GCMF THE GEORGE C. MARSHALL FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 1600, Lexington, VA 24450

"The day I receive the magazine, I sit down with it and read every word."

—Don DeArmon, Frederick, MD

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

This magazine, in tandem with our Marshall Legacy Series and other initiatives, brings Marshall to life substantially and in a fashion that does justice to the complexities of his life, character and career.

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MARSHALL

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MARSHALL

Features

VOL. 3, NO. 2

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Membership information is available on our website. Your membership supports programs and activities during your membership year. By renewing your membership, you help us perpetuate the legacy of the man President Harry Truman called "the great one of the age." As the keeper of the flame, the Marshall Foundation preserves and communicates the remarkable story of the life and times of George C. Marshall and his contemporaries. It has become a unique, national treasure worth protecting at all costs. That's why your membership is so important.

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Front cover image: Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall was reluctant to receive medals and honors during World War II. Following the war, however, he received many accolades and decorations, some of which are shown on the front cover. The French Legion of Honour in the center is surrounded by decorations from Greece, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Morocco, and the Soviet Union.

welcome

A warm welcome to the latest issue of *Marshall* magazine, our publication bringing together some of the latest and the best of writing on General Marshall and his life and times.

This issue provides a particularly rich array of offerings concerned with three of the pivotal aspects of Marshall's career. Internationally known and renowned author and historian Nigel Hamilton examines the myth and the reality of what would prove to be a defining moment in WW2, the decision as to who would lead the Allied invasion of occupied Europe. Much has been written about this, and much speculation has accompanied that judgment. Here, in an article that draws on his lecture in Lexington as part of the Marshall Legacy Series, Dr. Hamilton examines the relation between Marshall and FDR and looks closely at the background to the choice of Eisenhower as supreme allied commander. Additionally, and also drawing on his presentation to a packed house as part of the Marshall Legacy Series, Stephen Taaffe discusses how exactly General Marshall made the difficult but crucial decisions of selecting combat commanders. As Dr. Taaffe demonstrates, no matter how good the men, no matter how good the equipment and the logistical support, without the right people in the right roles across the leadership of the army, all would be for nothing. Marshall's methods and reasoning are the subject of this article. Finally, we have reprised one of the many insightful public lectures written by Dr. Forrest Pogue, Marshall's official biographer and a famed combat historian in his own right. In this instance, Dr. Pogue looks at the enormity of Marshall's role as Army chief of staff both in terms of the scale of his responsibilities but also the scale of the force he commanded, a force that marked the beginning of the United States' global role and presence.

In closing I would ask you all to look a little more closely at our front cover illustration. It is an image of the display from the Marshall Museum that holds Marshall's many decorations and medals. This, of course, is significant in its own right as his honors attest to his storied career. As you can see, however, within this image, there is a picture of Marshall himself, just visible in the background. This is an apt metaphor for what it is that we are trying to to do; draw Marshall from the shadows of history. There is a long way to go, of course, but we are making progress.

Sincerely,

Rob Havers, *President*

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Marshall was the leading figure in developing a global force, in cooperating with the Allied powers, in leading the fight for unity of command…

George C. Marshall: Global Commander

BY FORREST C. POGUE, PH.D.

Clearly, General George C. Marshall was the first American general to be truly a global commander. As [U.S. Army] Chief of Staff, he commanded ground and air forces which at the end of the war in Europe numbered some 8 1/3 million men in nine theaters scattered around the world.

General Marshall at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945

At the time of Pearl Harbor, Marshall's only important garrisons outside the continental United States were in the Philippines and Hawaii. A few months later, he had troops moving to the Hawaiian Command, now commanded by airman Lt. Gen. Delos Emmons, for support of operations in the Pacific. Marshall had appointed Gen. Douglas MacArthur as commander of the Southwest Pacific Theater and arranged for him to be named as commander of the Australian forces as well. To head Army and Army Air Forces in the South Pacific, he named Gen. "Hap" Arnold's Chief of the Air Staff, Maj. Gen. Millard F. Harmon, brother of the distinguished general for whom this series of lectures is named. Air units and service troops were also on their way to India, Burma, and China, where Gen. Joseph Stilwell was to command. An air force was also set up in the Middle East.

One morning in 1944, General Marshall invited the representative of a commander who believed that his theater was being neglected to attend a morning briefing in his office. In accordance with the usual custom, the officers charged with this duty had placed on the map the pins showing the progress on the different active fronts of the world. At a glance one could see that fighting was raging in Italy, in northwest and southern France, on the Ledo Road, in the air against Germany and the possessions of Japan, or in the widely scattered islands of the Pacific. The Chief of Staff was amused as he saw his visitor's growing realization of the many fronts the War Department had to arm and supply.

No other Chief of Staff in Great Britain or the United States carried a heavier burden in dealing with legislative bodies, the Press, state executives, and makers of public opinion

In addition to his normal duties as Army Chief, Marshall had important special responsibilities. In 1941, he became the only military member of the high policy committee dealing with the

This article has been excerpted from the Harmon Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr. Pogue at the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1968 when he was director of the Marshall Library. The full text of the lecture is available on our website.

photo credit George C. Marshall Research Library

General Marshall with Chiefs of the War Dept. in March 1942: LTG Henry H. Arnold (*seated left*) and LTG Lesley J. McNair (*seated right*) with MG Joseph T. McNarney (*standing left*) and MG Brehon Somervell

atomic bomb project. Later, when implementation of the project was placed under Maj. Gen. Leslie Groves, that officer was made directly responsible to Secretary of War Stimson and to General Marshall.

General Marshall served as the executive of the Combined Chiefs of Staff in giving directives to Gen. Eisenhower while he was Allied Commander in the Mediterranean and, later, when he became Supreme Allied Commander in northwest Europe. He also represented the Joint Chiefs of Staff in dealing with General MacArthur in the Southwest Pacific and General Joseph Stilwell in the China Burma-India Theater.

No other Chief of Staff in Great Britain or the United States carried a heavier burden in dealing with legislative bodies, the Press, state executives, and makers of public opinion. In frequent appearances on Capitol Hill, he gained votes for appropriations and for huge increases in manpower. His support helped to pass the first selective service legislation, after it had been brought forward by civilian leaders and bipartisan groups in Congress. In 1941, it was his strong appeal to a handful of members of the Lower House that secured the margin of one vote in the House of Representatives for the extension of the draft four months before Pearl Harbor.

Marshall found that his task did not end with obtaining appropriations and the men he needed. Early in his term as Chief of Staff he discovered that business leaders were distant to White House demands for increased war production and suspicious of Mr. Roosevelt's proposals. Using the same frank approach to the Business Advisory Council that he had used to Congress, he gained greater business cooperation in meeting the Army's needs.

"I wish above everything that I could feel that my time was to be occupied in sound development work rather than in meeting the emergencies of a great catastrophe."

This tremendous spreading of his time and energies was not to his liking. He had written an old friend soon after becoming Chief of Staff, "I wish above everything that I could feel that my time was to be occupied in sound development work rather than in meeting the emergencies of a great catastrophe." But he was to spend his long term of slightly more than six years as Chief of Staff in struggling to prepare the Army and Army Air Forces for their duties in a global war. Sworn in a few hours after Hitler's army invaded Poland, he remained at his post until the war was finished and demobilization had begun. With the exception of Marshal Stalin and the Japanese emperor, Marshall was the only wartime leader to retain the same position for this entire period. (Arnold, while chief of the Air Corps in September 1938, did not become Commanding General of the Army Air Forces and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff until 1942.)

Marshall's world view began to broaden during his first assignment in the Philippines in 1902-03.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Participants in the Allied Planning Conference that took place at the Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ) in Algiers in June 1943 include (*from left to right*): British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, General Alan Brooke, Air Chief Marshal Arthur Tedder, Admiral Andrew Cunningham, General Harold Alexander, General Marshall, General Dwight Eisenhower and General Bernard Montgomery with Prime Minister Winston Churchill (*seated in the center*).

At the war's close, the British Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Cunningham of Hyndhope, and Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Portal, who had served with Marshall during much of the conflict, hailed him as "architect and builder of the finest and most powerful Army in American history." Prime Minister Winston Churchill spoke of him as "the organizer of victory." Marshall's old friend, Bernard Baruch, called him the first global strategist.

What were the roads he followed to reach this end? In his first tour in the Philippines, Marshall gained his initial ideas of America's global responsibilities. At the same time he struggled through the necessarily painful process of learning how to command. The Philippine Insurrection had just ended and the volunteer officers who had served in the recent war and the ensuing fighting in the Islands were going home. As a result of the shortage of Regular Army officers, Marshall found himself a few months after arrival as the only officer in charge of a company in the southern half of the island of Mindoro. With little training to guide him, with no manual on how to deal with occupied territory, cut off from the outside world except for the monthly visit of a small supply boat, he fell back on what "the Corps, the [Virginia Military] Institute, expected of a cadet officer in the performance of his duty." He was green in military affairs, but he got by, as he recalled, with "the super-confidence of a recent cadet officer" and the help of two seasoned sergeants.

Col. Marshall and MG Henry T. Allen with the 8th Corps in France during World War I

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

The young officer, returned to the United States after 18 months in the Islands, could never again take a wholly narrow view of the world. Although he would not return to foreign duty for more than a decade, he knew that American interests lay beyond restricted boundaries. Indeed, his career was to parallel almost exactly the first 50 years of the twentieth century as the tasks of the United States Army grew and as the United States expanded its global role.

Growing Japanese aggressiveness worried the small Army force in the Philippines during Marshall's second tour. He and his colleagues became involved in exercises designed to test the ability of an unnamed enemy to overrun the Islands. In 1914, the sudden illness of the officer charged with acting as chief of staff of the "enemy" landing force in southern Luzon gave

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Marshall (*center*) served as executive officer with the Fifteenth Infantry Regiment in Tientsin, China from Sept. 1924 through May 1927.

Lt. Marshall his big chance to show his ability as a staff officer. Stepping into a role for which he had rehearsed in maneuvers in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, and Texas, only a few years before, he gained a reputation for genius with battle plans that would be exaggerated in the telling. One who watched him in those exciting days was young Lt. "Hap" Arnold. Observing Marshall dictate a field order with nothing but a map before him, Arnold told his wife that he had seen a future chief of staff of the Army.

Marshall was to have one more experience with duty in the Far East before World War II. In the years between the great wars, he asked for duty in China. From 1924 to 1927, he served in Tientsin as Executive Officer of the 15th Regiment, which was charged with the duty of helping other foreign powers keep open the railroad from Peking to the sea. Left in command on two occasions when warring factions threatened to overrun the American sector, he managed by quiet firmness and persuasion to tum the marauders aside from the city.

Newsmen referred to him as a "wizard" and Gen. Pershing in his memoirs singled out his contributions for special praise.... "The troops which maneuvered under his plans always won."

Although his mental horizons were immeasurably widened by the three tours he spent in the Far East, Marshall perhaps gained most in his global outlook by his two years in France from the summer of 1917 to the fall of 1919. A member of the first division to go to France, training officer and then chief of operations of the 1st Division, he advanced to a planning assignment at Pershing's General Headquarters at Chaumont, and then to the post of chief of operations of Gen. Hunter Liggett's First Army in the closing weeks of the war. In one of his later assignments, he helped plan the operation at St. Mihiel. Then, while that battle was still in progress, he was shifted to supervising the moving of units into the Meuse-Argonne area for the final United States offensive of the war. This task, which required the orderly withdrawal from the line of French and Italian units and moving in over three main roads troops from the St. Mihiel front and other areas, approximately 800,000 men, brought into play his logistical talents. Newsmen referred to him as a "wizard" and Gen. Pershing in his memoirs singled out his contributions for special praise. A member of Pershing's staff later wrote that Marshall's task at First Army was "to work out all the details of the operations, putting them in a clear, workable order which could be understood by the commanders of all subordinate units. The order must be comprehensive but not involved. It must appear clear when read in a poor light, in the mud and the rain. That was Marshall's job and he performed it 100%. The troops which maneuvered under his plans always won."

Marshall's rise in the Army was greatly assisted by his work in France, and his later leadership as Chief of Staff was strongly influenced by what he observed in World War I. He recalled the

BG John McAuley Palmer and General Marshall in the Chief of Staff's office in Nov. 1944

shocked faces of the French when they saw the almost total unpreparedness of the first American troops sent to France. Unlike many of his colleagues, most of whom arrived later when trained American units showed up well alongside weary, battle worn French contingents, he understood French reservations about fighting qualities of American troops and was patient with their unfavorable reactions. He returned to the United States determined, if he had anything to do about it, never to let another Army go abroad until it was prepared to fight.

General Marshall listens to MG Stafford Le Roy Irwin as he describes the French terrain in Oct. 1944. MG Walton Walker stands in the foreground.

Several other lessons stayed with him. He recalled that there had been no proper sifting out of officers before the units came overseas and that Pershing at one time had thirty or more general officers on the road to the rear for reassignment. He was angered when he found a lack of concern for fighting men by the Services of Supply. Told that items such as candy and small necessities would be available by purchase only through post exchanges, he protested. When the Chief of Staff of First Army chided him about his remarks, he angrily exclaimed, "By God, I won't stay as G-3 if the man at the front can't have these things. I don't favor sending men up to die if I can't give them a free box of matches." He fumed because recognition of bravery was long delayed, insisting that the value of medals and battlefield promotions lay in prompt recognition of performance so that other men could see that fine qualities of leadership and valor were appreciated by the Army. He was furious when red tape in the rear areas made unnecessarily difficult and unpleasant the process of demobilization. He was impressed by the fact that the officers responsible were fine men but "it was a huge machine and they were reluctant to make changes in it which would complicate things." As Chief of Staff of the Army, he never let his commanders forget that "we must do everything we could to convince the soldier that we were all solicitude for his well being. I was for supplying everything we could and [only] then requiring him to fight to the death when the time came. . . . If it were all solicitude then you had no Army. But you couldn't be severe in your demands unless [the soldier] was convinced that you were doing everything you could to make matters well for him."

ADM Ernest King, GEN George C. Marshall, and GEN H. H. Arnold leave the White House after a meeting with President Roosevelt in February 1944.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

In the five years following the war, Marshall served as senior aide to General Pershing. With his chief, he visited the battlefields of France, Belgium, and Italy and shared with him the victory parades in Paris, London, New York, and Washington. As his assistant, he sat through lengthy congressional hearings on the future National Defense Act of the United States. From the planning sessions and his observations of the legislative process, he gained a vital knowledge of how to work with Congress. This period of training was followed by trips with Pershing and his staff to the chief army posts and war plants of the country.

As Chief of Staff of the Army, looking at a world map which showed pre-Pearl Harbor commitments to the proposition of defeating Germany first and the growing lines of red thumb tacks which showed continued Japanese conquest in the Pacific, Marshall found it difficult at times to agree with British proposals for ending the war. Although he accepted the need of making full use of British and Russian power to end the struggle first against the strongest of the Axis powers, he opposed a strategy which might delay the speedy defeat of Japan. In this he was influenced by General Douglas MacArthur and the supporters of full scale action against the Japanese and by Adm. King's desire to strike back at the enemy in the Pacific. Forgetting the task Marshall faced in holding steadily to the Germany first concept, some British commentators have criticized him for reluctance to follow up opportunities in the Mediterranean and his obstinate insistence on the Cross-Channel approach. In fact he did much to support the British line in the Mediterranean. After ceding reluctantly to Roosevelt's pressure for operations in North Africa for November 1942, the Army Chief of Staff accepted the logic of events in the Mediterranean, agreeing to the invasion of Sicily, landings in southern Italy, the Anzio operation, the drive for Rome, and a thrust northward to the Pisa-Rimini line. Even while holding resolutely to the commitment to land in southern France in support of Eisenhower's operations to the north, Marshall managed to give a measure of assistance to the Italian campaign.

…it is clear that no high level military chief was more consistently generous in his efforts to meet the request of foreign allies.

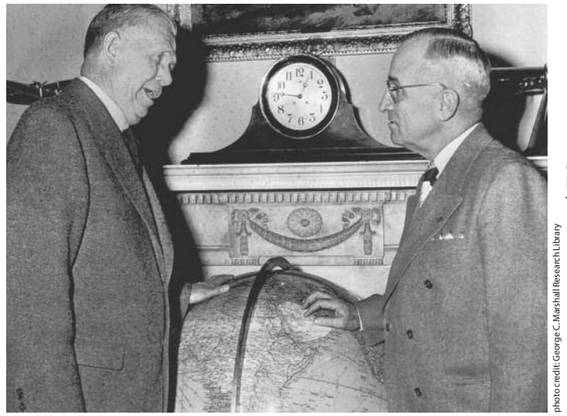
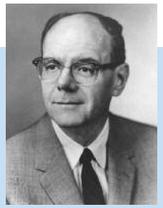


photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Marshall and President Harry Truman

Whatever the extent of Marshall's differences with the British, it is clear that no high level military chief was more consistently generous in his efforts to meet the request of foreign allies. Although they chronicled Marshall's refusal to give further backing to Mediterranean enterprises, Churchill and Alanbrooke never forgot his generosity after the fall of Tobruk when he stripped from American units tanks and guns they had only recently received and shipped them to the Middle East. When one of the ships carrying part of this precious cargo was sunk, he promptly made good the losses.

Such, in brief, are some aspects of the career of the American leader described by the British official historian, John Ehrman, as *primus interpares* (first among equals) in the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Among all the British and United States chiefs of staff, Marshall was the leading figure in developing a global force, in cooperating with the Allied powers, in leading the fight for unity of command, in sharing his resources and production priorities with Allied forces around the world, and in attempting to find the means to help Allied interests while also protecting those which were purely American.



Marshall's official biographer, Forrest C. Pogue received a Ph.D. from Clark University in 1939. He served with the U.S. forces in Europe as a combat historian for the First Army (1944-1945) and is the holder of several military decorations. He later joined the Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, becoming one of the principal authors of the U.S. Army in World War II series. In 1952 he joined the Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, based in Heidelberg, Germany. This was followed (1954-1956) by a professorship of history at Murray State College, Kentucky, the institution from which he received his A.B. in 1932 and where he had taught from 1933 to 1942. In 1956, Dr. Pogue was chosen director of the Research Library at the Marshall Foundation. He is the author of several works, including *The Supreme Command* (1954). He is the coauthor of *The Meaning of Yalta* (1956) and contributed to *Command Decisions* (1960) and *Total War and Cold War* (1962). He completed the four--volume, definitive biography of Gen. George C. Marshall with the publication of the final volume in 1987. He died in 1996.

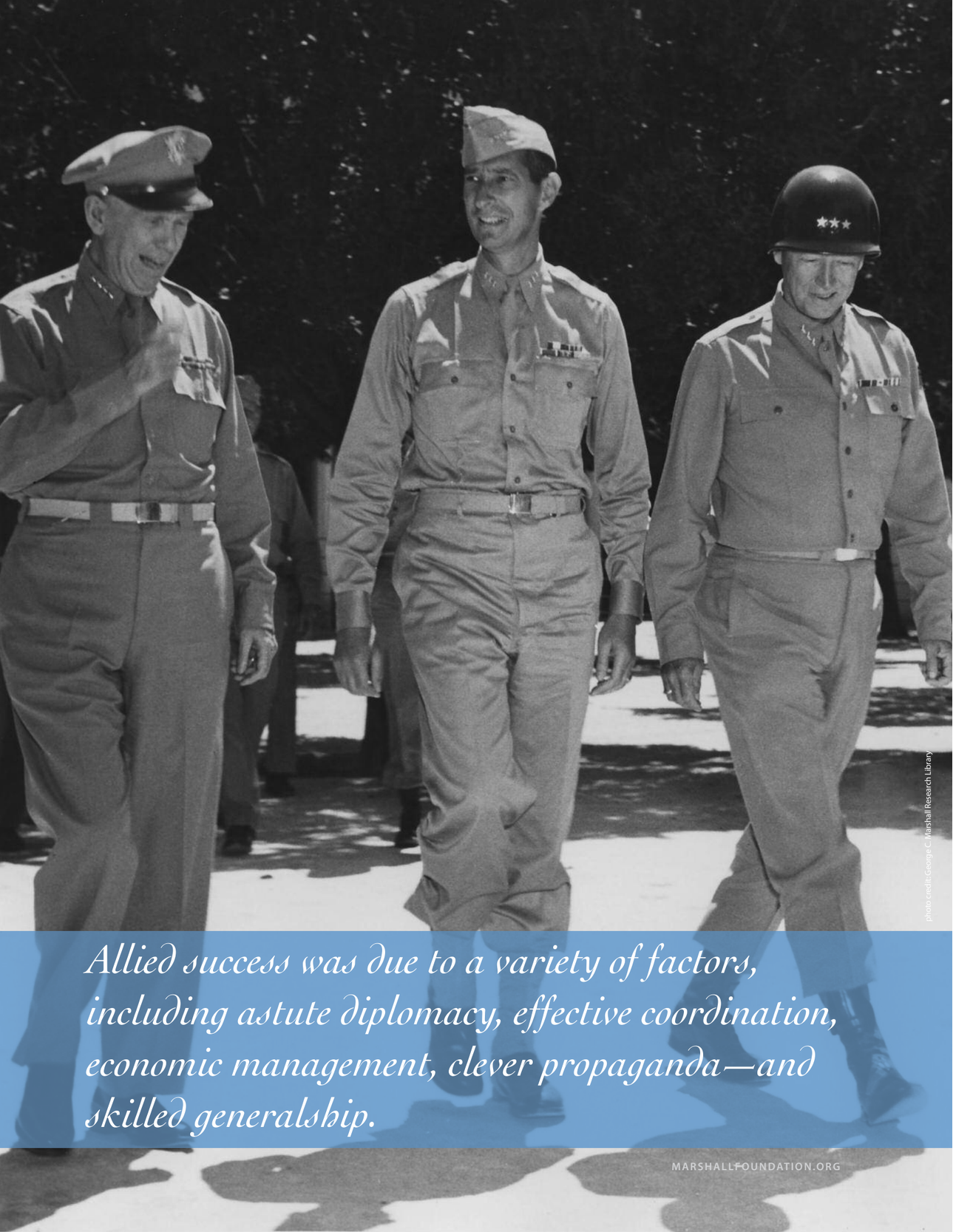


photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Allied success was due to a variety of factors, including astute diplomacy, effective coordination, economic management, clever propaganda—and skilled generalship.

George Marshall & World War II Combat Commanders

BY STEPHEN R. TAAFFE, PH.D.

One of General George C. Marshall's biggest and most important responsibilities as army chief of staff during World War Two was the selection of the army's high-level combat leaders. These army group, field army, and corps commanders played a major role in every campaign and battle in which the American army participated, from Guadalcanal in the Pacific to the invasion of Germany in Europe.

Indeed, it is impossible to fully understand these engagements without examining the roles of the men who operated the army's combat machinery. After all, an army is no better than the officers who command it. Marshall understood this as well as anyone, stating, "We must have the very best leadership we can possibly give…and we've stopped at nothing to produce that leadership." It is therefore impossible to assess Marshall's effectiveness as chief of staff during the conflict without evaluating the decision process he used to choose the thirty-eight officers who directed the army's biggest combat units in battle. Fortunately, Marshall's ability to identify these men and forge them into such an effective team is additional testimony to his claim as one of the greatest generals in American history.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Army Chief of Staff General Marshall (*seated*) with members of the War Department General Staff including (*from left to right*): BG Leonard T. Gerow, BG Raymond A. Wheeler, BG Sherman Miles, MG Henry H. Arnold, BG Wade H. Haislip, BG Harry L. Twaddle and MG William Bryden in Nov. 1941

Marshall believed that it was impossible to separate an army officer's character from his job performance. He therefore made character his primary criterion in his selection of combat commanders. As he explained in a letter to a group of school children, "The most important factor of all is character, which involves integrity, unselfish and devoted purpose, a sturdiness of bearing when everything goes wrong and all are critical, and a willingness to sacrifice self in the interest of the common good." Conversely, Marshall hated "can't," grandstanding, indecisiveness, pessimism, a refusal to accept responsibility, and deliberate discourtesy.

This article is a summary of the author's Marshall Legacy Series talk for *The World Wars* sequence delivered at the Marshall Foundation in July 2017.

To Marshall, character was fate, a barometer for an officer's likely performance at the head of his unit. To be sure, he occasionally promoted and appointed people whose character he doubted, but he did so reluctantly and against his better judgment. Although there are plenty of instances throughout history of great generals who were also terrible human beings, it was a distinction Marshall rarely made in his army.

Although Marshall prized character, he did not rely on it completely in his selection of high-level combat commanders. He also valued education. The army had established a full-fledged education system at the beginning of the century, and Marshall wholeheartedly agreed with the army's prevailing ethos that an officer's formal learning should not stop at his commissioning. It was instead a career-long process that kept minds nimble, up-to-date, and active. As a result, he was reluctant to appoint an officer to corps, field army, or army group command unless he had attended both the Command and General Staff College in Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Army War College in Washington. The former school trained promising mid-level officers to serve as staff officers, and the latter taught the army's brightest colonels to lead large units in wartime. Indeed, of the thirty-eight men who held corps, field army, and army group command during World War Two, all but five attended the Army War College, and only one–Third Corps commander James Van Fleet–never darkened the door of either school.

… Marshall wholeheartedly agreed with the army's prevailing ethos that an officer's formal learning should not stop at his commissioning. It was instead a career-long process that kept minds nimble, up-to-date, and active.

Marshall's World War One experiences convinced him that younger officers–by which he meant men in their forties and fifties–should lead the army's high level combat positions because they possessed the necessary stamina, energy, and vigor for such demanding posts. When he became chief of staff, he was dismayed that so many elderly officers beyond their prime commanded such units. In response, he waged a protracted and tenacious campaign to supplant overaged officers with younger men and repeatedly complained that he was not getting the results he wanted. Although he tried to be considerate of the feelings of those displaced, he made his reasoning perfectly clear. He explained to one relieved general:

> We have had to be absolutely firm on the question of age for command. Not only that, but we must go much lower in the age groups for division and corps commanders than we are now doing. Every bit of data we receive from the fighting fronts clearly shows that this is a young man's war except in rare instances and then only in the highest command.…I hope you will not be too much disappointed and that you will feel certain that there is nothing of reflection on you in this affair other than your birthday.

As a result, the average age at the war's start of the men who ended up holding the army's highest combat commands was the early fifties. As with character and education, Marshall was willing to bend his rules on occasion if, say, a theater commander insisted on the services of an older general. For example, under ordinary circumstances, Sixth Army commander General Walter Krueger should have spent the war training troops stateside, but Marshall permitted him to go overseas

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

General Marshall follows a briefing along with BG Joseph McNarney, LTG Mark Clark and BG Lucian Truscott, (*all seated*), Fifteenth Army Group, Italy, Feb. 1945.

because General Douglas MacArthur, the head of the Southwest Pacific Area theater, specifically asked for him. In most cases, though, Marshall believed that youthfulness trumped experience.

Despite all his years in the small prewar army, it was impossible for Marshall to familiarize himself with every officer eligible for high-level combat posts. Consequently, he often depended on the recommendations of those he trusted in selecting his combat commanders. As the war progressed, he increasingly relied on the opinions of his theater commanders, especially General Dwight Eisenhower. Marshall believed that theater commanders should have men of their own choosing working for them, so he was reluctant to force personnel on them. As he explained to Eisenhower, "You do not need to take or keep any commander in whom you do not have full confidence. So long as he holds a command in your theater it is evidence to me of your satisfaction with him. The lives of too many are at stake; I will not have you operating under any misunderstanding as to your authority, and your duty, to reject or remove any that fails to satisfy you completely." For instance, he had doubts about General Leonard Gerow's ability to lead a corps for the invasion of Normandy but set them aside when Eisenhower vouched for him. Although the extent of these personnel negotiations varied according to the theater's importance and Marshall's relationship with its commander–Marshall's interactions with Eisenhower, for instance, were far more open and freewheeling than with MacArthur–there was an unmistakable give-and-take to the process that reflected Marshall's desire to give his subordinates as much leeway as possible in their personnel selections.

He displayed little interest in an officer's family background, service branch, political connections, or membership in any of the army's innumerable cliques.

While character, education, and age were Marshall's key criteria, he ignored several issues which had in the past sometimes played important roles in determining promotions and assignments in the army. He displayed little interest in an officer's family background, service branch, political connections, or membership in any of the army's innumerable cliques. For instance, he appointed General John Millikin a corps commander even though Millikin's father-in-law was General Peyton March, the enemy of Marshall's mentor, General John Pershing. Nor did he

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

General Marshall stands with LTG Jacob Devers (*facing left*), MG David Barr (*center*) and LTG Mark Clark (*right foreground*) in Italy, June 1944.

Omar Bradley

care much about ethnicity or creed, though the army's institutionalized racism and regimentation had largely homogenized the officer corps in those respects for him. While Marshall placed great emphasis on an officer's character, he realized that good leaders came in different personalities and temperaments. He did not even mind eccentrics. Indeed, he had a soft spot for some of the army's talented unconventional-thinking oddballs such as General George Patton.

Most surprisingly, Marshall did not consider a lack of World War One battle experience a disqualifying factor for high-level combat command. Some of the army's greatest World War Two generals, such as Eisenhower and Omar Bradley, never heard a shot fired in anger before the conflict. Once the United States entered the war, Marshall gave mental points to high-ranking officers who had already led men against the Germans and Japanese, but he remained reluctant to penalize those who had done well in stateside tasks by denying them the chance to prove themselves in action. For instance, in the summer of 1944 he assigned the untested General Simon Buckner to lead the Tenth Army even though by then the army had plenty of combat-hardened commanders available for the job. Marshall simply believed that Buckner had done well in his previous assignments and deserved the opportunity to lead men in combat.

Evaluating the record of the army's World War Two corps, field army, and army group commanders is a thorny and subjective task. The playing field for these men was by no means even and fair. For one thing, there were wide differences in the terrain upon which the officers campaigned and the enemy they faced. The Germans were the more militarily sophisticated and technologically advanced opponent, but they also were willing to surrender when the situation warranted doing so. On the other hand, the Japanese emphasis on fighting to the death made even mopping-up duties inordinately dangerous. While European War generals impressed the public and future historians by capturing thousands of German soldiers in the spring of 1945 as they rolled to and beyond the Rhine, a couple of months later Simon Buckner, the Tenth Army commander, sparked criticism because he had to practically destroy the Japanese garrison on Okinawa in an enormously costly effort to secure the island. In each case it was pretty clear that the enemy had lost the war, but the contrast between the German and Japanese response to this

While Marshall placed great emphasis on an officer's character, he realized that good leaders came in different personalities and temperaments.

reality clearly impacted the performances of the American generals involved. Moreover, waging war under adverse topographical conditions also limited the chances of reputation-enhancing victory. Those generals operating in New Guinea's jungles, the Italian mountains, or Okinawa's cramped spaces had much less room to maneuver and gain spectacular and eye-catching triumphs than those clashing in the North African desert or central France. In short, if Buckner had faced German soldiers in northwest Europe instead of Japanese soldiers on Okinawa, he might have achieved that same kind of successes that cemented Patton's military reputation.

In addition, chronology mattered. Those generals who took their units into combat earlier in the conflict, when the enemy was stronger and American troops greener, obviously had a more difficult time than those who deployed later in the war with combat-hardened divisions against a weakened opponent. It is therefore not entirely fair to compare, say, Van Fleet's dash across Germany in the spring of 1945 with General Lloyd Fredendall's unsuccessful operations in North Africa two years earlier. Van Fleet was facing a demoralized enemy at the end of his rope, whereas the Wehrmacht Fredendall encountered was still a potent force.

Finally, a general's commander helped determine his achievements. It did not matter how accomplished a field army or corps chief was if his superior failed to use him properly and provide him with chances to excel. Some generals' pedestrian tactics gave their lieutenants little opportunity to shine. More flexible and daring generals, on the other hand, permitted their field army and corps commanders free rein to conduct their battles creatively. Patton, for example, accrued big military dividends by giving his corps commanders considerable leeway in northwest Europe. On the other hand, General Courtney Hodges, the First Army chief, stifled

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

General Marshall and MG Wade Haislip, CG, XV Corps, Oct. 1944 in France

General Marshall (*third from left*) is shown with (*left to right*) MG Joseph McNarney, LTG Mark Clark, BG Edward Almond, BG Lucian Truscott, LTG William Livesay and MG Willis Crittenberger on a visit to the Fifteenth Army Group, 92nd Division, Feb. 1945 in Italy.

photo credit George C. Marshall Research Library

the initiative of most of his corps commanders with his conventional and unforgiving attitude. As a result, the record of Patton's lieutenants outshone those of most of Hodges'. These limitations do not excuse a general's poor record–after all, a sign of greatness in any endeavor is overcoming counterproductive circumstances–but they do help to explain them.

Despite these caveats, there is evidence to support the argument that Marshall appointed quality generals to lead high-level combat units during the war. For one thing, there was considerable stability among this cadre throughout the conflict. Of the thirty-eight generals who held corps, field army, and army group command in combat, seventeen led their units from time of deployment to the end of the war. Fourteen of them, or nearly thirty-seven percent, were removed from their jobs. Of these fourteen officers, though, six were promoted to more important positions. Three others were relieved due to illness and one, Buckner, was killed in action. This left five generals who were dismissed for perceived battlefield failures: Fredendall in North Africa, General Ernest Dawley at Salerno, General John Lucas at Anzio, General Charles Corlett along the Franco-German border, and Millikin at Remagen. Even among those five, it is possible to argue that personalities and politics played as much a role in the removals from command for four of them as alleged incompetency. Indeed, Fredendall's relief is the only one that failed to generate controversy from both historians and contemporaries. Such low turnover is in this instance an indication of quality generalship.

… they were proud not only of their own battlefield accomplishments but also of those of their colleagues.

In addition, the testimony of these high-level commanders provides evidence of the quality of Marshall's selections. There is surprisingly little scapegoating in the contemporary reports and postwar memoirs of these men. With a few exceptions, they were proud not only of their own battlefield accomplishments but also of those of their colleagues. At the end of the war, for example, Eisenhower polled his four field army commanders about the officers who led their

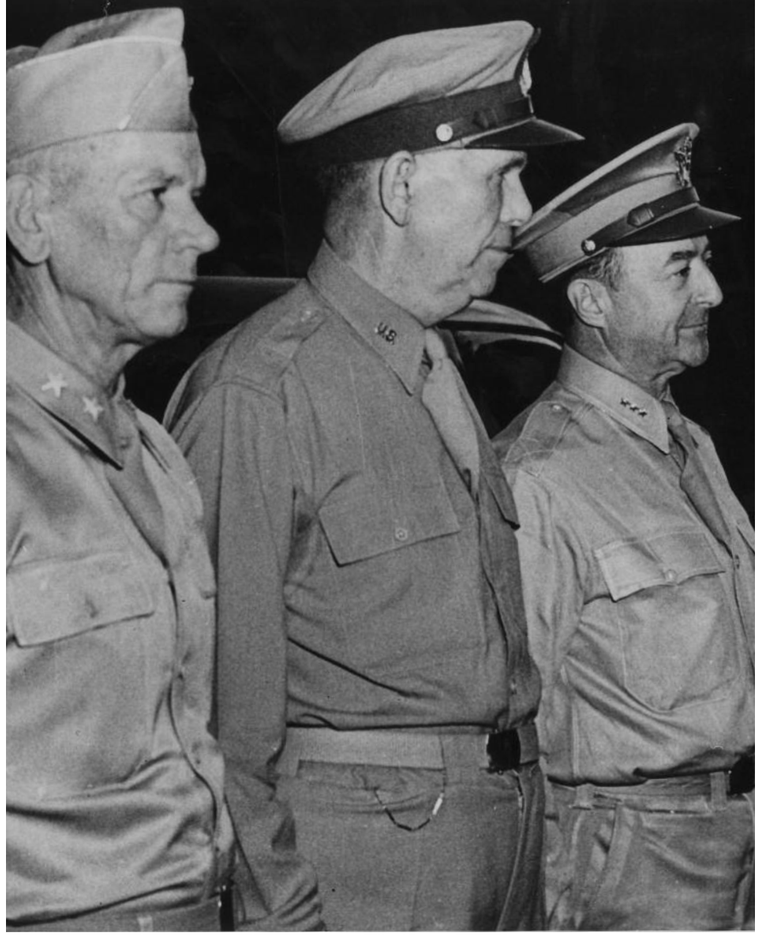
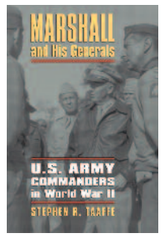


photo credit George C. Marshall Research Library

Reviewing the 7th Infantry Division that participated in the invasion of the Marshall Islands are (*left to right*) MG Charles E. Corlett (CG, 7th Infantry Division), General Marshall and LTG Robert C. Richardson, Jr. (CG, Army Forces, Central Pacific), 1944.

corps. All four of them, including the irascible Patton, claimed that they had the best corps commanders in Europe. Although it is easy to be generous in victory when there is plenty of credit to distribute, the reluctance of these men to blame each other for failures speaks well of Marshall's generals.

Finally, and most obviously, the fact that the army defeated its German, Italian, and Japanese opponents demonstrates the wisdom of Marshall's appointments. Some argue that Allied victory was all but inevitable because American materiel superiority in particular enabled the Soviets, British, and Americans to overwhelm their enemies. By this logic, the American army did not need good generals, so Marshall's selections would have sufficed regardless of their quality. There was in fact nothing inevitable about Allied victory. Winning the war required far more than materiel strength. There are after all plenty of instances of smaller and poorer nations triumphing over bigger and wealthier ones. Allied success was due to a variety of factors, including astute diplomacy, effective coordination, economic management, clever propaganda–and skilled generalship. To be sure, the American army did not require brilliant generals able to overcome tremendous odds. Instead, it needed competent ones capable of applying the army's doctrines to the war. Happily for the United States, Marshall was able to find such men and place them in responsible positions. As a result, the army won its war at an acceptable cost and in a tolerable amount of time. Once it brought its power to bear, it never lost a major engagement. From this perspective, the astuteness of Marshall's selections is almost self-evident.



Steve Taaffe teaches history at Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas. He has written several books, including three about aspects of World War II. One of those books is *Marshall and His Generals: U.S. Army Commanders in World War II* that was published in 2011. This article is based on his presentation in July as part of the Marshall Legacy Series sequence on The World Wars. You can see the recording of his talk by going to our YouTube channel accessible through our website.

With the United States fighting a global war, it would fall to his loyal U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, to be the lynchpin of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in achieving final victory over Nazi Germany and Japan.

Marshall and the President, 1943

BY NIGEL HAMILTON, PH.D.

D-Day–Operation Overlord as it was codenamed–was planned to be the largest amphibious invasion in human history. The selection of its supreme commander, late in 1943, was therefore of huge and historic importance, as everyone in military circles was aware. Who should it be? Even Stalin, whose forces would mount an equivalent offensive from the East, became fretful at the "Big Three" Tehran conference in November, predicting Overlord would fail unless the right commander was immediately appointed, in sufficient time to ensure victory.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

General Marshall and Sir John Dill at the Tehran Conference in Nov. 1943

Stalin was right–though not for the reasons he imagined. For Franklin Roosevelt, as Commander in Chief of the armed forces of the United States, the problem was not who to appoint, but how to stop the British from sabotaging the invasion. And to do this, paradoxically, he had needed to hold back on the appointment of its commander to the very last moment.

Throughout 1943, as I've related in *Commander in Chief: FDR's Battle with Churchill, 1943*, the British prime minister and his military chiefs of staff had fought the President and U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, their supposed coalition partners, rather than the enemy. It was a sorry saga. In May, 1943, they'd come to America in their hundreds on a transatlantic liner, the *Queen Mary*, to do battle against Overlord. Though they failed, they were back in North America to try it yet again, three months later, in August 1943, aboard the same ocean liner, bringing more than two hundred assistants and clerks.

The British team did not believe in Overlord, preferring the idea of postponement for yet another year or more...

This article is a summary of the author's Marshall Legacy Series talk for *The World Wars* sequence delivered at the Marshall Foundation in May 2017.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Generals Marshall (*left foreground*), Arnold (*next to Marshall*) and others at the Quebec Conference in August 1943

The British team did not believe in Overlord, preferring the idea of postponement for yet another year or more, while meantime exploiting Allied operations in the Mediterranean–striking east into the Aegean, forcing Turkey into the war, and advancing north through the Balkans, possibly even invading Germany from Austria and the Danube.

The President and his American team had said no. The terrain was awful, the Germans were defending every yard, and the strategy–especially the idea of forcing the Dardanelles and entering the Black Sea–was woolly and more reminiscent of Churchill's disastrous campaign at Gallipoli, in 1915, than the current war. By threatening to exclude Britain from further research to develop an atom bomb, the President had managed to quell Churchill's insurrection in August 1943, however. And to make sure the Allies stuck to the cross-Channel invasion and its timetable, he had insisted it should be commanded by an American, not a Briton. Churchill was thus forced to back down and to tell General Sir Alan Brooke, his British Army Chief of Staff, he would not lead the invasion. General George Marshall would.

Churchill, for his part, simply paid lip-service to the formal Quebec agreement, which made Overlord the Allies' absolute priority, with a launch date of May 1, 1944.

Brooke was hurt by the decision, he later admitted, but certainly not devastated; he did not think Overlord could possibly succeed. After all, it was quite a challenge; not even Hitler had dared attempt a cross-Channel invasion in the summer of 1940, when France was prostrate and defeated.

Churchill, for his part, simply paid lip-service to the formal Quebec agreement, which made Overlord the Allies' absolute priority, with a launch date of May 1, 1944. Instead of sticking to a fall-and-winter strategy of limited operations on the mainland of Italy, while preparing for the cross-Channel assault, he therefore launched British invasions of Rhodes, Cos, Leros and Samos in the Aegean, without the approval of General Eisenhower, the Allied Commander in Chief in the Mediterranean, or even knowledge in Washington of the attacks. The Wehrmacht had no difficulty in crushing the British forces, killing, capturing or forcing their evacuation from each island, to a man.

Instead of swallowing defeat, however, Churchill went "mad," in the opinion of General Brooke, his main military adviser. In October 1943 he thus declared a third war against the President and U.S. Chiefs of Staff: demanding that D-Day be postponed a further year while the Allies tried yet more operations in the Mediterranean and Aegean.

It was in this dark context that the President was compelled to mount a counteroffensive against its own ally, using General George Marshall as his weapon, or chess piece, depending on how one views the "crisis" that enveloped the Allies in the fall of 1943.

Crisis–a word Churchill used, since he was its progenitor–was no misnomer. By late October, 1943, Churchill was openly threatening in fact to resign as prime minister unless the President's strategy, agreed at Quebec, was overturned, and Allied priority was switched to the Mediterranean, Aegean and Balkans. President Roosevelt duly attempted to hold Churchill's feet to the fire by simply ignoring his predictions of disaster and defeat, and insisting instead that they stick to the Quebec accords.

It was to no avail, however. Churchill was Churchill–indomitable in defeat, and relentless in his obsessions, with a mastery of rhetoric that wore down even the most skeptical of his British advisers and subordinates. The Prime Minister thus persuaded his Chiefs of Staff to agree to his demands for an Anglo-American military conference, or showdown in November, 1943, to decide the issue before they all met with Stalin in Tehran at the end of the month.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Canadian Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King disembark a train at Wolfe's Cove and head for the Quebec Conference in August 1943.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Clockwise from top left: Canadian Prime Minister King, British Prime Minister Churchill, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Canada's Governor-General, the Earl of Athlone, at the Quebec Conference in August 1943

Embarking on the latest U.S. battleship, the USS *Iowa*, on November 13, 1943, the President therefore worked out with his Joint Chiefs of Staff a new plan to deal with the British insurrection. They would refuse to discuss any change in the Quebec agreement in Cairo, en route to Tehran. Instead they would use General Marshall as a chess queen to attack Churchill's king, demanding that Marshall not only assume command of Overlord, but of the Mediterranean and Middle East, too. That way Marshall would be able to put the kaibosh on any attempts to delay or de-prioritize D-Day. And if that counteroffensive failed–as the President felt it probably would–then it would still leave no time in Cairo to discuss Churchill's alternative strategy before flying to Tehran on November 27. There, in the legendary capital of the kings of Persia, Stalin would, the President had gotten confirmation from his ambassador in Moscow, help him to put down the British revolt: two against one.

And so it transpired. Churchill refused to accept Marshall as an "all Europe" Supreme Commander. The British and American teams therefore went to Tehran at loggerheads. In the Russian embassy, where the summit took place, Stalin assisted the President in squashing Churchill's wild dreams with a display of cold military realism that impressed even General Sir Alan Brooke. The Soviets would launch an equivalent grand offensive from the East, simultaneous with the launch of Overlord on May 1, 1944, from the West; the Wehrmacht would be crushed between, and the war against Hitler won. After that the Soviets would join forces with the U.S. to defeat Japan.

The President was delighted. Overlord would, even Hitler conceded, be the "deciding battle" of the war. Which left only the question, who would command it?

In Tehran it was assumed General Marshall would be appointed–indeed Stalin was so impressed by Marshall's bearing and military intellect he could not understand why the President still held off making the appointment official.

The President assured him he would do so, however, in two or three days, as soon as he got back to Cairo on December 2. And he did–though not in the way Stalin–or Marshall, or anyone else-had supposed.

General Marshall had been made U.S. Army Chief of Staff by the President during his second term, in 1939. He had won the President's respect for his coolness in all situations, his military bearing, his absence of ego, his devotion to duty, and his high-level administrative ability–setting goals and delegating necessary authority to competent subordinates. He had earned the respect, too, of Congress in the many hearings he had been required to attend, for budgetary and other reasons. But as a combat commander/supreme commander?

Here the President was not so sure.

Too much perhaps the delegator, Marshall was not infallible as a military strategist, or in his assessment of combat capabilities–American, German or Japanese. He'd failed to predict or prepare for a possible Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, had pressed for a cross-Channel assault in 1942 before a single shot had been fired by an American at the Wehrmacht, had protested the President's American-led "Torch" invasion of North Africa risked failure, had held back Eisenhower's forces in Morocco in fear of an unlikely German flank assault across the Mediterranean, and had argued for a cross-Channel invasion again in 1943, before U.S. commanders and forces had proven they could worst the Wehrmacht in battle–and therefore finding himself embarrassed by Allied defeat at Kasserine. He had not, in short, demonstrated to the President he could be the kind of effective supreme commander necessary for a coalition operation as critical as Overlord.

He had won the President's respect for his coolness in all situations, his military bearing, his absence of ego, his devotion to duty, and his high-level administrative ability

Even more influential in the President's mind was the fact that General Pershing, the aging but venerated commander of U.S. troops in Europe in World War I, felt strongly it would be wrong to move Marshall from Washington, as he'd written to the President in no uncertain terms back in September–arguing that Overlord was only a part of the global chessboard, and therefore

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

Canadian Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (*all seated*) with Henry H. Arnold, Sir Charles Portal, Sir Alan Brooke, Ernest J. King, Sir John Dill, George C. Marshall, Sir Dudley Pound, William D. Leahy (*all standing, left to right*) at the Quebec Conference in August 1943

beneath Marshall's talents. Mr. Roosevelt had responded that he was thinking of an "all Europe" command, not just northern Europe; in which case Marshall should surely be given the opportunity to make history.

Now that Stalin had helped put down the British revolt, however, Overlord was the Allied priority. Its timetable was set in stone. With no chance Churchill would agree to an American taking command of "all Europe," north and south, Overlord would be the major color in the tapestry of the war–but only one color. Pershing's advice now seemed eminently sensible. Which left only the President's quasi-promise to Marshall, if the general wanted the historic Overlord command.

Did he want it?

The President had never actually told Marshall directly he was to command the Overlord invasion. Even the minutes of the U.S. high-command meetings convened by the President aboard the *Iowa* on its way out to the Mediterranean had recorded an assumption by the President rather than a decision–and one based on the idea, after all, of an "all Europe" command.

General Marshall had told his wife to begin moving their furniture into storage, pending his move, and had even alerted some of his chosen staff he would probably be needing them abroad, all too soon. But on arrival in Oran, he'd asked for tropical clothes, not London wear; and to Eisenhower he'd complained he felt they were like pieces on a chess board, which the President was playing with. In other words, it was not a done deal, by any means. Thus, when Harry Hopkins, the President's White House counselor, arrived at Marshall's villa in Cairo the next evening, one day after their return from Tehran, asking what were his feelings about the Overlord command, Marshall realized what this meant. The President was having second thoughts.

Were they second, rather than first, all along?

President Roosevelt was wont to explain his sphinx-like decision-making process by saying he had two hands, and that the left one often did not know what the right one did; in other words, he liked to hold at least two options open in making any decision. He was probably the most instinctive strategist ever to occupy the Oval Office, exerting his leadership by a kind of magic in which each supplicant thought he had the President's actual or implied support. It led to a thousand crossed wires and frustrations–but he towered so high above any other politician or leader in the nation that few, beyond certain right-wing, isolationist newspaper moguls, dared openly cross him. He swept people along, as if on a half-idealistic, half-realistic journey that was forever positive and forward looking. He was in short hard to know, but easy to like and love–at least from a distance.

It is thus beyond doubt–mine at least–that General Marshall knew what Hopkins' visit meant. He had most recently thought himself favorite for the post because Stalin, commander in chief of the Soviet armies, had so obviously taken a liking to him, and had pressed the President again and again to make the crucial decision. But that was not what Hopkins' enquiry, or his manner, suggested. Rather, they implied the President was seeking, as he so often did, a way out.

Would telling Hopkins that he, George Marshall, had being counting on getting the historic command, that he wanted it and felt he was the right man to take it, have helped change or sway the President's mind?

The President had used him as a chess queen to, keep Churchill on the defensive–and had gotten what he wanted: D-Day.

It is doubtful. Marshall was Marshall, and could not become a Patton-like, or even MacArthur-like egotistical commander overnight. The President had used him as a chess queen to, keep Churchill on the defensive–and had gotten what he wanted: D-Day. He didn't actually need Marshall in that battlefield command capacity. Trying to convince the President he should go against his instinct–an instinct that had served Mr. Roosevelt so extraordinarily well since Pearl Harbor–would only make the inevitable decision more difficult, and the future path more stony.

Whether Marshall slept that night we do not know. As Dr. Forrest Pogue, his authorized biographer, put it, the general's prose in his personal correspondence tended to be "laconic," which made it the "despair of the biographer." The next day, however, after a Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, the President invited Marshall to lunch with him at his villa overlooking the Pyramids and the Sphinx, alone. After a certain amount of "beating about the bush," the President told him he was going to give the Overlord command to young General Eisenhower, with whom he'd spent two days on his way to Cairo and another in Cairo itself before the presidential party had flown to Tehran.

It was Saturday, December 4, 1943, and the other Chiefs were duly informed after lunch. The British Chiefs and their prime minister were told that evening.

How did Marshall react? He must have been upset, as any soldier would be, to be passed over. The President, in his charming way, had sugared the pill by saying it was best so, since he would not be able to sleep in Washington without him there. But in later years Marshall could not remember correctly even the day he'd been told, or whether it was before lunch or after, or during the meal. All historians since then have thus mistaken the date, following Marshall's mistake–ascribing this, the most consequential command appointment of World War II, to the wrong day, December 5, when it was really December 4.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

General George C. Marshall and Secretary of War Henry Stimson confer in the War Dept. in January 1942.

No wider announcement was made, for the moment–even to Eisenhower. Perhaps to avoid having to meet with the man who had taken the role he'd coveted, for the moment, Marshall decided to go the other way: to the Pacific, without even telling the President. As soon as the President sent his cable to Stalin to announce formally his decision, on the night of December 6, as he prepared to leave Cairo for the journey home, Marshall set off to the east. There, in the Pacific, he would meet the U.S. commanders in the field, such as MacArthur, fighting in the larger, global war. He would also have time to collect his thoughts–his "grief," as Dr. Pogue put it–and return several weeks later to Washington the strait-laced, no-nonsense general everyone knew and admired.

Marshal Stalin, after mulling it over, thought it a good choice. The Secretary of War, however, did not take the news nearly so well. It was, Henry Stimson confided in his diary, a "revolutionary change," and Stimson's first impression was that it was "a great mistake" by the President.

As history would show, it wasn't–not simply because young General Eisenhower proved a genius at welding together, in five short months, the forces of a rainbow coalition of nations and putting them into successful battle against the vaunted legions of the Wehrmacht, but because of something equally significant–in fact even more significant than General Pershing could have predicted. For, although the President returned from Tehran bronzed and in robust good health, as everyone who saw him averred, he fell sick with flu a few days after Christmas–and the sickness never got better. By March, 1944, racked with bronchitis, he was examined by specialists–and was told he was dying. His heart like his father's–was suffering fatal cardiac disease.

As President and Commander in Chief, Mr. Roosevelt would still have some important decisions to make, but to all intents and purposes he was, like President Wilson in 1920, an invalid. With the United States fighting a global war, it would fall to his loyal U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, to be the lynchpin of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in achieving final victory over Nazi Germany and Japan. Keeping him in Washington was one of the finest decisions Franklin Delano Roosevelt ever made.

Dr. Nigel Hamilton has been studying Franklin Roosevelt as U.S. commander in chief in WWII for many years. An award-winning Anglo-American historian and biographer, he is completing the third volume of his FDR at War trilogy. This article contains the substance of his presentation in May 2017 as part of the Marshall Legacy Series sequence on *The World Wars*.

Dr. Hamilton is best known for *Monty*, his three-volume study of WWII field commander, Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery. Dr. Hamilton's many books have been translated into 17 languages. He divides his time between Boston, where he is senior fellow in the McCormack Graduate School, University of Massachusetts–Boston, and New Orleans, Louisiana.

GEORGE C. MARSHALL
LEGACY SERIES
VISIONARY IN WAR AND IN PEACE

Myths, Marshall and World War II

Paul Barron discussed Marshall Myths in March.

Myths dominated two sessions of *The World Wars* sequence this spring.

In March, Paul Barron, former director of the Marshall Library, discussed Marshall myths, including the Little Black Book that General Marshall kept. It did not contain the names of up-and-coming Army officers as many have surmised. Yes, there is a black book, but the names of those future Army leaders were kept instead in Marshall's memory. Marshall was introduced to many of them during his assignment as assistant commandant at Fort Benning when he revamped the Infantry School curriculum and met this collective of future generals called "Marshall's Men," several of whom are shown on the following pages.

One month later three distinguished scholars discussed "Myths of World War II." Dr. Mark A. Stoler, professor emeritus of history at the University of Vermont and editor of volumes 6 and 7 of *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, began the evening by presenting myths about prewar appeasement, U.S. isolationism, Pearl Harbor and U.S. entry into the war, among others. Dr. Michael C. C. Adams, Regents Professor of History Emeritus at Northern Kentucky University and author of *The Best War Ever*, analyzed the triumph of the Good War myth in the last years of the 20th century. Finally, Dr. Conrad C. Crane, chief of historical services for the Army Heritage and Education Center at Carlisle Barracks, talked about numerous myths of the air war, the dangers of monocausal explanations about the defeat of Japan, and the misuse of historical analogies.

Dr. Stoler's presentation set the tone. "Most myths, not all of them, have a basis in fact. It is the distortion of that fact that leads to the myth," he said. He recited a summary of myths of World War II as they were seen late in 1945. The United States had been wrong to reject Woodrow Wilson's vision and membership in the League of Nations and had retreated into isolationism and military unpreparedness, he began. The result had been the rise of power-mad dictators who seized power in Germany, Italy and Japan and formed the Axis alliance to conquer the world. The democracies of Britain and France had foolishly attempted to appease these dictators which had only increased their power and appetite and led to the outbreak of World War II. By mid-1940 the Axis stood on the verge of total victory. Only then did the United States realize its past errors, begin to re-arm, and decide to provide first Britain, then China and Russia, with

Dr. Mark Stoler (*left*) talked about World War II myths as did Dr. Michael Adams (*below, far left*) and Dr. Conrad Crane (*below, left*).

military aid free of charge. That led the Axis to attack the U.S. at Pearl Harbor with Japan acting on Berlin's order. "Our response was to create and use around the globe the largest and most powerful army, navy and air force in U.S. history and indeed in world history and to defeat the Axis virtually by ourselves by 1945," he said in concluding the myths narrative.

Countering these perceptions, he said, "It is an ethnocentric and grossly distorted view of how and why World War II occurred, how and why we became involved, and how the Axis were beaten. It also ignores the roles and perceptions of other powers and peoples, of the war, the hope for a post-war world and this country," he said.

The realities, among others, include the following. "The Axis alliance was not a conspiracy run by Berlin. In fact it wasn't even an alliance. There was no trust between the partners, no cooperation during the war, and this is a key reason for the fact that they lost the war," Stoler said.

The United States was not isolationist at all during the interwar years or as militarily unprepared as the myth holds, he contended. "The country was deeply involved in international affairs during the 1920s despite the fact that it did not join the League, primarily through its enormous economic power…It used the years 1939 through 1941 largely with Marshall's prodding to prepare for war. It was not prepared on Dec. 7, 1941, but it was more prepared for war than it had been for any previous war. War Plans were completed. You had one of the largest navies in the world. And Marshall had raised the army from 175,000 to 1.5 million men," he explained.

He continued, "Germany did not mastermind the Pearl Harbor attack, and it was not the result of U.S. aid to Britain and China….The United States was not totally responsible for Allied victory in World War II….Belief that it was ignores the massive contributions and perspectives of our numerous allies, most notably the British and the Russians."

You can read more about both Myths presentations in the fall issue of *The Strategist*, and you can see the entire presentations on the Foundation's YouTube channel that is accessible from the website. Dr. Stoler will return to Lexington on October 18 to present a summary lecture on Marshall's legacy from the world wars. YouTube

Legacy Series SCHEDULE

The World Wars
Jan—Dec 2017

October 18
Dr. Mark Stoler discusses "George C. Marshall: Soldier of Peace."

October 29
Victory Chef Cook-off: *Cuisine de Casablanca*

November 18
Paint Party: Marshall and the Monuments Men

Europe's Unlikely Recovery
Jan—Apr 2018

January 25
Dr. Barry Machado opens the next sequence, *Europe's Unlikely Recovery*, introducing the Marshall Plan, "New Light on the Origins of the Marshall Plan."

January 25
The new exhibition, "Hope for Those Who Need It," opens in the Lower Gallery.

To see the lineup for the rest of the Marshall Legacy Series, go to our website.

MARSHALL SHORTS

Portrait of the tactical instructors at Fort Benning in 1929. George C. Marshall is seated front and center. This photo includes future generals Joseph Stilwell, seated to Marshall's right, and Omar Bradley who is standing behind Marshall's right shoulder.

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

MARSHALL'S MEN ROOTED IN FORT BENNING EXPERIENCE

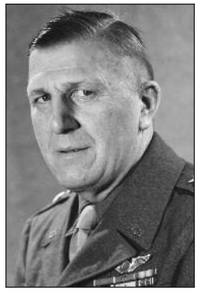
The term Marshall's men has been tossed about, yet few people know it originated from Marshall's assignment at Ft. Benning (1927-32) during which he modernized the Infantry School curriculum in anticipation of the fighting in the next big war. "Simplicity, innovativeness, and mobility would be the hallmarks of the U.S. Army of 1941-45, and the leadership of that army would consist overwhelmingly of 'Marshall's Men' from Fort Benning. In all, 200 future generals passed through the school during his years there, 150 as students and 50 as instructors. The latter category, which included names such as Joseph Stilwell and Omar Bradley, Marshall labelled 'the most brilliant, interesting and thoroughly competent collection of men I have ever been associated with,'" wrote Larry Bland, editor of the Marshall Papers in the first volume.[1] Hundreds more who would lead the field learned from Marshall at Benning.

So who were these Marshall's Men? Some photographs bring the group to life.

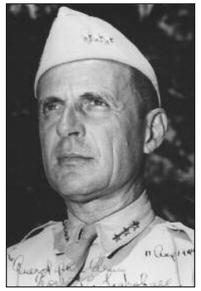
[1] From *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall,* Larry Bland, editor, Vol. 1: "The Soldierly Spirit," December 1880 – June 1939.

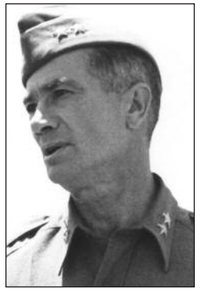
photo credits: George C. Marshall Research Library

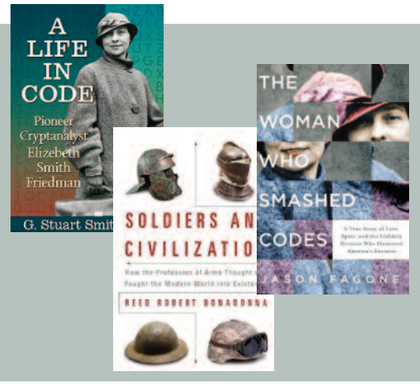
Clockwise from upper left: Omar Bradley, Joseph Stilwell, James A. Van Fleet, Walter Bedell Smith, John E. Dahlquist, Terry Allen, Lawton Collins, Matthew Ridgway, Manton S. Eddy and Leonard Gerow.



Gen. Marshall rides with Edward Almond (*center*).







BEST NEW BOOKS

The Woman Who Smashed Codes: A True Story of Love, Spies, and the Unlikely Heroine Who Outwitted America's Enemies (Harper Collins) **by Jason Fagone**

Soldiers and Civilization: How the Profession of Arms Thought and Fought the Modern World into Existence (Naval Institute Press, 2017) **by Reed Bonadonna**

A Life in Code: Pioneer Cryptanalyst Elizebeth Smith Friedman (McFarland) **by G. Stuart Smith**

the last word

"I hope, someday, everyone in America will realize what a debt he owes to George Marshall. There's just nobody like him. Nobody!"

—President Franklin D. Roosevelt
Tehran, November 1943

photo credit: George C. Marshall Research Library

General George C. Marshall stands with General Henry H. Arnold (*top left*) at the Tehran Conference while the "Big Three," Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin (*left*), U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, are seated in the center.

The three leaders coordinated military strategy and made important decisions concerning the post-World War II era. The most notable achievements of the Conference focused on the next phases of the war. Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin discussed the terms under which the British and Americans finally committed to launching Operation Overlord in 1944.

By renewing your membership, you help us perpetuate the legacy of the man President Harry Truman called "the great one of the age." As the keeper of the flame, the Marshall Foundation preserves and communicates the remarkable story of the life and times of George C. Marshall and his contemporaries. It has become a unique, national treasure worth protecting at all costs. That's why your membership is so important.

KEEP MARSHALL'S LEGACY ALIVE

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Marshall received this Nobel Peace Prize in 1953. It's on display in our museum.