

Texas and Texans During WWII

TEKS Social Studies and History curriculum correlation:

History

1A: Identify major eras in Texas History such as WWII.

7D: Describe contributions of Civil Rights and Equal Rights movements and activists such as Oveta C. Hobby

7E: Analyze the impact of major events including World War II

Social Studies Skills

21B: Analyze information by comparing, contrasting, summarizing and drawing inferences and conclusions.

21E. Support a point of view on a social studies issue or event.

22C: Transfer information from one medium to another.

Historical Thinking Standards

Historical Thinking Standard 3

The student engages in historical analysis and interpretation:

Therefore, the student is able to:

- Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors and institutions by identifying likenesses and differences.
- Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes, and fears.
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships bearing in mind multiple causation including (a) the importance of the individual in history; (b) the influence of ideas, human interests, and beliefs; and (c) the role of chance, the accidental and the irrational.
- Draw comparisons across eras and regions in order to define enduring issues as well as large-scale or long-term developments that transcend regional and temporal boundaries.

Historical Thinking Standard 5

The student engages in historical issues-analysis and decision-making:

Therefore, the student is able to:

- Identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.
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Pre-Distance Learning Video Conference Activity:

Instructional Sequence

1. Teacher asks questions to increase engagement with the lesson:
 - Do you think most people have negative events that they must overcome in order to become someone who contributes to others?
 - What are some examples?
 - Does our society put barriers in the way of some people?
 2. Teacher frames the Lesson. (e.g. Now we are going to examine how four Texans contributed to our victory in WWII. We will identify the contributions they made, the struggles they faced, and their impact on our world today.
 - Admiral Chester Nimitz-5 star admiral/Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet. Link to picture
 - Audie Murphy-Most decorated soldier in American History. Link to picture.
 - Doris Miller-First black to receive a medal in WWII. Link to picture.
 - Oveta Culp Hobby-Formed and commanded the Women's Army Auxiliary Corp and Second Female Cabinet Secretary in American History. Link to picture.
 3. Divide students into 8 groups.
 4. Explain key tasks for each group.
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Post-Distance Learning Video Conference Activity:

1. Biographies

- Read below for biographies for each person
- Summarize the main events of your person's life in a series of tweets.

- Complete the area of the chart for the person you are summarizing.
- Prepare to present your group’s findings to the entire class (teacher may choose to allow the class to vote for who they believe was the most impactful Texan after all presentations are complete)
- Complete the chart for the 3 other people by adding the content for the others as the other teams present their information. (Imbed link to chart)

2. Allow collaborative time for team reading and processing.

3. Present your findings to the class.

4. Initiate class discussion and/or add as a writing prompt: What did you notice about the differences in the obstacles each person faced or advantages they possessed (personal-family situations vs. societal/racial/gender/class/etc.)? How did each obstacle/advantage play itself out in the lives of the people studied? Do these still exist in our lives today?

5. Ask the students to reflect about which person they believed had the most significant impact. Allow students to voice their opinions and then vote.

- Nimitz-leader of U. S. forces in Central Pacific/Helped U. S. win WW II
- Hobby-pioneer in Women’s rights/second female cabinet member
- Miller-hero and civil rights symbol
- Murphy-most decorated soldier of all time/leader in recognition and acceptance of PTSD in veterans.

6. “TinderChoose”: Select the one you would most like to meet and explain why. What would you say and what questions would you ask?

Comparing and Contrasting the Lives of Four Famous Texans of the World War II Era

Person	Main Events	Barriers or Boosters	Achievements	Long-Term Impact
Oveta Culp Hobby Pioneer for Women’s Rights				

Doris Miller War Hero and Symbol for Civil Rights				
Audie Murphy Most Decorated Soldier and Campaigner for Veteran's Rights				
Chester Nimitz 5 Star Fleet Admiral and Important Leader in WW II				

BIOGRAPHIES:

- Hobby

Oveta Culp Hobby was a strong Texas woman who began her career in politics and public service at her father's knee. Even as a child in elementary school she would go to her father's law office, listen to him talk to his clients and friends and read books. She began her life-long interest in history and politics very early. In 1919, when Oveta was 14 years old, her father was elected to the Texas Legislature and he took Oveta with him to live in Austin during the legislative session, even though it meant her missing a lot of school. She loved the experience and it set the course she would follow. Throughout her life she pursued her deep interests in public service. She was involved

in work with the Texas Legislature, in the fields of journalism and the law. Her boundless energy and intelligence propelled her career. She was one of Texas's most influential women of the 20th century. Her most famous contributions were when she was chosen to be the Commander of the Women's Auxiliary Corps during WWII and when she was appointed as the first Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in American History.

Ms. Hobby attended the University of Mary Hardin Baylor and then law school at the University of Texas in Austin. As a female, she was denied formal admission but she learned her craft and passed the bar test. Even though she was just 20 years old, the Texas Legislature selected her to serve as the parliamentarian for the House of Representatives. With her keen mind and her father's access, Oveta amassed a deep knowledge of politics in Texas. Immediately after graduation, she was given jobs as the Clerk to both the State Banking Commission and the House Judiciary Committee and she even ran for the legislature in 1930 but was defeated.

She moved from Austin to Houston in 1930 to work in the office of the Attorney for the City of Houston. In 1931, she met and married William Hobby, the former Governor of Texas and the owner of the most important newspaper in Houston, the Houston Post. She had two children, one of whom, William, became the Lt. Governor of the state of Texas. She threw herself into work with social issues and serving on committees helping Houston plan its development and improve its treatment of children and the poor. During the 30's, Oveta served on the Texas State Commission for Human Security. These commitments remained with her for her entire life and formed the basis for her work as the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

On December 7, 1941, just like millions and millions of other Americans, Oveta's life changed forever with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. American military and political leadership knew that the vast manpower needs of a war that spanned the entire globe would make it essential to tap into the vast resources of American women. The Secretary of War, Henry Stimson said "The War Department must fully utilize, immediately and effectively, the largest and potentially the finest single source of labor available today—the vast reserve of woman power." Despite the obvious need for women's service to the country, there was a bitter battle in Congress to pass the law to authorize women's participation in the armed forces.

With Pearl Harbor burning in American's minds, the congress passed an authorization to form the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC—later the 'auxiliary' was dropped and it became known as the WAC). In February 1942, the Army Chief of Staff, General George Marshall, appointed Oveta Culp Hobby as the first Director of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Ms. Hobby had the incredibly daunting task of creating the entire service from scratch. She had to establish the framework for an agency that eventually included 150,000 women. She had to create an entire organizational structure, hire all of the first key people and direct them as the organization expanded. Originally, the WAAC was planned for 25,000 women. As the call went out for the first training class

with 1,000 women, Hobby received 35,000 applications. The army originally identified 54 positions they believed females could serve in; that number swelled to 230 occupations.

As Ms. Hobby took up her duties, she had no illusions about how women's service in non-traditional roles would run up against constant friction. One of the first most visible signs was that despite the fact Hobby ended up commanding more than 150,000 women, she was only given the rank of Colonel with pay equal to that of a major. Even a three-star general in the American Army would typically only command 60-100,000 troops; far less than Hobby's command.

Each branch of the military set up its own female services; there were Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASPS), the Navy established the Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES). The Marines dispensed with the catchy acronyms and just called them Marines. One of the biggest differences that Hobby's WACS faced was that the original bill that established them kept them out of the actual service that would entitle them to none of the benefits that their male soldiers were entitled to. This was eventually changed because of constant pressure from Women's Rights advocates.

The WACS, WASPS, SPARS and Marines were designed to free up men for combat duty. Females served as clerks, drivers, typists and in numerous other non-combat roles. At the start of the war they were restricted to serving only in the United States. Later, some service branches allowed them to serve overseas but never in actual combat. WASP aviators flew planes inside the United States. They served as shuttle pilots, moving planes around the country where they were needed—freeing up male pilots for combat roles.

No matter the rank or position, women were paid less than their male counterparts. That was true in government service and in the private sector; but the discrimination went far beyond that. Ms. Hobby had designs created for barracks for the thousands of incoming recruits and the Army Engineers refused to build them because they said they didn't work for her. Males in the ranks as low as company Sergeants would be issued a jeep for their transportation but the Army insisted that Hobby request one from the motor pool every time she needed to drive somewhere.

At times the discrimination took on striking dimensions. Early government policy held that if a WAC was killed away from home, her family had to pay the bill to ship her body for burial; in addition, her family would have to bear the costs of the funeral—at which the United States would not provide an honor guard or even a flag to drape the coffin. As a final insult, women's families were not awarded the gold star ribbon to post in their windows to show their family's contribution and loss. Ann Daar was trained as a WASP pilot and she witnessed the death of a female pilot and compared it to that of the men she saw die. "The male's body was sent home to be buried with honors...the female pilot, the Army said, wasn't responsible. The Civil Service said it wasn't responsible. We took up a collection to send her home...I was so humiliated that our government could

treat us that way.” It took a long, hard fight throughout the course of the war and in the decades that have followed to improve the layers and layers of discrimination.

Many men resented women’s participation in the armed forces. On one level it sprang from a combination of protectiveness and an underappreciation of what they could contribute to the war effort. However, there was a deeper level of resistance about “women’s proper place” that was signified by the message one Catholic Bishop shared with his congregation, he “hoped that no Catholic women would join the WAACS, as it was opposed by teachings and principles of the Roman Catholic Church.” Following along the same lines, a Catholic publication said that WAACS were “no more than an opening wedge to break down the traditional American and Christian opposition to removing woman from the home and to degrading her.”

One underhanded form of resistance was the spreading of malicious rumors about the women who were serving. In 1943, a rumor spread that 90 percent of WACS were prostitutes and that 40 percent had become pregnant and spread diseases while “serving” male troops. Word spread along the East coast that any woman who was found to be a virgin was turned down for service. Apparently, people were adept at spreading lies even before they had the help of the internet. The rumors had an impact on recruiting and the War Department asked the FBI to investigate their sources because of the damage they were inflicting on the war effort. The terrible rumors were of course just that. In fact, the pregnancy and venereal disease rates among WACS were practically non-existent. The pregnancy rate amongst the women was less than 20% of that of women who remained at home and 50% of that pregnancy rate was amongst the married women in the corps.

Much of the resistance to service came from within the women’s own families. One soldier wrote his sister “Join the WAVES or WAC and you are automatically a prostitute in my opinion.” Another serviceman wrote his sister; “It’s no damn good sis, and I for one would be very unhappy if you joined them. Why can’t you gals stay at home and be your sweet little self instead of being patriotic?” There are numerous stories about men threatening their wives with divorce if they joined. The emotional impact can be seen in the words of one WAC; “I went home on leave to tell my family it wasn’t true. I held my head up but I imagined that everybody was talking about me, but when I was safe inside our front door, I couldn’t say a word to them, I was so humiliated...I couldn’t understand how my eagerness to serve our country could have brought such shame on us.”

Despite these pressures, hundreds of thousands of women persisted. One woman put it in context when she noted “men have for centuries used slander to keep women out of public life.” Hobby knew firsthand the issues that the women under her command faced. Even though she was an officer and entitled to use the officer’s club, she was instructed to use the back door. Hobby helped those she led to frame their service. She told them “You are the first women to serve...Never forget it...You have given up comfortable homes, highly paid positions, leisure. You have taken off silk and put on khaki. And all for essentially the same reason—you have a debt and a date. A debt to democracy and

a date with destiny.” After the war she reflected that, “No new agency requiring social change has escaped a similar baptism.” An American Captain, Mary Hallaren, wrote an article in 1945, in which she said, “There were many bets against you when you first came...that you couldn’t take it with the boys; that American women couldn’t endure Army discipline; that you would break within a year. Everyone who bet against you, lost.” WAC’s service came to be deeply valued by many in military leadership. Although the service was only allowed to enroll 200,000, military commanders requested more than 600,000 women to fill all of the positions in which they knew the women could contribute.

As the war wound down, Ms. Hobby resigned her commission and returned to Texas. Her leadership earned her the Distinguished Service Medal. One of the highest the military can bestow. In 1947, the WAC, which had begun as a temporary expedient, became a permanent part of the army. It remained a part of the military until 1978, when it was dissolved, and women were simply enlisted as regular members of the service.

Ms. Hobby resumed her positions in the Houston media. She was the director of two television stations and the executive vice president of the Houston Post. In addition, she returned to her public service on boards and commissions—always revealing her lasting interest in the welfare of the elderly, poor and children.

In 1952, she became involved in the presidential campaign. She was an early and strong supporter of General Eisenhower. She helped his campaign win Texas and because of her earlier service as the director of the WACs. The new president was well-aware of her enormous talents and selected her to be the first Secretary of Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). Once again, Ms. Hobby had to build a completely new organization with thousands of employees and responsible for a vast array of government services. She controlled a budget in excess of 20 billion dollars. During her time in office, the new cabinet agency under her leadership supervised a bewildering variety of responsibilities. Ms. Hobby oversaw the introduction of the polio vaccine, the operation of one of the largest hospital systems in the world, a new plan to build schools across the nation to accommodate our rapidly expanding population health insurance plans.

Ms. Hobby served as the Secretary for 31 months and then resigned to return to Texas to be at the side of her husband who had become ill. She moved back to Houston and became the editor of the Houston Post—the most widely read newspaper in the largest city in Texas. In addition, she resumed her work in numerous social causes such as education, literacy and child welfare. She was awarded numerous honorary degrees from many universities to recognize her enormous contributions. She was tremendously proud of her son, William, who became the Lt. Governor of Texas. He held that position from 1973 to 1991, making him one of the longest serving in that role in state history.

Ms. Hobby lived a long and full life that came to an end in 1995, when she died at the age of 90. One of the best tributes to her leadership is a quote that is included on the

National World War II Monument in Washington. “Women who stepped up were measured as citizens of the nation, not as women. This was a people’s war and everyone was in it.”

- Miller

On the morning of Dec. 6, 1941, Doris Miller arose early and began fulfilling his regular duties on board the USS West Virginia. Most of the 1,541 officers and sailors who formed the crew were still sleeping as he moved about his ship cleaning, polishing officers’ shoes and tending to their uniforms. The intensity and pervasiveness of the racism that characterized mid-century America meant that the few Black sailors the US Navy allowed to enlist were restricted to service positions such as cooks and porters and--no matter their bravery, patriotism, fidelity or intellect they were not eligible to serve as warfighters or officers in the Naval service.

Miller enlisted in the Navy in 1939 to escape the poverty and limitations of his upbringing in early 20th century Texas. His family barely scraped by as sharecroppers; always at risk of the catastrophe that the death or serious illness of a parent could bring. He dropped out of school in 8th grade to help his parents provide for his three brothers.

By the time the first Japanese planes began their deadly torpedo runs on battleship row at Pearl Harbor, Miller’s workday was well underway. What should have been an uneventful Sunday turned out to be the turning point in the life of Miller, his nation and the entire world.

At just before 8 AM Miller felt the thump that reverberated as a shudder throughout the ship. The first of the nine Japanese torpedoes and three armor piercing bombs that rocked the West Virginia that day put the crew on immediate war footing. Every sailor on the ship had a very specific role to fulfill when the call to battle stations rang out aboard the vessel. Miller ran to his assigned position on an anti-aircraft battery in the middle of the ship but when he reported for duty, he found the fighting position nothing more than wreckage. The second bomb to strike that morning had flipped over a float plane and ruptured its gas tank. A blazing inferno engulfed much of the craft. Miller immediately reported for another assignment. Seeing that he was strong and in excellent condition an officer called on Miller to assist in moving the wounded. This included Captain Bennion. He suffered from a mortal injury caused by a chunk of metal that had split open his midsection. Bennion had to grip his stomach tightly to hold in his own intestines. In spite of this, he remained alert and in command. The second in command wanted to move the Captain from the exposed bridge but the ship’s lean, the intense flames and the wreckage prevented this. The best they could do was to shift him to a slightly more protected location.

Lt. White noticed that the twin .50 caliber machine guns nearby were unmanned, and he directed Miller to assist him in loading the two weapons. Japanese Zeros screamed past the bridge on low strafing runs. They weaved between the ships on battleship row

wreaking havoc upon the crews. Each Zero was armed with two machine guns and two 20mm cannons. The two machine guns combined spit out nearly 1,000 rounds per minute and dealt death on the crews and those who had abandoned their ships and were swimming from their vessels.

Miller had been trained how to fetch ammunition and load the gun, but Navy policy did not allow Blacks to handle heavy weapons, so it came as a surprise to Lt. White to see Miller swing the machine gun into action and engage the enemy. There have been many stories over the years, but careful scholarship sheds doubt on whether Miller, or anyone from the West Virginia brought down any enemy planes that day. In the chaos of the violent attack and the spirited defense mounted by the crews of the ships, many of them damaged, sinking wrecks, it is very difficult for anyone to piece together exactly what happened.

What is certain though is that Miller remained at his exposed fighting position firing the weapon in his attempt to fend off the attackers and save the lives of his shipmates. He only left his defense of the West Virginia when he was ordered to. Miller was one of the last three to abandon ship. As he swam to shore from the flaming hulk of the sinking ship he was strafed by enemy planes. He later told his niece, "With those bullets spattering all around me it was by the grace of God that I never got a scratch." Even after he reached the dock, he continued to help by rescuing wounded sailors from the bay.

A shocked nation eagerly devoured as much information as they could get about the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. The Navy released several official statements outlining the bravery of many of those who served that day. The armed forces were skilled at notifying local papers whenever a 'hometown boy made good.' The military press machine went into overdrive and sent out stories across the nation. However, it seemed as if black valor could be ignored because when it came to the exploits of Miller the Navy failed to identify him by name and instead referred to actions "by a Negro sailor."

This injustice was quickly addressed by Civil Rights organizations such as the NAACP, the Southern Negro Youth Council and the National Negro Congress. They were joined by black newspapers and some Congressmen. Since there were so few African American sailors serving on the West Virginia, it was relatively easy for reporters to find out and publicize Miller's name. It would have been even easier for the Navy to have done so in the first place. The first news story identified Doris Miller by name on December 16th. Even after his name was widely known, the Navy resisted giving him a medal. It required a sustained pressure campaign that took more than five months before Miller finally secured the honors he deserved. On May 27, Admiral Nimitz, a fellow Texan, awarded Miller the Navy Cross; the third highest medal the Navy offered.

The Navy's initial refusal to acknowledge Miller's achievements was part of a deeply ingrained pattern of racism in the US Armed Forces—a pattern that mirrored the situation in the society as a whole. During times of national crisis, the services would

temporarily set aside a little of their institutional prejudice and begrudgingly enroll black servicemen. Typically, blacks would be first utilized in service and construction roles and then finally, as the casualties mounted, in combat service. Once the immediate crisis abated their contributions and achievements were forgotten.

This pattern was formed in the very first battles in our history. Thousands of Blacks served the nation during the Revolution. In 1794, just 11 years after the war and in spite of their meritorious service, the Navy passed regulations that limited black participation to five percent.

Some four score years later, Black contributions had slipped from national consciousness and it took a long and sustained struggle to convince Lincoln and the Union leadership to accept black servicemen. As the war progressed nearly 20% of Union sailors were black and more than 200,000 African Americans served in the army.

Once again, after the Civil War this contribution was quickly minimized and forgotten. Once again at the start of WWI there were severe restrictions on the roles in which blacks could serve and the rank to which they could aspire. Once again as the casualty rolls piled up, the country turned towards African American citizens to step into the breach. Once again, they did so with distinction. The all Black 369th, The Harlem Hellfighters, was one of the very best units in the American Army.

This deeply ingrained institutional pattern was firmly in place at the start of WWII and it relegated the brave, athletic and powerfully built Miller to a service rather than a combat role. Some two weeks *after* Miller's act of heroism the Navy published the results of a study about potential integration and concluded "the inclusion of Negroes, other than as mess attendants, leads to destructive and undermining conditions." It seemed that the country was determined to keep a tight grip on its racist beliefs about African American men even if it deprived the nation of thousands of black warriors.

But this time Black servicemen's contributions and potential weren't allowed to be ignored, minimized or forgotten. Civil rights organizations and activist newspapers were determined to tell the story of black contributions to the war effort and Doris Miller was a big part of that story. He became a role model and a symbol that helped bring about a lasting change in our Armed Forces.

Just after Pearl Harbor, Miller returned to service as a messmate aboard the Indianapolis. His battle station was at a twin .50 caliber machine gun—just like the one he had so bravely manned on Dec. 7. However, despite his heroism at Pearl Harbor, he still was not allowed to fire the weapon. His role was to supply it with ammunition. The Navy still had its regulations in place and even Navy Cross medal winners couldn't shoot the heavy weapons; if they were black.

Many Anglo medal winners were pulled from their normal duties and sent on goodwill, recruiting or War Bond tours. As usual, it took public pressure to get the Navy to do what would have been a common course of action for a white war hero. A loose

coalition of Civil Rights organizations, African American media outlets and Congressional leaders rose up to protest this unequal treatment. Over time White media in the North began to pick up on the story. Early inquiries led to the Navy responding by saying that Miller couldn't be released from his critical wartime duties. The press publicly derided this excuse by pointing out that the Navy restricted his service to shining shoes and pressing uniforms and pointedly asking how this contribution was 'vital to the war effort.'

Finally, in late November of 1942, nearly a year after his exploits, Miller was ordered on a war bond tour. He made appearances and speeches in California, Texas and Illinois. He addressed the first graduating class of African Americans at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. Color prints of Miller in his uniform went on sale and began to show up in a place of honor in the homes of African Americans across the country. A radio station dramatized his heroism. The Navy produced a recruiting poster designed to be used in Black communities.

The Armed Forces were being subjected to relentless pressure by the emerging coalition of organizations, media, Black sports and entertainment figures and a few Congressmen. That campaign slowly gained traction. It was resisted at every turn. James Knox, the Secretary of the Navy threatened to resign if the President ever ordered him to integrate fully the service. The "white establishment" was firmly in power and highly resistant to meaningful change. Each step towards full integration, which finally became official policy in 1948, was met with stubborn resistance.

In this push and pull of demand for changes and outright refusal and foot dragging, the Civil Rights movement that finally emerged with full force in the 1960's began to gain its footing and learn how to use the levers of power. Miller and the torrent of Black warriors who followed him were the levers that the movement used to demand more justice. America needed Black soldiers, sailors and airmen. The voices demanding equality under the law repeatedly pointed out the hypocrisy of the nation's claims to be fighting tyranny abroad while encouraging a vile form of it at home. One Black recruit perfectly summarized the contradictions when he said, "Should I sacrifice to live half-American?" Advocates for equality began using a "Double V" symbol. Churchill had popularized the "V" as the sign for victory. Civil Rights protestors began using the "Double V" to signify that they were fighting for two victories—one against Nazi and Japanese and tyranny overseas and one against racism and inequality at home.

An important aspect of Miller's legacy is that he served as an early role model for the fledgling coalition that grew into an ever-stronger Civil Rights movement. However, Miller did not have the chance to see this come to fruition. In June of 1943, he was promoted to Petty Officer and returned to the fleet as a cook aboard the escort carrier USS *Liscome*.

At 5:10 in the morning of November 24, 1943, at the Japanese submarine I-175 sent one perfectly aimed torpedo into the carrier's bomb storage area. The *Liscome* had just

arrived at the island of Tarawa and the magazine had its full complement of bombs and torpedoes. The ship erupted into a gigantic ball of orange flame. Pieces of twisted metal from the vessel rained down on Navy ships anchored nearly three miles away. The *Liscome* sunk some 23 minutes later taking Miller and 700 other Americans to their deaths. Miller's parents were informed of his loss on December 7, 1943, exactly two years to the day after his exploits. The Navy later sent his final medal, a Purple Heart, to his family.

Miller wasn't forgotten and has been honored many times over the years. He has had school and municipal buildings named after him, a US stamp bears his image and the Navy christened a ship in his honor in 1973. His role as an inspiration and icon for the early Civil Rights movement is just beginning to be fully recognized. This time the contributions of Black servicemen were not forgotten and a long and sometimes violent struggle for justice and equality continues to this day.

- Murphy

On a bitter cold afternoon of January 25, 1945, Lt. Audie Murphy's company had been ordered to hold a vital roadway. He led his soldiers and two M10 Tank Destroyers to a rise just above a small town. Around 2 PM the Germans in the town below his position began an attack with six tanks and some 250 troops. Murphy established contact with the artillery and rounds began to slam into the advancing enemy. He continued to redirect the fire to increase accuracy until he told them "It is on the nose."

The two tank destroyers turned out to be practically useless against the German Tiger tanks. Even direct hits bounced off their armor. One of the destroyers was hit by an enemy round and began to burn. The survivors jumped out and ran to the rear. The second tank destroyer maneuvered to gain a better firing position and slid sideways into a ditch that turned the weapon over so far that its guns could not be aimed at the enemy. Despite the accurate artillery fire the German assault continued and Murphy realized that his unit's position was untenable, and he ordered most of his men to retreat to a tree line in the rear. Their carbines would not have made much of an impact of the assault and he saw no reason to sacrifice them needlessly. He remained alone in the forward position to resist the overwhelming force.

Lt. Murphy jumped on top of the burning Tank Destroyer and began using its .50 caliber machine gun to suppress the German infantry. He knew that the German tanks would withdraw if he could kill enough of their infantry support. In addition to firing the .50 caliber machine gun, he continued calling in accurate rounds on the advancing columns. Yet another tank round hit the tank destroyer Murphy was on, sent hot metal shrapnel into his leg and knocked him to the ground. He remounted and resumed machine gun fire and communication with the artillery.

A squad of 12 German soldiers moved to flank his position and he swung his weapon and trained it lethally on the group. At one point the artillery commander asked him how

close the enemy was to his position and he yelled “Just hold the phone and I’ll let you talk to one of the bastards.” Murphy called in artillery so close to his position that rounds were hitting a mere 50 yards in front of the burning hulk of the destroyer. Miraculously, the German attack finally withered in the face of the combination of his machine gun fire and the artillery barrage.

Murphy slid off the tank still clutching his tattered and bloodied map marked with the coordinates he used to call in the artillery fire. He described his experience as “Existence has taken on the quality of a dream in which I am detached from all that is present.” He began shaking and had to lean against a tree to remain standing. American airplanes roared by just above him and joined the attack. His men were incredulous, they watched in shock at seeing what one described as “the greatest display of guts and courage I have ever seen.” One of his fellow officers said, “He saved our lives. If he hadn’t done what he did the Germans would have annihilated us.”

Lt. Audie Murphy was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions that day; the highest military decoration the country has to offer. This medal and others, including those awarded by allied governments made Lt. Murphy the most highly decorated soldier in American History. Murphy was far from a Hollywood hero from central casting. He wasn’t 6 foot 4 with square jaw and powerful build. Instead, when he enlisted, he stood 5 feet 5 inches tall and weighed just 112 pounds. He was a youthful 19 year-old who many thought appeared even younger than his years. Murphy was shy, very humble and had boyish good looks and charm.

Audie Murphy returned to America as one of its most celebrated national heroes. On June 10, 1945, he flew into San Antonio for what turned out to be a very long list of special celebrations in his honor. It was estimated that 300,000 people lined the route of the parade that they held in his honor. When he returned to his hometown 5,000 people showed up to greet him in a town whose population was only 2,200. That summer, Murphy was featured on the cover of Life Magazine; the most popular periodical in the country. His fame skyrocketed almost overnight. The American public could not get enough of its hero. He traveled the United States with great fanfare everywhere he went; the guest of honor at post war celebrations across the country. Whenever too much attention fell on him he deflected it. At the reception in his honor in Farmersville, Texas, several local politicians gave speeches and when it was Murphy’s turn he simply said “I know you people don’t want to stand in this hot sun any longer just to look at me but I want to thank you one and all, and I’d like to say that you can be proud of your husbands, brothers and sweethearts who did the fighting over there. They did a swell job.”

Murphy’s life up to that point had been one of near constant struggle and heartbreak. He was born in 1924 in rural Texas; the seventh of twelve children in a desperately poor share cropping family. Three of the children had already died by the time he was born. At the age of five he was put to work in the cotton fields. The family’s poverty made it impossible for him to attend school regularly and he dropped out of school when he was

13; at his mother's insistence, he briefly returned to school and he dropped out again when he was 15 years. He had only completed fifth grade by that point.

Audie's father was an alcoholic and regularly spent the night in jail after being arrested for intoxication. He had never held down a steady job and he periodically disappeared for days. He finally abandoned the family in 1940, leaving Audie's mother with the full responsibility for all the children. At first, she was able to hold the family together. Audie worked and contributed his earnings, and they received charity from her family and neighbors but eventually she faltered under the strain. In early 1941, she contracted an infection in the lining of her heart and was then afflicted with pneumonia. Audie's mother quickly faded and passed away on May 23, with Audie holding her hand. It was just a few days short of her 50th birthday.

At 16, Audie was effectively an orphan. His mother had always been his emotional anchor and some friends believed he never fully recovered from her death. Following his mother's instructions, he and his older sister were forced to put the youngest three children into an orphanage. Murphy barely scraped by. He moved in with neighbors who gave him food, lodging and a little money in return for work. His strong work ethic, aversion to alcohol and easy going, gentle personality made him popular and respected in his community. One of his employers said, "He is just a boy, but he works like a man and I am going to give him a man's wages." However, the odds in Depression era Texas were heavily stacked against Audie Murphy ever escaping the generational poverty into which he had been born.

Throughout his childhood Murphy had always been attracted to the military. He loved to listen to his uncles' talk about their experiences in WWI. He spent quite a bit of time hunting to supplement his diet and developed into a superb marksman. When the war came, he attempted to enlist in the Marines and was repeatedly turned down for being too small. Finally, in June of 1942, he was accepted into the Army after lying about his age.

Murphy joined the 3rd Infantry; the most decorated division in WWII. He participated in the invasions of Sicily, Italy and the opening of the Southern European front in France. Early on he showed skill, bravery and determination and over time he rose through the ranks from private to lieutenant. The fighting in Italy turned out to be a long, vicious slog. His life was one of danger, discomfort and death. He watched one close friend after another get cut down.

The lowest point of the war came when his best friend, Lattie Tipton was killed. Tipton and Murphy were assaulting a hilltop defended by rifle and machine gun nests. They advanced relentlessly, each providing covering fire as they moved up the hill shooting their weapons and throwing grenades. A German at the top of the hill waved a white flag and Tipton said he would approach. Murphy warned that it might be a trick and Tipton smiled and said, "You're getting to be a cynic." He stood up and a round from a sniper hit him squarely in the chest and he fell dead on top of Murphy. Completely filled

with rage Murphy began a furious one-man assault. He ran up the hill shooting as he went. He killed all the men in a machine gun emplacement, picked up the weapon and trained on the other Germans. Later he recalled "I remember the experience as I do a nightmare. A demon seems to have entered my body." The rest of the company moved up in the wake of his attack and Murphy went back down the hill to the body of his best friend. He pulled off his pack and placed it under Tipton's head like a pillow and collapsed beside his body weeping uncontrollably.

Although he was given a Distinguished Service Cross for his actions that day, he never accepted any accolades. He preferred to deflect any attention and deny that he was brave. He viewed his actions as guided by natural survival instincts that did not merit great honor. His entire life Murphy would relentlessly refocus the attention he received on those who had given their all and not returned home.

At the end of the war Murphy had been in combat for nearly two years. He had won numerous medals and suffered three combat wounds, one of which had turned into gangrene requiring him to have a 9-inch incision to remove the infected flesh. In addition, he had been hospitalized for malaria, exhaustion and recurring lung infections. Murphy exhibited unbelievable acts of heroism, but he was open about how terrified he was during the war. He described his experience of fear; "It strikes first in the stomach, coming like the disemboweling hand that is thrust into the carcass of a chicken. I feel now as though icy fingers have reached into my mid-parts and twisted the intestines into knots." He shared his fears with the men he led to help them cope; "Now there'll be times when you are scared to death. I'm always scared when we are at the front. Don't be ashamed of it. There'll be times when you want to cry. There's nothing wrong with that." Audie Murphy would later return to these themes and help the country better understand what we now call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

After the whirlwind of attention, honors and celebrations Audie Murphy was faced with what to do with the rest of his life. He had several offers of jobs back in his hometown and across Texas. A bank president offered to send him to any college he wished to attend. He could have remained in the Army or accepted a position as a police officer. Instead, his life took a totally unexpected turn. Just after the Life magazine article, James Cagney, one of the most famous actors in America, contacted Murphy with an offer to come out to Hollywood to consider a life in the movie business. He accepted the invitation and flew to California with 11 dollars in his pocket. Cagney found him near mental and physical exhaustion and knew he needed some time to rest before embarking on this new career, so he put him on contract for 150.00 dollars a week. Murphy had earned 15 dollars a week in his last job before joining the Army. His only responsibilities were to rest, regain his strength and begin acting lessons.

While the two eventually went separate ways, this was the start of Murphey's acting career. Over the next 25 years he would perform in more than 40 movies; one of which, his own life story, "To Hell and Back" was a blockbuster success. It was based on his autobiography which was on the best seller list for two months. Most of his movies

however were “B-Grade” low budget westerns and he was cast in essentially the same role over and over again but despite this the public voted him as one of their favorite actors year in and year out. He never enjoyed acting and he wasn’t blessed with native talent but saw it as a good way to make a living. He refused to participate in the Hollywood party scene. On set, he spent all his free time with the horse wranglers, stunt men and crew; ignoring the other stars. He said, “I’m not an actor. I don’t even like actors. By that I mean that I have nothing in common with them.” Friends later said that, looking back, Murphy wished he had become a stuntman instead of an actor.

During these years Murphy served as a voice for the veteran’s community. His story and unassailable courage allowed him to raise the issue of the treatment of veterans and their struggles with the effects of the carnage they both witnessed and inflicted. The nation began a more honest dialogue about the costs of sending its children to war. His testimony eased the stigma of cowardice that had accompanied the expression of fear and reduced the tremendous shame that some had felt. Murphy helped the country realize that it was a normal reaction to feel intense fear and it was not something that had to be hidden. At the start of the war Army doctors believed that one could carefully observe soldiers and detect character flaws that would later manifest in “cowardice.” Succumbing to combat fatigue was seen as a personal defect. Observations during the war changed their minds and they began to see that almost every person has a breaking point. Doctors estimated that the average soldier would suffer mental and physical collapse after 240 days in combat.

Murphy was speaking from his own deep distress. There was a dark side that always haunted him. His PTSD was never far and he suffered from the recurring nightmares that are so familiar to people who have endured violent trauma. Murphy’s early family life alone could have been expected to leave deep emotional scars. From 1940 to 1941 he saw his father abandon the family, his beloved mother pass away and he had to commit his younger siblings to an orphanage. Just a year later he enlisted in the Army and experienced three years of a brutal war that included seeing his very best friend ever killed in front of his eyes. His family scars when combined with his combat experiences caused him to struggle just to keep afloat.

Probably because of his disgust with his father he never drank but he became dependent on sleeping pills. Friends and family members described frightening episodes in which he would awaken in sweat with night terrors. He insisted on sleeping with a loaded pistol under his pillow every night and he occasionally pulled it on those nearby when he awoke in terror. Murphy’s first wife alleged that he pulled the weapon on her and then put it in his own mouth a few times. As he described it, he struggled to feel anything at all when he was awake. He missed the intensity of combat. His two marriages fell apart. Certainly not an unusual thing in Hollywood then or now but he was difficult to live with. He had numerous affairs and was addicted to risk taking of all kinds. He would leave Hollywood and volunteer to serve as an undercover drug officer or accompany police officers on raids.

Another manifestation of his PTSD was his compulsion to gamble—another form of risk taking. His addiction intensified over the years. He shot dice at 100 dollars a throw. Even poker became too slow for him and he would bet two to five thousand dollars per card. He made millions of dollars on his book and movies but ran through it at an astonishing rate. It really had nothing to do with the money. One of his friends said, “With Audie, gambling is a matter of living on the edge.” By the time he finished the movie “Ride a Crooked Trail,” in 1957, he had already lost the 50,000 dollars the studio paid him for the work.

He used some of his fortune to open a horse racing stable and his horses did very well and would have added to his potential fortune, but he gambled away his winnings and more. He once bet 200,000 dollars on a single race. He lost almost 300,000 dollars on an oil deal in Algeria. He owed 250,000 in back taxes to the IRS. Despite his incredible earnings he found himself bankrupt by 1968. He tried numerous avenues to regain his footing and was attempting to sell a movie idea to Frank McCarthy, the producer of the blockbuster movie “Patton.” They agree to meet to discuss the idea when Murphy returned from a trip to check out a potential investment.

Murphy chartered a plane to fly him from Atlanta to Virginia. The pilot lost his way in bad weather over the mountains and sometime shortly after 11:00 AM on May 28th, the plane slammed into a mountainside some 12 miles from Roanoke. The craft disintegrated on impact and everyone on board was instantly killed. Murphy’s body was found on Memorial Day 1971. All of the remains were badly mangled, and his body was identified by the long scar left from his surgery to remove the gangrene infection in 1944. In just one month, he would have celebrated his 46th birthday.

On June 7th, 1971, Audie Murphy was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Hundreds of mourners, including 40 members of his 3rd Division and many military dignitaries stood to honor him as his casket was lowered. While his story has faded from modern culture, to this day his gravesite remains the second most visited in Arlington Cemetery, exceeded only by the grave of President Kennedy.

- Nimitz

A boy from the middle of Texas grew up to be a Five-Star Admiral—the highest rank possible in the U. S. Navy. He led the U. S. Pacific fleet to victory in World War II and claimed a legacy as one of the greatest leaders the military has ever produced. His beginning was anything but hopeful. As a young boy Chester Nimitz grew up without a father. His own father passed away in August of 1885, just six months prior to Chester’s birth in Fredericksburg, Texas on February 24, 1885. The loss of a father from a family in what was barely past the time of the frontier in Texas could have easily been a sentence to a life of almost abject poverty. Nimitz was spared from this because he was fortunate to have a grandfather to rely on to help support the family. Nimitz and his

mother moved into his grandfather's hotel and earned their keep by helping his grandfather run the establishment.

Charles Henry Nimitz, Chester Nimitz's grandfather, had moved to Fredericksburg in the 1840's. At that time the town was at the edge of the frontier. Charles established a hotel in town and added to and improved the building over the years and was able to make a living in the small community. He eventually built a three-story hotel designed to look like a steamboat, which still sits on the site and is now a part of the National Museum of the Pacific War campus.

The future admiral grew up working in the hotel, attending school and hunting and fishing to supplement the family's food. Chester and his grandfather were close, and Charles loved to tell stories of his time in the German Navy before he immigrated to America. Chester Nimitz grew up desiring a life beyond rural Texas. His work in the hotel led him to meet all kinds of people traveling through and a group of young men from the United States Military Academy led him to aspire to become a soldier.

Nimitz sought an appointment to the Military Academy. Nimitz's grandfather had served in the Texas legislature and had political connections. However, the Congressman told him that he had already filled the two positions he could appoint, but that he still had one left to the Naval Academy that would go to the young man who scored the highest on the qualifying exam. Nimitz crammed for weeks and made the best score. That turn of events led to the career of one of the most famous admirals in American History.

Nimitz attended the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, from 1901 to 1905. He graduated 7th out of his class of 114. Early on he was recognized for his keen intelligence. Nimitz's career mirrored many of his colleagues with various assignments in ships such as minesweepers, destroyers and cruisers but his was almost ended on the night of July 7, 1908. Nimitz, a very inexperienced Ensign, had been given command of the destroyer Decatur and it ran aground. The next morning, the Decatur was pulled off the sandbar it had struck without any damage but allowing a ship under one's command to ground was a very serious mistake. Nimitz was court-martialed and found guilty of dereliction of duty. This could have easily been the end of any officer's chances, but the commander decided to issue just a letter of reprimand instead of ending his career. It was part of his personality already, but this incident probably strengthened Nimitz's commitment to teach the young officers under his command. Throughout his career he personally invested tremendous time, effort and patience training in junior officers. An outstanding example of his commitment to teaching junior officers under his command was documented in E. B. Potter's biography, "Nimitz." He had given command of the ship to an Ensign, the lowest ranking officer in the Navy, and instructed him to "Take the ship and bring her to anchor." Ensign Odale Waters brought the vessel in too fast and had to pour on reverse power to bring the ship to a stop. Before he could do so he had spun out nearly 200 feet of anchor chain. The Ensign was obviously rattled at such a performance with his captain standing right at his side but without raising his voice Nimitz said "Waters, you know what you did wrong, don't you?"

Waters replied, "Yes sir, I certainly do, I came in too fast." Nimitz's only reply was "That's fine." Significant mistakes in the United States military are not always handled with such calm, kindness and understanding. While he had very high expectations for those who served under his command, he achieved superb results throughout his career by demonstrating concern, care and a drive for excellence.

Nimitz was recognized for his sharp intellect, strong work ethic and his spirit of fair play and collaboration. Because of these outstanding qualities he was given numerous important assignments as his career developed. He commanded submarines which gave him an appreciation for the role they could serve in the modern Navy. Early on, he was sent to Germany to become one of the Navy's foremost experts on diesel engines. Upon his return an American engine manufacturer attempted to hire him away from service by offering him what amounted to 10 times his annual salary. He refused the offer because of his commitment to service.

Nimitz became an expert in at sea refueling and carrier battle group organization. These two skills became central to important to the Pacific Fleet during the World War II. Unlike too many admirals who failed to see the central role that the air craft carrier would serve, he had a keen appreciation for the role they would play.

His experiences and preparation had been noticed and when Japan suddenly attacked Pearl Harbor on Sunday, December 7, 1941, he was soon chosen for one of the most important jobs in the war effort. On December 16, the Secretary of the Navy, John Knox, informed Nimitz of his appointment as the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor. While the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor had been devastating and a shock to the country, it had failed to sink the carriers, which were at sea, and left the enormous fuel reserves untouched.

Nimitz inherited a demoralized command. The commanding naval officer at Pearl Harbor on December 7, Admiral Kimmel, had been relieved and was later investigated by Congress and found guilty of dereliction of duty. Kimmel's team of officers expected to be purged and their careers damaged, maybe permanently, as a part what they anticipated would be a gigantic "witch hunt" for all of the officers responsible for the lack of preparation for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Nimitz quickly sensed this pervasive feeling of impending doom and called the entire staff in for a meeting. They braced themselves but Nimitz informed them that he had complete faith in their professionalism, and he asked them all to remain in their positions but added that he would understand and assist any officer who wanted to find a combat command. He clearly communicated that "I value you and want you to stay but I will help you get the job you want." In one instant Nimitz's actions completely restored the morale of the Pacific Fleet headquarters and sent an electric jolt of energy into their work.

Nimitz's skill at infusing his subordinates with a sense of duty and energy and a relentless drive for excellence was just what his officer staff needed but the task now before him was to direct the efforts of some 2,000,000 servicemen under his command

who were spread over hundreds of thousands of square miles of the Pacific Ocean. The early days of the war were an unending series of military catastrophes. The allies lost Singapore and the Philippines, which saw the largest surrender of soldiers in the history of the United States. Japan seized French held Indochina, British held Malaya, and U. S. controlled Wake Island. Japan's military was extraordinary and well prepared for its onslaught. They appeared unstoppable. Japanese soldiers, sailors and airmen had been at war since 1931 when they invaded China as the first step in the expansion of their empire.

Meanwhile, the U. S. was woefully underprepared at the start of World War II. During the trying period of the first 12 to 18 months of the war Nimitz served as a critical anchor for the war effort. He was unflappable and radiated confidence as the U. S. lost territory, ships, tanks, cannons, airplanes and servicemen. His leadership style was a study in contrast from that of the other great commander in the Pacific, Five-Star General Douglas MacArthur. MacArthur was a towering figure with much greater recognition in the U. S. than Admiral Nimitz. MacArthur was a constant threat to resign and run for the Presidency himself. Nimitz kept a picture of MacArthur on his desk throughout the war. Those close to Nimitz believed he did that as a reminder to keep his own ego in check.

Even at this time of peril for the country, the intense rivalry between the Army and Navy made complete cooperation impossible. MacArthur made several power moves to take over complete control of all U. S. forces in the entire Pacific but was refused by President Roosevelt. MacArthur and Nimitz embraced two very different strategies for how to conduct the war. The Army and Navy plans for war emphasized their own service's capabilities and sought to subordinate all of the forces under the command of one leader (Nimitz or MacArthur). Instead of choosing one grand strategy, Roosevelt solved the problem by cutting the Pacific into two giant pieces and let each commander pursue his own strategy in his area of command. While cooperation was still required, this reduced the most potentially explosive of the inter-service frictions.

Nimitz's strategy was to keep the lines of communication open between the U. S. and Australia and hold on in the Pacific until America's phenomenal industrial potential could begin to make itself felt. The U. S. had embraced a "Europe First" strategy under which the Pacific theater would only get 20% of the resources. Several influential Japanese military leaders knew that America could ultimately bring its overwhelming might to bear and dwarf Japan's military output. The plan developed by Japanese military leaders counted on holding on in the Pacific until the U. S. despaired of the costs and casualties of regaining all of Japan's conquests. At this point the Japanese believed that the United States would seek a settlement that would still leave Japan with much of its a far-flung empire.

In the midst of what seemed like an almost uninterrupted series of military losses, a grand opportunity emerged. The American code breakers had put in untold hours of effort on trying to understand Japanese encryption. They believed they had achieved a breakthrough and that it showed that Japan's navy intended to attack the American

base on Midway Island. Admiral Nimitz signed off on an enormous gamble and ordered the fleet to ambush the Japanese armada. The plan worked astonishingly well. American forces hit four of Japan's remaining six carriers and sent them to the bottom of the Pacific. The US lost only one carrier. In one stroke the American navy had neutralized Japan's advantage and to a large extent the Japanese navy moved to a much more defensive strategy for the rest of the war. Nimitz had trusted his code breakers and ordered a risky and decisive action that gave America time for its productive capacity to weigh in.

Nimitz's planning team developed the strategy that became known as "Island Hopping or Leapfrogging" in which the American military would identify key islands and attack them while skipping over and isolating the Japanese garrisons along the route. This campaign was ultimately successful but the manner in which it was implemented was criticized for leading to too many casualties. On Guadalcanal the US lost almost 15,000; at Tarawa, 3000 more casualties; on Saipan, almost 14,000; on Peleliu another 13,000; on Iwo Jima 26,000 were killed or wounded and finally, on Okinawa it is estimated that Americans suffered at least 52,000 casualties. Nimitz employed American power in a relentless and systematic drive towards the Japanese homeland. By 1944, many of Japan's top military leaders knew that they were headed for near certain defeat.

That defeat was hastened on August 6th and 9th when the United States dropped two atomic weapons on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Even after these devastating attacks, the Japanese Imperial Council was split four to four on whether to surrender. Emperor Hirohito broke the deadlock to bring about the end of the war. He went on the radio, the first time his people had ever heard his voice, and told the Japanese public that the war was over and that they had lost.

On August 15, 1945, one of Nimitz's aides, Captain Layton, gave Nimitz the news that they had been waiting for. He handed the admiral notification of Japan's surrender. Layton recalled that "he didn't get jubilant or jump up and down like I saw some other officers do. He merely smiled in his own calm way...as if he'd known all along." Admiral Nimitz and General McArthur accepted the surrender of all Japanese forces aboard the USS Missouri on September 2, 1945. Under their leadership, the United States military forces in the Pacific had achieved the great goal for which they had worked so hard for so long.

Admiral Nimitz returned home to a grateful nation and he enjoyed dinners, celebrations and parades across the country. Still, he sought one last command. His ambition led him to seek the highest command position in the Navy; the Chief of Naval Operations. On November 30, 1945, President Truman appointed him to the position as his last command before retirement. It was the capstone of his extraordinary career. On December 21, 1947, Admiral Nimitz retired after 42 years of service. His retirement ended in March of 1947 when he accepted a position at the United Nations to supervise elections in Kashmir. This region was the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan and it was hoped that the Nimitz led effort might find a solution to avoid

bloodshed. His work never resulted in any long-lasting settlement of the issue as the area remains a flashpoint that periodically results in bloodshed between the two nations. In 1951 it was obvious that the two nations would not allow the U. N. to settle their dispute so Nimitz resigned his position but offered to return to supervise elections if the two countries could come to a resolution.

Nimitz served on various boards and in civic positions and devoted time to editing and advising authors who were writing books about World War II. In addition, he was called upon by presidents, congressman and naval leaders for his perspective and guidance. In the post-war period and to this day his fame in the popular imagination has been eclipsed by Admiral "Bull" Halsey and General Douglas McArthur. Nimitz was not a flamboyant leader and he never sought fame or recognition. When he came to the end of his life on February 20, 1966, he had planned a simple funeral and instead of being buried with honors in Arlington Cemetery, he was laid to rest in California. Nimitz had arranged with his wartime comrades to be buried together. Admirals Chester Nimitz, Raymond Spruance, Charles Lockwood and Kelly Turner and their wives are all buried side by side under simple gravestones at the Golden Gate National Cemetery.