



high-value target: a target the enemy commander requires for the successful completion of the mission (a.k.a. high-payoff target)

hill shading: a method of representing relief on a map by depicting the shadows that would be cast by high ground if light were shining from a certain direction

hoist: in helicopters, the mechanism by which external loads may be raised or lowered vertically

hold: a cargo stowage compartment aboard a ship



Colonel (Ret) Steven D. Martin
Phone: 919-571-4378
stevedebmartin@gmail.com

A New Year's Thought:

"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

~ Abraham Lincoln



Pray for our Deployed Members:

Chaplain Brian Palmer and Family: serving the Lord in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin
LCpl Timothy Robinson, USMC: Persian Gulf

Together in Scripture Reading:

This month:
the book of Luke



Vigilant Faith

Perhaps no branch of the United States war effort during World War II bore the brunt of relentless fear and danger than did the United States Merchant Marine. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, the US industrial complex switched into high gear and moving the men and equipment to the front heavily depended upon the citizen mariners. Additionally, the Merchant Marine was critical to keeping the country of Great Britain in the fight as the whole of Europe was conquered by the Axis forces of Germany and Italy. The shipment of food, fuel, equipment and men was a continuous cycle that kept these cargo ships constantly on the move picking up and delivering their precious cargo. However, the cost was high for these civilian sailors. During the war, they lost 733 cargo ships totaling 3.1 million tons. Of the 215,000 civilian sailors who served during the war, 8,651 (or 1 in 24 sailors) were lost at sea. Many more had to be rescued from perilous seas after having their vessel lost to U-boat torpedoes.

The United States Merchant Marine consists of civilian mariners who man and sail U.S. civilian and federally owned merchant vessels. Because the United States Navy cannot keep sufficient vessels on standby for war operations, this fleet in reserve becomes critical for quickly putting sufficient vessels to use in support operations as the war effort gains momentum. During war, they become an auxiliary of the US Navy and are called upon to deliver supplies to support the war effort. Civilian vessels have been used to support our war efforts throughout our country's history. World Wars I and II brought about significant changes to this vitally important fleet to standardize policy and procedure.

The Germans knew that these cargo ships were the



lifeline for the Allied campaign in Europe and that disrupting this lifeline meant the difference between victory and defeat. In early 1942, the merchant ships took tremendous losses as convoy operations and procedures were still being developed. So heavy were these early losses that it threatened the war effort and the very survival of Great Britain. The United States Navy began to follow the convoy operations used by the British Navy and the loss of ships dramatically decreased. However, even with convoy operations in effect, these cargo ships were slower than their naval counterparts and most had minimal or no defensive capabilities against the U-boats who hunted them. The United States, British and Canadian navies provided escort duty for the convoy of merchant ships, but the slower cargo ships had an unmistakable silhouette and could be more easily detected even in a convoy of many ships.

Moving cargo from the United States to England was always a nervous time for the sailors. Strict radio silence was adhered to and no lights could be shining at night - nothing that could give away their position to German U-boats. "The civilian Merchant Marines who manned the ships grimly calculated where they slept aboard the ship by the cargo they carried. If you were hauling a load of iron ore, you slept on deck for you had only a few seconds to clear the ship once a torpedo hit. If you carried general cargo, you could sleep below decks but kept your clothes on because your survival time was calculated in minutes. If, however, your ship carried a load of aviation fuel, you were free to sleep naked below decks, with the door closed since you would never have the time to escape the certain and sudden oblivion of a torpedo attack."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

HERE'S WHY: THE LIL' JERRY CAN THAT COULD (PART 2)

Editor's Note: And now, the conclusion. Please see last month's Patriot News for the first part of this article.

Back in the United States, Pleiss told military officials about the container, but without a sample can he could stir no interest, even though the war was now well under way. The risk involved in having the cans removed from the car and shipped from Calcutta seemed too great, so he eventually had the complete vehicle sent to him, via Turkey and the Cape of Good Hope. It arrived in New York in the summer of 1940 with the three jerry cans intact. Pleiss immediately sent one of the cans to Washington. The War Department looked at it but unwisely decided that an updated version of their World War I container would be good enough. That was a cylindrical ten-gallon can with two screw closures. It required a wrench and a funnel for pouring.

That one jerry can in the Army's possession was later sent to Camp Holabird, in Maryland. There it was poorly redesigned; the only features retained were the size, shape, and handles. The welded circumferential joint was replaced with rolled seams around the bottom and one side. Both a wrench and a funnel were required for its use. And it now had no lining. As any petroleum engineer knows, it is unsafe to store gasoline in a container with rolled seams. This ersatz can did not win wide acceptance.

The British first encountered the jerry can during the German invasion of Norway in 1940, and gave it its English name (the Germans were, of course, the "Jerries"). Later that year Pleiss was in London and was asked by British officers if he knew anything about the can's design and manufacture. He ordered the second of his three jerry cans flown to London. Steps were taken to manufacture exact duplicates of it.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Vigilant Faith

Sailing through the night was an exhausting experience for the crews of both the cargo ships and the naval vessels who protected them. With blackout conditions and no lights showing, crew members had to be ever vigilant with intense focus and eyestrain - always aware that they were sailing among other vessels that they could not see. One wrong calculation or failure to follow procedure could open a dangerous gap that would leave them vulnerable to attack by submarine. Often the cargo ships had to follow a zigzag pattern to further thwart efforts by the U-boats to target their vessel. In the book, *Cruel Sea*, Nicholas Monsarrat (pictured at right) gives account of one young officer's experience with this maneuver:

"A zigzag on a pitch-black night, with thirty ships in close contact

adding the risk of collision to the difficulty of hanging on to the convoy, was something more than a few lines in a Fleet Order. Lockhart...evolved his own method. He took Compass Rose out obliquely from the convoy, for a set number of minutes: very soon, of course, he could not see the other ships, and might have had the whole Atlantic to himself, but that was part of the maneuver. Then he turned, and ran back the same number of minutes on the corresponding course inwards: at the end, he should be in touch with the convoy again, and in the same relative position. It was an act of faith that continued to justify itself,



(Continued from page 1)

but it was sometimes a little bit hard on the nerves."

Hundreds of convoys braved the dangers of the sea, from U-boat attacks to gale force storms, to help achieve ultimate victory during World War II. These brave men sailed in dangerous waters that seldom provided reprieve from hardship and nervous anticipation. Their contribution to the war effort was as important as any military member who took the fight to the enemy. Without them, the equipment and supplies of war would not have been in place to defeat the enemy and the war could not have been won!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Don't Shoot; We're Republicans!

(conclusion)

Editor's Note: When we left our intrepid heroes on the *USS William D Porter* last month, they had just accidentally fired a torpedo on the *USS Iowa*, which was carrying US President FDR at the time!

Initially there was some reluctance to admit what had happened or even to warn the *Iowa*. As the awful reality sunk in, people began racing around, shouting conflicting instructions and attempting to warn the flagship of imminent danger. First there was a flashing light warning about the torpedo which unfortunately indicated it was headed in another direction.

Next, the *Porter* signaled that it was going reverse at full speed! Finally, they decided to break the strictly enforced radio silence. The radio operator on the destroyer transmitted "Lion (code for the *Iowa*), Lion, come right." The *Iowa* operator, more concerned about radio procedure, requested that the offending station identify itself first. Finally, the message was received

and the *Iowa* began turning to avoid the speeding torpedo. Meanwhile, on the *USS Iowa's* bridge, word of the torpedo firing had reached FDR, who asked that his wheelchair be moved to the railing so he could see better what was coming his way. His loyal Secret Service guard immediately drew his pistol as if he was going to shoot the torpedo.

As the *Iowa* began evasive maneuvers, all of her guns were trained on the *USS William D.*

'The whole (USS Iowa) incident was chalked up to an unfortunate set of circumstances and placed under a cloak of secrecy.'

Porter. There was now some thought that the *Porter* was part of an assassination plot. Within moments of the warning, there was a tremendous explosion just behind the battleship. The torpedo had been detonated by the wash kicked up by the battleship's increased speed. The crisis was over and so was Captain Walker's career. His final utterance to the *Iowa*, in response to a question about the origin of the torpedo, was a weak, "We did it."

Shortly thereafter, the brand new destroyer, her Captain, and the en-

tire crew were placed under arrest and sent to Bermuda for trial. It was the first time that a complete ship's company had been arrested in the history of the U.S. Navy. The ship was surrounded by Marines when it docked in Bermuda, and held there several days as the closed session inquiry attempted to determine what had happened. Torpedoman Dawson eventually confessed to having inadvertently left the primer in the torpedo tube, which caused the launching. Dawson had thrown the used primer over the side to conceal his mistake.

The whole incident was chalked up to an unfortunate set of circumstances and placed under a cloak of secrecy. Someone had to be punished. Captain Walker and several other *Porter* officers and Sailors eventually found themselves in obscure shore assignments. Dawson was sentenced to 14 years' hard labor. President Roosevelt intervened, however, asking that no punishment be meted out for what was clearly an accident.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Don't Shoot; We're Republicans!

The destroyer (pictured below, right) was banished to the upper Aleutians. It was probably thought this was as safe a place as any for the ship and anyone who came near her. She remained in the frozen north for almost a year, until late 1944, when she was re-assigned to the Western Pacific. Before leaving the Aleutians, she accidentally left her calling card in the form of a 5-inch shell fired into the front yard of the American Base Commander, thus re-arranging his flower garden.

In December 1944, she joined the Philippine Invasion Forces and acquitted herself quite well. She distinguished herself by shooting down a number of attacking Japanese aircraft. Regrettably, after the war, it was reported that she also shot down three American planes. This was a common event on ships, as many gunners, fearful of Kamikaze's, had nervous trigger fingers.

In April 1945, the destroyer was assigned to support the invasion of Okinawa. By this time, the greeting, "Don't Shoot, We're Republicans" was commonplace and the crew of the "Willie D" had become used to the ribbing. But the crew of her sister ship, the USS Luce, was not so polite in its salutations after the Porter accidentally riddled her side and superstructure with gunfire.

On 10 June 1945, the USS Porter's luck finally ran out. She was sunk by a plane which had unintentionally attacked underwater. A Japanese bomber almost made entirely of wood and canvas slipped through the Navy's defense. Having little in the way of metal surfaces, the plane didn't register on radar. A fully loaded Kamikaze, it was headed for a ship near the Porter, but just at the last moment

veered away and crashed alongside the unlucky destroyer. There was a sigh of relief as the plane sunk out of sight, but then it blew up underneath the Porter, opening her hull in the worst possible location.

Three hours later, after the last man was off, the Captain jumped to the safety of a rescue vessel and the ship that almost changed world history slipped astern into 2400 feet of water. Not a single soul was lost in the sinking. After everything else that happened, it was almost as if the ship decided to let her crew off at the end.

For more information, visit
www.usshancockcv19.com



ANNOUNCING: This month we mark the 75th edition of the Patriot News with an update to our look and feel. We thank you for your support and pray this publication continues to be a blessing to all who receive it. Praise the Lord for the opportunity to serve Him by honoring those who have sacrificed so much for this great nation.

Vigilant Faith

To use an analogy, we as Christians often sail on troubled and dangerous seas with an enemy who is ever on the watch to attack our position. 1 Peter 5:8 tells us: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Through His Word, God has given us a plan to follow; how to chart our course in life. He has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us along this path. To be sober means we must be watchful, clear-headed, alert and aware of what is going on around us. Paul tells us in 1 Thesalonians: "Therefore let us not

sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." Being vigilant is similar to being sober in that it means to be watchful while staying awake. Everyone grows weary, particularly when the trials of life are bearing down on us. That is the moment we must be vigilant and watchful - staying close to God through prayer and reading His Word.

(Continued from page 3)

Even when we follow the plan, we will occasionally go through dark and difficult periods of time. It may seem at times that the long dark night may never end as we eagerly await the dawn to see more clearly. During these dark times we may often wonder if we are on the right course. When the way before us is unclear or the unknown, we can have faith in God's Word to bring us safely to an expected end. To deviate from His Word leaves us vulnerable to an attack by the enemy that could devastate us and greatly harm our Christian testimony.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

THE LIL' JERRY CAN THAT COULD

(continued from page 2)

Two years later the United States was still oblivious of the can. Then, in September 1942, two quality-control officers posted to American refineries in the Mideast ran smack into the problems being created by ignoring the jerry can. I was one of those two. Passing through Cairo two weeks before the start of the Battle of El Alamein, we learned that the British wanted no part of a planned U.S. Navy can; as far as they were concerned, the only container worth having was the jerry can, even though their only supply was those captured in battle. The British were bitter; two years after the invasion of Norway there was still no evidence that their government had done anything about the jerry can.

My colleague and I learned quickly about the jerry can's advantages and the Allied can's costly disadvantages, and we sent a cable to naval officials in Washington stating that 40 percent of all the gasoline sent to Egypt was being lost through spillage and evaporation. We added that a detailed report would follow. The 40 percent figure was actually a guess intended to provoke alarm, but it worked. A cable came back immediately requesting confirmation.

We then arranged a visit to several fuel-handling depots at the rear of Montgomery's army and found there that conditions were indeed appalling. Fuel arrived by rail from the sea in fifty-five-gallon steel drums with rolled seams and friction-sealed metallic mouths. The drums were handled violently by local laborers. Many leaked.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Some results from the 2014 Military Family Lifestyle Survey:

There were 6200 respondents to this survey, including military spouses, service members, and veterans.

FINANCIAL READINESS

TOP 3 OBSTACLES TO FINANCIAL SECURITY

- 40% SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT
- 38% UNCERTAINTY IN MILITARY LIFE
- 34% UNCERTAINTY IN POTENTIAL CHANGES IN BENEFITS

MILITARY LIFESTYLE STRESSORS

TOP STRESSORS RELATED TO MILITARY LIFESTYLE

- DEPLOYMENT OR SEPARATION
- FINANCIAL
- EMPLOYMENT OR WORK
- ISOLATION FROM FRIENDS OR FAMILY



CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Friendship Baptist Church
5510 Falls of Neuse Road
Raleigh, NC 27609

Phone: (919) 876-0585
Email: fbcmail@fbcweb.net
Website: www.fbcweb.net

COLONEL STEVE AND DEBORAH MARTIN

Phone: (919) 571-4378
stevedebmartin@gmail.com

Editor in Chief:

Joe Perez (perez@usa.com)

Contributing Author:

Don King (dking010@nc.rr.com)

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

- Therry Johnson - 10
- Ethan Stewart - 11
- Dan Reece - 13
- Lorre Hayden - 18
- Joel Harris - 28
- Joe Perez - 29

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

- Steve & Deborah Martin - 17
- Dan & Becky Reece - 31

THE LIL' JERRY CAN THAT COULD

(Continued from page 3) **PAGE 4**

The next link in the chain was the infamous five-gallon "petrol tin." This was a square can of tin plate that had been used for decades to supply lamp kerosene. It was hardly useful for gasoline. In the hot desert sun, it tended to swell up, burst at the seams, and leak. Since a funnel was needed for pouring, spillage was also a problem.

Allied soldiers in Africa knew that the only gasoline container worth having was German. Similar tins were carried on Liberator bombers in flight. They leaked out perhaps a third of the fuel they carried. Because of this, General Wavell's defeat of the Italians in North Africa in 1940 had come to naught. His planes and combat vehicles had literally run out of gas. Likewise in 1941, General Auchinleck's victory over Rommel had withered away. In 1942 General Montgomery saw to it that he had enough supplies, including gasoline, to whip Rommel in spite of terrific wastage. And he was helped by captured jerry cans.

The British historian Desmond Young later confirmed the great importance of oil cans in the early African part of the war. "No one who did not serve in the desert," he wrote, "can realize to what extent the difference between complete and partial success rested on the simplest item of our equipment—and the worst. Whoever sent our troops into desert warfare with the [five-gallon] petrol tin has much to answer for. General Auchinleck (pictured below, left) estimates that this 'flimsy and ill constructed container' led to the loss of thirty per cent of petrol between base and consumer.... The overall loss was almost incalculable. To calculate the tanks destroyed, the number of men who were killed or went into captivity because of shortage of petrol at some crucial moment, the ships and merchant seamen lost in carrying it, would be quite impossible."

After my colleague and I made our report, a new five-gallon container under consideration in Washington was canceled. Meanwhile the British were finally gearing up for mass

production. Two million British jerry cans were sent to North Africa in early 1943, and by early 1944 they were being manufactured in the Middle East. Since the British had such a head start, the Allies agreed to let them produce all the cans needed for the invasion of Europe. Millions were ready by D-day. By V-E day some twenty-one million Allied jerry cans had been scattered all over Europe. President Roosevelt observed in November 1944, "Without these cans it would have been impossible for our armies to cut their way across France at a lightning pace which exceeded the German Blitz of 1940."

In Washington little about the jerry can appears in the official record. A military report says simply, "A sample of the jerry can was brought to the office of the Quartermaster General in the summer of 1940."

Editor's Note: The author of this article, Richard M. Daniel, is a retired commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve and a chemical engineer.

Vigilant Faith

(Continued from page 3)

General Claude Auchinleck



God does indeed have a plan for our life. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Satan roams about seeking to thwart God's plan for your life by attacking the unguarded soul. When you feel weak or weary, you can rest in God's promise that "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength

is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9)." Ephesians 6:10 tells us to "be strong in the Lord and the power of His might." If you, as a Christian, find yourself in a situation where your prayer life has dropped off, you rarely spend time in your Bible, and you are spending less time in church and around Christian friends, you have become unguarded and you are vulnerable to attack. You have an advocate with

the Father who can help you fend off the fiery darts of Satan. If you find yourself in this vulnerable position, repent and get back in line with the Lord by relying on His Word and getting close to Him in prayer. He will give you the power to resist Satan's attempts to tempt you, but you must be vigilant in your faith!

My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.

II Corinthians 12:9



Prayer Notes, Event Announcements

Praise the Lord for the wonderful outcome of surgery for Albert Watkins. Albert came through surgery with flying colors – please continue to keep him in your prayers as he recovers and regains his strength.

Please keep Ashley Huskey in your prayers. Ashley, the daughter of Todd and Tammy Huskey, recently had surgery and is awaiting lab results from this surgery. Please pray for Godly wisdom and guidance for the team of doctors working with her. Please keep Lance Corporal

Timothy Robinson in your prayers. Timothy, Hope Kennon's fiancé, has recently shipped to the Persian Gulf. Please pray for his safety and that he will be able to share his Christian witness with those he is serving. Please also pray for Brian and Ivey Palmer as they minister to soldiers and families at Ft. McCoy, Wisconsin.

Deborah and I wish each of you and your family a very Happy New Year! We anxiously anticipate what the Lord has in store for us and this ministry during this year!

~ Colonel Martin

Coming up next month:

- **Here's Why:** The Military Abolishes Grog
- **Meet the Military:** Don Woodard, US Navy

