I did not know all the circumstances; I was everywhere, I knew everything and the authorities, when I called upon them to intervene, were never misled by my information."

Birth of the Brigade de Sûreté

The authorities quickly realised that Vidocq had something of a knack for undercover work and he was brought onto the force. Expert in Victorian-era crime, Dr Angela Buckley, wrote that Vidocq was shocked at the lack of communication and cooperation

"To this end he suggested the creation of a new plainclothes operation, intended to further utilise undercover work to both detect and prevent crimes"

The Literary Detective

Francois Vidocq's flamboyant personality and sensational stories saw him inspire a number of contemporary works of fiction...

Les Miserables
VICTOR HUGO | 1862

Vidocq is thought to have inspired not only Victor Hugo's main hero, Jean Valjean, but also his nemesis – Inspector Javert. A sequence in which Valjean saves a worker at a factory by lifting a heavy cart is inspired by an event that Vidocq details in his memoirs, and states occurred at his paper factory in 1828.

Murders in the Rue Morgue
EDGAR ALLAN POE | 1841

Edgar Allan Poe's classic tale of the macabre sees his detective, C Auguste Dupin (inspired by Vidocq), attempt to solve the mystery of a number of unsolved killings of women plaguing the city of Paris. At the story's climax it is revealed the murderer is not a man at all, but an escaped orangutan.

between the various branches of the police. To this end he suggested the creation of a new plainclothes operation, intended to further utilise undercover work to both detect and prevent crimes. His wish was soon granted and he was made head of the Brigade de Sûreté. The brigade was an exceptionally small outfit, with Vidocq assisted by only four other officers. Over the years it would expand to 12 men, but some sources state that at its height Vidocq may have had 28 undercover operatives (including several women) working for him. All were in their own way, ex-criminals, Vidocq seemingly believing in the notion that 'it takes a thief to catch a thief'.

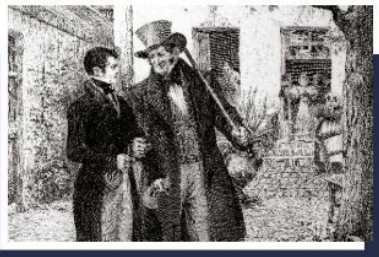
Vidocq and his team quickly went to work, introducing a wide array of innovations to the world of criminal detection. Perhaps the most surprising of these was the creation of a comprehensive system of records that remarkably had not existed before. According to the *Public Domain Review* this took the form of a card index system of files on thousands of known criminals. During one court case, when the defendant's lawyer argued his client had no previous criminal record, Vidocq produced a lengthy file detailing the man's physical description and previous crimes. Vidocq and his agents worked to create a vast network of known informants, utilising cash bribes where necessary but also offering lighter sentences to already serving criminals. However, John Madinger, in his work *Confidential Informant: Law Enforcement's Most Valuable Tool* states that Vidocq also used other means, pioneering "the hammer", which was essentially "using the threat of imprisonment as a means of motivating cooperation."

ABOVE-LEFT British prison reformer John Howard inspects the prisoners of the galleys engaged in hard labour

MIDDLE An illustration of the humorous instance when Vidocq claimed to have escaped disguised as a nun

ABOVE Vidocq arrests a thief after finally managing to find and corner him

But Vidocq's innovations went further, introducing methods that would later become commonplace in the field of forensics. When seeking the culprit of a number of robberies, Vidocq whittled down his suspects to a man named Hotot. Convinced that Hotot was the thief, but unable to produce the evidence necessary to secure a conviction, Vidocq spotted Hotot's muddy boots and was instantly reminded of similar footprints at the scene of the crime. Plying Hotot with wine so ▶



Pere Goriot
HONORÉ DE BALZAC | 1835

As well as inspiring heroes, the earlier aspects of Vidocq's life also influenced authors to create a number of criminal masterminds, among them Honoré de Balzac's Vautrin who, like Vidocq, would eventually find himself working for the Parisian police. Balzac was just one of a number of writers whom Vidocq was said to have befriended.

Great Expectations
CHARLES DICKENS | 1861

Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*, alongside works such as *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol*, remains one of the 19th century author's most famous works. Alongside characters such as Miss Havisham, one of the most colourful characters is the escaped criminal Magwitch – purportedly based on Vidocq's memoirs.

The Mysteries of Paris
EUGENE SUE | 1842-1843

One of the first examples of serialised storytelling in France, Eugene Sue's enthralling tale was slowly woven over the course of 150 tense issues. Its stories of the Parisian underworld may have been influenced by Vidocq's memoirs, but were themselves highly influential, helping to inspire Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* among others.

The Vidocq Society

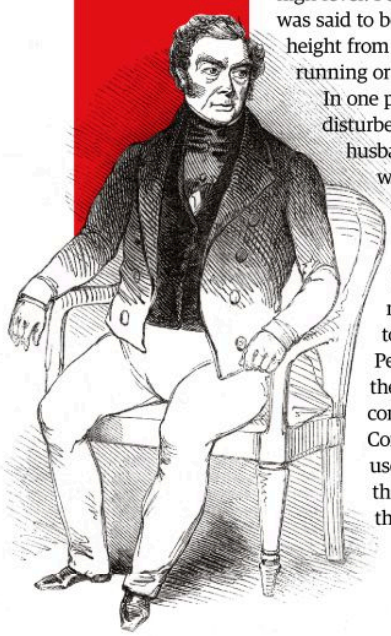
Far from the streets of Paris, this elite dining society solves cold cases in the name of the first detective

Even centuries after his death, Francois Vidocq's legacy continues to inspire those in the world of criminology. In Philadelphia, there is an exclusive organisation who meet once a month for lunch. In exquisite banqueting halls and over fine food, the members of the Vidocq Society discuss criminal cold cases and try to bring justice to the victims of decades past. This unusual club is the brainchild of three friends, William Fleisher, an ex-cop and FBI agent; Richard Walter, a prison psychologist; and Frank Bender, a forensic sculptor. In 1990 this trio formed an organisation for fellow crime experts and lovers to meet and discuss their subject over haute cuisine.

As time went on, the Society's mission changed. The potential was seen for them to put their skills to use, solving cold cases that had baffled the police of the time. According to *The Guardian*, their assistance may have led to the solving of some 300 crimes, including the discovery that the missing persons case of Scott Dunn was in fact a murder, achieving a conviction for his ex-girlfriend without a body or weapon. The society's members never number more than 82, one for each year of Vidocq's life.

ABOVE Vidocq's adventures have provided inspiration for many authors and filmmakers, such as this 1923 film directed by Jean Kemm

BELOW A depiction of an older Vidocq from his time in London in 1845



> *"Francois Vidocq's imagination and ingenuity continue to inspire crime fighters the world over"*

he was not aware of Vidocq's men's actions, he instructed one officer to sneakily obtain one of the boots. The other he ordered to return to the crime scene and pour plaster of paris into the footprint. Later, Vidocq compared the stolen boot with the plaster cast and discovered they were identical. Hotot was convicted in the first recorded use of plaster of paris cast in detection.

In conducting his own undercover work, Vidocq drew on a skill that had previously assisted him in his escapes from Paris's prisons – that of disguises. He once disguised himself as an 'invalid', using dye to darken his hair, strapping his arm tight against his chest and employing a fake arm to give the impression that he only had the use of one. During his incarceration, when he needed to be transferred to the prison hospital, he took tobacco juice in order to give himself a high fever. Perhaps most bizarrely, Vidocq was said to be able to reduce his natural height from 5'10, even when walking, running or even jumping.

In one particular case, Vidocq was disturbed when he heard that the husband of the Comtesse D'Arcy was to be executed for her murder. The Comtesse had been shot, but Vidocq was unconvinced that her husband had either the motive, nor the temperament to carry out such a crime. Persuading a doctor to remove the bullet from her body, he compared it to the gun the Comte was supposed to have used. The bullet was far larger than the barrel of the pistol and there was no way the weapon could have fired it. However, using his charm to coerce his way into the home of the Comtesse's lover, he found not only a gun carrying the same type of projectile but also a number of her possessions.

So successful were these new methods of detection that, if Vidocq himself is to be believed, then the Brigade was responsible for the arrest of thousands of criminals. But there were rumours that the efficiency of the Brigade was due to something far more insidious than mere innovation. In the 1885 edition of *The International Cyclopaedia: A Library of Universal Knowledge*, the author notes that "suspicions became rife that Vidocq was himself the originator of many of the burglaries he showed himself so clever in hunting out, and even contrived to make a good thing of them." Whether such rumours had any validity is of course unknown, but evidently the author of the *International Cyclocpaedia* believed that, "Mr Vidocq being plainly the sort of person in whom any suggested blackguardism is rather more likely than not, it had every inherent possibility."

Going private

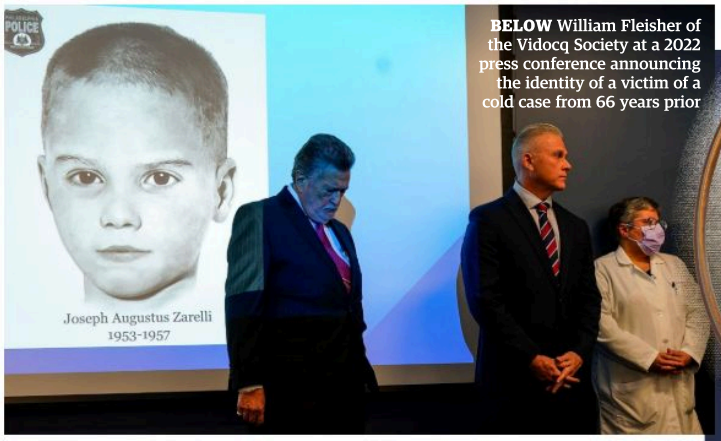
In 1827, Vidocq resigned and occupied his time by publishing four volumes of memoirs that popularised his story and made him something of a celebrity. He then spent the following years running a paper factory, employing former convicts before in 1831 he once more returned to the Brigade de Sûreté. However, within six months he was forced to resign due to a case in which his undercover agents were accused of enticing known criminals to commit illegal acts, in order to secure convictions against them. But perhaps realising that detection work was where his skills lay, Vidocq decided that if he was not welcome among the officers of the law, then he would go into business for himself.

The Bureau de Renseignements (Office of Intelligence) is widely considered to be the world's first modern private detective agency. According to Clive Emsley in his book *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950*, the Bureau "specialised in investigating the creditworthiness of individuals for businessmen." Clients paid via annual subscription that allowed them to access comprehensive files on Paris's known criminals. The Bureau also investigated more personal cases, which would later become the bread and butter of the private detective, relating from suspected infidelity to tracing missing persons. So successful was Vidocq's venture that the Bureau established offices in the Galerie Vivienne, described by Vidocq's memoir editor Ron Walz as "one of the most fashionable glass-covered arcades in Paris."

But others resented Vidocq's success and the Parisian police objected to the creation of what was essentially seen as a private police force. Multiple times Vidocq was arrested and he and his Bureau faced trial for a variety of offences, including fraud and illegally detaining persons. Eventually, the Bureau would be forced to close.

Death of a detective

In 1845, Vidocq travelled to Britain. At age 69, he was investigating the possibility of opening a new branch of his detective agency and gauging interest in another volume of his memoirs. Upon arrival in London, he spent much of his time putting



BELOW William Fleisher of the Vidocq Society at a 2022 press conference announcing the identity of a victim of a cold case from 66 years prior

LEFT An illustration showing Vidocq emptying a tavern of criminals

BELOW In recent decades Vidocq's legacy has been honoured on stamps

on an exhibition relating to his days as a detective. Among the items on display were supposed murder weapons, manacles that Vidocq claimed had held him during his imprisonment, and a number of his disguises. According to the *London Review of Books*, Vidocq spent time modelling these disguises for eager patrons, taking libations with interested journalists and trying to sell "several dozen paintings of French battles and four thousand imitation tropical fruits that had recently come into his possession."

The exhibition would prove to be something of a last hurrah for the ageing detective, and in the last 12 years of his life there were few of the adventurous escapades that had defined him. However, according to Morton in his Vidocq biography, *The First Detective*, in 1848 Vidocq returned to London this time to spy on Charles Louis-Bonaparte. Of his mission, he reported that: "There have been difficulties without number but my temerity has been crowned. I knocked and all doors were opened to me." Charles Louis would soon return to France and in 1852 reinstated the imperial monarchy, becoming Napoleon III. Vidocq continued to slowly slide into poverty, his health deteriorated until on 11 May 1857 he died, aged 81.

The legacy of Eugene Francois Vidocq cannot be understated. From pioneering techniques, such as taking plaster casts of footprints, to inspiring modern-day sleuths – and not to mention supposedly even being one of the many models for the most famous detective of all, Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes – Francois Vidocq's imagination and ingenuity continue to inspire crime fighters the world over.

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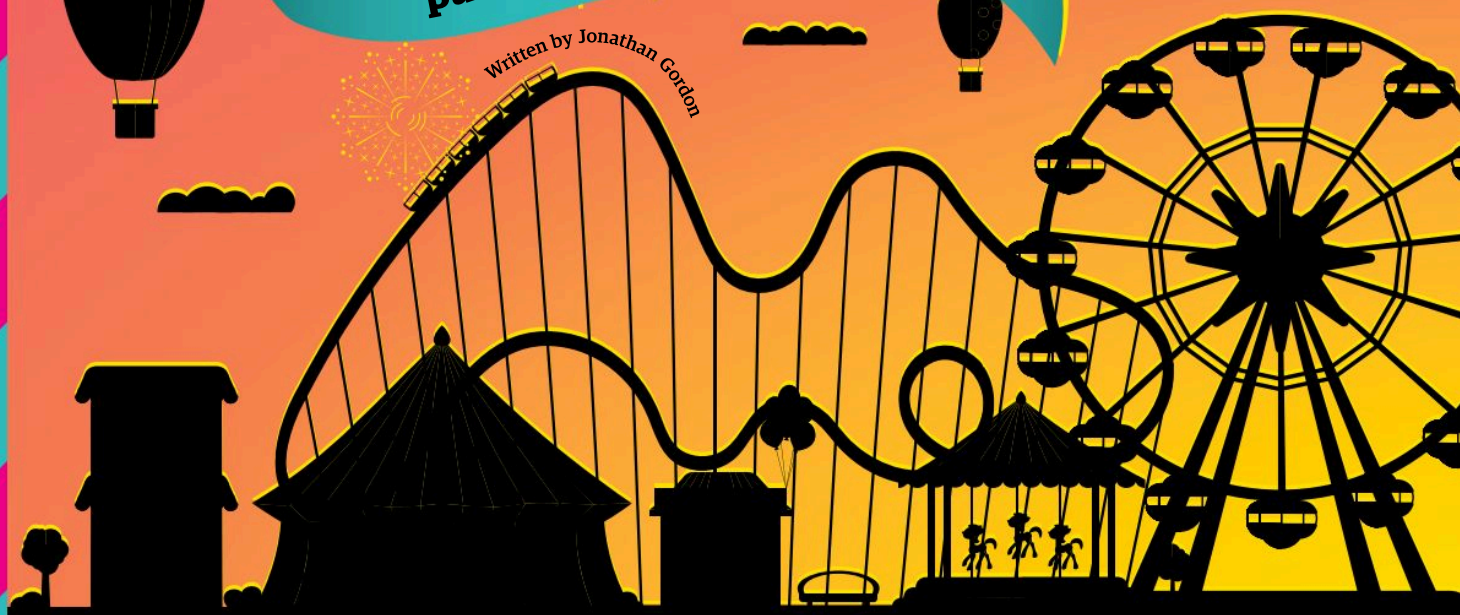
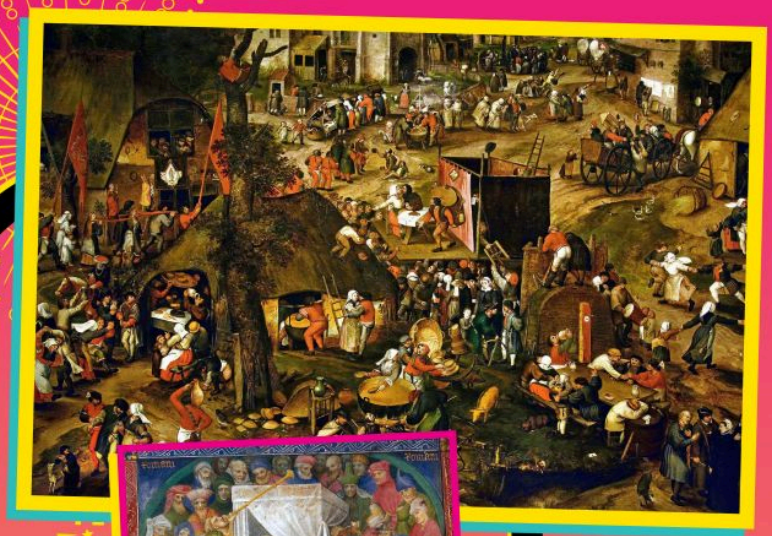
Evolution of the Amusement Park

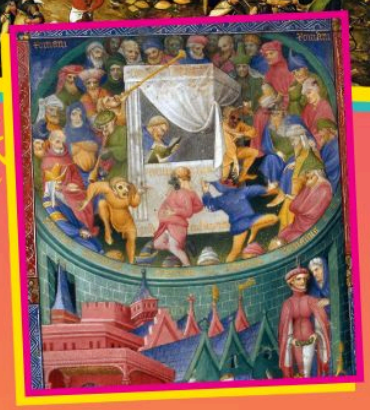
From pleasure gardens to Disneyland, discover the history of public entertainment resorts

Written by Jonathan Gordon



Roller coasters, spinning tea cups, swinging pirate ships and log flumes are the staples of the modern amusement park, but these often massive, dedicated entertainment spaces have a fascinating history. Their origins can be traced back to the ancient world with its pleasure gardens, all the way up through the Renaissance and Industrial Revolution, with each age building on the attractions that came before. Here we'll chart the evolution of the amusement park, from its lavish natural parks to the mechanical wonders of the modern world.





ABOVE A farmer's fair in the Netherlands from 1570

LEFT Actors, mimes and jugglers from a 1407 manuscript

Fairs & Festivals

The history of the fair, a gathering of people for a common purpose for a limited time, goes back to ancient history. A key visual of the fair to this day can trace its legacy back to religious festivals, where large crowds necessitated the use of tents to accommodate visitors. However, the use of the fair primarily for entertainment rather than exclusively trade or religious purposes began to take on a more recognisable shape in the medieval period.

As a means to drink and make merry, the fair became very popular for working people and a royal charter was set up in 13th-century England to manage the revenues of such events. From the 1200s to 1350, over 1,500 charters were granted for the holding of fairs and markets, establishing a strong network of traders and entertainers. Many of these fairs became travelling enterprises, being more practical to seek money in different towns rather than one place.

The carnival also emerged from this tradition, with these events gaining particular popularity in continental Europe. The carnival can also trace its roots back to the ancient world, often linked to religious celebrations as a time to feast and celebrate. Decorations and music would fill the senses, religious plays and feats of acrobatics would entertain and food and drink would be enjoyed. These traditions carried on into Christianity and offered an outlet for working people to leave their troubles behind for the day.

Pleasure Gardens

It was not unusual for great houses, particularly those of royalty, to have large and fabulously maintained gardens through many periods of history. Alongside this were botanical gardens, which can be traced to ancient China and ancient Mediterranean regions, where plants were cultivated for early medicines alongside fruits, vegetables and herbs. With the printing press came an easy means of sharing and disseminating guidance on how to care for these plants, and so the Renaissance period saw a resurgence of such gardens, with notable examples in Pisa and Padua in Italy.

By the 18th century, Swiss physician and botanist Jean Gesner claimed there were 1,600 such gardens around Europe alone. Around the same time, the pleasure gardens that were once the refuge of the wealthy elites were opened to the public. Vauxhall Gardens in London was one of the most popular, opening in 1729, established by entrepreneur Jonathan Tyers. It cost a shilling to enter, but the draw of circus acts and firework displays enticed many visitors who found themselves with greater leisure time. Industrialisation was not only changing the economy, but also altering how people's days were managed. These venues also put on performances from musicians and other artists, attracting new audiences to the arts.

The phenomenon was not contained to the UK either as New York got its own Vauxhall Gardens in 1767 with a carousel added in the early 1800s, while one of the most famous, Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, was opened in 1843 as Tivoli & Vauxhall. Prater, a pleasure garden in Vienna, installed a giant Ferris Wheel in 1897.

RIGHT The Rotunda of Ranelagh Gardens from 1751

FAR RIGHT An overview of Vauxhall Gardens, London, from 1751

Resorts Parks

The construction of railways led to a new form of entertainment destination, developed by rail companies to entice off-peak and weekend travel. Located at the end of the lines, such company-driven locales were also known as Trolley Parks, while this is also when beach day trips began to become popular. These resorts would offer dance halls, restaurants, games and, eventually, rides. Good examples of this include Hirakata Park in Osaka, Japan, which was developed from a botanical garden by the Keihan Railway Company in 1910.

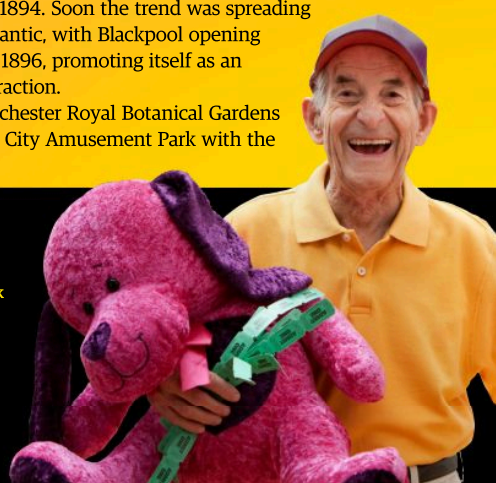
However, one of the most famous of these locations was Coney Island in New York, which went on to have a massive influence on amusement parks to come. The first hotel on Coney Island was opened in 1829 as it was connected to the rest of New York by railway. Following the Civil War it became an increasingly popular seaside attraction, and further amenities were developed such as pavilions offering cabaret shows. The island was actually split into three competing ventures: West Brighton backed by railway syndicates, Brighton Beach controlled by businessman Bill Engeman, and Manhattan Beach under the control of banking and railroad entrepreneur Austin Corbin. Eventually it was mostly taken over by construction company head John Y McKane.

Resorts and racetracks drew crowds, but the big innovation was the introduction of LaMarcus Adna Thompson's Switchback Gravity Pleasure Railway in 1884, a precursor to the roller coaster we know today, which is so central to the amusement park package. Such rides had started out with the Mauch Chunk Switchback Railway in Pennsylvania, originally built in 1827 to haul coal from a mine and then offered as a 'scenic railway' for passengers to experience.

Amusement Parks

With the advent of rides for visitors, many resort parks and pleasure gardens began to transition into something closer to what we would call an amusement park. In 1889 the first vertical looping roller coaster was built in Toledo by Lina Beecher, which was then also relocated to Coney Island, with bigger and bigger thrills becoming a draw for visitors. However, the first enclosed amusement park that charged admission to enter was Chutes Park in Chicago in 1894. Soon the trend was spreading back across the Atlantic, with Blackpool opening its amusements in 1896, promoting itself as an American-style attraction.

In 1907 the Manchester Royal Botanical Gardens reopened as White City Amusement Park with the

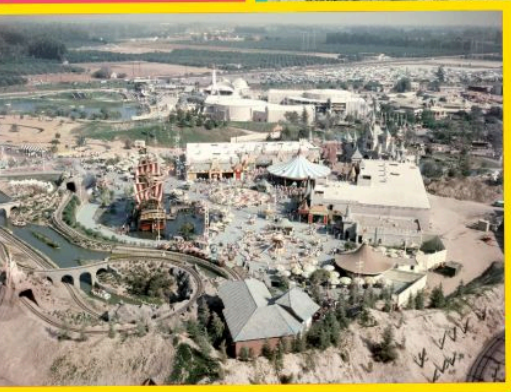


TOP LEFT An 1898 poster advertisement for Coney Island

LEFT The Switchback Railway at Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania, in 1880

RIGHT Walt Disney sitting with his grandson in front of the Magic Kingdom's castle in 1955

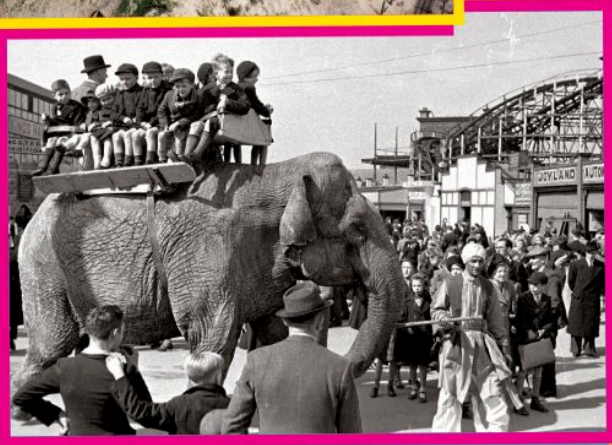
BELOW An overview of Disneyland in 1955



Theme Parks

World War II and its aftermath saw a growing interest in leisure activities and family-friendly diversions, particularly for children. From these demands arose the theme park, an evolution of the amusement park that looked to add an element of escapism to the experience. The first to offer this was Efteling in the Netherlands. This fairytale-inspired park opened in 1952. The epitome of this concept was the construction of Disneyland, completed on 17 July 1955 in Anaheim, California, USA. It was the first park of its time to be focused around a singular brand, considered by Walt Disney to be a giant movie set in which people could immerse themselves. The park opened with four themed areas of Tomorrowland (a vision of the future), Adventureland (jungle-themed), Frontierland (western-themed) and Fantasyland (inspired by Disney's own animated films). It cost $17 million to develop, the largest investment in such a project at the time, and attracted 3.8 million visitors in its first season.

There had been sceptics who doubted the success of Disneyland, but its undeniable popularity saw a number of theme parks emerge, usually in dedicated locations outside of cities and offering a full, multi-faceted experience of rides, entertainment, food and accommodation that could occupy people for days at a time. Six Flags Over Texas is a good example, opening in Arlington, Texas in 1961. It introduced the first log flume in 1963, which was imitated by many parks that followed. Similar endeavours emerged around the world such as Nagashima Spa Land in Japan (1966), Europa-Park in Germany (1975), Everland in South Korea (1976) and Alton Towers in England (1980).



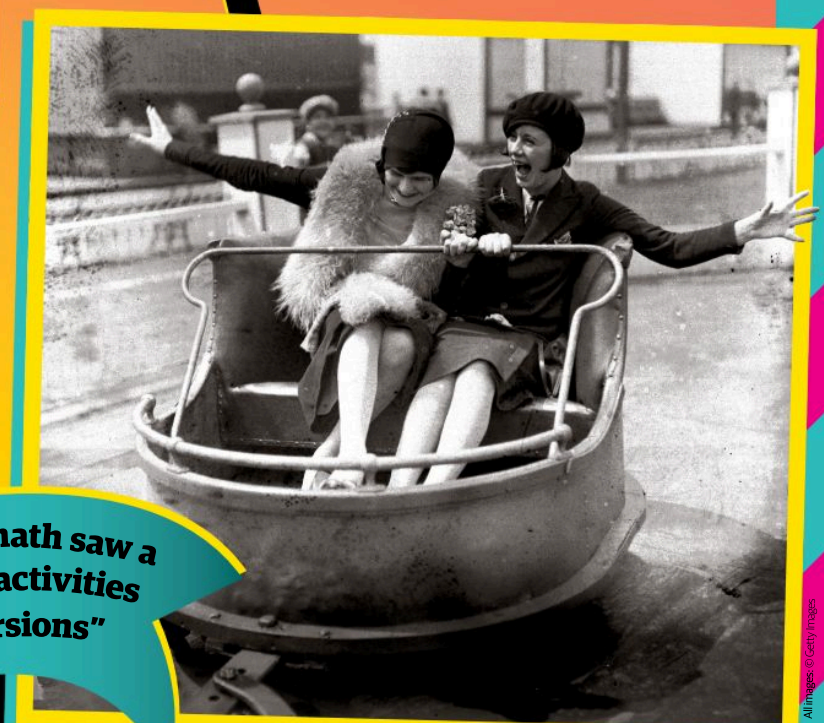
LEFT An elephant ride offered at Belle Vue Amusement Park in Manchester, 1943

BELOW Two women enjoy one of the rides at White City in Chicago, 1927

addition of gondolas, coasters and a water chute to attract crowds. The term White City became used widely by other parks and was derived from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair that spawned the White City Amusement Park in 1905, where a number of entertainment innovations were showcased that massively changed the leisure park industry. Manchester would also see one of the UK's first roller coasters in 1929 at the Belle Vue Amusement Park, which had begun life as a zoo before adding fairground rides, food and music to its repertoire, followed by dodgems and a ghost train.

The Great Depression saw many of these parks decline in popularity and close as visitor numbers dropped (America's 2,000 amusement parks in 1910 dropped to 500 by 1933).

"World War II and its aftermath saw a growing interest in leisure activities and family-friendly diversions"



Queen Dido

Founder of Carthage

Honoured by Rome and Greece, what do we know of this semi-mythical woman?

Written by Catherine Curzon

As founder and queen of Carthage, Dido's name has survived the ages as a myth. Deity to some, historical reality to others, she has been further immortalised in literature, most famously in Virgil's *Aeneid* as the woman who gave her life for one of the founding heroes of Rome. In this epic poem, written between 29 and 19 BCE, Aeneas encounters Dido, queen of Carthage, a city-state that will one day rival Rome itself. She is a central yet fictionalised figure in this story, killing herself for the love of its hero and dooming the powerful city that she founded. It is little wonder that Dido's tale has long fascinated scholars, who continue their investigations into whether this remarkable woman was flesh and blood or myth and legend.

Dido's name has appeared in writings since ancient times, the oldest known occurrence being in the writings of Timaeus, a 3rd-century BCE Greek historian. These stories are lost today, as is the work of Roman historian Pompeius Trogus, who wrote his own version of Dido's story around a century later. However, Trogus' tale was summarised by a fellow Roman, Justin, and it is his treatment along with Virgil's epic poem that offers tantalising clues to the identity of Dido.

Pygmalion had the priest murdered. Pygmalion intended to force Dido to hand over the treasure, but he had reckoned without the ghost of Acerbas, who appeared to Dido and told her that she must trick Pygmalion into believing she had disposed of the gold, then flee for a new land. Accordingly, Dido asked her attendants to throw a vast number of heavy sacks into the sea. She told them that these contained her husband's wealth and were intended as an offering to his spirit. Little realising that the sacks were actually stuffed with sand, Pygmalion believed that the treasure had been consigned to the depths of the ocean.

Once the sacks had all been disposed of, Dido warned her attendants that they would face Pygmalion's wrath for their loyalty to her if they remained. They agreed to follow her on a flight to refuge and were joined by a number of influential senators who wished to escape the young, vengeful king. Led by Dido, the party initially travelled to Cyprus, where new followers joined them, then on to Africa and the country that is today known as Tunisia.

> DIDO'S TALE HAS LONG FASCINATED SCHOLARS, WHO CONTINUE THEIR INVESTIGATIONS INTO WHETHER THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN WAS FLESH AND BLOOD OR MYTH AND LEGEND

Family feuds

Known to some scholars as Elissa, Dido was the daughter of the Phoenician ruler Mutto, who was the King of Tyre, today part of Lebanon. Dido was a highly intelligent and quick-witted woman whose name has been variously interpreted as meaning "beloved" and "the wanderer". According to the writings, Dido's father declared that she and her younger brother, Pygmalion, should serve as joint rulers of his kingdom in the event of his death. However, when Mutto died, the people chose the young Pygmalion as their sole ruler, against the late king's wishes. With Dido sidelined, second only to Pygmalion in terms of power was his uncle Acerbas, a powerful priest of Heracles. Acerbas was believed to be in possession of an immense fortune, which he had buried to keep it from plunder by his avaricious and duplicitous nephew.

Dido and Acerbas were married and, hungry for the wealth his sister and her husband supposedly possessed,

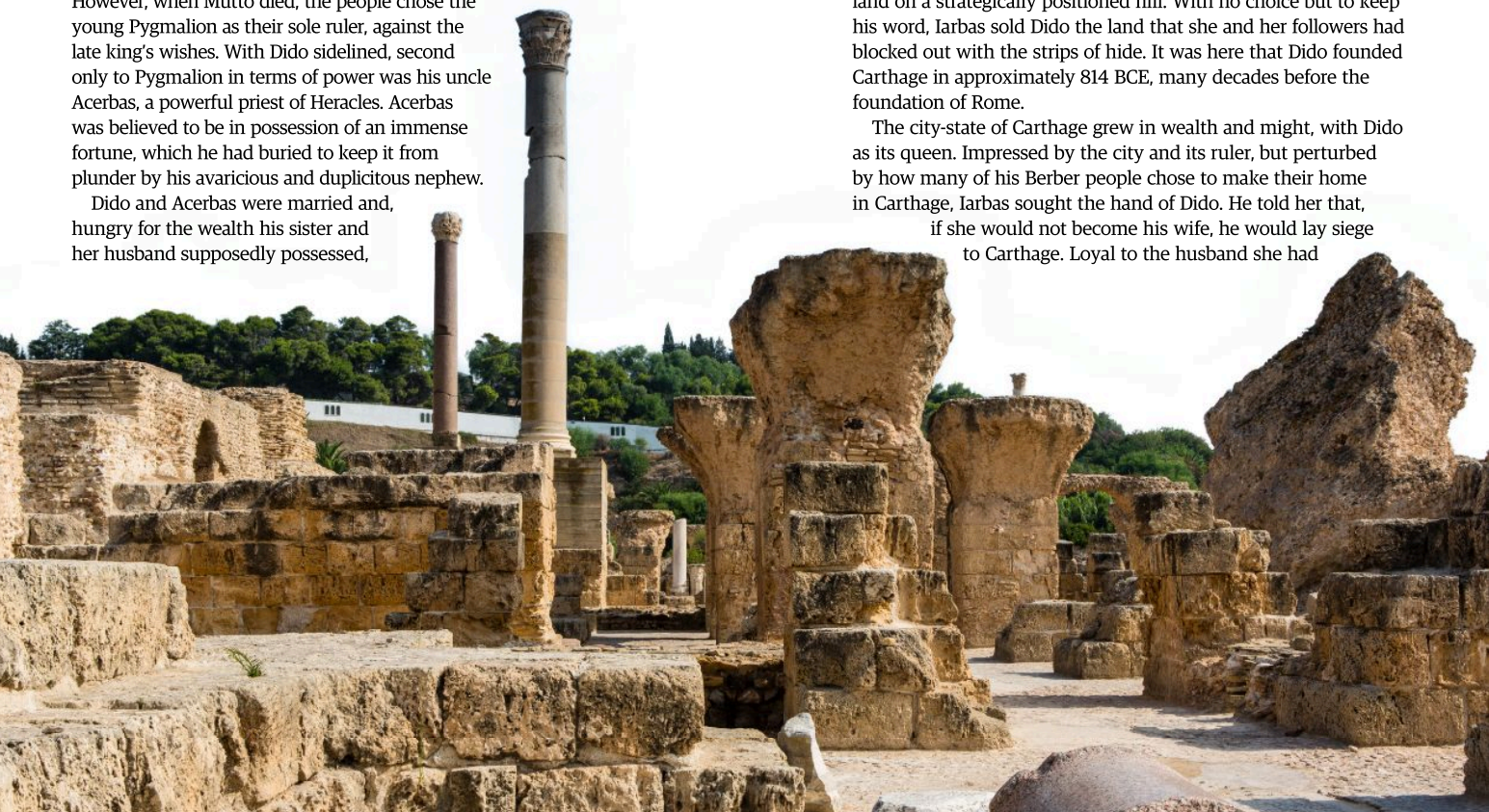
ABOVE The story of Dido is one of loyalty and sacrifice, which has inspired artists, authors, and musicians for centuries

BELOW Today, Carthage lies in ruins, though it was once a glittering city-state that dominated the area

Founding Carthage

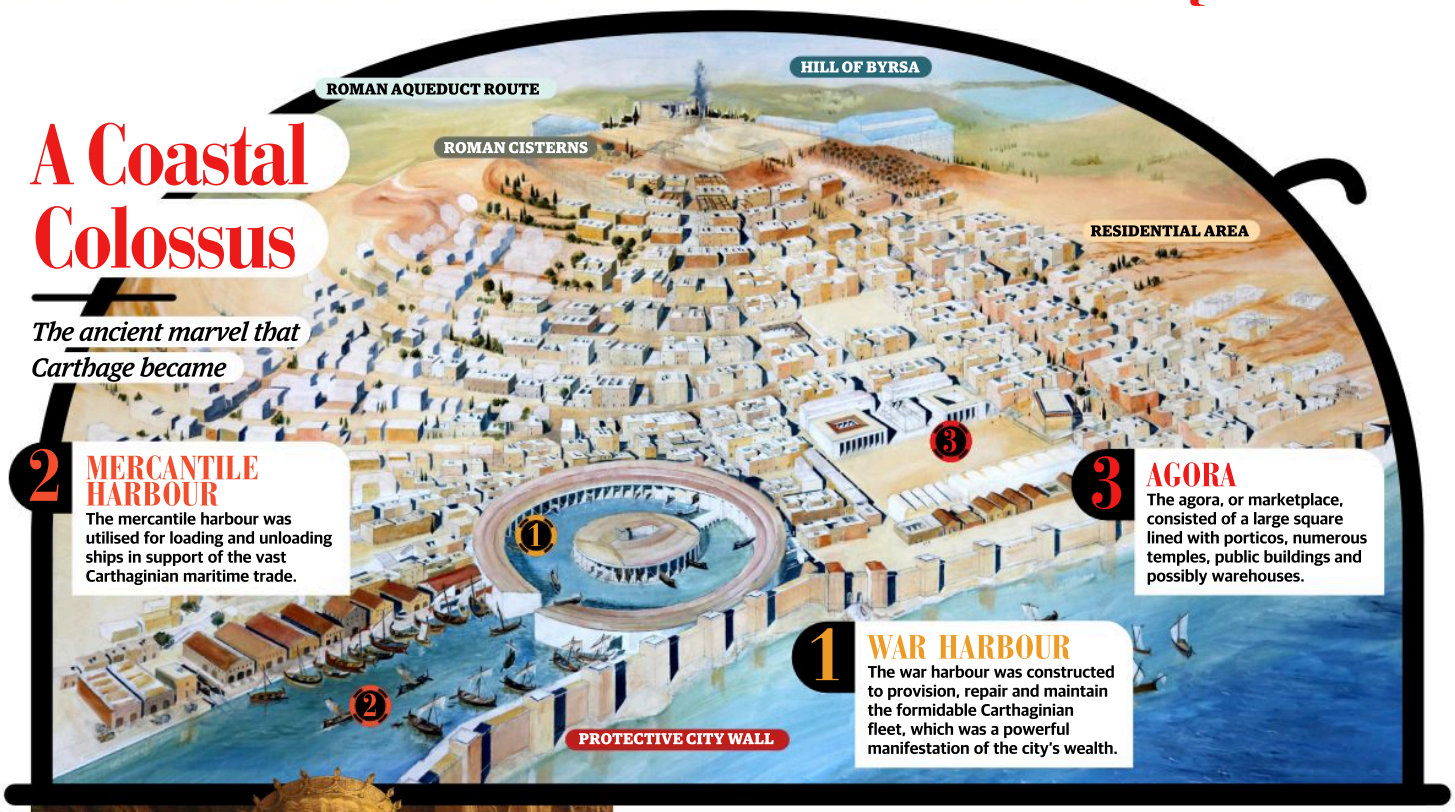
Upon her arrival in Africa, Dido approached Iarbas, the ruler of the Berbers, and asked if he would trade her some territory on which she could found a settlement. Iarbas agreed, offering to sell Dido only as much land as she could encompass within the hide of a slain ox. However, while Iarbas thought that would be an end to the matter, Dido had her followers cut the ox skin into incredibly thin strips, with which she mapped out a large area of land on a strategically positioned hill. With no choice but to keep his word, Iarbas sold Dido the land that she and her followers had blocked out with the strips of hide. It was here that Dido founded Carthage in approximately 814 BCE, many decades before the foundation of Rome.

The city-state of Carthage grew in wealth and might, with Dido as its queen. Impressed by the city and its ruler, but perturbed by how many of his Berber people chose to make their home in Carthage, Iarbas sought the hand of Dido. He told her that, if she would not become his wife, he would lay siege to Carthage. Loyal to the husband she had



A Coastal Colossus

The ancient marvel that Carthage became



2 MERCANTILE HARBOUR
The mercantile harbour was utilised for loading and unloading ships in support of the vast Carthaginian maritime trade.

3 AGORA
The agora, or marketplace, consisted of a large square lined with porticos, numerous temples, public buildings and possibly warehouses.

1 WAR HARBOUR
The war harbour was constructed to provision, repair and maintain the formidable Carthaginian fleet, which was a powerful manifestation of the city's wealth.

LEFT This semi-mythical queen founded the mighty Carthage from nothing, years before the dawn of the Roman Empire

loved but fearing for Carthage, Dido agreed to the marriage. Shortly before the wedding was to occur, Dido built an enormous funeral pyre and began sacrificing many victims in what she said was a final act of honour in memory of Acerbas.

However, rather than submit to the marriage that Iarbas was trying to force on her, at the climax of the ceremony Dido climbed onto the pyre she had built for her husband. Then she drove the blade of a sword through her body, killing herself and escaping her promise to Iarbas. The queen's death elevated her to the status of goddess in the eyes of her people, who worshipped her as a deity afterwards. Carthage, the city Dido had founded, remained a powerful city-state for over half a millennium, until it fell to Rome in 146 BCE.

Fact or fiction?

Dido's story is compelling, but whether it is true has been hotly debated. It has never been verified. Much of the evidence that supports her existence can be extrapolated from ancient histories that mention the reigns of her grandfather and brother. In fact, Josephus, writing in the 1st century CE, specifically refers to Pygmalion's sister by the name Elissa, describing her as having fled her brother's reign during the seventh year to found Carthage. However, while Josephus' writings certainly lend weight to the claim that Dido lived, they were obviously written long after what would have been her lifetime.

There is also circumstantial evidence for Dido's existence if we consider the timelines that classical scholars attached to the founding of Carthage. If we map mentions of Pygmalion and his grandfather in historical writings to the proposed founding dates of Carthage in either 825 BCE or 814 BCE, there is certainly circumstantial evidence that would support Dido's flight in the seventh year of her brother's reign, along with the time she spent wandering, before she settled to found Carthage.

In addition, in 1894 a pendant was found in a 6th-century CE cemetery at Carthage that was inscribed with a verse regarding Pygmalion and the date 814 BCE. This has been taken by some ▶

ABOVE Turner's 1815 work, *Dido Building Carthage*, offers an idealised glimpse at the foundation of the city that eventually fell to Rome

BELOW A bronze medal depicting Dido made by Italian artist Alessandro Cesati in the mid-16th century

as evidence of the date of the city's foundation. On a similar note, 4th-century BCE coins found at the site depicting a female figure have likewise been interpreted by some as a representation of Dido.

However, what muddies the waters somewhat is, ironically, the thing that has arguably made Dido most famous to wider readers: her appearance in the *Aeneid*. While Virgil agrees with much of her story as it is usually told, by placing her as a romantic figure who kills herself for Aeneas, the hero of the epic, he has led many to assume that she was entirely fictional. Even if Dido and Aeneas were both real, they could not have shared the story as told in the *Aeneid*: Aeneas would have been an elderly man by the time Dido was queen of Carthage. In the *Aeneid*, as Aeneas sails away from Carthage he sees the funeral pyre which consumes Dido flickering on the horizon; this memorable and tragic death has lingered in the memory of writers and artists. Indeed, since her fictional tangle with the Trojan, Dido's story reached through the ages to inspire Purcell, Turner and Dante among others, sending her further into the realm of myth.

> IN THIS MYTHICAL TALE OF THE WOMAN WHO BECAME A GODDESS, ALL EMPIRES MUST FALL EXCEPT ROME

Of course, whether Dido existed is one question. Another is whether Dido, if she were real, did actually found and rule Carthage. While the writings tell us that Dido was accompanied by senators when she left Tyre, there is every possibility that myth and fact may have become combined here and that the voyage from Tyre was not a desperate escape, but a deliberate and planned expansion of the Phoenician empire. The pendant found at Carthage contains reference to a soldier sent by Pygmalion in its inscription, which lends additional weight to the idea that Carthage was a Tyrian colony founded by agents sent by the king, rather than his sister. There is no extant evidence to prove that Carthage ever had a monarch in residence at all.

It's generally agreed by historians that Carthage was likely not the first Phoenician settlement in the region and no archaeological

How to Build a Great City

Tips from the ancient world

AUGMENT THE WEALTH OF TYRE

Tyre, the capital of the Phoenician Empire, intended for Carthage to serve as a western Mediterranean port city and outpost for trade and commerce, paying tribute to the capital and generating revenue.

DEVELOP FUTURE TRADE ROUTES

Largely a maritime trading empire, Phoenicia was constantly in search of new trading partners, and expanded its potential for commerce across the Mediterranean. Carthage could open trade with previously unknown lands and peoples in the west.

ESTABLISH A DEFENSIVE PERIMETER

The Carthaginians were a warlike people, both in terms of conquest and defence. Initially, Carthage provided a military buffer for the Phoenicians, and later for the empire in its own right, as it went about exercising expansionist ambitions in the Mediterranean.

evidence has yet been found that definitively supports the recorded founding of Carthage in 814 BCE. Rather, archaeological findings from the site currently suggest that it was founded around a century later than that, placing it squarely outside the lifetime of Dido, both in legend and when measured against the recorded mentions of her brother. This would also put it outside of the reign of Pygmalion, however, to whom reference has been found on jewellery discovered at the site.

Into legend

Yet, as David Quint notes in *Design and Meaning in the Aeneid*, much of this would have been known to Virgil's readers, who would have certainly been aware that Aeneas and Dido did not feature in one another's story, even if they were both real people. As Quint also points out, the version of the founding of Carthage that has entered myth is a Greco-Roman invention; we don't know what stories Carthaginians themselves told of their city-state's founding, because those stories are lost to us.

What these Greco-Roman versions of events do is serve as a dramatic origin story of sorts; in these legends, Carthage wasn't a colony of an expanding empire that later went on to overwhelm its neighbours, eventually subduing the Berbers who had initially provided the land on which it stood. Instead, it is a mythical tale of the woman who became a goddess, before the powerful city-state she founded eventually fell to the conquering might of Rome. As written by the Romans, the lesson was simple: all empires must fall except Rome.

BELOW Today, Dido is better known as the doomed lover of Aeneas, the Trojan hero of Virgil's writings

Virgil's fictionalised account rewrites Dido's sacrifice too. In this version, she doesn't kill herself out of love for her murdered husband, but because she has betrayed his memory with Aeneas, admittedly under the influence of Cupid. In this reading, Carthage was not a city founded by a woman who would give her life rather than submit to male domination, but a woman whose uncontrolled passions drive her to an act of self-destruction that ultimately brings down the city she founded. It is precisely this act that condemns her to Hell in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. It is a very different note on which to end her story versus the deification common to the oldest versions of the myth. In these, Dido's sacrifice proves to be the thing that inspires the Carthaginians to achieve greatness, not the touchpaper that eventually brings down the city.

Given her appearance in ancient writings and the references to a sister of Pygmalion, it is likely that Dido did indeed exist, most likely as the woman referred to as Elissa. Whether Elissa was indeed the founder of the powerful city-state of Carthage is currently unproven. Under her new name, which means "wanderer", however, Queen Dido entered myth and became a legendary figure.

BEHIND THE AZTEC MYTHS

Camilla Townsend helps us to cut through the colonial legacy of this misunderstood people

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

© Courtesy of Thames & Hudson

EXPERT BIO

PROFESSOR CAMILLA TOWNSEND

Professor Camilla Townsend specialises in early Native American and Latin American history with a number of books to her name on these subjects. They include *Fifth Sun: A new history of the Aztecs* (Oxford University Press, 2019) and *Annals of Native America: How the Nahuas of Colonial Mexico kept their history alive* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

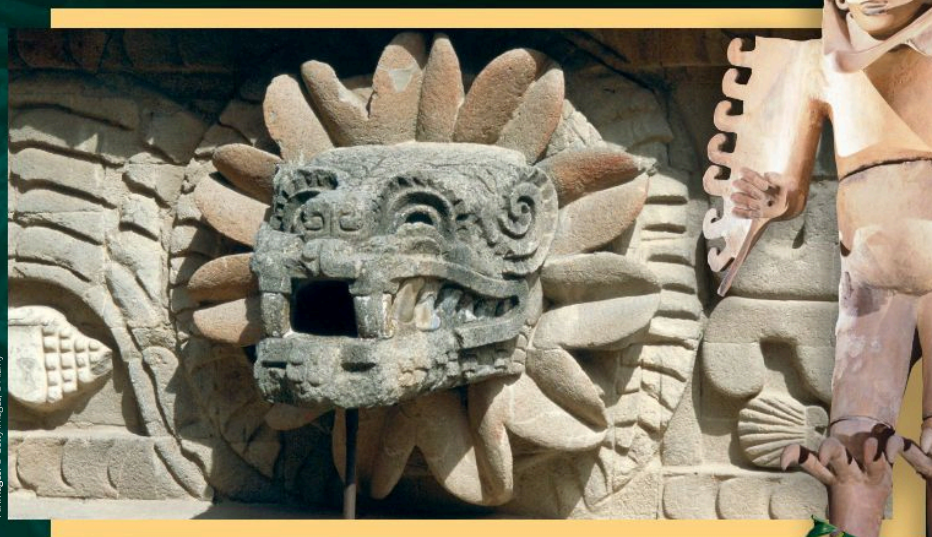
Despite centuries of research and interest in the Aztec people, they remain one of the more misunderstood and mysterious cultures to many of us. Thanks to a combination of Spanish records from the time painting them in a very particular light, and an understandable preference for some of the gorier details of public life in Central America at the time, what it was really like living in a city like Teotihuacan can be hard to imagine. Experts like Camilla Townsend have thankfully been working hard to demystify the Aztecs and highlight sources that give voice to the real people behind the legends. Her new book, *The Aztec Myths*, breaks down their real and evolving religious beliefs and we were delighted to catch up with her to learn more.

How challenging is it to unpick the true beliefs of the Aztecs from those the Spanish projected onto them?
It is very difficult. In fact, it is so difficult that we have imbibed a great deal of misinformation. Traditionally, scholars used the writings of Spaniards – or of Indigenous people working under the supervision of Spanish friars – to study Aztec religious beliefs. Quite frankly, this didn't work terribly well, but we kept up the practice because it had become customary. And many scholars could not read other kinds of existing primary sources that might have been more helpful.

What primary sources are still available to us to interpret their myths?
We have hundreds of pages of writing in the Aztecs' own language of Nahuatl. Before the arrival of Europeans, the Aztecs had a pictographic writing system that consisted of suggestive images intended to elicit from trained reciters the telling of certain tales. (For instance, a picture of a burning temple could serve as a reminder to give an account of a particular war.) After the conquest, Spanish friars taught hundreds of adolescent students the Roman alphabet (what we think of as our alphabet) so that they could read the Bible and help proselytise their people. The young scholars were very helpful to the friars in that regard. But some of them took the new, phonetic writing system home and employed it for a different purpose: they used it to transcribe the words of their elders.

"Tell me the history of the Tepanec Wars," they might say to an old uncle, who would tell it to them, and they would use the letters to sound out the Nahuatl words and record them on paper. Now, most of what they wrote down was historical and political, since these young people who knew the Roman alphabet were baptised Christians, and they wished to avoid writing too much about the old, pagan gods. Yet most of the historical sources nevertheless begin with a few paragraphs or pages of more spiritual material. I decided to try to glean what I could about Aztec religious beliefs from those sources, written in Nahuatl for the authors' own families. The Spaniards couldn't interfere with the project, because they didn't even know it was happening!

What was the origin myth for the Aztecs and how, if at all, was that reflected in their practices?
The Aztecs believed that the universe had collapsed four times in the past, and that they themselves were living under the Fifth Sun. After the implosion of the fourth world, the gods and other beings, both human and animal, all lived in darkness, in desperate need of a sun. So the gods gathered everybody together at what is today the stupendous archaeological site of Teotihuacan and they asked for someone to volunteer to immolate himself and become the solar orb. One great hero did volunteer. But the gods were not satisfied with just one. They looked around, but no one else stepped forward. Then they singled out Nanahuatzin (whose name means "Little Pimply One") and asked him to volunteer. He was an ordinary guy and did not want to do it, but he said that since the gods had always been good to him, he would try to find the courage to do what needed to be done to help those who would come after him. The great hero ran to leap into a bonfire created by the gods, but he pulled up short. He tried again and again, but he ▶



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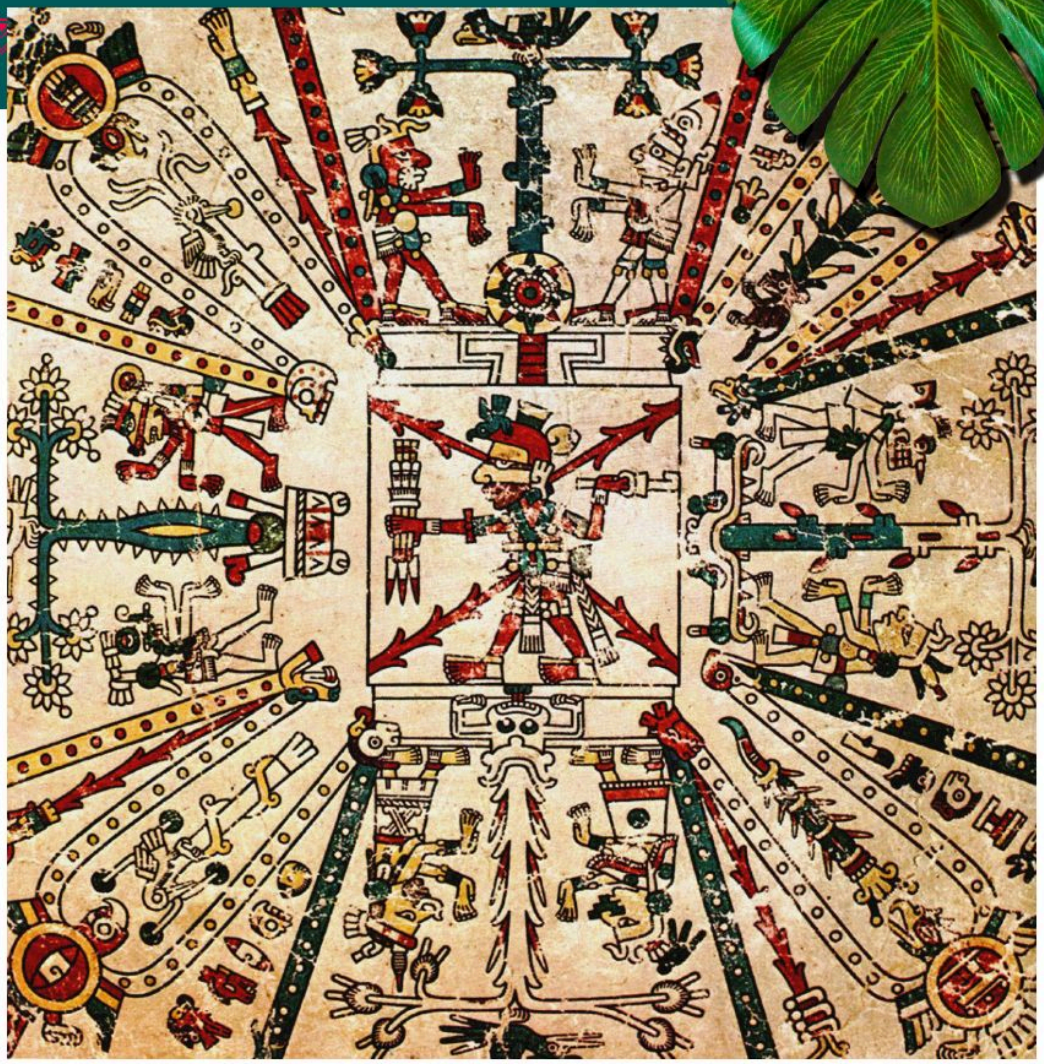
ABOVE The head of Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent, from the Temple of Quetzalcoatl in Teotihuacan, Mexico

RIGHT An eagle warrior from the Templo Mayor Museum in Mexico City



TOP The god Xiuhtecuhtli from the *Codex Fejérváry-Mayer*

RIGHT The Coronation Stone of Motecuhzoma II, also known as the Stone of the Five Suns

what month and date it is in the solar calendar, and at the same time, we maintain a completely unrelated, eternally repeating series of seven day-signs named for Norse gods.

Who were some of the most important mythical figures?

In the past, scholars have promulgated the idea of an Aztec pantheon, a bit like the Olympians of ancient Greece. But at this point, most of us have stopped believing that we can really give a list of 10 or 20 or even 50 separate and eternally defined beings. Instead, the gods seem to have been a bit like 'mosaics' with clusters of characteristics, which different believers could pick and choose from in different ways at different times.

Still, there were certain divine figures that everyone in central Mexico would have recognised, even if they each had their own slightly different versions. There was Tezcatlipoca ("Smoking Mirror"), the frightening bringer of change through conflict or random acts of power. There was Quetzalcoatl ("Feathered Serpent"), who was a crosser of boundaries and, with his creative bent, the protector of priests and of artists. And there was Tlaloc, often styled "the god of rain" in Spanish sources, but whose name really meant, "Filled with Soil", and whose various divine aspects

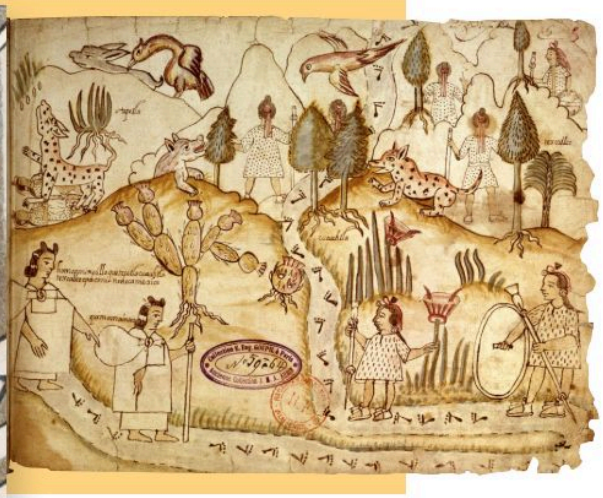
"THE AZTECS WERE SKYWATCHERS AND KNEW ABOUT THE 365-DAY YEAR, JUST AS WE DO"

could not do it. Then Nanahuatzin closed his eyes tightly and ran forward to do what had to be done. He did not stop. His body burned in a great conflagration and became the sun. The Aztecs loved Nanahuatzin and identified with him because they felt that they, too, had started out as ordinary guys who did not necessarily want to do great or dangerous deeds, but who had done so because they were called upon to be brave for the sake of their descendants. We must remember that not long before, they had come down from the north (from what is today the southwestern United States) as impoverished migrants, and then they had made something of themselves.

What role did the measuring and marking of time play in Aztec life?

An Aztec person was always conscious of two different wheels of time. On one hand, there was the solar year, which consisted of 18 months of 20 days each, for a total of 360 days, plus five "blank" days called the period of nemontemi, during which time people prayed for renewal. As you can tell, the Aztecs were skywatchers and knew about the 365-day year, just as we do (they hadn't worked out the equivalent of our leap year, but I imagine they would have done so eventually if they had been left alone). On another level, Aztec people were also always in the midst of a ceremonial or spiritual calendar, with the 20 days signs appearing in counts of 13, for a total of 260 days. (Many scholars believe that this originated as a count that is close to the human gestation cycle.)

At first glance, this system might seem impossibly complicated for an ordinary person to keep track of, but we ourselves do something similar: we always know



ABOVE A small portion of the *Codex Azcatitlan* that tells the history of the Mexica people

ABOVE While sacrifices were a part of Aztec life, they were perhaps not as bloodthirsty as history has often recorded

constituted all the elements of humans' earthly home, wet and dry, high and low.

What are some of the big misunderstandings concerning the Aztecs and human sacrifice?

It has become commonplace to assert that the Aztecs loved death and believed that if they did not sacrifice hundreds of people every month (or some say, every day), the sun would not continue to rise. As with many stereotypes, there is a kernel of truth buried in the myth. Archaeologists teach us that ancient humans in many places practised some form of human sacrifice. Native Americans were no different. Many of them believed that the greatest gift one could offer to the gods was the gift of human life, and some of them translated this into an occasional sacrifice of a prisoner of war. Such prisoners were not demeaned. It was a great honour to die for the gods. In the second half of the 1400s, as the Aztecs tried to solidify their power, they took this notion and weaponised it. Their high priests, who were tightly connected to the ruling family, began to say that more sacrifices needed to be made, eventually killing far more than ever before. If they wanted to bring a new region into their empire, they would kidnap people from there and bring them to see a terrifying ceremony, then send them home, knowing they would advise joining voluntarily, rather than fighting and risking brutal conquest.

Do we have evidence of the gods of the Aztecs evolving or morphing over time?

You are pointing to a central issue: we do indeed have evidence that the Aztecs' ideas about what their gods demanded changed over time. The most ancient stories and early archaeological remains both tell us that when they first arrived in the Central Valley of Mexico, they were poor and powerless. They were in no position to offer their gods dozens of sacrifice victims! Instead, they begged various city states just to be allowed to live on their land, or to build a tiny pyramid temple. Only as their power grew – and when they began to fear backsliding into vulnerability – do we find evidence (in the stories, or in archaeological remains) of their developing ceremonies that required the deaths of many people.

How different could Aztec myths be from storyteller to storyteller?

I find that each version of a particular story is a bit different than all other versions. ▶

WORDS OF THE AZTECS

What terms did we take from the Nahuatl language?

AVOCADO **AHUACATL**	COYOTE **COYŌTL**	MOLE **MOLLI**
CHILI **CHĪLLI**	GUACAMOLE **ĀHUACAMŌLLI**	OCELOT **ŌCĒLŌTL**
CHIPOTLE **CHĪLPŌCTLI**	MESCAL **MEXCALLI**	TAMALE **TAMALLI**
CHOCOLATE **XOCOLATL**	MESQUITE **MIZQUITL**	TOMATO **XĪTOMATL**

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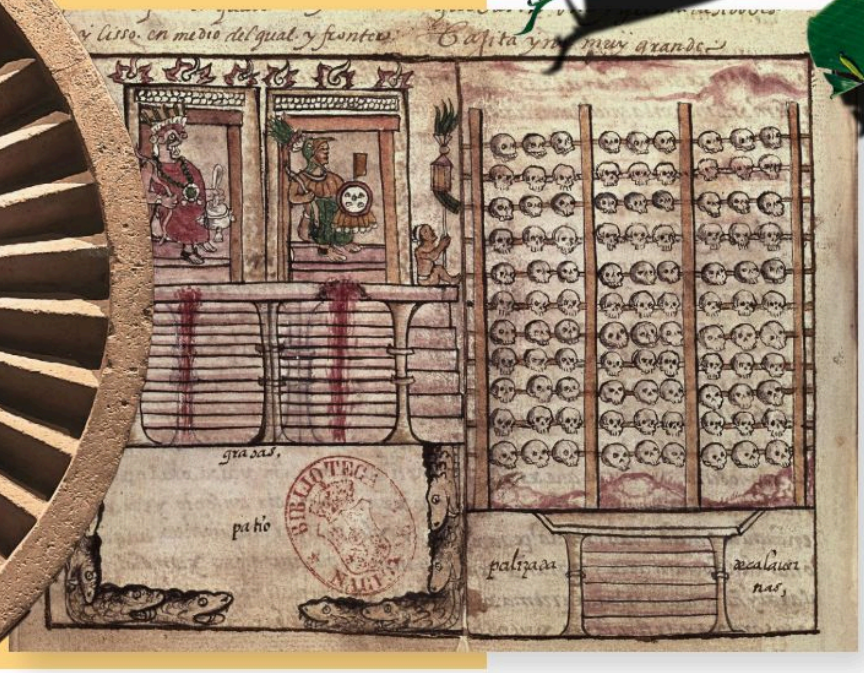


ABOVE A stone disc depicting Mictlantecuhtli, the Aztec god of death, ruler of the underworld, Mictlān

FAR RIGHT An Aztec temple as recorded in friar Diego Duran's book *The History of the Indies of New Spain*

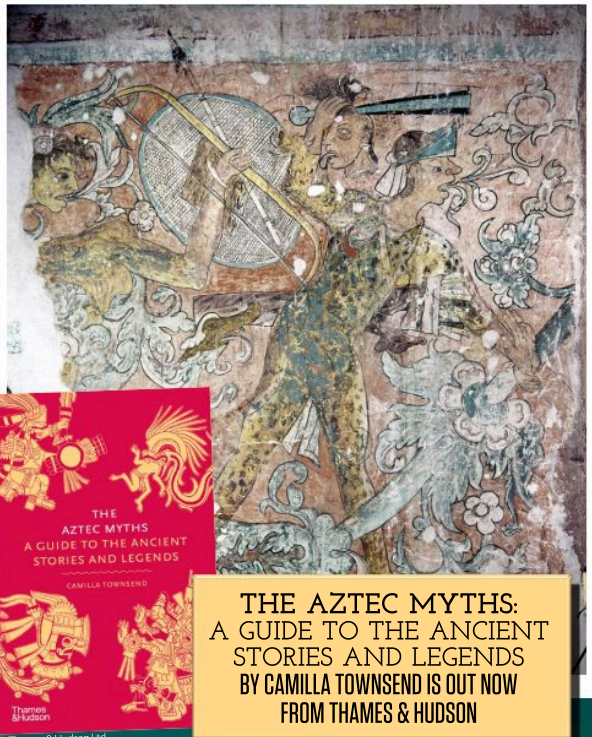
> "SOME PEOPLE MAY FIND THIS SURPRISING, BUT FAR FROM LOVING DEATH, THE AZTECS HATED AND BEMOANED IT"

On the other hand, these differences are relatively small: the main themes of a particular tale are quite consistent. For instance, their tutelary god, Huitzilopochtli (Left-Footed Like a Hummingbird) most often quarrels violently with his sister in defence of his beloved mother, but in one version, he becomes angry with his mother in defence of his people. I suppose the 'moral of the story' is that we shouldn't draw grand conclusions from one particular item in one particular text, just in case it's an outlier; on the other hand, we shouldn't assume that there are no patterns, because if we read enough in the Nahuatl literature, we see that there are.

What were some of the central tenants of life for Aztecs that they drew from their mythologies and stories?

Some people may find this surprising, but far from loving death, the Aztecs hated and bemoaned it. They dreaded the necessity of killing or being killed in times of war. People who gave their lives for their people – men who died in battle, or as a sacrificed prisoner of war, or women who died in childbirth – could expect to live on at the side of the gods for a few more years, but for most people, death was the end, "our place of disappearing together," as they said. That meant that this world, this life, was what we might call heaven and should be loved and enjoyed and celebrated. Their stories taught them that. And at the same time, they taught them about the inevitability of conflict, and the ways that people should try to navigate it. They also insisted on the power of the divine, and that life is full of surprises.

BELOW This fresco actually combines Aztec colours with European realism



THE AZTEC MYTHS: A GUIDE TO THE ANCIENT STORIES AND LEGENDS BY CAMILLA TOWNSEND IS OUT NOW FROM THAMES & HUDSON

Could you give an example of an Aztec story that you particularly like?

A clever one is an apocryphal story about the power of nature. The king of the Aztecs told Tzotzomatzin, the vassal king of a nearby settlement, that he wished to divert the waters of a certain river and bring them to the capital city of Tenochtitlan. Now, Tzotzomatzin did not wish to do this, for the river water irrigated his own people's fields. But he also did not wish to refuse the high king of the Aztecs. So he said that unfortunately, they could not obey, because the water had been bewitched by one of his ancestors and would flood if the river was diverted. The Aztec king consulted with a close advisor of his, another vassal king of a different nearby settlement, who snorted derisively and said that it was obvious that Tzotzomatzin was making up the story. At that, the king put Tzotzomatzin to death and had the river diverted.

Not long after, the river flooded, killing some people and sending many more out onto the roads, homeless. Now the Aztec king went into a rage and ordered the killing of the vassal king who had given him such bad advice. After a tale of human machinations and mutual second-guessing, the storyteller gives the river the last word. "So it was that two kings were killed because of the River Acuecuexatl!"

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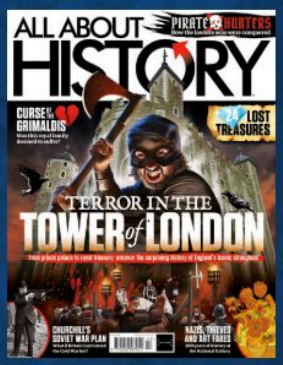

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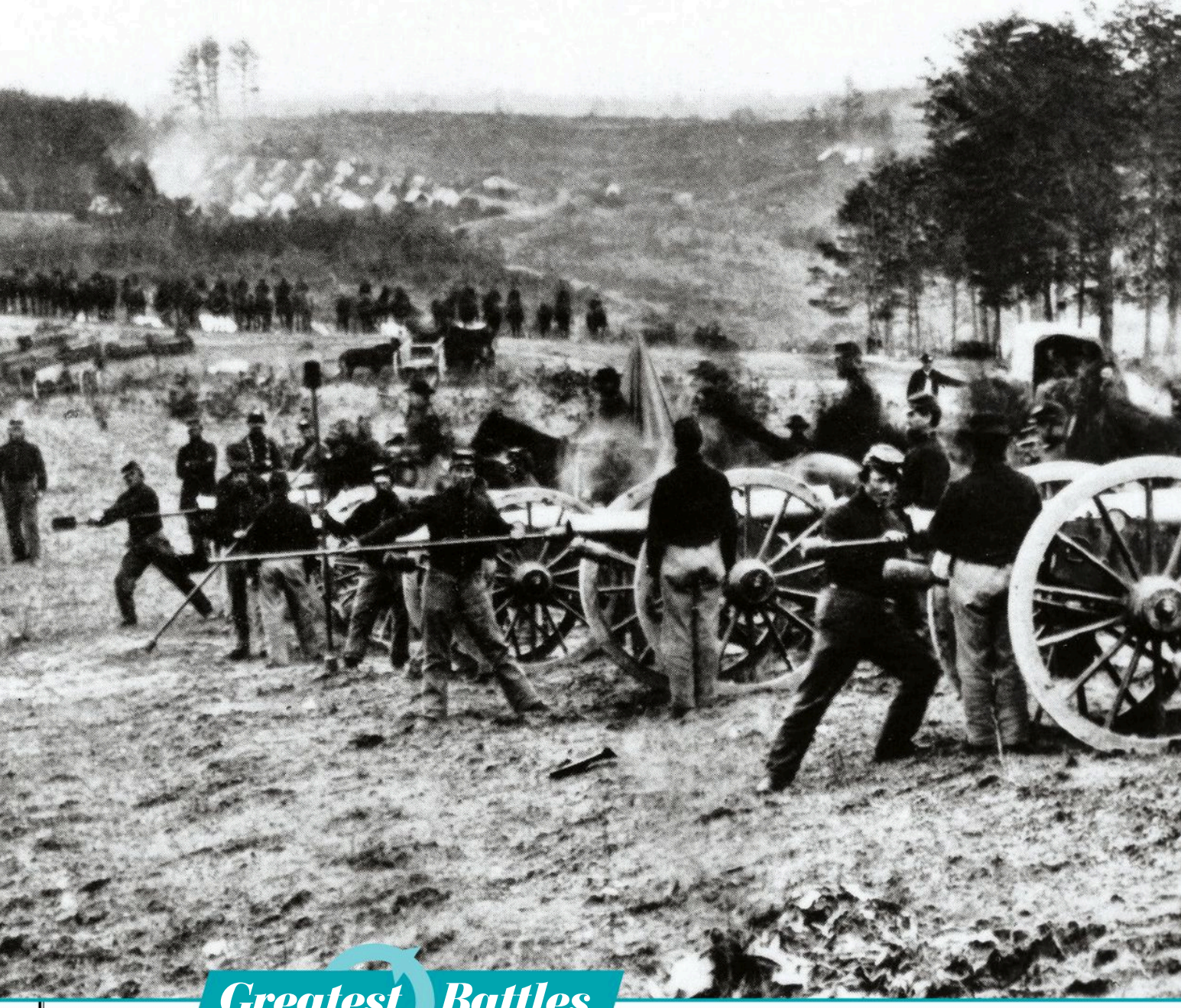


Greatest Battles

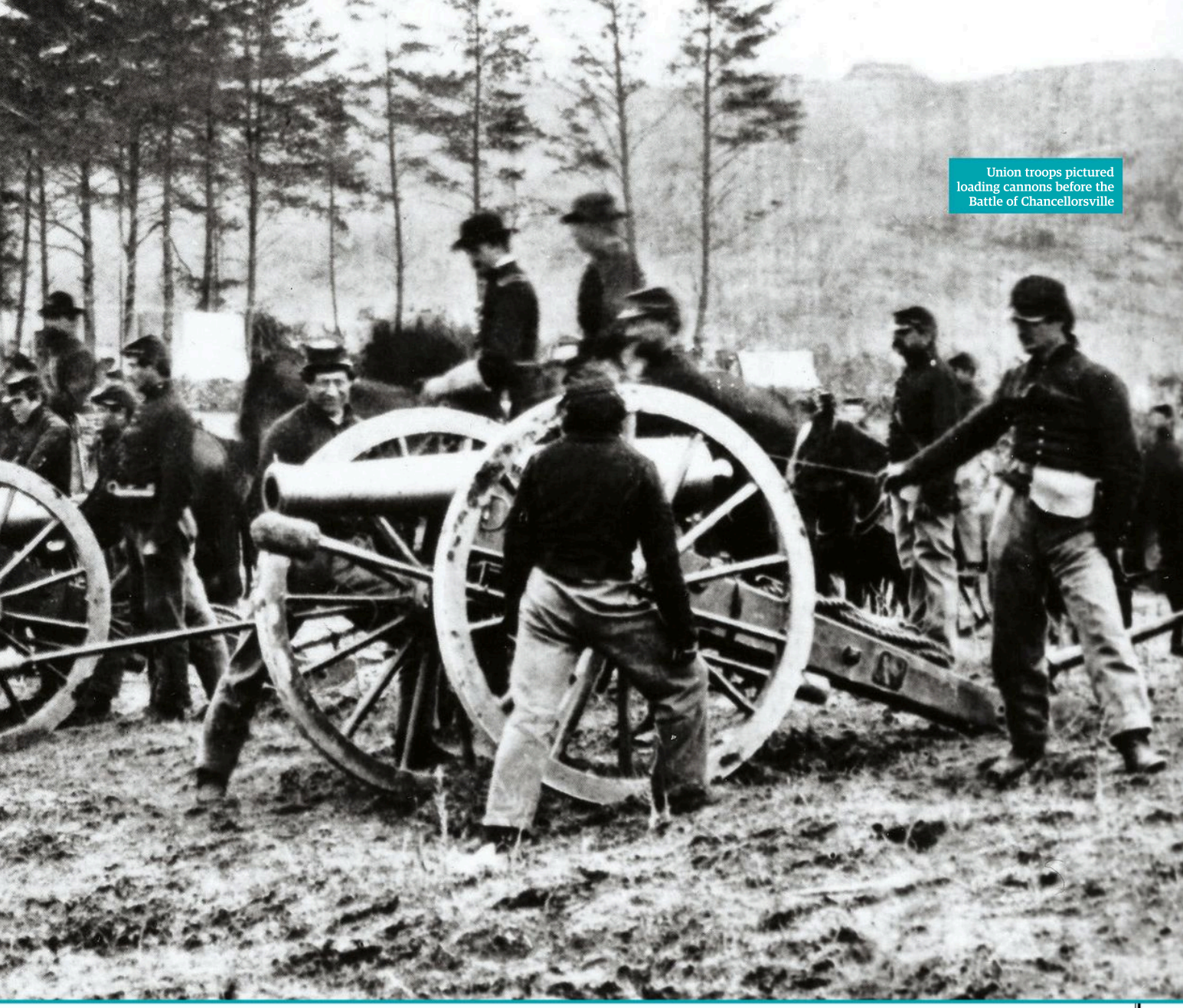
BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE

CHANCELLORSVILLE, USA, 27 APRIL – 6 MAY 1863

Written by Iain MacGregor

By the spring of 1863, the American Civil War in the eastern theatre of Northern Virginia was in stalemate. Both sides had been busy rebuilding their forces in winter quarters since the bloodletting at the Battle of Fredericksburg the previous December. Since the beginning of the war itself, President Abraham Lincoln had been searching for a general who could effectively lead the enormous resources Washington would place under his command in terms of men and materiel. The industrial north had the resources to conduct and win a strategic war against the weaker agricultural-based southern rebel states, but what it repeatedly failed to do was defeat Robert E Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

The Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862 had been a bloody calamity for the north, with



Union troops pictured loading cannons before the Battle of Chancellorsville

thousands needlessly killed as Union divisions marched up to entrenched Confederate positions above the Virginian town on Marye's Heights only to be mercilessly cut down by massed musketry and cannon. Yet Lee's victory had not been turned into a strategic success and his exhausted forces failed to follow up with their own counterattack to finish off the enemy. Both sides now settled for a winter truce.

The Army of the Potomac had survived, but yet again was given a new commander. The hapless Ambrose Burnside, who had overseen the carnage, was replaced as he suggested his next move that spring of 1863 would follow the exact strategy that had brought disaster on the slopes of Marye's Heights. Two of his own corps commanders with political connections lobbied Washington for change. Aware of a lack of enthusiasm for his leadership, Burnside's offer of resignation was readily accepted by Lincoln, who now installed one of the more outspoken officers who had lobbied against him – Major General Joseph Hooker.

Already a veteran of the battles of Bull Run, Antietam and Fredericksburg, Hooker believed he had the strategic sense to beat Lee's army and the resources to make it happen. It was here that alarm bells should have rung in the White House. Lincoln had given command of the Army of the Potomac to Hooker with clear instructions for him to defeat Lee and protect Washington, but now looked on as that spring Hooker developed a plan to invade Virginia and capture Richmond, believing that would culminate in Lee being forced to give battle on Hooker's terms. Though a good organiser of commands – Hooker restructured the Army of the Potomac along the corps system that would remain throughout the war – events would prove that he had been promoted above his ability as a frontline army commander.

BACKGROUND

The fallout from Fredericksburg had forced Lincoln to quickly install yet another new commander of the Army of the Potomac in order to bring defeat upon the seemingly unbeatable Army of Northern Virginia. 'Fighting Joe' Hooker from Massachusetts, 48, was a hard-drinking, womanising general who had already been involved in many of the Army of the Potomac's defeats the previous year. Though severely bloodied at Fredericksburg, Hooker would still command a formidable force of 130,000 men, now encamped at Falmouth, Virginia, as ▶

Main image: © Alamy


The Union suffered 17,197 casualties, with 1,606 killed – including three divisional commanders


Wounded soldiers from the Union Army recuperate after their defeat at Chancellorsville


Union artillery at Chancellorsville, by photographer A.J. Russell

they were resupplied. By April, he had successfully reorganised the unwieldy Grand Division structure to a more sensible corps formation, with an independent cavalry wing. Just as significantly, he improved his men's morale, having them adopt specific insignia for their units, improving supplies, implementing more drilling and reinvigorating the Army of the Potomac esprit de corps.

He realised that to bring Lee to battle on ground of his choosing he must first threaten the Confederate capital, Richmond. On 27 April, 10,000 Union horses crossed the Rappahannock River upstream, then swung around Lee's rear and attacked his supply lines. At the same time another corps crossed downstream, while three more corps of infantry crossed the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers and marched as planned toward the hamlet of Chancellorsville to the west – a large brick mansion, sited at a crossroads in a clearing. By 1 May, Hooker had over 70,000 troops situated around Chancellorsville awaiting what he was sure would either be a doomed Confederate frontal assault, or their withdrawal.

Lee had uncharacteristically been taken by surprise, but realising the enemy troops at Chancellorsville were the immediate threat, he gambled and divided his smaller force to attack a portion of the Union army before it had time to gather itself. Leaving a much smaller force of 11,000 men still situated above Fredericksburg to hold in place Union forces, Lee was strengthened by Major General 'Stonewall' Jackson's corps and thus marched to Chancellorsville with at least 40,000 troops – still far fewer than the bulk of Union troops awaiting them.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

The battle began mid-morning on 1 May as Hooker's columns advanced to capture a strategic crossroads, unaware that Stonewall Jackson's forces were there too. The fighting was fairly even, yet Hooker became anxious. The realisation that his enemy had not retreated from such superior forces and instead wished to fight had spoiled his strategy and shaken his confidence. Against the wishes of his corps commanders, he ordered Union troops back behind their original fortifications, not only giving up valuable high ground but also handing the initiative back to Lee.

The Union army was now stretched out for several kilometres, anchored on the left flank by the Rappahannock River to the east, with strong fortifications in the centre; right on the farthest point, surrounded by thick woods, was XI Corps led by Major General Oliver Howard. Such was Howard's belief in his natural defences that he'd shied away from Hooker's general order for all corps commanders to construct fortifications; it would be his downfall.

That night, Lee and Jackson sat in conference debating an audacious idea. Lee would again divide his forces in the face of superior numbers and have Jackson take his 2nd Corps of 28,000 men through the back roads of the Wilderness – a wide area of dense shrubs and trees – to position himself at the flank of XI Corps, while Lee held at bay the bulk of Hooker's army facing him. Using a local guide, Jackson's men set out at 4am, reaching their destination by 5pm after a 19km march.

Jackson's men hit XI Corps like a sledgehammer, enveloping the startled Union troops as Hooker's whole line retreated before his eyes. Darkness saved a total Union collapse, as both sides halted and dug in where they stood. Jackson and his staff ventured ahead of the Confederate line to assess if a night-time attack could work. As they returned, rebel pickets, tired and anxious from the day's fighting, mistook them in the dark for Union cavalry reported to be in the vicinity. The trigger-happy Confederate sentries opened fire, killing two of the general's staff and wounding Jackson himself. Though a tragic loss, the enemy still needed to be finished off the next day and his corps would be led by Major General JEB Stuart.

Generals Lee and Stuart now needed to eliminate Hooker's III Corps, which stood between them, if they were to bring both halves of the Confederate Army together and drive the remaining Federals


A depiction of 'Stonewall' Jackson's wounding during the battle, which in fact occurred at night

from the battlefield. The daring marches of the previous days now gave way to a series of bloody encounters in the dense undergrowth and woods as both sides slugged it out throughout the morning of 3 May. Again, Hooker's timidity resurfaced as he gave up a key elevated position at Hazel Grove, allowing the Confederates to take it and establish a formidable gun park that would dominate the rest of that day's fighting. That morning Jackson's old corps crashed into the centre of the Union positions, bringing calamity to Hooker's forces. Fearing for the overall position, Hooker ordered Major General John Sedgwick's VI Corps of 22,000 men to come to his aid. Sedgwick successfully advanced up Marye's Heights at the Second Battle of Fredericksburg and marched west to Chancellorsville – unaware Hooker's position was about to cave in.

Though wary of this new threat coming from fresh Union forces advancing from Fredericksburg, Lee remained calm and, turning away from Hooker, divided his army a third time to meet Sedgwick head-on. The Union VI Corps was held at a crossroads at Salem Church, and then driven back. A rattled Hooker refused to come to Sedgwick's aid to coordinate a counterattack that might have at the last moment turned the battle in the Union's favour.

Unsupported, Sedgwick was forced to retreat eastwards to protect the Union flank and support Hooker's order for the bulk of his army to undertake a rapid withdrawal back to the safety of the Rappahannock River. With Union troops disappearing westwards, both of Lee's wings finally met in the clearing of the Chancellorsville mansion. It was a crushing Union defeat as Lee surveyed his weary and bloodied troops raising their rifles in triumph, their yelling echoing through the woods. Once again, a superior Union army had been out-generalled into abject defeat.

AFTERMATH

Lee's comprehensive victory would later be described as the 'perfect battle', but the cost to the South was enormous in terms of casualties that they could ill afford and the mortal wounding of their legendary general Stonewall Jackson. Of the 133,000 Union troops that Hooker had taken ▶

UNION

JOSEPH HOOKER

Defeat for the Union has largely been placed on the head of Hooker whose command during the confrontation has been described as timid. He had previously served in the Mexican-American War and at Williamsburg, Antietam and Fredericksburg in the Civil War. He continued to fight despite the blow of Chancellorsville, and led the funeral procession for President Lincoln.

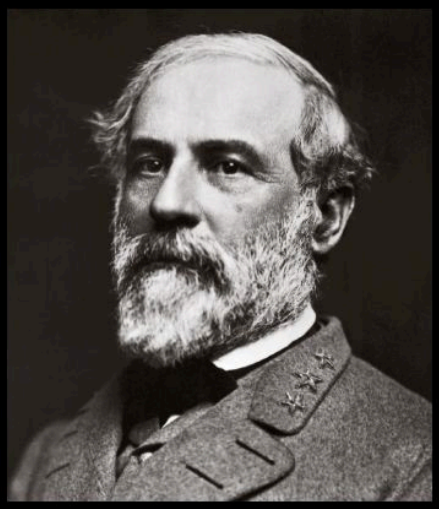
GEORGE STONEMAN

The cavalry officer trained at West Point where his roommate was Stonewall Jackson, a man he would later oppose at Chancellorsville. He served in the US Army for 36 years. His attempt to break the Confederate lines failed, leading to Stoneman taking a lot of the blame for defeat from Hooker. He was elected governor of California in 1883.

JOHN SEDGWICK

Having been wounded three times at the Battle of Antietam, Sedgwick missed Fredericksburg, but was key to the Union in its Chancellorsville campaigns to follow. He was also in command of the last corps to arrive at the Battle of Gettysburg. He didn't survive the war, however, as he was killed by a sharpshooter at the Battle of Spotsylvania.

CONFEDERATE



ROBERT E LEE

The famous Confederate general achieved one of his great victories at Chancellorsville having chosen to split his army against a superior force to keep them from swamping them at once. Despite victory, little was gained and Lee set his sights on an invasion of the North once again to push his cause. Fortunately for the Union, his plans didn't prove successful on that occasion.

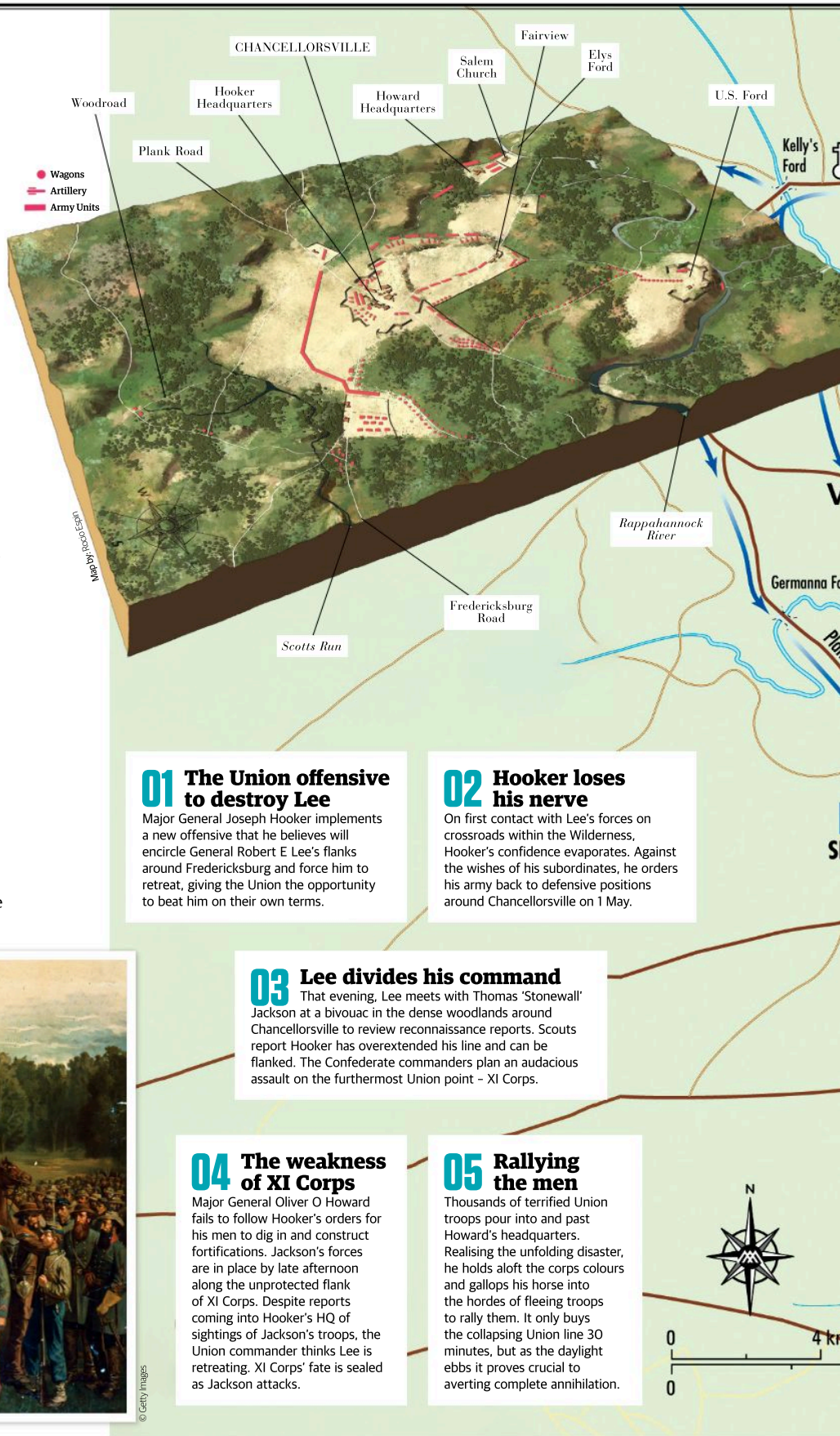
THOMAS J JACKSON

One of Lee's most trusted commanders, 'Stonewall' Jackson trained at West Point like many senior military staff, but sided with the Confederate cause when his home state of Virginia seceded from the Union. He fought in the Jackson's Valley Campaign, Seven Days Battles, Northern Virginia Campaign and Maryland Campaign, but was ultimately killed by friendly fire returning from a night raid.

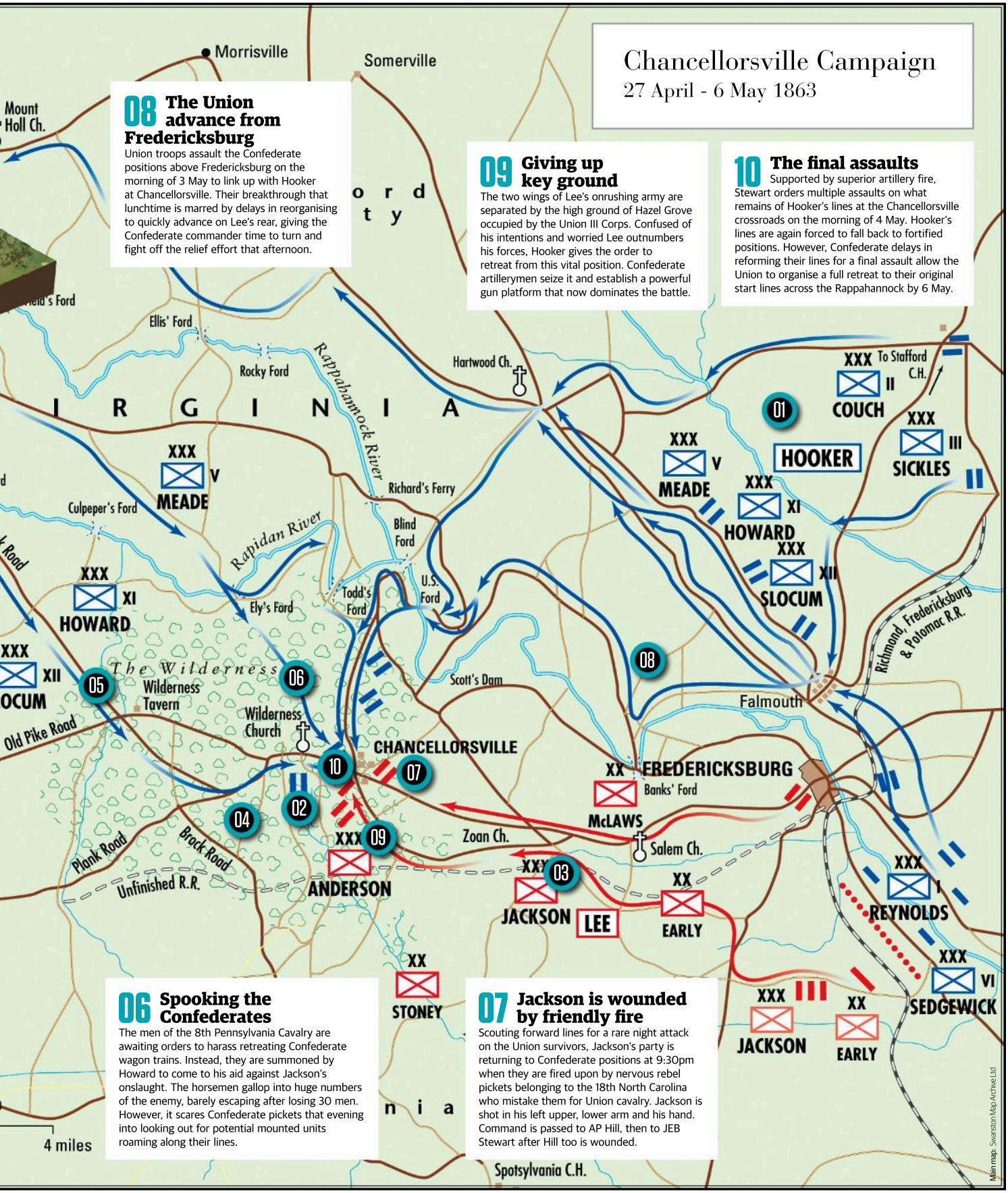
into the campaign, he had suffered 17,197 casualties with 1,606 killed, including three divisional commanders – more than had been lost at the disaster at Fredericksburg the previous December. The news caused shock and disbelief in Washington, with President Lincoln lamenting to his staff: "My God, my God, what will the country say?"

For the South, despite the elation of Lee's superb victory, it had come at a terrible price. The Army of Northern Virginia's losses amounted to 13,303 (a staggering 22 per cent of Lee's command), more than the bloodletting his army had suffered at Antietam in September 1862 when he had invaded the North. Compounding these figures would be the shocking news a few days later on 10 May that Stonewall Jackson, despite a successful amputation of his wounded arm, had then succumbed to infection. A crestfallen Lee bemoaned to staff: "He may have lost his left arm, but I have lost my right." The loss to the command structure of the Army of Northern Virginia going forward, and to the morale of the Confederacy, was incalculable.

For both sides, the outcome of the Battle of Chancellorsville brought into sharp focus what they needed to achieve in 1863. Lee was despondent. Despite this famous victory, his losses and his failure to finish off Hooker's beleaguered and confused army convinced him that only taking the war to the Union once again might bring about a strategic victory. Lee would convince the South's leadership that they should focus all their energies on the eastern theatre, to the detriment of those Confederate forces defending vital western interests on the Mississippi. For the Union, President Lincoln once again began the desperate search for a commander who could successfully use the North's superior strength in numbers and materiel to bring him victory. A feeling of a coming reckoning pervaded Washington circles as many saw the summer campaign season as pivotal to the outcome of the war.



This painting shows the last meeting between Stonewall Jackson (left) and Robert E Lee. Jackson was mortally wounded during the battle by friendly fire


Chancellorsville Campaign
27 April - 6 May 1863
08 The Union advance from Fredericksburg
Union troops assault the Confederate positions above Fredericksburg on the morning of 3 May to link up with Hooker at Chancellorsville. Their breakthrough that lunchtime is marred by delays in reorganising to quickly advance on Lee's rear, giving the Confederate commander time to turn and fight off the relief effort that afternoon.
09 Giving up key ground
The two wings of Lee's onrushing army are separated by the high ground of Hazel Grove occupied by the Union III Corps. Confused of his intentions and worried Lee outnumbers his forces, Hooker gives the order to retreat from this vital position. Confederate artillerymen seize it and establish a powerful gun platform that now dominates the battle.
10 The final assaults
Supported by superior artillery fire, Stewart orders multiple assaults on what remains of Hooker's lines at the Chancellorsville crossroads on the morning of 4 May. Hooker's lines are again forced to fall back to fortified positions. However, Confederate delays in reforming their lines for a final assault allow the Union to organise a full retreat to their original start lines across the Rappahannock by 6 May.
06 Spooking the Confederates
The men of the 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry are awaiting orders to harass retreating Confederate wagon trains. Instead, they are summoned by Howard to come to his aid against Jackson's onslaught. The horsemen gallop into huge numbers of the enemy, barely escaping after losing 30 men. However, it scares Confederate pickets that evening into looking out for potential mounted units roaming along their lines.
07 Jackson is wounded by friendly fire
Scouting forward lines for a rare night attack on the Union survivors, Jackson's party is returning to Confederate positions at 9:30pm when they are fired upon by nervous rebel pickets belonging to the 18th North Carolina who mistake them for Union cavalry. Jackson is shot in his left upper, lower arm and his hand. Command is passed to AP Hill, then to JEB Stewart after Hill too is wounded.
Morrisville
Somerville
Mount Holl Ch.
Ellis' Ford
Rocky Ford
Rappahannock River
Hartwood Ch.
I R G I N I A
Richard's Ferry
Culpeper's Ford
Rapidan River
Blind Ford
Ely's Ford
Todd's Ford
U.S. Ford
Scott's Dam
Falmouth
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac R.R.
The Wilderness
Wilderness Tavern
Wilderness Church
Old Pike Road
Plank Road
Brock Road
Unfinished R.R.
Zoan Ch.
Salem Ch.
Banks' Ford
Spotsylvania C.H.
4 miles
XXX V MEADE
XXX XI HOWARD
XXX XII SLOCUM
XXX III SICKLES
XXX To Stafford C.H.
XXX II COUCH
01 HOOKER
XX FREDERICKSBURG
CHANCELLORSVILLE
ANDERSON
McLAWS
JACKSON
LEE
EARLY
STONEY
REYNOLDS
SEDGEWICK
02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10
Main map: Swanston Map Archive Ltd

What If...

ARGENTINA HAD WON THE FALKLANDS WAR?

Margaret Thatcher gambled on direct military action. But an Argentine victory could have left both her and Britain's reputation in tatters

Interview by David Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

© Paula Fernley

PROFESSOR RICHARD TOYE

Toye is professor of Modern History at the University of Exeter. He has published over 20 books, the most recent of which is *Age of Hope: Labour, 1945, and the Birth of Modern Britain* (Bloomsbury Continuum, 2023).

Following the Argentinian incursion into the Falklands, the move by Margaret Thatcher to deploy a military task force to retake the territory galvanised a nation. Britain seemed to be united in a patriotic fervour and single-minded belief that it had been deeply wronged and was taking action to show it was still a major player to be reckoned with on the world stage. Following the British victory, and a hero's welcome for the task force, Thatcher would refer to the 'Falklands Spirit' for years to come. But with a British failure in the South Atlantic, the global respect afforded Margaret Thatcher might never have materialised, and there could have been serious repercussions for Britain, at home and around the world.

What may have been the impact on global politics and Britain's reputation if Britain had lost?

This depends on the exact scenario. One possibility would have been that the UK's political and military leadership decided that action to recapture the islands was simply too risky, and that it should just be accepted. Another is that military action was tried but failed – possible if the Americans had not given critical intelligence and logistical help. The first outcome would have been easier to survive than the second. Few people in Britain even knew where the Falklands were, and though the issue could not exactly have been brushed under the carpet, it would have been possible to try to manage it diplomatically, and through economic sanctions. This was what had been tried after Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965, and although the Rhodesian question became a running sore in British politics, it never brought down a government. Once a task force had sailed to the South Atlantic, though, the stakes were much higher. Defeat would have been reminiscent of the 1956 Suez Crisis (albeit that was a diplomatic catastrophe surrounding a successful military operation). In terms of global reputation, it would likely have confirmed impressions of Britain as a declining power with failed imperial pretensions. Certainly, it would have been harder for Thatcher (or any replacement prime minister) to present herself as a serious player on the world stage. Although Britain's impact on the end of the Cold War should not be overstated, Thatcher deserves credit for recognising Mikhail Gorbachev as a Soviet leader with whom it was possible to do business. She was also widely admired in Eastern Europe. It is hard to envisage things turning out quite the same way if Britain had recently experienced military humiliation, though.

What boost would a win have given the military dictatorship in Argentina and how would that impact on the country's future?

Victory would doubtless have given the Argentine Junta a significant boost, but equally clearly it would not have solved the fundamental political, economic, and social problems from which the ▶

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Main image source: © Getty Images

RIGHT Falklands sovereignty has been disputed for more than a century

"The Tories would have faced an enormous challenge, and the prospect of election victory might have led Labour to act in a more united way"

THE PAST

PRE-1982

CLAIM & COUNTERCLAIM

The issue of sovereignty over the Falklands Islands had been a matter of dispute between Britain and Argentina since the early 19th century. By 1833, Great Britain had established the islands, basically using gunboat diplomacy, as British territory. For more than a century the dispute rumbled on in the background, an ever-present agenda item for British-Argentine diplomatic relations. In 1982, under the military Junta led by Leopoldo Galtieri, the voices grew much louder. Things were not going well at home for the generals, with eye-watering inflation and human rights abuses against their opponents. They needed a glorious victory to reunite the country, and their attention turned to the Falkland Islands.

MAR-APR 1982

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD

On 19 March 1982, a group of salvage workers raised the Argentine flag on the island of South Georgia, also British Territory. On 2 April, Argentina invaded the Falklands and later that month had 10,000 troops on the islands. Thatcher's government declared a war exclusion zone around the islands. On 5 April, a British task force led by two aircraft carriers set sail for the South Atlantic. By 25 April, South Georgia was recaptured. The sinking of the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano, by a British nuclear submarine kept most of the Argentine fleet in port.

1982-83

VICTORY AWAY GIVES VICTORY AT HOME

There were considerable losses of aircraft and ships on both sides, but Argentina could never create the dominance in the air to stop a land invasion. Following an amphibious landing, British troops started their assault. They faced a fierce and determined defence, but on 14 June, the Argentine forces surrendered. Success in the South Atlantic meant a hero's welcome on the return of the Task Force. It also assured victory for Thatcher and the Conservatives in the 1983 election. The reputations of both Britain and its prime minister were intact.

LEFT Margaret Thatcher staked her reputation on the Task Force

invasion was designed to distract. On 6 April 1982, around a quarter of a million people gathered before the presidential palace in Buenos Aires in support of the Falklands/Malvinas invasion. Yet they also voiced their opposition to the Junta. The opposition was determined to demand sweeping change once the war was over – whether it was won or lost. Triumph on the battlefield would have given the regime breathing space – but it would not have forestalled its probably inevitable collapse.

In short, a different outcome to the war would not have averted the Argentinian political instability that persists to this day. It is also interesting to ask, though, if the USA could have maintained better relations with Latin America had it not decided to back Britain – a move seen widely across the region as a betrayal.

What would a loss have meant for Margaret Thatcher and for the Conservative Party?

Whereas acceptance of the situation might have been politically survivable, that was not Thatcher's style. Once she had committed herself to taking back the islands by force, her future prospects were inevitably tied to the operation's success. If it had failed unambiguously, she would have had to resign. The question is, who would have taken over? There were a number of able ministers in the Cabinet. Three of them, Willie Whitelaw, Jim Prior, and Geoffrey Howe, had been defeated by Thatcher for the leadership in 1975. Of these, Howe, as chancellor of the exchequer, might have been the most plausible contender, but there could also have been wildcards such as the ambitious environment secretary, Michael Heseltine.

What, though, would have been the outcome for the ideological direction of the Conservatives? In 1982, Thatcher was in the process of converting the party to her brand of economics, but still had to be mindful of the divisions between 'wets' and 'dries'. Howe was fully signed up to the free market agenda, but might have lacked the force of personality to drive through radical change by himself. Defeat in the Falklands would certainly have strengthened the hand of those who had long been sceptical of Thatcher's approach, even though her economic policies would not obviously have been discredited by military failure as such. In other words, Tory divisions would have been exacerbated, and if Thatcher had remained on the backbenches, she would have had little incentive to hold her tongue.

What public opinion issues would need to be managed in Britain?

The despatch of the Task Force was accompanied by an upsurge in jingoistic feeling. Defeat in the South Atlantic would surely have led to a sense of crushing disappointment, even betrayal, likely much encouraged by parts of the popular press. This was also a time of mass unemployment and considerable industrial strife. The loss of the war could have had repercussions for Britain's global economic standing, which would have made these problems even harder to manage. However, Suez offered a precedent for the Conservatives in how to successfully deal with a heavy reputational blow. Anthony Eden quickly stood down

BELOW Captured Argentinian soldiers were repatriated

on grounds of ill health and his successor, Harold Macmillan, moved quickly to mend relations with the USA, while maintaining a world statesperson image which seemed to suggest that nothing very damaging had happened. Although it is difficult to see exactly how the same trick could have been pulled off in the conditions of the 1980s, the Conservatives have historically been very good at sustaining themselves in power even in spite of major crises and obvious failures. However, the loss of the Falklands would certainly have dented their reputation as the patriotic party, and a new threat might have emerged from the right.

Would a loss have meant Labour won the 1983 election?

This seems far from certain. The Labour Party was extremely divided and its leader, Michael Foot, was not widely regarded as a credible prime minister. If the Conservatives had ditched Thatcher and adopted a more consensual style of politics, they might actually have increased their appeal. That said, the Tories would have faced an enormous challenge, and the prospect of a potential election victory might have led Labour to act in a more united way. It could conceivably have squeaked a narrow majority.

However, there is another possibility. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) broke away from the Labour Party in 1981. Prior to the Falklands, it rode high in the polls, and in fact (in alliance with the Liberals) scored a quarter of the votes in the 1983 election. If the Conservatives had been discredited by defeat, and if Labour had failed to solve its internal and policy

RIGHT General Galtieri hoped victory would settle unrest at home

issues, the SDP-Liberal Alliance could have been significantly strengthened. The first-past-the-post electoral system tends to favour the two main parties. This makes it unlikely that the Alliance would have been able to form a government in its own right unless its performance was truly spectacular. However, if the Conservatives, Labour, and the Alliance had all secured 33 per cent shares, the Alliance could have emerged as a potential kingmaker/coalition partner for one of them. Perhaps a Geoffrey Howe-Roy Jenkins partnership would have rendered the Cameron-Clegg coalition historically unnecessary.

How would domestic and economic politics in the UK have looked in the years after a defeat, and since?

Let us continue with the Tory-Alliance coalition scenario. The Conservatives moderate their policies, undertaking only a few further modest privatisations and tax cuts, and making common cause with their Alliance partners in favour of European integration. At a further election in 1987, the Alliance emerges as the largest party and Jenkins becomes prime minister. When he retires through ill health, David Owen, foreign secretary, enters No 10. When the Berlin Wall falls he gains a temporary boost from the 'peace dividend'. But his personality is too abrasive to maintain unity, and though he squeezes out a narrow surprise victory in 1992, the British people are tired with the politics of the centre ground and are instead looking for a new approach. The Labour Party revives and in 1997 wins a landslide victory under an MP from the 1983 intake with radical left-wing credentials. His name is Tony Blair.

THE POSSIBILITY

1983

THE IRON LADY MELTS

It is unlikely, having staked so much of her reputation – and that of her party – on the defence of the Falkland Islands, that Margaret Thatcher would have been able to politically survive an Argentine victory. With loss of face, and faith, in the eyes of the electorate she would have become a liability for the Conservatives. At worst it would mean outright defeat in the polls. At best, some form of coalition with the rising SDP party could be struck. But without Thatcher as leader, or perhaps even the Tories in opposition, pivotal moments in history, such as the Brighton Bombing by the IRA, may never have come to pass.

1981 ONWARDS

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Although the newly formed Social Democratic Party (SDP) was rising in popularity, it probably wouldn't have been able to form a government on its own. That's not to say it would not wield power. In alliance with the Liberal Party, it had shown it could attract votes. With a weak Labour leadership and a fractured Tory party, such an alliance could have squeezed enough votes to govern. If not, then a more traditional pact with either Conservatives or Labour as the power behind the throne, would have meant 'Thatcherism' lost its focus and its relevance.

1984

SOFT LINE NOT PICKET LINE

With British social and economic policy taking a more restrained route, a number of things may have been different. Through the influence of more moderate voices – either from within the Tories or from coalition partners – the push for privatisations of public utilities may never have got off the ground. And industrial relations may possibly have been far more conciliatory. In 1984, the threat to the coal industry through pit closures dominated the news, and the political agenda. Government and unions were locked in a war of attrition, and running battles on the picket lines have become a symbol of British politics of the day. But with a victory for Argentina in the Falklands, this time could all have been so different.

CAVALRY SPORTS HELMET

Discovered in Nola, Italy, this bronze cavalry sports helmet dates from the 2nd century CE. It is designed in the image of a female warrior, likely an Amazon. Depictions of Amazon warriors, like this one, are common in classical art.

Through History

LEGION LIFE

A new exhibition at the British Museum explores what everyday life was like in the Roman army

The Roman legion has an enduring legacy as the elite army that helped to enforce the might of the Roman Empire across the world. Serving as the military, navy and police force, the legion as a whole stood for centuries as a symbol of the power of Rome. But, for the individual legionaries that made up the imperial army, life was often more domestic than we may imagine. A new exhibition at the British Museum in London aims to shine a spotlight on the lives of these ordinary men who were recruited to the legion, as well as those of their families.

Legion: Life in the Roman Army draws together over 200 objects from the British Museum's collection, and from 28 lenders around the world, to bring to life the individual stories of Rome's legionaries from Scotland to the Red Sea. One of the most astounding exhibits on display includes the remains of a Roman marine, preserved at Herculaneum after the infamous eruption of Mount Vesuvius, who has been reunited with his belt and equipment. Other objects of interest for the exhibition's visitors range from swords to coins, which come together to tell an alternative and fascinating story of the Roman legion.

ARMINIUS REVOLT ARMOUR

Discovered in the Teutoburg Forest, Germany, this armour is believed to have belonged to a legionary killed in the Arminius revolt (9 CE). It is the oldest and most complete segmental cuirass, the armour known to be worn by legionaries.

ROMAN SHIELD

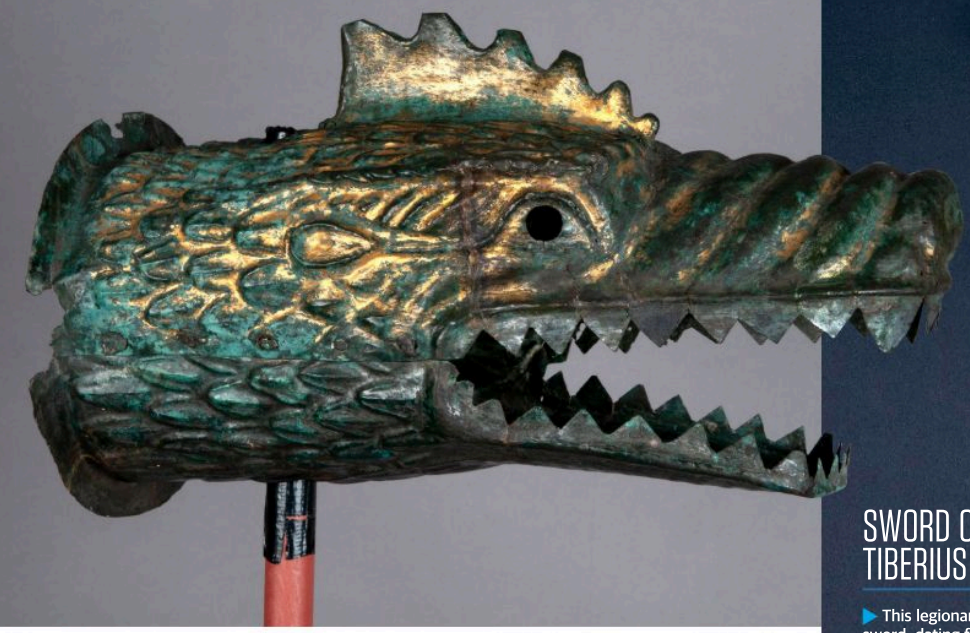
The only intact legionary shield in the world, this *scutum* was discovered in Dura-Europos in Syria. It is made from leather and wood, dates from the 3rd century CE and features painted designs of eagles and lions. It would originally have been flat.

LEGIONARY HELMET

Dating from the 1st century CE, this bronze coolus type helmet is rare as it still has the original side tubes, which were used to attach plumage, intact. Discovered in England, it is paired with a separate cheek-piece and crest fitting.

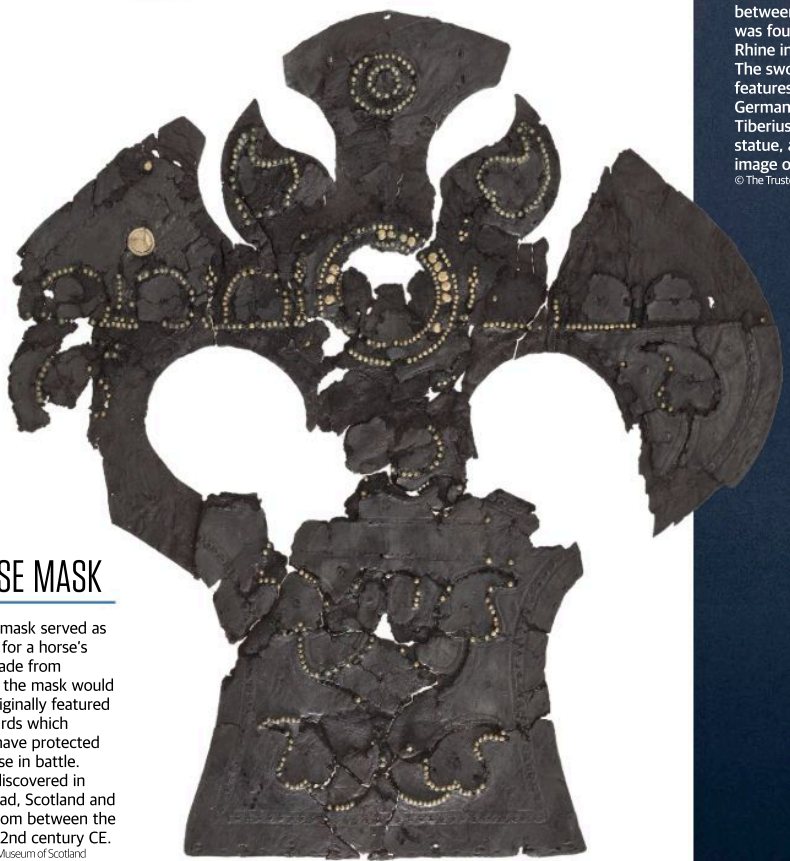
DRAGON STANDARD

This standard from the Roman legion takes the form of a menacing dragon. Dating from 190-260 CE, it is unique in its design and is being displayed for the first time in the UK. It was discovered in Niederbieber, Germany.



SWORD OF TIBERIUS

This legionary sword, dating from between 14 and 19 CE, was found in the River Rhine in Germany. The sword's scabbard features a depiction of Germanicus presenting Tiberius with a Victory statue, as well as an image of Augustus.



HORSE MASK

This mask served as armour for a horse's face. Made from leather, the mask would have originally featured eye guards which would have protected the horse in battle. It was discovered in Newstead, Scotland and dates from between the 1st and 2nd century CE.

CROCODILE PARADE ARMOUR

This enigmatic suit made from crocodile skin still puzzles experts. It is unclear whether it was worn as part of a set of armour, or as a religious costume. The ensemble was found in Manfalut, Egypt and possibly dates from the 3rd or 4th century CE.

Legion: Life in the Roman Army is open at the British Museum until 23 June 2024.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

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THIS TOWN

Steven Knight's soulful Midlands memories deliver poignancy over power

Cert: 18 **Director:** Paul Whittington **Cast:** Levi Brown, Jordan Bolger, Nicholas Pinnock **Released:** Out now

With a series like *Peaky Blinders* having such success, creator Steven Knight was never going to stay away from his Midlands homeland for long. He returns there with *This Town*, a BBC mini-series set against the backdrop of the Handsworth Riots of 1981 and the Troubles of Northern Ireland. Here he draws up a ragtag group of young people on the Midlands council estates, and throws them into a world of alcohol, drugs, the IRA, and the need to make music to escape a life on society's outskirts.

The tribute Steven Knight and director Paul Whittington pay to the area is clear in every shot. Not an opportunity is wasted to have the sun rising behind a foggy, misty council estate to give an air of ragged pastoral hope to every scene possible. It is the simple ways, the creative arts, that can act as our beacons of hope, and when an area gives birth to Black Sabbath and Judas Priest in the years prior, it isn't surprising that main character Dante turns to music, and eventually guitar, as his attempt to escape. His poetry also reminds one of Handsworth hero Benjamin Zephaniah, who passed away a few months before the series' release.

The characters are well drawn up, likeable and lovable, specks of gold shining in a world forgotten by those in power. "The government is closing down Birmingham," says Nicholas Pinnock's character. Knight puts his heart, soul, and youth into these words from characters who are desperately trying to make it in an oppressive, abusive, racist world.

Unfortunately, the series trips up due to a chronic case of bad pacing. The first episode meanders, unsure of how it is going to start everything off, despite a promising opening scene. And while the second episode has a clear focus around a single funeral, everything after that tends to just ramble round its characters without clear structure to its episodes, and sometimes even its individual scenes. Things simply happen, and while they may be interesting and pull at the heart strings, or even get the pulse racing once or twice, they don't seem to belong to the place they're put in the story. They just occur, and while that might work in a rambling postmodernist novel, it's out of place in a drama of this nature.

When the series ends, although one might get a great sense of euphoria in its final moments, *This Town* also finds it has to wrap everything up far too quickly. This it manages by finding a quick possible ending for its storylines, rather than ones that feel right. As a result, we're left with characters we've grown attached to unceremoniously dumped because the episode count ticked down too quickly. The final product ends up heartfelt, and at times beautiful, but ultimately aimless, a series that showed such promise but in the end failed to fully deliver on its potential. ***KJ***

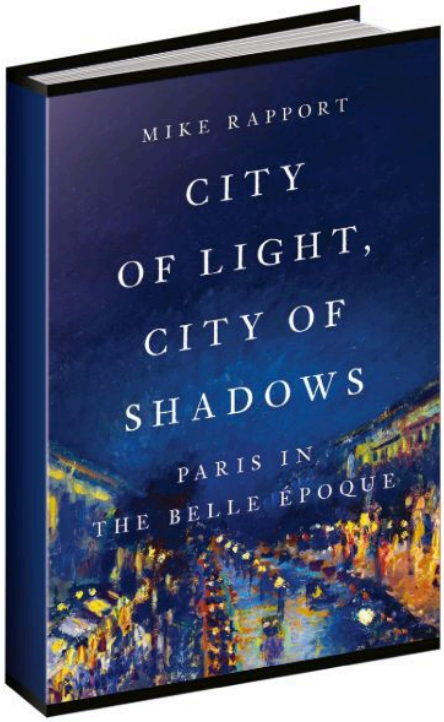
★★★☆☆

Reviews by
Mallory James, Kieran Judge, Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth

CITY OF LIGHT, CITY OF SHADOWS: PARIS IN THE BELLE ÉPOQUE

A comprehensive portrait of Paris during a period of cultural prosperity and social unrest

Author: Mike Rapport **Publisher:** The Bridge Street Press
Price: £30 **Released:** Out now



From the 1870s to the beginning of 'the war to end all wars', Paris experienced a period of economic prosperity and peace when masterpieces of literature, art and the theatre were composed – the Belle Époque. However, this was only one side of the story and much more was going on beneath the surface. Now, the historian Mike Rapport (an expert on French history) explores this most evocative of eras in his new book, *City of Light, City of Shadows*.

The variety of subjects Rapport touches upon is vast and wide. From the construction of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart and the Eiffel Tower, to the opening of the metro, the city's culture of Bohemia and the controversial Dreyfus affair – the level of research on display is truly astounding.

One figure, among a number who recur frequently throughout the book, is the novelist Emile Zola. The author's presence haunts the pages, Rapport making frequent reference to both the man and his various works. Often, this is used to introduce various elements, showing how Zola's novels reflect the changes of the time – for example, the 'grand magasins', or department stores. Later, Zola's trial becomes a key focus of one of the chapters.

This is an incredibly informative, highly literate and extremely enjoyable work. For any would-be scholar of Parisian or indeed French history, this book is a must read. Rapport once again proves himself the provider of some of the most enlightening books on this subject. ***CM***

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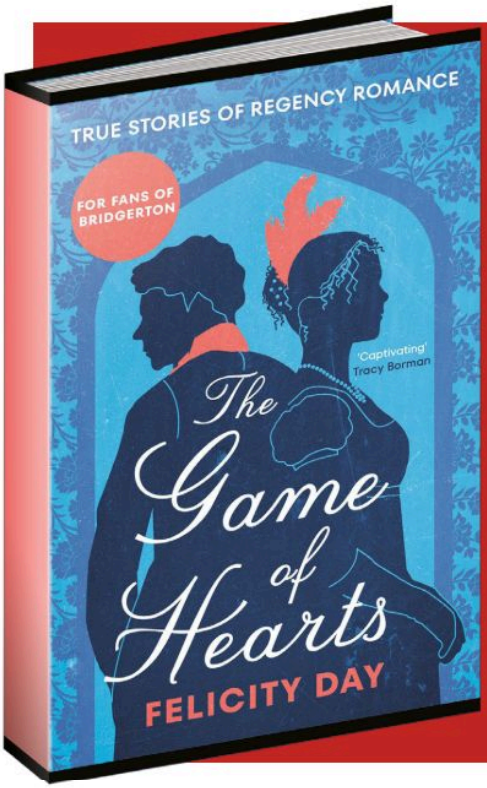


THE GAME OF HEARTS

An enchanting look into the love lives of Regency women

Author: Felicity Day **Publisher:** Blink Publishing
Price: £10.99 **Released:** Out now

With the imminent release of the highly anticipated third season of Netflix's *Bridgerton* on the horizon, there is no more fitting book to delve further into the real history behind the lives and loves of the members of the 'ton'. In her debut book *The Game of Hearts: The lives and loves of Regency women*, which has now been released in paperback, Felicity Day explores the realities of courting and marriage in Regency England as she follows six historical women on their search for love and beyond. All these women are of the highest class in English society, members of the beau monde, which makes their experiences less universal but no less intriguing. Day herself acknowledges that the women featured in *The Game of Hearts*, such as Lady Sarah Spencer from the notorious Spencer family, would have had different courting experiences to other less affluent Regency women, but also highlights that the wealth of material they have left behind is ripe for research.

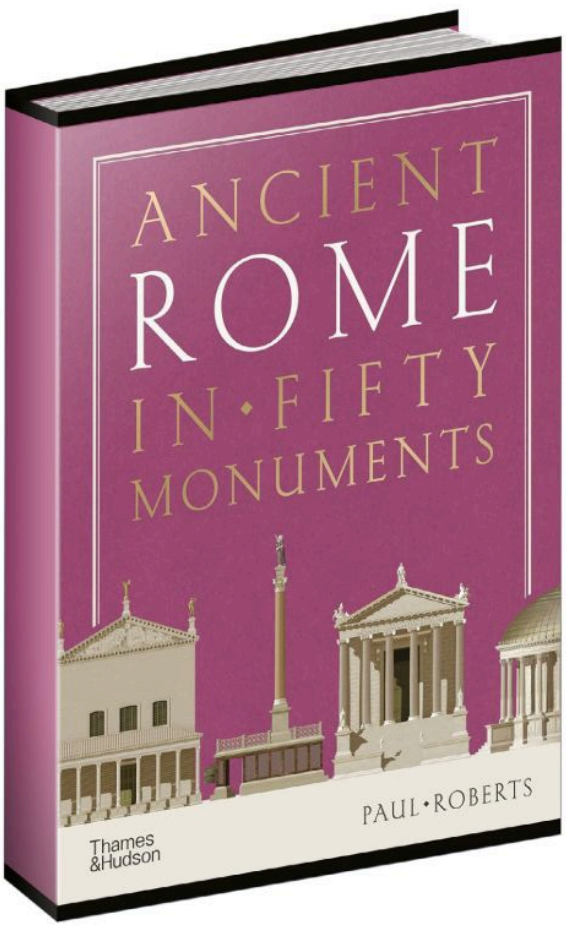
Using the diaries and letters of the six Regency women, and their friends and relations, as well as newspaper stories, *The Game of Hearts* delivers real-life romance, scandal and heartache. Day expertly brings these figures to life and compares their predicaments in themed chapters, though this structure can at times make it hard to recall the details of each leading woman from one chapter to the next. However, in satisfying a desire to understand more about the courting and marriage rituals of Regency England, this well-researched and informative book doesn't fail to entertain. ***ES***

★★★★½

ANCIENT ROME IN 50 MONUMENTS

Follow this detailed map of Ancient Rome's history and architecture

Author: Paul Roberts **Publisher:** Thames and Hudson **Price:** £30 **Released:** Out now



"Roberts' book explores the evolving stories of monuments – their days of glory and decline"

Julius Caesar, Nero and Constantine. The Colosseum, the Pantheon and the Mausoleum of Augustus. These names and buildings loom large over the history of Ancient Rome, and they certainly all feature in Paul Roberts' *Ancient Rome in 50 Monuments*.

Yet, in this book Roberts has also mapped out a meticulous and wider history of the city and its inhabitants. Readers are taken from the reign of kings, to the days of the Republic, through to the rise and fall of the Empire. It naturally gives a great insight into famous buildings and the famous names behind them, like those noted above. However, as well as highlighting the stories of the powerful individuals who ordered their construction, Roberts also considers what these buildings meant to those who saw and used them. This book explores the evolving stories of monuments – their days of glory and decline. This is a sweeping tour of a living, changing, growing and shrinking city.

The Colosseum, for instance, instinctively conjures images of its busiest days, packed with eager Romans. We picture clashes between gladiators and hear the roar of the crowd. But what came after? During the Middle Ages it was used as a fortress, with houses, shops and even a graveyard. And it's interesting to consider that the Ancient Romans wouldn't have called it the Colosseum. This name was a product of the early Middle Ages. To the Romans, it was the 'Amphitheatrum Flavium'.

Ancient Rome in 50 Monuments deftly questions who built what, and why. It also considers the thoughts of onlookers. Julius Caesar's building projects may have demonstrated his power, but they contributed to a negative image of power going too far. He initiated the construction of the Temple of Venus Genetrix, and his contemporaries were well aware his family claimed to trace their lineage back to the goddess. However, Claudius' focus on practical projects, such as the Aqua Claudia and Aqua Anio Novus aqueducts, seems to have bolstered his reputation as an emperor.

Monuments also reflect changes to Roman history and society. The later shift away from building baths and aqueducts for use by the public, towards Christian churches for God, highlights this clearly.

Reinforced by a range of images – from sketches of reconstructions to photographs of what remains in place today – *Ancient Rome in 50 Monuments* creates a visual and immersive history of the city. The rich, graphic support that accompanies the text is a key aspect of this book. There are also additional 'pop out' boxes to provide further insight into topics around Roman society, life and architecture.

In *Ancient Rome in 50 Monuments*, Roberts has told the stories of the city's buildings, from the time of their construction to their changing lives and uses in the centuries thereafter. It is an engaging read that will appeal to those with both an established interest in this topic and period, but which will also be accessible to those who are starting to explore this subject. ***MJ***

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HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME

Director: Charles Vidor **Starring:** Doris Day, James Cagney, Cameron Mitchell **Country:** USA **Year:** 1955

An all-singing, all-dancing take on the life of singer Ruth Etting, but do the facts match the fiction?

VERDICT: An entertaining musical that features two Hollywood legends, it fails to reach the high notes as far as fact is concerned.

01 Ruth Etting (Doris Day), is a popular singer during the 1920s/30s in a relationship with gangster, Martin "Moe the Gimp" Snyder (James Cagney). Snyder gives Etting her first performing job, but in reality they met when she was already a chorus girl.

02 Under Snyder, Etting's career takes off. The film portrays her as somewhat complicit and at worst using Snyder. While it's impossible to know if this is what Etting was referring to, she did state that she thought Day's portrayal was too "tough".

03 Snyder and Etting first go to New York, where she performs in the Ziegfeld Follies. Snyder's burly manner sees him struggling to fit in to New York theatre, this really occurred and Ziegfeld had Snyder forbidden from attending rehearsals.

04 Enraged by jealousy, Snyder shoots piano player Johnny Alderman, who he believes is Ruth's new lover. Etting and Myrl Alderman met far later than the film suggests and during his attack, Etting attempted to shoot Snyder, prevented only by his daughter.

05 The film ends on an uncomfortable note, as Snyder, facing trial, is released on bail to see Etting perform at his club on opening night, an attempt to 'pay back' what she 'owed'. No such performance occurred, although Etting did refuse to testify at Snyder's trial.

All images: © Alamy, © Shutterstock

Did you know?

The Broodje Haring is a traditional form of street-sandwich, which features soused herring, gherkins and onion.

SOUSED HERRING

A TRADITIONAL DUTCH PICKLED HERRING RECIPE, NETHERLANDS, MIDDLE AGES

Ingredients

- 6 fresh herring fillets (filleted and trimmed)
- 600ml white wine vinegar
- 1 onion, chopped
- 200g caster sugar
- 1 red chilli, finely cut
- 1 tsp allspice berries
- 1 bay leaf
- Ground black pepper
- Salt

Main image: © Alamy
Inset image: © Getty Images

An extremely popular dish in the Netherlands, this form of raw pickled herring has become a seasonal staple. But herring is also an important part of Dutch history and was integral to the country's economy. In the 14th century, William Buckles invented gibbing, a process of preserving herring by placing them into salt barrels. This created a vast maritime industry and has even led some to claim that herring was partially responsible for the Golden Age. In fact, during this period the Dutch, according to the Marine Stewardship Council, were responsible for 80 per cent of the herring trade. As this recipe contains raw fish, please exercise caution when preparing soused herring.

METHOD

01 Soak the herring fillets in a brine made of 4 parts water/1 part salt. Make sure they are fully submerged and leave them in the fridge for three hours.

02 When the herring has been fully soaked, mix the vinegar, sugar, chilli, allspice, black pepper, onion and bay leaf in a pan over a medium heat. Stir thoroughly until the sugar has dissolved.

03 Turn off the heat and allow the mixture to cool completely.

04 Place the herring fillets in a dish or jars which can be well covered. If using jars, make sure the container is well sterilised and safe to use.

05 Once the liquid has cooled thoroughly, pour over the herring fillets, cover and place in the fridge.

06 Keep in the fridge for at least two days, to allow the herring to fully absorb the flavour.

07 Finally, serve with cut onions and, if desired, gherkins.

HOW KEY WWII MOMENTS COULD HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

World War II was the biggest and bloodiest conflict the world had ever seen. We all know how things turned out in the end, but have you ever stopped to think about what might have been if key battles, decisions or events had taken a different course? Discover the answers inside.

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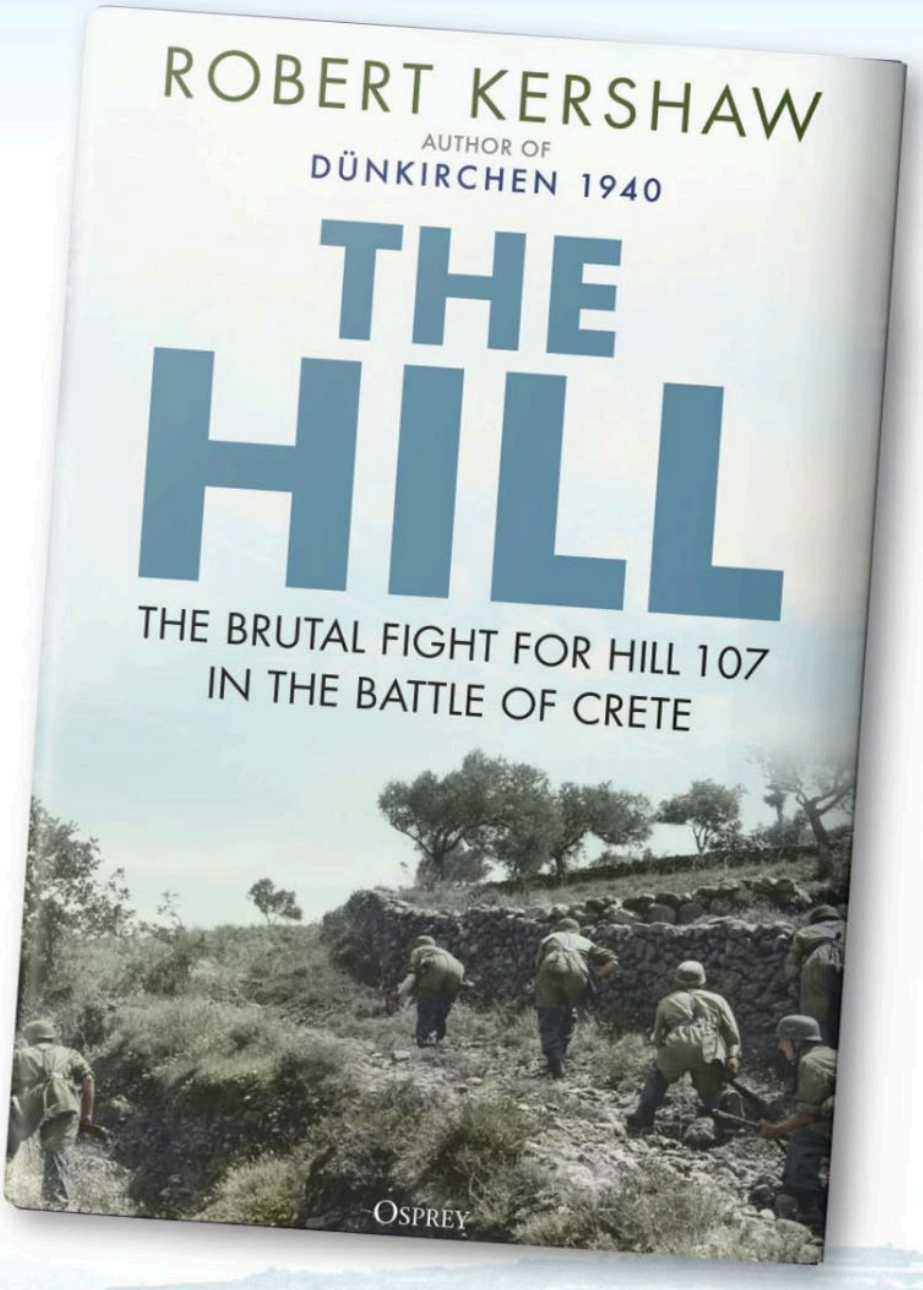

From the critically acclaimed author of *Dünkirchen 1940*, this is a history of the epic three-day battle for Hill 107.

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