



Official Newsletter of the Michigan Company of Military Historians & Collectors  
**August 14, 2017**

*“Never had a general so effectively willed away the facts.”* **Mark Bowen**, writing about William Westmoreland in “Hue 1968: A Turning Point of the American War in Vietnam”.

*“In any fight, it’s the first blow that counts; and if you keep it up hot enough, you can whip ’em as fast as they come up.”* **Lieutenant-General Nathan Bedford Forrest CSA (1821-1877)**

*“If men make war in slavish obedience to rules, they will fail.”* **Ulysses S. Grant General of the army, Personal Memoirs, I, 1885.**

*“He who commands the sea has command of everything.”* **Themistocles (c. 528-462 BCE)**

*“He who rules on the sea will very shortly rule on the land also.”* **Thayer ad-Din (d. 1546)**

*“You will usually find that the enemy has three courses of action open to him, and of these he will adopt the fourth.”* **Field Marshal Helmuth Graf von Moltke (1800-1891)**

Our August speaker will be member Francisco Vega who will continue with his earlier presentation of his WWII activity.. **We have been asked to come earlier to Monday’s meeting. Starting time will be 6:45**

**MEETINGS** take place the second Monday of every month at the **Downtown Holiday Inn, 310 Pearl NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504 (616) 235-7611**. Socializing begins at 6:00 (1800 hrs), dinner at 7:00 (1900 hrs), business meeting 7:15 (1915 hrs), and program at 8:00 (2000 hrs). Ample free parking available

GENERAL STAFF  
OFFICERS OF THE  
COMPANY

- Commandant - Fern O’Beshaw
- Executive Officer - Gregg Metternich
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- Judge Advocate -Jay Stone
- Mess Officer - Mike Krushinsky
- Sgt-at-Arms - Richard Foster
- Editor Cannon Report - Kingman Davis
- Editor Emeritus - Jose Amoros
- Open Mess Chairman - Jay

- Former Open Mess Speaker Chuck Pfarrer has a new book published by the Naval Institute Press Philip Nolan The Man Without a Country
- Despite the objection by POTUS, the *USS Gerald R. Ford* launched its first plane without using steam catapults.

# The Anglo-Boer Wars

In 1682 the Dutch East India Company established a way station at the southern tip of Africa. The settlement grew and expanded over the years with the original Dutch settlers joined by French and German Protestants. Together they came to call themselves Afrikaners (People of Africa) and developed a variant of the Dutch language, Afrikaans, that all spoke. They drove the indigenous tribe, the Hottentots, from the growing and grazing land they coveted and prospered uninterrupted until the early 19th century. In 1806 Napoleon ruled the Netherlands and made his brother, Louis, King of Holland. The British Navy went off to protect the Cape Colony in the name of the deposed Dutch monarch. As a partial reward for their long struggles with the French, the English annexed the South African colony in 1814. Tensions soon rose between the British and the Afrikaners, also called Boers, from their word for farmer. The principle problem was that the British were opposed to the Boers enslavement and poor treatment of the indigenous African tribes which they collectively called Kaffirs.

The English endeavored to treat the Kaffirs fairly and humanely, and to make the Dutch do the same. The Dutch Boer, however, could not understand why this should be, and they hated the English for coercing them into it. As John Arquilla writes in Insurgents, Raiders and Bandits, “the Boers all over South Africa shared the same characteristics. They were ignorant and grasping; and as regards the Kaffirs they had a doctrine which completely satisfied themselves, though it did not satisfy any other of the parties concerned in the question. They were stern Calvinists, and held the Bible as their only moral law. When the English remonstrated with them, they turned to the five books of Moses, and point(ed) to the passages where the people of Israel were commanded to go in and possess the land, and to drive out the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ‘Ye shall utterly drive out the inhabitants thereof. Ye shall make no covenant with them nor show any mercy unto them. The Lord hath given the land for an inheritance to you and to your children.’”

In this blind stubbornness the Dutch Boers went on, forgetting that they were in the midst of a land which was far from being conquered from the inhabitants, who were a numerous and warlike people, and gradually learning the use of fire-arms. Their treatment of the natives often provoked hostility to all white people ; and although in most parts of South Africa the natives fully understood the difference between the English and the Dutch, in the case of a general rising against the Dutch the English settlers would be seriously endangered. It was this, besides motives of common justice and humanity, which lead England, however unwillingly, to keep her hand upon the Dutch wherever they went. Bridling at what they considered a most undue intrusion into their way of life Several thousand Boers set off on a “Great Trek” north from the Cape across the *veldt* or fields. During this period (1835-1837) they established a multitude of small, independent republics where they could do as they wished. The Boers who remained in the Cape had to toe the British line.

Prior to the Great Trek the Boers and later the English fought wars against the various native tribes between 1779 and 1878. These wars are now referred to as the First to the Ninth Frontier Wars respectively. Some have other appellations, such as the War of the Axe (7th), the War of Nxele or Makana (4th), Hintsa's War (6th) and the War of Mlanjeni (8th). Some of the names are a little misleading; while the theft of an axe was the spark which ignited the 7th Frontier War, it was not the cause, but of such incidents and anecdotes are legends made! Much like 19th and 20th century American Southerners, the Boers maintained that their relationships between them, the natives and the British was complex. When in actuality it was just about power and who wielded it. The Boers

justified their behavior based on the Old Testament completely ignoring the New Testament. No one was going to dictate how they should treat the native Zulus and Bantu tribes. The English never ceased to allow the new Boer republics to continue in their ill-treatment of the natives.

In early February 1881 Major General Sir George Colley, the British High Commissioner for South East Africa, moved towards the Transvaal where the Boers were in revolt against British rule. The Boer demands were for self-rule under the overall suzerainty of Britain. Colley was an arrogant, English imperialist who gave very little credence to the fighting ability of the Boers and the well-being of his own men. Pushing his infantry toward the interior he failed to set out scouts to reconnoiter the countryside and when stopping for the night did not take adequate precautions to protect his perimeter. Arriving at a small, raised plateau called Majuba, the exhausted British dropped their gear and settled in for the night. Early the next morning Colley was awakened and told that a detachment of Boers were camped out at the lower end of the plateau. He took no action, believing that his mere presence would cause the Boers to flee. Over the next hour, realizing the British were going to do nothing, the Boers poured over the top of the British line and engaged the enemy at long range, refusing hand-to-hand combat action and picking off the British one by one. The Boers were able to take advantage of the scrub and long grass which covered the hill, something that the British were not trained to do. It was at this stage that British discipline began to wane and panicky troops began to desert their posts, unable to see their opponents and being given very little in the way of direction from officers. There was little coordinated command. Lieutenant (later General) Ian Hamilton urged Colley to charge the Boer line, but the general procrastinated, saying "Wait, wait." When more Boers were seen encircling the mountain, the British line collapsed and many fled. Sir George Colley was shot dead. The troops rushed to the bottom of the hill, falling back on the picket companies which were themselves enveloped by the Boers, now mounted and in pursuit.

Although a small battle, Majuba was a major disaster for Britain and the British Army. 649 men were killed, wounded or captured while the Boers had 1 KIA and 4 wounded. This battle highlighted many of the inadequacies of an army steeped in the methods of early 19th Century warfare and failing to grasp the implications and potential of modern long range breech loading firearms. Colley was a disastrous commander, rash in assuming battle, but timid in the conduct of the battle. Victorian Britain had a tendency to make martyrs of generals killed in action furthering British colonial interests, particularly if they had a reputation for being religious. Colley was given just such a status. Illustrations of the stone marking the spot where "Colley fell" were widely published in the British press. Assuming overall command, Sir Evelyn Wood, on instructions from London, negotiated terms with the Boers which gave them what they had sought from the start, self-government under the overall suzerainty of the British Crown. The British grudgingly and with loudly voiced dissatisfaction gave up their efforts to ensure better Boer treatment of the Bantus. The Anglo-Boer relations were never repaired and only got worse.

In 1887 gold was discovered in the Transvaal and all manner of immigrants came to seek their fortune. The Boers imposed strict controls over the mostly British interlopers and hard feelings soon developed. Tension mounted, much of it inflamed by Cecil Rhodes, who had made his fortune in diamonds and wanted in on the gold as well. He was prime minister of the largely British Cape Colony and wanted to formerly annex the Transvaal. He even conspired to stage a private invasion, believing that Queen Victoria would welcome such a conquest. The attack in 1895 was an utter disaster. The lingering crisis was brought to a new intensity when Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany publicly congratulated the Boers and sold them Mauser rifles, accurate at ranges of over a mile. Slowly the British increased the number of troops stationed in the Cape Colony. Curiously the British made a decision to use no soldiers of color, even though the Indian Army had extensive and recent experience in both conventional and irregular warfare, much of it against the Afghan tribes. It was

believed to be inadvisable to make use of any but white soldiers in a war fought between white men in a country where the black man presented so difficult a problem. All that now remained was to see which side would start this whites-only war on the dark continent.

The wait ended in October, 1899 when the Boers took the offensive with more than forty thousand riders, all mounted on their own horses and all expert marksmen. The Boers had no standing army just a conscription system that called on all males between sixteen and sixty to serve in small *Kommando* units, usually with 100 to 150 riders each. Moving swiftly, they struck scattered British forces stationed in the outlying republics of Natal, Transvaal and the Orange Free State. They did not ride south into the Cape Colony, believing that they would rather see the British struggle to come north over great distances. It was 800 miles from Capetown to Pretoria and the lack of roads would tether the British to easily disrupted rail lines. The simultaneous attacks forced the British relief forces to divide their army to lift the sieges. The Boers dealt roughly with them and the series of reverses from December 10 to 17, 1899, came to be known in Britain as “Black Week.” Small, fast moving attackers disrupted British supply trains and exhausted the infantry that was expected to conquer men on horseback.

Slowly reinforcements were coming into South Africa. Field Marshall Lord Frederick Roberts, an old India hand, led a newly arrived contingent of 75,000 troops to Paardeberg where General Piet Cronje led his Orange Free State *kommandos*. Instead of fleeing, Cronje, who did not want to leave his artillery and supplies behind, chose to fight. For the first time, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealanders were part the the British South African Army. They surrounded the Boers, who had lost all their horses to cannon fire and were forced to surrender. One tenth of the Boer forces were now out of action on February 27, 1900. On March 15, Field Marshall Roberts felt the Boers were on the brink of capitulation, so he offered amnesty to all fighters willing to return to their farms. Many took up the offer and others chose to fight a rear guard action. But Christiaan de Wet, a poorly educated farmer-turned-soldier now led the Boers and he wanted to take the strategic offensive. The overwhelming numerical superiority of the British demanded a new strategy. The commando system was best suited not to large-scale, set-piece battles, but to smaller-scale guerrilla strikes. Before he could enact his new strategy Roberts, aided with mounted Commonwealth troops seized the capitals of the various Boer Republics, Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, and most important, Pretoria. He was also helped, in no small part by the Horse and Cape Mounted Rifles, a contingent of Afrikaners who had changed sides and fought with the British.

With the fall of Pretoria in June, 1900 and the mopping up of other Boer main forces Roberts and Queen Victoria were convinced that the British had won the war. Later that year Roberts sailed for England and landed on January 2, 1901, to a massive public welcome. A few weeks later Victoria died, ending a reign that lasted for more than 63 years. With her also died the Victorian notions of war following set rules and conventions; a noble undertaking guided by insights drawn from the Enlightenment. Christiaan de Wet and some of his more stalwart countrymen were about to herald the emergence of an age of a full-blown guerrilla warfare; and the savage British response to Boer holdouts soon wiped away any remaining Victorian notions about the niceties of conflict. Total war was now at hand.

De Wet now employed a new and ambitious plan for the next phase of the war. While still believing in hit-and-run raids, his *Kommandos* would break up into even smaller units than their usual 100-150 riders. De Wet summed up his plan “we should be able to do better work if we divided into small parties, and, if we divided our forces, the English would have to divide their forces too.” Over the next year his strategy would give the British fits and drive them to practices that would come to be reviled around the world. The principal target of this global opprobrium was General Horatio Herbert Kitchener, who had defeated the Mahdist forces at the Battle of Omdurman in the Sudan two years

earlier. He was given virtually free rein to do what was necessary to end the war the government thought was already over. His plan was to control the countryside with a network of garrisoned blockhouses and barbed-wire enclosures. Hunter-killer patrols would then drive the Boers into these fixed, fortified positions. Regarding the insurgents' ability to hide among the people, Kitchener's solution was to drain the *Veldt* of all the sympathetic civilians, denying the Boers all sources of shelter and supply. In practice this meant herding tens of thousands of women and children into concentration camps and seizing or burning crops and farms. British neglect allowed disease to spread through the camps causing thousands of deaths and kindling an antiwar rage among the world's nascent civil society organizations. Eye witness accounts of the squalid camp conditions and the atrocities committed by imperial troops against Boer civilians led to a firestorm of public criticism. Pressure was brought to bear on the government to rein in Kitchener, but the fact that his methods were working against the guerrillas made Whitehall slow to act.

Throughout 1901 De Wet was regularly able to elude his pursers by breaking down his forces and recombining at some predetermined fall-back position. Aided by a force of expert marksmen, accurate at ranges exceeding a mile, and using smokeless powder de Wet caused Kitchener to change his tactics. With over 400,000 troops in the field, Kitchener broke the *Veldt* into massive squares with larger flying columns at each compass point. Instead of continuing in his attempts to drive the Boers into the fixed, immobile line of blockhouses he had his men move inward to concentrate the insurgents in a smaller area. De Wet countered this move by staggering the timing of his movements so that British reinforcements would leap to join their compatriots who had made first contact, creating gaps other Boers could escape through. This new tactic was wearing down the Boers and their only hope was that the British were just as weary. Public opposition to the war had grown to a critical level and the Brits offered to negotiate for peace.

In May, 1902, the Treaty of Vereeniging was signed. This settlement entailed the end of hostilities and the surrender of all Boer forces and their arms to the British, with the promise of eventual self-government to the Transvaal (South African Republic) and the Orange Free State as colonies of the British Empire. The Boer Republics agreed to come under the sovereignty of the British Crown and the British government agreed on various details including the following:

1. All Boer fighters of both republics had to give themselves up
2. All combatants would be disarmed
3. Everyone had to swear allegiance to the Crown
4. No death penalties would be dealt out
5. A general amnesty would apply
6. The use of Dutch would be allowed in the schools and law courts.
7. To eventually give the Transvaal and the Orange Free State self-government (civil government was granted in 1906 and 1907).
8. To avoid discussing the native (Black) enfranchisement issue until self-government had been given.
9. To pay the Afrikaners £3,000,000 in reconstruction aid.
10. Property rights of Boers would be respected
11. No land taxes would be introduced
12. Registered private guns would be allowed.

Subsequent to the British government giving the Boer colonies self-government, the Union of South Africa was created on May 31, 1910. The Union gained relative independence under the 1926 Imperial Conference and the 1931 Statute of Westminster. The country became a republic in 1961 therefore severing all connections with Great Britain. The country rejoined the Commonwealth in 1994. Black and Colored voting wasn't allowed until 1994.

# The Falkland War

Argentina had claimed sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, which lie 300 miles (480 km) east of its coast, since the early 19th century, but Britain seized the islands in 1833 for use as a coaling station, expelling the few remaining Argentine occupants, and since then consistently rejected Argentina's claims. In early 1982 the Argentine military junta led by Lieut. Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri gave up on long-running negotiations with Britain and instead launched an invasion of the islands. The decision to invade was chiefly political: the junta, which was being criticized for economic mismanagement and human rights abuses, believed that the "recovery" of the islands would unite Argentines behind the government in a patriotic fervor. Argentina had banked on achieving three diplomatic results: Britain being unwilling to fight, the US remaining neutral, and the UN being generally content with the change of government in the Falklands. They failed in all three. An elite invasion force trained in secrecy, but its timetable was shortened on March 19 when a dispute erupted on British-controlled South Georgia island, where Argentine salvage workers had raised the Argentine

flag, 800 miles (1,300 km) east of the Falklands. Naval forces were quickly mobilized.

Argentine troops invaded the Falklands on April 2, rapidly overcoming the small garrison of British marines at the capital Stanley (Port Stanley); they obeyed orders not to inflict any British casualties, despite losses to their own units. The next day Argentine marines seized the associated island of South Georgia. By late April Argentina had stationed more than 10,000 troops on the Falklands, although the vast majority of these were poorly trained conscripts, and they were not supplied with proper food, clothing, and shelter for the approaching winter.

As expected, the Argentine populace reacted favorably, with large crowds gathering at the Plaza de Mayo (in front of the presidential palace) to demonstrate support for the military initiative. In response to the invasion, the British government under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher declared a war zone for 200 miles (320 km) around the Falklands. The government quickly assembled a naval task force built around two aircraft carriers, the 30-year-old *HMS Hermes* and the new *HMS Invincible* light carrier, and two cruise ships pressed into service as troop carriers, the *Queen Elizabeth 2* and the *Canberra*. The



carriers sailed from Portsmouth on April 5 and were reinforced en route. Most European powers voiced support for Great Britain, and European military advisers were withdrawn from Argentine bases. However, most Latin American governments sympathized with Argentina. A notable exception was Chile, which maintained a state of alert against its neighbor because of a dispute over islands in the Beagle Channel. The perceived threat from Chile prompted Argentina to keep most of its elite troops on the mainland, distant from the Falklands theater. In addition, Argentine military planners had trusted that the United States would remain neutral in the conflict, but, following unsuccessful mediation attempts, the United States offered full support to Great Britain, allowing its NATO ally to use its air-to-air missiles, communications equipment, aviation fuel, and other military stockpiles on British-held Ascension Island, as well as cooperating with military intelligence.

On April 25, the British task force was steaming 8,000 miles (13,000 km) to the war zone via Ascension Island with a large fleet of tankers and cargo ships to supply the fleet while it operated. All told, 127 ships served in the task force including 43 warships, 22 Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, and 62 merchant vessels. A smaller British force retook South Georgia island, in the process sank one of Argentina's 1944 vintage U.S.-made diesel-electric submarines the *ARA Santa FE*, the former *USS Catfish* (SS-339). On May 2 the obsolete Argentine cruiser *ARA General Belgrano* (the former *USS Phoenix*, a Brooklyn class light cruiser purchased from the United States in 1951) was sunk outside the war zone by a British nuclear-powered submarine with the loss of 323 men (almost half of Argentina's total combat losses). Following this controversial event, most other Argentine ships were kept in port, and the Argentine navy's contribution was limited to its naval air force and one of its newer German-made diesel-electric submarines. The latter posed more of a threat to the British fleet than was expected, launching torpedo attacks that narrowly failed.

Meanwhile, the British naval force and the land-based Argentine air forces fought pitched battles. Argentine aircraft consisted mainly of several dozen old U.S. and French fighter-bombers armed only with conventional high-explosive bombs and lacking electronic countermeasures or radar for acquiring targets. That they proved as effective as they did was a testimony to the skill and motivation of their pilots. In addition, the Argentine navy had recently taken delivery of a few new French-made Super Etendard attack aircraft armed with the newest Exocet antiship missiles; though only a handful in number, these proved particularly deadly. Because the Falklands were at the extreme edge of the Argentine aircraft's combat radius, the planes could take only one pass at the task force. British ships therefore remained out of range except when closing in to attack Argentine positions.

For the British, the problem was their dependence on two aircraft carriers, as the loss of one would almost certainly have forced withdrawal. Air cover was limited to perhaps 20 short-range Sea Harrier naval jets armed with air-to-air missiles. To make up for the lack of long-range air cover, a screening force of destroyers and frigates was stationed ahead of the fleet to serve as radar pickets. However, not all of them were armed with full anti-aircraft systems or close-in weapons for shooting down incoming missiles. This left the British ships vulnerable to attack, and on May 4 the Argentines sank the destroyer *HMS Sheffield* with an Exocet missile. The Argentines, meanwhile, lost some 20–30 percent of their planes.

Thus weakened, the Argentines were unable to prevent the British from making an amphibious landing on the islands. On May 21, the British Amphibious Task Group under the command of Commodore Michael Clapp moved into Falkland Sound and began landing British forces at San Carlos Water on the northwest coast of East Falkland. The landings had been preceded by a Special Air Service (SAS) raid on nearby Pebble Island's airfield. When the landings had finished, approximately 4,000 men, commanded by Brigadier Julian Thompson, had been put ashore. Over the next week, the ships supporting the landings were hit hard by low-flying Argentine aircraft. The

sound was soon dubbed "Bomb Alley" as *HMS Ardent* (May 22), *HMS Antelope* (May 24), and *HMS Coventry* (May 25) all sustained hits and were sunk, as was *MV Atlantic Conveyor* (May 25) with a cargo of helicopters and supplies.

The British landed unopposed, but the Argentine defenders, some 5,000 strong, quickly organized an effective resistance, and heavy fighting was required to wear it down. Nevertheless, they were not able to damage either aircraft carrier or sink enough ships to jeopardize British land operations. They also lost a considerable portion of their remaining jets as well as their Falklands-based helicopters and light ground-attack planes.

From the beachhead at Port San Carlos, the British infantry advanced rapidly southward, through forced marches under extremely adverse weather conditions, to capture the settlements of Darwin and Goose Green. After several days of hard fighting, some of it hand-to-hand, against determined Argentine troops dug in along several ridgelines, the British succeeded in taking and occupying the high ground west of Stanley. With British forces surrounding and blockading the capital and main port, it was clear that the large Argentine garrison there was cut off and could be starved out. Menéndez therefore surrendered on June 14, effectively ending the conflict. British forces removed a small Argentine garrison from one of the South Sandwich Islands, some 500 miles (800 km) southeast of South Georgia, on June 20.

The British captured some 11,400 Argentine prisoners during the war, all of whom were released afterward. Argentina announced that about 650 lives had been lost—while Britain lost 255. Military strategists have debated key aspects of the conflict but have generally underscored the roles of submarines (both Britain's nuclear-powered vessels and Argentina's older, diesel-electric craft) and antiship missiles (both air-to-sea and land-to-sea types). The war also illustrated the importance of air superiority—which the British had been unable to establish—and of advanced surveillance. Logistic support was vital as well, because the armed forces of both countries had operated at their maximum ranges. Combat was carried out in the Southern hemisphere's winter where the sleet and freezing temperatures severely reduced the under supplied effectiveness of both forces. Prior to Argentina's surrender British ground forces hadn't eaten in two days and they were almost out of ammo.

The Falkland's War was a much closer run affair that British popular memory holds, and could easily had been different, especially if Argentinian planes had targeted certain supply ships instead of warships, and if Argentina's bombs had been launched from the required height, instead of pilots flying lower and wasting their chances. Argentina's military government was severely discredited by its failure to prepare and support its own military forces in the invasion that it had ordered, and civilian rule was restored to Argentina in 1983. Meanwhile, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher converted widespread patriotic support into a landslide victory for her Conservative Party in the parliamentary election of 1983. Nothing like shedding someone else's blood to stir up the patriotic juices.

Following WWII Britain had 49 colonial entities break free from her hold. But the manner in which the Brits met these challenges to her imperial control varied greatly. From letting India go in 1947, granting Israel independence the following year, and Burma following shortly, all without a great loss of British lives or money. But, thereafter, it was determined in the high councils of London to hold on to the empire, come what may. A nascent series of insurgencies and terror campaigns put British resolve to the test. Kenya, Malaysia, Oman, Northern Ireland, to just name a few, caused a great expenditure of British lives and money just to maintain her dwindling empire, which she still eventually relinquished at the cost of unnecessary lives lost and monies spent. But when a ruling party senses a loss of power, there's nothing like a good war, even for 400,000 sheep and 1800 civilians 8000 miles away to fire up nationalistic fervor and put a party back in power.



# The Changing Face of War

For all the hope of peaceful progress that accompanied the turn of this century, its first decade ended with more than thirty armed conflicts still in progress. Most were civil wars, but some involved the presence of foreign troops. The salient fact about the ongoing conflicts of our time is that *all* are irregular in nature. That is, they are primarily conducted through acts of terrorism or more classic guerrilla hit-and-run tactics. Those who face insurgents and terrorists have too late accepted—as we have learned in Viet Nam, Afghanistan, and Iraq—that conventional forces will not suffice. The forces of order and stability have been ineluctably drawn to mount irregular, small-unit raids of our own, and we have often found ourselves teaming up with local tribesmen and a range of other groups in all manner of unusual field operations. In the conventional realm of warfare the best strategies are generally gleaned from the careers of the so-called great captains, such as Julius Caesar, Frederick of Prussia, Napoleon Bonaparte. The most effective of the moderns can start with Patton, but the near great who ended in defeat like Robert E. Lee and Rommel can still be studied.

Yet when it comes to the great leaders of irregular warfare there is little that is written. John Arquilla attempts to fill this knowledge gap by surveying the greatest guerrilla fighters of the last 250 years in *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits*. These characters, male and one female, came into a bitter conflict with leading nations with no apparent end in sight. Despite their origins in so many different cultures these masters of the irregular have a great deal in common, most noteworthy was their sheer indomitability. Their ability to endure unimaginable hardships (Robert Rogers), their relentless pursuit of victory even after suffering countless defeats (Nathaniel Greene) and their ability to adapt when circumstances made their present tactics unsuccessful (Christiaan de Wet). Another important theme highlighted by the lives and campaigns of the masters of irregular warfare is their ever-deepening encounter with advanced technology (Nathan Bedford Forrest). Conventional armies have always prized the possession of the latest weapons and the swiftest transports and means of communication. But irregulars have realized that the greater reliance of conventional troops on these advanced systems makes them highly vulnerable to disruption, and some masters have aimed at achieving just such an effect (T. E. Lawrence).

The masters of irregular warfare that Arquilla writes about are important because of their ability to shape the future of conflict—and thus the future of the world system. They raise issues that lie at the heart of military affairs in our time, an era of perpetual irregular warfare. Their lessons have the potential to transform an entire military organization by integrating irregular and conventional operations; by pursuing nation building from the grassroots up; by infiltrating insurgent and terrorist groups; and by building networks and crafting a capacity for employing and countering swarm tactics, like those used on 9/11. The great captains of traditional forms of conflict have little to tell us about this. Nor can the classical principles of war provide much help; in particular the notion of the sheer power of mass, which has lived on until now in the form of Colin Powell's doctrine of "overwhelming force" and other concepts like "shock and awe." Such ideas were already faltering by the time of the Vietnam War; today it is clear that attempts to retool them against insurgent and terrorist networks will prove just as problematic.

Irregulars will always remain a step ahead because traditional militaries must continually ready themselves to fight conventional foes. But implementing the "lessons learned from the masters" will not only help us defeat the *al Qaedas* of the world but they can also provide a new way to fight the big, old-style opponents too— with smaller but more effective forces. This looming age of irregular warfare is not only one characterized by grave new threats but also by amazing opportunity.

Beyond simply adopting partisan tactics to confront traditional aggressors and terrorists, military elites may also employ other irregular warfare techniques—including commado-style raiding to defeat guerrilla movements. This is the basis of a major strand of thinking in the field of counterinsurgency, though it should be noted that military experts have often tried to defeat insurgents by using big units, traditional tactics, and overwhelming firepower against them—the approach that the U.S. military eventually settled on and lost with in Vietnam. Thus military special operation forces’ and irregular warfare missions often overlap substantially with guerrilla techniques and may be employed to fight other militaries or terrorist organizations as well.

Tactics aside, the fundamental and defining characteristic across the range of forms of irregular warfare is the small force; employing small military units in innovative ways, primarily against larger, more traditional forces. A second form of irregular warfare is that conducted by guerrillas. Fighters, wearing no discernible uniform and usually coming from the general population, would engage in pop-up attacks, doing substantial damage before blending back into the general population. Their greatest contribution was in detrimentally effecting the morale of the enemy forces. The third leg of the irregular triad is terrorism, employing small units in innovative ways—the aim being to kill the innocent in hope of coercing or blackmailing others into compliance with their wishes.

One definition has been advanced that reflects the formulation and provides a common root for thinking about all of irregular warfare. It comes from a German nobleman, legal scholar, and WWII paratroop commander Baron Friedrich August von der Heydte. Writing in 1972, at the onset of what is considered the modern age of terror, the year of the Olympic massacre in Munich, he held that irregular warfare was a type of conflict: *“in which the parties are not large units, but small and very small action-groups, and in which the outcome is not decided in a few large battles, but the decision is sought, and ultimately achieved, in a very large number of small, individual operations, robberies, acts of terror and sabotage, bombings and other attacks. Irregular warfare is ‘war out of the dark’”*. He even goes an important step further, associating irregular warfare with long, attritional struggles aimed at wearing down the enemy, rather than on short, sharp wars that may be won in a single decisive battle, or a few victories strung together.

In irregular warfare there are virtually no set piece battles; there are no armored, high-speed blitzkriegs, irregular campaigns are generally slow and cumulative. Think more of the example of Vietnamese general Giap who, for the most part, hewed to a strategy of slowly wearing down his opponents—first the French, later on the Americans—over a period of decades. Terror is intended to work in the same manner, gradually breaking down the adversary’s will to resist with continual small actions. This is surely *al Qaeda’s* or *ISIS’s* strategy today. Trying to defeat them with conventional, military thinking will not end well.

Arquilla lists 18 masters of the irregular: Robert Rogers—frontiersman; Nathanael Greene—the fighting Quaker; Francisco Espoz y Mina—the first guerrillero; Denis Davydov—Hussar poet; Abd el-Kader—desert mystic; Giuseppe Garibaldi—nation builder; Nathan Bedford Forrest—rebel raider; George Crook—the Grey Fox; Christiaan de Wet—veldt rider; Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck—bush fighter; T.E. Lawrence—the emir of dynamite; Orde Wingate—the Long Ranger; Charles Lockwood—the undersea wolf; Josip Broz, ”Tito—partisan; Frank Kitson—Counterinsurgent; Vo Nguyen Giap—people’s warrior; Phoolan Devi—bandit queen; and Aslan Maskhadov—the Chechen lion. All were successful in their endeavors and left behind strategies that are enduring. For us to benefit from their experiences we have to understand why they are thought to be masters. By taking a lesson from another master, USAF colonel John Boyd, we can profit from any situation by applying the concepts of the OODA Loop—observe, orient, decide, then act. Defeating our present day enemies requires a realization that the old ways won’t work, “shock and awe,” and “bomb’em back to the Stone Age” only benefit the reconstruction industry.

