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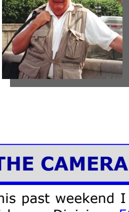

FRED HENSTRIDGE PHOTOGRAPHY

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THE APERTURE

Vol.3, No 8, September 2010

THE CAMERA AS A WEAPON

This past weekend I had the privilege of spending time with the reenactors of the Research and Preservation Society's 101st Airborne Division, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Camp Roberts, California. The weather was hot and the terrain rough, but as always these dedicated reenactors portray the actions of the WWII paratroopers with great accuracy and enthusiasm.

This battle event portrayed the D-Day drops of the 506th over the fields of Normandy in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944. To add authenticity to their reenactment the fellows were dressed in full paratrooper battle gear and taken out to the remote fields of Camp Roberts in the early morning hours on a moonless night and dropped at random from a large van simulating an 18 member stick of paratroopers. Their mission was to link up in the dark and begin attacking the German forces, played another group of reenactors.

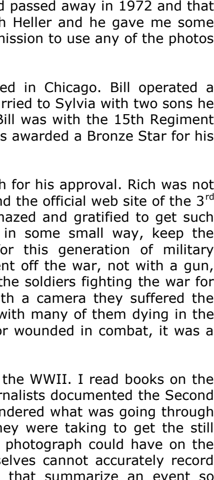
Reenactor in full paratrooper battle gear ready to board a simulated C-47. Note the Stick identification tag hanging around his neck.

The simulated drop went off flawlessly with no accidents, sprained ankles or other personal injuries. Safety was the number one concern of the squad leaders and event planners. By daylight the troopers were engaged in simulated firefights with their German adversaries. My role, along with my brother bob, was to photograph the entire event.

To the members of the RPS this is much more than playing soldiers and firing blanks from their M1 rifles, 30 cal carbines and browning 30 cal machine guns. Yes, this is the exciting and photogenic, but it is not the only reason these folks do this three or four times each year. They do to preserve our history by reenacting these WWII events and creating an authentic impression of the soldiers and nurses who fought for the freedom of the world. Yes, I said nurses, because there was a medical tent staffed by men and women reenacting the roles of the nurses, doctors and medics who supported our troops on the battlefield.

They take their impressions very seriously. These guys and gals spend a great deal of their treasure on the uniforms, weapons, web gear, blank ammunition, vehicles and other military gear to accurately portray these soldiers of WWII. They spend a great deal of time planning, dealing with logistics for the events and in organizing to keep the unit alive and well. They are truly dedicated to this mission. They also honor the veterans of WWI whenever they can. You can read my newsletter describing the October 2008 event when they brought five veterans from the 506th PIR to a D-Day reenactment by clicking here.

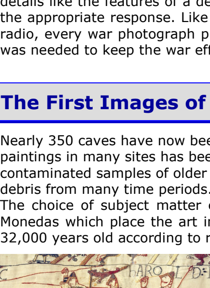
The members of this group come from all walks of life and the professions. There are police officers, U.S. Marshalls, FBI agents, truck drivers, retired professional football players, businessmen, retired judges, active duty serving military personnel and Vietnam veterans. They are Americans who want to keep our history alive.



Reenactor nurse representing the 10th Field Hospital Unit

History is a major part of the reenactment scene. At each battle event someone will give a presentation detailing some aspect of the history of the 101st Airborne. At this event Terry Poyser gave a presentation on the men of the 506th PIR,' 2nd Battalion, "F" Company who jumped that D-Day morning over Normandy. Many of the readers of this newsletter have seen the HBO series "Band of Brothers:, a miniseries that portrayed the men of the 506th PIR, 2nd Battalion "E" Company. There has been much publicity given "E" Company through the Spielberg series but little for "F" or the other companies that jumped on that morning.

Terry does a great deal of research including making trips to France to interview people who were alive and witnessed the events of D-Day. He also travels around the United States to interview surviving veterans and their families. During his presentation Terry was able to profile almost all of the members of "F" Company who jumped that night. One little known fact that Terry brought to light was that while the movies, like the Longest Day, and the HBO miniseries show the French village of Ste Mere Eglise being taken by the 82nd Airborne, it was the troopers of the 506th "F" Company that made the first landings in this first French village to liberated. As the taking and holding of Ste Mere Eglise was not the primary mission of the 506th they moved on after landing and advanced to secure the dikes over the flooded fields to provide safe passage for the 4th Division that had landed on Utah Beach.

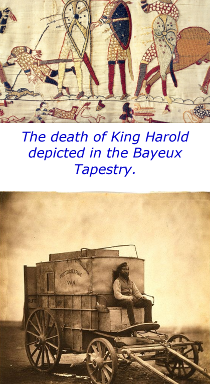


506th Paratrooper in the field. Note the Mohawk hair cut and war paint. This was typical of many of the troopers on D-Day

As a person interested in the role of the combat photographer during WWI and all wars past and present I gave a presentation on The Camera as a Weapon. It is this presentation I want to address for the remainder of this newsletter.

Before I get into a summary of my presentation I want to talk about the research and background for my presentation. About one year ago I was searching the Internet for information of combat photographers during WWII. I was looking for information about the U.S. army signal corps photographers rather than to well known civilian photojournalist like Robert Capa and Joe Rosenthal. I had plenty of information on these photographers, I wanted to profile a person who was drafted or enlisted into the army in WWII and trained to be a combat photographer. My search led me to a website entitled www.warfoto.com/ that displayed the work of Sgt. William (Pops) Heller of the 3rd Infantry Division's, Third Signal Company. Much to my chagrin I discovered that Bill Heller had passed away in 1972 and that his son, Rich, was maintaining the web site. I contacted Rich Heller and he gave me some information on his dad and was kind enough to grant me permission to use any of the photos or materials on the web site for my presentation.

Sgt. (T4) William "Pop" Heller (1910-1972): Born and raised in Chicago. Bill operated a portrait studio on the south side for more than forty years. Married to Sylvia with two sons he volunteered for service in WWII when he was 33 years old. Bill was with the 15th Regiment before joining the photo team on the Anzio beachhead. He was awarded a Bronze Star for his photography in France and Germany.



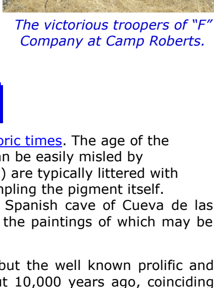
Marlene showing her loyalty to the 3rd Division-1945. Photo by Bill Heller of the 3rd Signal Corps.

After I had prepared my PowerPoint presentation I sent it Rich for his approval. Rich was not only pleased with my presentation he posted it his web site and the official web site of the 3rd Infantry Division (click here to view the site). I was both amazed and gratified to get such recognition for my work. I was also pleased that I could, in some small way, keep the memory of Bill Heller and his photographic team alive for this generation of military reenactors and historians. It was men like Bill Heller who went off the war, not with a gun, but armed with a camera so they document the activities of the soldiers fighting the war for those on the home front. Even though they were armed with a camera they suffered the same dangers as the fighting men they were photographing with many of them dying in the process. It is estimated that 75% of these men were killed or wounded in combat, it was a dangerous job.

I always had this fantasy of being a combat photographer in the WWII. I read books on the subject and was fascinated how these photographers and journalists documented the Second World War. As a devotee of the History Channel, I always wondered what was going through the minds of these combat photographers and what risks they were taking to get the still shots or film that was being aired. I knew the impact a still photograph could have on the public's perceptions of events. Photographs in and of themselves cannot accurately record history. Often, however, they become icons–single images that summarize an event so powerfully that they become lasting symbols of that experience.

Still photographs from the likes Robert Capa with his photo of the Spanish Militiaman being shot during the Spanish Civil War; Joe Rosenthal with his famous shot of the flag raising on Iwo Jima; and Eddie Adams' famous shot of the execution of a Viet Cong prisoner in Saigon had a major impact on casting public opinion during these conflicts. I thought I would have been great at this profession.

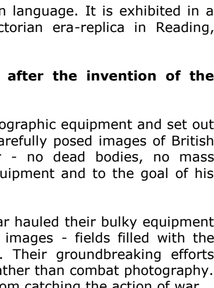
From Mathew Brady's haunting portraits of the Civil War to the same-day coverage of the men fighting in far off Afghanistan, the image of war stirs our emotions and opens our eyes.



Troopers of "F" Company gathering to make a push on the German positions at Camp Roberts.

Some of the most powerful scenes in the history of 20th Century warfare were photographed by World War II combat photographers. The combat photographers of the Second World War introduced us to a portfolio of horrors we'd never seen before—the detail of their work was far more graphic than in World War I—and gave modern war its familiar deadly face. "In their hands, the camera became a weapon more powerful than the rifle," said host Tom Hanks in the Steven Spielberg production of "The Shooting War," a 90-minute documentary that aired on ABC television on Pearl Harbor Day, 2000.

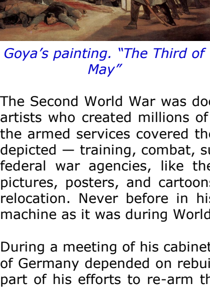
Photographs were one of the American public's most powerful sources of information about the progress of World War II from the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, until the surrender of Japan on August 15, 1945. Photojournalists and military combat photographers covered every campaign, and photographs from the front were published weekly in illustrated news magazines such as LIFE, LOOK and TIME reaching millions of homes. It was the United States government and not the magazines, however, that determined which pictures the public could see and what text could be printed about them. In the interest of maintaining public morale and promoting the national war effort, government censors reviewed all photographs relating to the war and decided whether and when a picture could be published. They retouched images to hide military secrets or potentially demoralizing details like the features of a dead GI, and rewrote captions to ensure that the picture evoked the appropriate response. Like the stories the public read in the newspapers or heard on the radio, every war photograph published had an impact on the people at home whose support was needed to keep the war effort going.



The victorious troopers of "F" Company at Camp Roberts.

The First Images of Combat

Nearly 350 caves have now been discovered in France and Spain that contain art from prehistoric times. The age of the paintings in many sites has been a contentious issue, since methods like radiocarbon dating can be easily misled by contaminated samples of older or newer material, and caves and rocky overhangs (parietal art) are typically littered with debris from many time periods. Recent advances make it possible to date the paintings by sampling the pigment itself. The choice of subject matter can also indicate date, as for instance in the reindeer at the Spanish cave of Cueva de las Monedas which place the art in the last Ice Age. The oldest known cave is that of Chauvet, the paintings of which may be 32,000 years old according to radiocarbon dating.



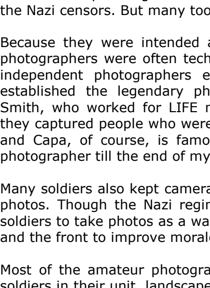
The death of King Harold depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry.

Other examples may date as late as the Early Bronze Age, but the well known prolific and sophisticated style from Lascaux and Altamira died out about 10,000 years ago, coinciding with the advent of the Neolithic period. Some caves continued to be painted in for a long time.

The Bayeux Tapestry (French: Tapisserie de Bayeux, Old English: Baius tæppel) is a 0.5 by 70 metres (1.6 by 230 ft) long embroidered cloth — not an actual tapestry — which depicts the events leading up to the Norman conquest of England as well as the events of the invasion itself. The Bayeux Tapestry is annotated in the Latin language. It is exhibited in a special museum in Bayeux, Normandy, France, with a Victorian era-replica in Reading, Berkshire, England.

The photographic documentation of war began soon after the invention of the camera.

In 1855, Englishman Roger Fenton packed a wagon with photographic equipment and set out to cover the Crimean War. Although precedent-setting, his carefully posed images of British camp life failed to capture the drama and horror of war - no dead bodies, no mass destruction. This was in part due to the handicaps of his equipment and to the goal of his royal patrons to portray the war in the best light possible.



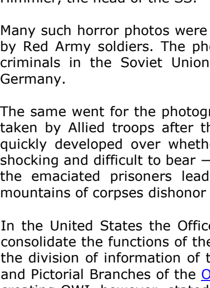
Roger Fenton's photographic wagon during the Crimean War—1855

A few years later, the photographers of the American Civil War hauled their bulky equipment onto the battlefield to capture war's grisly aftermath. Their images - fields filled with the bloating bodies of the dead — caused a public sensation. Their groundbreaking efforts however, can be more appropriately described as battlefield rather than combat photography. The technical limitations of their equipment prevented them from catching the action of war.

Armed with faster film, smaller cameras and no longer needing to haul a darkroom behind him, the World War I photographer could get closer to combat. The introduction of 35mm film increased the intimacy of the camera's eye, enabling the World War II photographer to become part of the action. Television changed perspectives again — the war in Vietnam literally entered the living rooms of millions of Americans each night. Today, with the introduction of satellite connections, our images of war are not only in our living room but they are instantaneous and live.

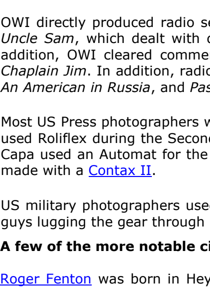
Some of the first images of war were seen in the paintings of the artists of the era. In many ways they were the first to use visual propaganda.

Eugène Delacroix's best known painting, Liberty Leading The People, is an unforgettable image of Parisians, having taken up arms, marching forward under the banner of the tricolor representing liberty, equality, and fraternity; Delacroix was inspired by contemporary events to invoke the romantic image of the spirit of liberty. The soldiers lying dead in the foreground offer poignant counterpoint to the symbolic female figure, who is illuminated triumphantly, as if in a spotlight.



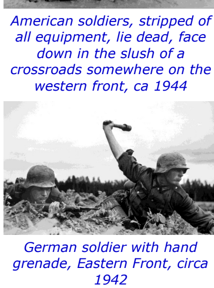
Delacroix's iconic painting of Liberty Leading the People. The painting hangs in the Louvre Museum, Paris

Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (30 March 1746 – 16 April 1828) was a Spanish painter and printmaker regarded both as the last of the Old Masters and as the first of the moderns. Goya was a court painter to the Spanish Crown and a chronicler of history. The subversive and subjective element in his art, as well as his bold handling of paint, provided a model for the work of later generations of artists, notably Manet and Picasso. One of Goya's most famous paintings depicting war and oppression is his "The Third of May 1808", which hangs in the Prado Museum in Madrid Spain. In his painting Goya portrays the execution of Spanish resistance fighters by the troops of Napoleon Bonaparte. His use of lighting, scale and object placement gives a powerful message of the brutality of Napoleon's troops. These paintings represent a few examples of how artist portrayed war and combat without ever being there. The paintings were done based on the artist's knowledge or from heresy testimony, sometimes many years after the actual event. The famous American iconic painting of George Washington Crossing the Delaware River was painted by German American artist Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze in 1851, many years after the event.



Goya's painting. "The Third of May"

The Second World War was documented on a huge scale by thousands of photographers and artists who created millions of pictures. American military photographers representing all of the armed services covered the battlefronts around the world. Every activity of the war was depicted — training, combat, support services, and much more. On the home front, the many federal war agencies, like the Office of War Information (OWI), produced and collected pictures, posters, and cartoons on such subjects as war production, rationing, and civilian relocation. Never before in history was photography such an integral part of the military machine as it was during World War II.



German soldier at Stalingrad

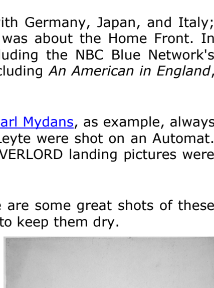
During a meeting of his cabinet in early 1933, Adolf Hitler told his government that the future of Germany depended on rebuilding the Wehrmacht, the country's once-powerful military. As part of his efforts to re-arm the military, he also ordered photographers to begin preparing for the real thing.

In 1938, a year before the invasion of Poland, the Wehrmacht began recruiting photographers for its propaganda campaigns. Most of the photographers ended up being volunteers who had approached the Nazis themselves in order to avoid the fate that might await normal soldiers on the front. As a propaganda tool, "the camera has become a weapon in the hands of soldiers," one wrote.

As the propaganda photographers, there were many taboos that they were not allowed to break. Photos of dead or wounded Germans, for example, were a complete no-no — after all; it would be unpalatable for the relatives back home in Germany. Photos of German soldiers or SS officers liquidating Jews or partisans also had no chance whatsoever of passing through the Nazi censors. But many took taboo photos, anyway, and kept them after the war.

American soldiers, stripped of all equipment, lie dead, face down in the slush of a crossroads somewhere on the western front, ca 1944

Because they were intended as propaganda photos, the snapshots taken by the German photographers were often technically superior to the raw and powerful photos taken by the independent photographers embedded with the Allied troops. Robert Capa, who later established the legendary photo agency Magnum, Margaret Bourke-White, and Eugene Smith, who worked for LIFE magazine delivered few pictures of radiant heroes — instead they captured people who were suffering from the war. They didn't try to aggrandize the war and Capa, of course, is famous for the quote: "I hope to remain unemployed as a war photographer till the end of my life."



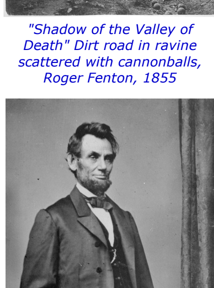
German soldier with hand grenade, Eastern Front, circa 1942

Many soldiers also kept cameras in their field packs and managed to snap explosive amateur photos. Though the Nazi regime conducted almost absolute surveillance, it encouraged its soldiers to take photos as a way of strengthening the connection between the soldiers' homes and the front to improve morale. The Nazis couldn't control all the photography, anyway.

Most of the amateur photographers chose innocuous subjects for their snapshots — other soldiers in their unit, landscapes, memorials and even people in the areas they occupied. The photos taken by these armed tourists often made it look like their work had all the severity of a school field trip.
Nevertheless, many of snap shooters felt a sort of magical draw to the horrors of the war of extermination in the Soviet Union. Many captured the mass shootings of Jews or the hanging of members of the resistance on film — pictures that were strictly forbidden by Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS.

Many such horror photos were taken out of the pockets of dead or captured German fighters by Red Army soldiers. The photos then became evidence in the trials against German war criminals in the Soviet Union and later in the legal processing of the Nazi criminals in Germany.

The same went for the photographic evidence of the Holocaust and especially for the photos taken by Allied troops after the liberation of the concentration camps. The argument that quickly developed over whether or not these photos — some of the 20th century's most shocking and difficult to bear — should be shown, has continued until today. Do the photos of the emaciated prisoners lead to a kind of emotional blunting? Do the pictures of the mountains of corpses dishonor the victims anew? Or do they serve the purpose of education?



German soldier with machine gun ammunition

In the United States the Office of War Information (OWI) was established by Executive Order 9182 on June 13, 1942, to consolidate the functions of the Office of Facts and Figures, OWI's direct predecessor; the Office of Government Reports, and the division of information of the Office for Emergency Management. The Foreign Intelligence Service, Outpost, Publication, and Pictorial Branches of the Office of the Coordinator of Information were also transferred to the OWI. (The Executive order creating OWI, however, stated that dissemination of information to the Latin American countries should be continued by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.) Elmer Davis, who was a CBS newsman, was named director of OWI.

Among its wide-ranging responsibilities, OWI sought to review and approve the design and content of government posters. OWI officials felt that the most urgent problem on the home front was the careless leaking of sensitive information that could be picked up by spies and saboteurs.

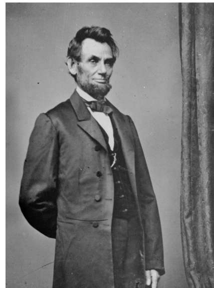
OWI directly produced radio series such as *This is Our Enemy* (spring 1942), which dealt with Germany, Japan, and Italy; *Uncle Sam*, which dealt with domestic themes; and *Hasten the Day* (August 1943), which was about the Home Front. In addition, OWI cleared commercial network scripts through its Domestic Radio Bureau, including the NBC Blue Network's *Chaplain Jim*. In addition, radio producer Norman Corwin produced several series for OWI, including *An American in England*, *An American in Russia*, and *Passport for Adams*, which starred actor Robert Young.

Most US Press photographers working with combat units used either Roliflex or 35mm gear: Carl Mydans, as example, always used Roliflex during the Second World War, and those shots of MacArthur wading ashore at Leyte were shot on an Automat. Capa used an Automat for the incoming shots as he approached Normandy and the actual OVERLORD landing pictures were made with a Contax II.

US military photographers used Speed Graphics for the most part, in 4" by 5" format. There are some great shots of these guys lugging the gear through New Guinea swamps, holding their cameras high as they could to keep them dry.

A few of the more notable civilian photojournalists who covered war and combat.

Roger Fenton was born in Heywood, England in 1819. He first started by studying painting with "historical painter Edward Lucy." Fenton went to the "Great Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851," this exhibition inspired him to start photographing. In 1855 he "went to the Crimean War," to take photographs of the troops and of the different events that were taking place, during this war. He was forced to stop taking photographs and instead went to take photographs of The Valley of Death, and because he thought that the photographs were not exciting enough he added different negatives to the photograph to make them look more interesting. He "may, therefore, have also been the first photographer to fake or falsify pictures." He died in 1869.



"Shadow of the Valley of Death" Dirt road in ravine scattered with cannonballs, Roger Fenton, 1855

In 1855 Fenton went to the Crimean War on assignment for the publisher Thomas Agnew to photograph the troops, with a photographic assistant Marcus Sparling and a servant and a large van of equipment. Despite high temperatures, breaking several ribs, and suffering from cholera, he managed to make over 350 usable large format negatives. An exhibition of 312 prints was soon on show in London. Sales were not as good as expected, possibly because the war had ended. According to Susan Sontag, in her work Regarding the Pain of Others (ISBN 0-374-24858-3) (2003), Fenton was sent to the Crimean War as the first official war photographer at the insistence of Prince Albert. The photographs produced were to be used to offset the general aversion of the British people to an unpopular war, and to counteract the antiwar reporting of The Times. The photographs were to be converted into woodblocks and published in the less critical Illustrated London News and published in book form and displayed in a gallery. Fenton avoided making pictures of dead, injured or mutilated soldiers.

Abraham Lincoln. Photo by Mathew Brady, ca 1863

Mathew Brady was born in Warren County, New York, to Irish immigrant parents, Andrew and Julia Brady. He moved to New York City at the age of 16. Beginning in 1841, Brady's artistic aptitude allowed him to study under the skilled daguerreotypist Samuel F. B. Morse. By 1844, he had his own photography studio in New York, and by 1845, Brady began to exhibit his portraits of famous Americans. He opened a studio in Washington, D.C. in 1849, where he met Juliette Handy, whom he married in 1851. Brady's early images were daguerreotypes, and he won many awards for his work; in the 1850s ambrotype photography became popular, which gave way to the albumen print, a paper photograph produced from large glass negatives most commonly used in the American Civil War photography. In 1850, Brady produced *The Gallery of Illustrious Americans*, a portrait collection of prominent contemporary figures.

His efforts to document the Civil War on a grand scale by bringing his photographic studio right onto the battlefields earned Brady his place in history. Despite the obvious dangers, financial risk, and discouragement of his friends, Brady is later quoted as saying "I had to go. A spirit in my feet said 'Go,' and I went." His first popular photographs of the conflict were at the First Battle of Bull Run, in which he got so close to the action that he only just avoided being captured.

Dead soldiers at Antietam battlefield, ca 1862. Click here to see current photos of Antietam Battlefield.

Robert Capa was born as Ernest Andrei Friedmann in 1913 in Budapest. He "covered five different wars: the Spanish civil war, the Japanese invasion of China, World War II across Europe, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the First Indochina War." He photographed these five wars because he always was there at the right time at the right moment. He worked for Collier's Weekly and also for Life Magazine. He founded Magnum Photos in 1947, with team work of some of his friends.

In 1936, he became known across the globe for a photo (known as the "Falling Soldier" photo) presumably taken in Cerro Muriano on the Cordoba Front of a Loyalist Militiaman who allegedly had just been shot and was in the act of falling to his death. There has been a long controversy about the authenticity of this photograph. A Spanish historian identified the dead soldier as Federico Borrell García, from Alcoi (Alicante). This identification has been disputed; in fact there is a second photograph showing another soldier falling exactly on the same spot. According to the Spanish newspaper El Periodico, the photo was taken near the town of Espejo, at 10 kilometres from Cerro Muriano, proving that the photo was staged [. In 2009, a Spanish professor published a book titled Shadows of Photography, in which he alleged that the photograph could not have been taken where, when or how Capa and his backers have alleged.

Robert Capa, ca 1944

His most famous work occurred on June 6, 1944 (D-Day) when he swam ashore with the second assault wave on Omaha Beach. He was armed with two Contax II cameras mounted with 50 mm lenses and several rolls of spare film. Capa took 106 pictures in the first couple of hours of the invasion. However, a staff member at Life in London made a mistake in the darkroom; he set the dryer too high and melted the emulsion in the negatives in three complete rolls and over half of a fourth roll. Only eleven frames in total were recovered. Capa never said a word to the London bureau chief about the loss of three and a half rolls of his D-Day landing film.

Although a fifteen-year-old lab assistant named Dennis Banks was responsible for the accident, another account, now largely accepted as untrue but which gained widespread currency, blamed Larry Burrows, who worked in the lab not as a technician but as a "tea-boy". Life magazine printed 10 of the frames in its June 19, 1944 issue with captions that described the footage as "slightly out of focus", explaining that Capa's hands were shaking in the excitement of the moment (something which he denied). Capa used this phrase as the title of his autobiographical account of the war, slightly out of focus. Capa died covering the French-Indochina War in 1954 when he stepped on a land mine.

Robert Capa in full paratrooper battle gear ready to make a jump, ca 1945

The famous picture of the Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima was taken by Joe Rosenthal. He actually captured the second flag-raising event of the day. A U.S. flag was first raised atop Suribachi soon after it was captured early in the morning (around 10:20) of February 23, 1945. 2nd Battalion Commander Chandler Johnson ordered Captain Dave E. Severance to send a platoon to go take the mountain. Severance, the commander of Easy Company (2nd Battalion, 28th Marines, 5th Marine Division), ordered First Lieutenant Harold G. Schrier to lead the patrol. Just before Schrier was to head up the mountain Commander Chandler Johnson handed him a flag saying, "if you get to the top put it up." Johnson's adjutant, second lieutenant Greeley Wells, had taken the 54 by 28 inches (140 by 71 cm) American flag from their transport ship, the USS Missoula (APA-211). The patrol reached the top without incident and the flag was raised, and photographed by Staff Sergeant Louis R. Lowery, a photographer with Leatherneck Magazine. Others present at this first flag raising included Corporal Charles W. Lindberg, Platoon Sergeant Ernest I. Thomas Jr., Sergeant Henry O. "Hank" Hansen, Private Gene Marshall (sometimes disputed as Raymond Jacobs), and Private First Class James Michels. This flag was too small, however, to be seen easily from the nearby landing beaches.

Iconic photo of flag raising on Iwo Jima, Joe Rosenthal, 1945

Rosenthal was repeatedly accused of staging the picture, or covering up the first flag raising. One New York Times book reviewer even went so far as to suggest revoking his Pulitzer Prize. For the decades that have followed, Rosenthal repeatedly and vociferously refuted claims that the flag raising was staged. "I don't think it is in me to do much more of this sort of thing... I don't know how to get across to anybody what 50 years of constant repetition means." Genaust's film also shows the claim that the flag-raising was staged to be erroneous.

The beach, Iwo Jima, Joe Rosenthal, 1945

Eddie Adams was born on June 12, 1933. Adams, as a photojournalist, covered 13 wars. While he was taking photographs of the Vietnam War he took his most famous photograph, a photograph of a General Nguyen Ngoc Loan executing Viet Cong prisoner. Because of this photograph Adams won a Pulitzer Price and a World Press Photo award." He "died on September 19, 2004 in New York City from complications of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis."

It was while covering the Vietnam War for the Associated Press that he took his best-known photograph – the picture of police chief General Nguyễn Ngọc Loan executing a Vietcong prisoner, Nguyễn Văn Lém, on a Saigon street, on February 1, 1968, during the opening stages of the Tet Offensive. Adams won the 1969 Pulitzer Prize for Spot News Photography and a World Press Photo award for the photograph (captioned 'General Nguyen Ngoc Loan executing a Viet Cong prisoner in Saigon'), but would later lament its notoriety.

Execution of the Viet Cong prisoner in Saigon, Eddie Adams, 1968

On Nguyen Ngoc Loan and his famous photograph, Adams wrote in Time: "The general killed the Viet Cong; I killed the general with my camera. Still photographs are the most powerful weapon in the world. People believe them; but photographs do lie, even without manipulation. They are only half-truths. ... What the photograph didn't say was, 'What would you do if you were the general at that time and place on that hot day, and you caught the so-called bad guy after he blew away one, two or three American people?" Adams later apologized in person to General Nguyen and his family for the irreparable damage it did to Loan's honor while he was alive. When Nguyen died, Adams praised him as a "hero" of a "just cause".

Adams once said, "I would have rather been known more for the series of photographs I shot of 48 Vietnamese refugees who managed to sail to Thailand in a 30-foot boat, only to be towed back to the open seas by Thai marines." The photographs, and accompanying reports, helped persuade then President Jimmy Carter to grant the nearly 200,000 Vietnamese boat people asylum. He won the Robert Capa Gold Medal from the Overseas Press Club in 1977 for these series of photographs in his photo essay, "The Boat of No Smiles" (Published by AP). Adams remarked, "It did some good and nobody got hurt."

Margaret Bourke-White was the first female war correspondent and the first woman to be allowed to work in combat zones during World War II. In 1941, she traveled to the Soviet Union just as Germany broke its pact of non-aggression. She was the only foreign photographer in Moscow when German forces invaded. Taking refuge in the U.S. Embassy, she then captured the ensuing firestorms on camera.

Margaret Bourke-White ready to embark on a B-17 mission over Germany, ca 1944

As the war progressed, she was attached to the U.S. Army Air Force in North Africa, then to the U.S. Army in Italy and later Germany. She repeatedly came under fire in Italy in areas of fierce fighting.

"The woman who had been torpedoed in the Mediterranean, strafed by the Luftwaffe, stranded on an Arctic island, bombarded in Moscow, and pulled out of the Chesapeake when her chopper crashed, was known to the LIFE staff as "*Maggie the Indestructible*."' This incident in the Mediterranean refers to the sinking of the England-Africa bound British troopship SS Strathallan which she recorded in an article "Women in Lifeboats", in LIFE, February 22, 1943.

In the spring of 1945, she traveled through a collapsing Germany with General George S. Patton. In this period, she arrived at Buchenwald, the notorious concentration camp. She is quoted as saying, "Using a camera was almost a relief. It interposed a slight barrier between myself and the horror in front of me." After the war, she produced a book entitled Dear Fatherland, Rest Quietly, a project that helped her come to grips with the brutality she had witnessed during and after the war.

Margaret Bourke-White's photo of Gandhi a few hours before he was assassinated.

"To many who got in the way of a Bourke-White photograph — and that included not just bureaucrats and functionaries but professional colleagues like assistants, reporters, and other photographers — she was regarded as imperious, calculating, and insensitive."

She had a knack for being at the right place at the right time: She interviewed and photographed Mohandas K. Gandhi just few hours before his assassination. Eisenstaedt, her friend and colleague, said one of her strengths was that there was no assignment and no picture that was unimportant to her. She also started the first photo lab at LIFE.

B-17 Waist gunner in action over Germany. Margaret Bourke-White, ca 1944

Steve McCurry, whose picture of a young Afghan girl captured the hearts of millions of people around the world as she peered hauntingly from the cover of National Geographic Magazine in 1985. This photo was viewed around the world and contributed greatly to Afghan relief efforts.

Seventeen years latter with the help of National Geographic Magazine and a Pakistani guide Steve located this girl in Tora Bora Afghanistan. Her name is Sharba Gula and she is married with four children.

The Afghan Girl, Steve McCurry-1985

From these examples you can see how the camera can be used as both a documentary tool and a weapon. Mathew Brady brought the terror of the Civil War to American homes. Robert Capa's photo of the Spanish loyalist at the moment of death generated support for the loyalist cause in the Spanish Civil War. In the case of Joe Rosenthal his iconic photo boosted the morale of a war weary America and generated the most successful bond drive of the war, just when the nation needed the money the most. Margaret Bourke-White's images showed the world the evils of NAZI Germany and Holocaust. Eddie Adams' photo of the execution of the Viet Cong prisoner was used by the Left and American anti war protestors to destroy America's moral high ground and reduce support for the Vietnam War. Every one of these images was just as powerful, and in some case more so, than any gun or bomb.

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