GENERAL WILLIAM HOOD SIMPSON:

UNSUNG COMMANDER OF US NINTH ARMY

by

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In late March 1945, Lieutenant General William H. Simpson focused the efforts of his US Ninth Army, now numbering more than 300,000 troops, on the impending crossing of the Rhine.[1] Ninth Army headquarters, smoothly managing the buildup for the crossing, was no longer the green organization that had become operational in France the previous August. As General Omar Bradley observed after the war, Ninth Army had been "ambitious and impressively eager to learn,"[2] and it had achieved success after success in battle on the Continent. Simpson and his now combat-seasoned senior staff officers had brought Ninth Army to maturity.

Simpson's skills as an army commander, though not highly publicized during the war, were recognized by many senior officers, including General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower. In *Crusade in Europe*, Eisenhower wrote that he was aware of no mistake the Ninth Army Commander had made. "He was," in General Eisenhower's fitting words, "the type of leader American soldiers deserve."[3]

Controlling an organization as diversified as a field army is difficult at any time, but under combat conditions the challenge is especially great. At Ninth Army headquarters, General Simpson set the tone, and under the close supervision of his Chief of Staff, Brigadier General James E. Moore, headquarters functions were conducted according to well-established Army principles. Many on the staff at army level and in subordinate units had attended the Command and General Staff School, and it was ensured that the lessons learned at Leavenworth were followed in practice.[4]

That this system worked has been attested to by Ninth Army soldiers of various ranks. Major General Robert C. Macon, whose 83d Infantry Division served in several armies, recalled after the war that he had had a problemless relationship with the Ninth Army staff, while a former sergeant recollected that once his division joined Ninth Army he received patrol instructions early enough to properly plan, an advantage he had not enjoyed when his division was in two other armies. Another veteran of service in several armies, Brigadier General John H. "Pee Wee" Collier of the 2d Armored Division, also remembered Ninth Army for its preeminently smooth operation. Of course, Simpson's subordinate commanders and his staff officers did not always see eye-to-eye, but when a disagreement did arise—as, for example, when the Army G-3 changed a corps boundary during the advance to the Rhine—Simpson and Moore saw to it that the problem was resolved in a professional manner.[5]

Ensuring that the efforts of this large army staff were unified and that subordinate units received proper support required careful coordination. Staff conferences were

held virtually every morning; at these, Simpson and his key officers were updated on the military situation, following which the Commander gave appropriate guidance. Often problems raised or actions discussed during the briefing would cause Simpson to adjust his plans for the day. General Simpson was easy to brief. Even-tempered and composed, he refrained from interrupting and allowed the briefer to complete his presentation before questions were asked.[6] Following the regular staff meeting, Simpson often met with his air commander and G-3 to discuss air support plans. When artillery ammunition was short, the artillery officer joined the group.[7]

General Simpson and other properly cleared officers also routinely received Ultra briefings in which decoded material from intercepted German messages was presented. Following analysis of such intelligence for the ground forces, a representative of the XXIX Tactical Air Command would discuss the air situation. After the first Ultra briefing, General Simpson talked to those present concerning the need for absolute secrecy. Reminders were issued occasionally, and there were no reportable security breaches.[8]

While formal briefings were important, informal discussions also contributed to the feeling of camaraderie and mutual understanding which marked the Ninth Army staff. Each evening at about 1800 hours, General Moore assembled his G-staff and his deputy for a half-hour informal look at what had happened during the day and what was on tap for the next. Routine actions, which would eventually reach Moore's desk through the papermill, were not discussed; rather, this early evening meeting was reserved for an airing of important decisions the staff officers had made during the day. Moore wanted to be fully involved, not only so that he could answer any questions that might arise, but so as to be able to respond to General Simpson's insistence on being kept up to date on key staff matters.[9]

Later, the senior staff members would join the Commanding General at the evening meal. On occasion, a unit commander in from the field would be a part of the group. The atmosphere was cordial, with the conversation serving not only to keep Simpson and Moore informed, but also helping to tie the staff together. Simpson's junior aide, Major John H. Harden, recalled that the informal atmosphere of these gatherings permitted the airing of matters that would ordinarily not come to an army commander's attention.[10]

After dinner, another officer would come in and update the group on the war situation. The army Commander would then telephone each of his corps commanders to see how things were going and to ask them how they felt about what was expected to take place the next day. It was generally his practice then to discuss the calls informally with a small group, usually the Chief of Staff, G-2, G-3, G-4, and sometimes the Deputy Chief of Staff. Later, to relax, General Simpson might watch a movie or talk with a visiting USO artist; then he would take a brisk walk, perhaps review the situation map maintained in his quarters, and retire for the night.[11]

The staff worked together to implement Simpson's directives, keep him informed, and handle routine duties. More was involved than office work, since the army staff officers, often headquartered far from the scene of combat, made frequent trips to units closer to the front as well as to higher and adjacent headquarters. While forward, they not only observed the situation, but also saw for themselves the

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problems faced by their counterparts in subordinate units. These visits were encouraged by the army Commander. Simpson believed that staff officers should center their attention on activities one and two echelons below. Thus, the focus of Ninth Army staff officers was on the corps and division level, though smaller units were often visited as well. Such visits allowed staff officers to resolve some problems on the spot and pass others along with vital information back to Ninth Army headquarters. Further, as General Simpson well realized, the mere presence of army staff officers in the forward area demonstrated to those assigned to subordinate headquarters that the army staff cared about them and their troubles.[12]

Planning was a major staff function, of course, and both Simpson and Moore stressed that regular military staff planning procedures be scrupulously followed. Simpson usually discussed each major mission, such as the attack to the Roer River or the crossing of the Rhine, with the army group commander before a directive was issued. When the mission arrived, Simpson would give only general guidance. The staff then set to work preparing an estimate of the situation. Heads of each staff section directed study of their appropriate areas, with the engineer making a terrain analysis, the G-3 preparing possible courses of action, the G-2 determining enemy capabilities to meet each course of action, the G-1 and G-4 calculating whether the plans could be supported with sufficient men and materiel, and special staff officers making comments when appropriate.[13] All but about three courses of action were normally discarded.

As had been taught at the Command and General Staff School, early in the planning sequence the staff took a careful look at the final terrain objective and at what operations would probably have to be conducted after its seizure. With the probable subsequent objective in mind, troop dispositions were envisioned and whenever possible plans were designed so that each operation would end with troops properly disposed for a rapid kickoff of the succeeding attack. Swift, deep, and decisive combat was habitually planned for and anticipated; provisions were always made to exploit success. As a means for Simpson to influence the action at critical battle junctures, a division was normally kept in army reserve. When the reserve was committed during an operation, it was reconstituted by withdrawing a tired division from the line.[14]

Viewed from the perspective of those close to the battle, Simpson's insistence on detailed preparations paid great dividends. "Pee Wee" Collier recalled that Simpson's operations were well known for their perfect timing.[15]

Simpson was a great believer in the necessity of adequate logistical support, and before he approved any plan he wanted to ensure that it could be supported. Consequently, the G-4's contribution was a key factor in all planning. When the staff work was completed, the finished product was briefed to the army Commander, who usually approved the staff recommendation.[16]

Key to the successful operation of this system was the relationship between the Commanding General and his Chief of Staff. Simpson and Moore had worked together in several units, and they understood, trusted, and admired each other. Moore usually could anticipate Simpson's reactions, while Simpson gave Moore a great deal of latitude. Often when Simpson was in the field, Moore would issue orders in the commander's name, then tell Simpson later. So closely did the two work together that in many instances it is impossible to sort out actions taken or ideas conceived. Moore was an intelligent, thorough, dedicated, and loyal staff officer; he well complemented General Simpson, a down-to-earth troop leader.[17]

Simpson was careful to enhance Moore's position by using the staff through the Chief. When the army Commander was in his office, he either passed his guidance and questions through the Chief or had Moore sit in on his discussions with staff officers. Both Simpson and Moore realized that just as there could be only one army commander, only one man should be in charge of the staff. Thus, even when Simpson was contacted by another general officer—for example, when Brigadier

General Sibert, Bradley's G-2, called concerning personnel changes in the Ninth Army G-2 section—Simpson referred him to Moore. The team of Simpson and Moore was extremely effective, earning the respect and praise of those with whom they worked.[18]

General Simpson had the knack for eliciting the best from his staff, and working for him was enjoyable in many ways. He let staff officers do their jobs, appreciated and praised good performance, and provided encouragement as necessary. When he spoke with staff officers, his understanding smile led them to feel that he was interested and was sincerely listening. Though even-tempered, and never a ranter or raver, he could make his displeasure plainly known when necessary. Armistead D. Mead, Simpson's wartime G-3, remarked that there was "an iron fist in the velvet glove." Mead recalled, for instance, a time when Simpson became enraged and pounded a table so hard that everything on it was flung into the air. This uncharacteristic demeanor was in response to one of his division commanders who had been offering excuses about why his unit was not advancing. Simpson's order to the division commander was unambiguous: "Get off your tail and get out there and command your troops. I want you on your objective before nightfall." Mead remarked that the officer "was running when he grabbed his helmet, moved out from his CP, and was on his objective that night."[19]

Much of Simpson's time was spent visiting subordinate units. He was concerned about the welfare of his troops, realizing that soldiers in the front lines would often not be aware of the work being done to solve the problems they faced. Without any theatrics, he moved about the army area asking questions. He listened closely to his soldiers when they talked about their problems, but he did not overreact. His standard reply was that he would look into the situation, and he *would* later do so. His aide made notes; when Simpson returned to his headquarters, he and his aide discussed their trip with the Chief of Staff. General Moore saw that staff action was initiated when necessary, but more often than not he was able to tell General Simpson of work that was already being done to resolve the various problems.

By moving in this deliberate manner, Simpson benefited from the broadest of perspectives. He could make decisions based on what he thought was best for the entire Ninth Army and at the same time ensure that staff efforts were focused where he and Moore thought they should be.

Mead later summed up Simpson's ability to deal with the staff:

> General Simpson's genius lay in his charismatic manner, his command presence, his ability to listen, his unfailing use of his staff to check things out before making decisions, and his way of making all hands feel that they were important to him and to the army . . . . I have never known a commander to make better use of his staff than General Simpson.[20]

Staff officers can make plans and see that war materiel is available when needed, but it is the combat elements which must ultimately close with and defeat the enemy. During heavy fighting Simpson felt that he needed to maintain a perspective of his entire front and be easily available by telephone or radio in case a critical decision had to be made. Thus, he believed he could do the most good by working through his corps and division commanders. He did understand the front-line situation, of course. Aside from his own front-line visits, his service in the Philippines in 1910-12, in Mexico in 1916 as a member of Pershing's Punitive Expedition against Pancho Villa, and as a divisional staff officer in World War I, when he won the Silver Star, had given him a feel for the situation of the infantrymen and tankers who were daily in face-to-face contact with the enemy. While assuring that the Ninth Army attained its objectives, he took great care to see that battles were won with a minimum of casualties. His guiding principle seemed to be: "Never send an infantryman where you can send an artillery shell."[21] Whenever Simpson visited the front, his presence had a noticeably positive effect. In fact, when it

seemed to Moore and Mead that an advance of a couple of miles was needed from a somewhat sluggish division, they would suggest that the "old man" drop in for a visit—and that method never seemed to fail.[22]

Simpson's corps commanders actually directed the tactical battle, and his relations with John B. Anderson (XVI Corps), Alvan C. Gillem Jr. (XIII Corps), and Raymond S. McLain (XIX Corps) were exemplary. General Simpson routinely solicited the views of each of his corps commanders, then gave due attention to their thoughts before final orders were written. When he was planning an operation, Simpson would explain his concept early, frequently orally, so that as much time as possible was available for discussion and corps-level planning. True to American preference, he told his subordinates what he wanted accomplished, then left it up to them to devise a way to attain the objective. During the corps planning process, small conferences between corps and army level officers would be held. Once all corps plans were prepared and submitted to Ninth Army Headquarters, Simpson convened a larger conference at which he and his corps commanders discussed and modified plans as necessary. By so intimately involving his subordinate commanders, he hoped that they would accept the plan as partly their own. His system worked. Brigadier General L. D. White, who commanded the 2d Armored Division, recalled: "When the orders were finally issued, each subordinate commander felt a compelling personal interest to effectively carry out his assignment."[23]

Much like a head football coach and his assistants work out a game plan, Simpson, his corps commanders, and sometimes his division commanders wargamed an upcoming operation so that they could anticipate contingencies and agree on what action should be taken in each case. Before troops were committed to battle, Simpson wanted mutual understanding, maximum preparation, and resolution of difficulties. In recalling Operation Grenade, during which Ninth Army crossed the Roer River and closed on the Rhine, Simpson described his method of operation: "I've often said that the way that fight developed and went on through until we reached the Rhine was very much like a series of successful football plays. These drives start way back and just keep going and pretty soon . . . touchdown. Everything went pretty smoothly and I think a large part of it was the result of my having three corps commanders in with my staff."[24]

Once combat began, Simpson kept a close watch on the situation. He made it a practice, however, not to interfere with a subordinate's conduct of the battle. Should an occasion arise which had not been foreseen in the planning sessions, Simpson was prepared to modify his plans or influence the action by using the resources he could summon. Corps commanders appreciated this flexibility and also Simpson's cool, calm manner of operation. When Simpson felt that things were not going as he wanted, he did not bypass a corps commander to give orders to a division or regimental commander, but worked through the senior commander.[25]

Reflecting after the war, Gillem expressed his recollection of how Simpson worked with his corps commanders:

> The relationship maintained between the Army commander and his corps commanders . . . was pleasant, very personal, understanding, and cooperative. I had a high regard for his professional ability, his integrity, his knowledge, and his general human qualities. . . . He was eminently fair . . . . I could not wish for a more desirable relationship, both personal and professional . . . . He reflected the highest ideals of service and always respected the advice [of] his corps commanders. . . . General Simpson represented the type of leadership which inspired subordinates and stimulated all ranks to work with him and for him.[26]

Simpson's treatment of his Ninth Army staff and his corps commanders was influenced by his study of the successful command styles of leaders of previous wars. As a cadet at West Point, Class of 1909, he had read of Napoleon's counsel to study the great commanders of the past. Accordingly,

Simpson had made it his practice to read military biographies.

Early in the war, for example, Simpson read Archibald Wavell's *Allenby: A Study in Greatness*. Reflecting on Allenby's performance during World War I, Simpson noted that the British General "didn't devil his staff to death. He laid down the general policy he wanted them to follow, gave them all instructions, and then let them go ahead and do it without sitting on top of them and trying to do it all himself, like lots of commanders do or have done."[27] Allenby had realized that it was impossible to achieve a maximum effort if the commander became immersed in minor details and tried to run everything himself. That Simpson learned these lessons well was evident in his dealings with his own staff.[28]

After Simpson took command of Ninth Army in 1944, he was given a copy of Douglas Southall Freeman's *Lee's Lieutenants*. The son of a Confederate veteran himself, Simpson was an instinctive admirer of Lee, and his admiration had grown through the years as he learned more about the Virginian. One of Lee's techniques particularly impressed Simpson, who observed: "After he got going and had a pretty good team of corps commanders, he gave them orders and it was up to them to perform the duties. He only intervened when it was necessary."[29]

Simpson's manner of command was also shaped by the lessons he had learned in nearly 35 years of commissioned service. When he was a staff officer in the 33d Infantry Division in World War I, for example, Simpson noted how General John J. Pershing, immediately prior to the Meuse-Argonne offensive, visited each assaulting division to ensure that the attack plan was understood. Simpson, as Ninth Army Commander, did not feel that he had to visit each division, but he took pains through conferences and telephone calls to be absolutely sure that his subordinate commanders had no doubt in their minds concerning the army plan and objectives.[30] Wise in the ways of soldiers and soldiering, he tried to build the confidence of his subordinate commanders and ensure that they knew that everything possible was being done to support them.

Simpson's experience also helped him deal with a delicate security problem. When one of his corps commanders confessed to Simpson that he had violated security regulations during a telephone conversation, the army Commander paused to recall a similar situation in World War I. At that time, despite a clear no-patrolling order, a patrol from Simpson's division was in fact dispatched from which, embarrassingly, some soldiers were captured. When Simpson's division commander reported the incident, his senior considered that the act of candid reporting was reprimand enough and took the incident no further. Over 15 years later, Simpson did likewise in the case of his own corps commander, telling the offender that the incident was closed. That corps commander went on to give distinguished service throughout the rest of the war.[31]

This sincere, caring demeanor was a key to Simpson's ability to maintain rapport and elicit maximum efforts from his subordinates. Should a staff officer stumble during a briefing, Simpson attempted, without cussing or raising his voice, to draw him out. When it became obvious that an officer could not handle the pressure and would have to go, Simpson was known to arrange for the man to be admitted to the hospital, then quietly shifted to a job he could handle. Such an approach was appreciated, for while it was no secret that the officer was moved, he was spared the indignity of a highly prejudicial relief in combat. In at least one case an individual so treated later recovered to the extent that, during another assignment, he was promoted to the rank of general officer.[32]

Simpson proved that a senior officer can be sympathetic and feeling while still being a winner. And Simpson looked the part of a general; he was a self-confident, lean, and fit Texan, with a warm smile, a shaven head, and always a sharp-looking regulation uniform.

Though Simpson was not always highly

visible and did not stand out as a personal spectacle in a theater where officers named Patton and Montgomery served, his quiet competence nonetheless became progressively more evident, as did the disciplined and orderly operation of the Ninth Army.[33] As a comparative late-comer to the ranks of high command in the European war, it took time for Simpson to win in the eyes of Bradley and Eisenhower the esteem enjoyed by the veteran commanders who had been in the thick of the fighting since Overlord. For example, when, just before the Battle of the Bulge, Bradley compiled for Eisenhower a list of officers who had contributed importantly to the war effort, he placed Simpson only 16th of the 32 mentioned.[34] But as the war progressed, Simpson rose to a far more imposing position.

In late August 1944, the Supreme Commander had told General Marshall that if Ninth Army was not committed soon, a corps commander experienced in handling large numbers of troops might be put in command in place of Simpson. Owing to the peculiarities of the prevailing system of promotions and billets, no provision had been made for the Ninth Army Commander to be a lieutenant general, so that Simpson held his three stars only tenuously. On 1 October, Eisenhower wrote the Army Chief of Staff recommending that Simpson be nominated to the Senate for confirmation in the grade of lieutenant general. If Marshall recommended Simpson, and if his recommendation was approved, the aberration would be corrected by an appropriate increase in the number of three-star billets.[35] In mid-January 1945, Marshall asked Eisenhower if he still felt that Simpson should be a lieutenant general. Eisenhower replied: "By all means . . . . He is excellent in every respect."[36]

On 27 January, Marshall, en route to the Yalta Conference, stopped at Marseilles to meet with Eisenhower. After that meeting Eisenhower prepared a memorandum in which he ranked 38 senior wartime general officers according to their contribution to the war effort. Simpson was listed 12th, preceded only by Bradley, Spaatz, Smith, Patton, Clark, Truscott, Doolittle, Gerow, Collins, Patch, and Hodges. In a column which called for outstanding characteristics or qualifications, Eisenhower wrote of Simpson: "Clear thinker, energetic, balanced."[37] Simpson was appointed lieutenant general on 6 February, and in early March Eisenhower wrote to Marshall that Simpson was one of only six officers whom he eventually planned to recommend for a fourth star.[38]

Thus, when Simpson moved on 10 March 1945 to München-Gladbach, the first Ninth Army headquarters site located on German soil, his superiors had come to a full realization of the net worth to the war effort of this unflashy but superbly competent officer. Nor was such recognition confined to Simpson's American comrades, for his value had become evident to Field Marshal Montgomery as well. Ninth Army was under Montgomery's operational command. On the same day that the army moved forward, Montgomery wrote to Simpson:

> I would like to tell you how very pleased I have been with everything the Ninth Army has done. The operations were planned and carried through with great skill and energy. It has fallen to my lot to be mixed up with a good deal of fighting since I took command of the Eighth Army before Alamein in 1942; and the experience I have gained enables me to judge pretty well the military calibre of Armies. I can truthfully say that the operations of the Ninth Army, since 23 Feb last, have been up to the best standards.[39]

Considering the letter's source, this was high praise indeed.

When Montgomery's letter was received, the Rhine still lay ahead and beyond it was the Elbe and Berlin. On 24 March, Simpson took his Ninth Army across the Rhine. Soon the dash into the heart of Germany began. By the time that General Eisenhower halted further advance, Simpson had his lead elements across the Elbe and was planning his move on Berlin.

Ninth Army had done its work well. William Hood Simpson's combat leadership, featuring a unique blend of strength and

humanity, would remain a model for those who aspire to higher command.[40]

NOTES

1. For more information about Simpson and his Ninth Army from arrival in England to the taking of the west bank of the Rhine, see Thomas R. Stone, "He Had the Guts to Say No: A Military Biography of General William H. Simpson" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 1974). A portion of this dissertation which deals with General Simpson's decision to postpone Operation Grenade has been published under the title, "1630 Comes Early on the Roer," in *Military Review*, 53 (October 1973), 3-21. The official US Army history series, *United States Army in World War II: The European Theater of Operations*, contains much material concerning Ninth Army. Particularly important are Martin Blumenson, *Breakout and Pursuit* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1961) for operations on the Brittany Peninsula; Charles B. MacDonald, *The Siegfried Line Campaign* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1963) for the movement into the line south of First Army, the shift to the north, and the November offensive; Hugh M. Cole, *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1965) for operations during the Bulge; and Charles B. MacDonald, *The Last Offensive* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1973) for the period from January 1945 to the reaching of the Rhine. Another valuable source is the committee-authored history, *Conquer, the Story of the Ninth Army, 1944-1945* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1947). *Conquer* is a comprehensive work and is, according to MacDonald, "one of the most objective of the unofficial histories" (*Last Offensive*, p. 136).

2. Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Henry Holt, 1951), p. 422.

3. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1948), p. 376.

4. Personal interviews with James E. Moore on 17 and 29 June 1971, with Armistead D. Mead on 9 June 1972, with Theodore W. Parker on 18 June 1971, and with Charles D. Y. Ostrom Jr. on 7 June 1972. Mead had been G-3 of Ninth Army; Parker, G-3 Operations Officer; and Ostrom, Ninth Army Ammunition Officer.

5. Telephone interview with Robert C. Macon on 22 February 1972; personal interviews with John H. Collier on 27 April 1972, with Bernard J. Leu Sr. on 23 March 1973, with William H. Simpson on 23 June 1972, and with Moore on 30 May 1972; letter received from John H. Harden, undated (approximately 14 February 1972); MacDonald, *The Last Offensive*, pp. 174-75. Macon had been Commanding General of the 83d Infantry Division; Collier, Commanding General, Combat Command A, 2d Armored Division; Leu, a sergeant in Company I, 291st Regiment, 75th Infantry Division; and Harden, one of Simpson's aides.

6. Personal interviews with Simpson on 23 June 1972, and with Rowland F. Kirks on 28 June 1971; letter received from Daniel H. Hundley, 14 February 1972. Kirks, as Chief of Combat Intelligence, G-2, had briefed Simpson almost daily. Hundley had been G-1 of the Ninth Army.

7. Mead interview, 9 June 1972.

8. Loftus E. Becker, "Use of Ultra by Ninth US Army," 27 May 1945, pp. 2-3, in *Reports by US Army Ultra Representatives with Army Field Commands in the European Theater of Operations* (n.p., n.d.) (copy in US Army Military History Institute [hereafter referred to as MHI], Carlisle Barracks, Pa.); Ronald Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), pp. 245-46.

9. Moore interviews, 29 June 1971 and 30 May 1972; Harden letter.

10. Harden letter; personal interview with Maurice J. D'Andrea, 2 July 1971. D'Andrea had been Simpson's physician.

11. Moore interviews, 29 June 1971 and 30 May 1972; Mead interview, 9 June 1972; Harden letter; letter received from George A. Millener, 4 February 1972. Millener had been Deputy Chief of Staff, Ninth Army.

12. Personal interviews with Charles P. Bixel on 28 June 1971, and with Harry D. McHugh on 16 February 1972; Hundley letter; letter received from William E. Shambora, 17 February 1972. Bixel had been G-2 of Ninth Army from 22 May 1944 to 22 February 1945; McHugh had held several positions in Ninth Army, including commander of an infantry regiment; Shambora had been Ninth Army surgeon.

13. Moore interview, 29 June 1971; Hundley letter.

14. Mead interviews, 24 June 1971 and 9 June 1972.

15. Collier interview, 27 April 1972.

16. Personal interviews with Moore on 29 June 1971, with Simpson on 27 January 1972, and with Parker on 18 June 1971; letter received from Simpson, 12 August 1970; letter received from Parker, 8 April 1973.

17. Personal interviews with Jacob L. Devers on 13 June 1971, and with Moore on 17 June 1971 and 30 May 1972; Millener letter. Devers, who commanded the 6th Army Group in Europe during World War II, was a West Point classmate and long-time friend of General Simpson.

18. Personal interviews with Moore on 17 June 1971, and with Bixel on 28 June 1971; "Resume of Telephone Conversation between General Simpson and General Sibert, Time: 271040 Feb 45," General Simpson's Personal Calendar [prepared by General Simpson's aides—Simpson did not keep a regular diary], vol. IV, William H. Simpson Papers, San Antonio, Tex.; telephone interview with William A. Harris on 23 June 1971; letter received from Isaac D. White, 23 February 1972. Harris had been a member of the 12th Army Group G-3 Section. White, who had been Commanding General of the 2d Armored Division, recalled that he had heard many war correspondents remark that Ninth Army Headquarters was the most professional of all army headquarters.

19. Mead interviews, 24 June 1971 and 9 June 1972.

20. Mead interview, 24 June 1971. Sources of comments on Simpson's visits to the field and relations with his staff are: personal interviews with Mead on 9 June 1972, with Moore on 17 June 1971 and 30 May 1972, with Kirks on 28 June 1971, with Perry L. Baldwin on 26 June 1971, and with John G. Murphy on 23 June 1971; Hundley letter; and John Toland, *The Last 100 Days* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 98. Baldwin had been Inspector General, Ninth Army. Murphy had been the Ninth Army Antiaircraft Officer.

21. Leu interview, 23 March 1973.

22. Personal interviews with Simpson on 27 January 1972, 16 February 1972, and 23 August 1977; with Moore on 17 June 1971 and 30 May 1972; and with Harold D. Kehm on 25 June 1971. Kehm became G-2 of Ninth Army on 3 March 1945.

23. White letter. Sources of comments on Simpson's relations with subordinate commanders are: personal interviews with Simpson on 16 February and 17 March 1972, and with Moore on 17 and 29 June 1971; Alvan C. Gillem Jr., letter to Louis Truman, 26 February 1954, Simpson Papers; Hundley letter; letter received from Richard W. Stephens, 25 March 1972. Gillem had been Commanding General of XIII Corps. Stephens had been Chief of Staff of the 30th Infantry Division.

24. Simpson interview, 16 February 1972.

25. Mead interview, 24 June 1971. Also, Gillem letter to Truman; letter received from Gillem, 8 June 1971; and personal interviews with Simpson on 17 March 1972, with Moore on 29 June 1971 and 30 May 1972, and with John B. Anderson on 23 June 1971. Anderson had commanded XVI Corps.

26. Letter received from Gillem, 8 June 1971. Anderson remembered his experience as XVI Corps Commander as "the most pleasant service during my career" (letter received from Anderson, 30 May 1971). Raymond S. McLain, Commander of XIX Corps, died before the research for this article was begun. In a letter to Simpson, McLain wrote "I consider it a great honor to have been a part of the great Ninth Army, and I will always remember the kindness with which I was received by you and your staff and will always be sensible of the confidence and faith you reposed in me as Corps Commander of your great army" (Raymond S. McLain, letter to William H. Simpson, 23 June 1950, Simpson Papers).

27. Simpson interview, 26 January 1972.

28. Simpson interviews, 22 April 1971 and 26 January 1972.

29. Simpson interview, 26 January 1972; "War Correspondent Frank Conniff's Interview with General Simpson for Press Release," filed with 27 February 1945 entry, Simpson's Personal Calendar, vol. IV, Simpson Papers.

30. Simpson interview, 5 January 1971.

31. Ibid.

32. Personal interviews with D'Andrea on 8 August 1971, with Mead on 9 June 1972, and with Parker on 18 June 1971; Harden letter.

33. Letter received from Robert H. York, 20 May 1972. York, a regimental commander in a division which had also been assigned to another army, remarked that though he never met Simpson, he could see Simpson's personality coming through.

34. "Memorandum For: General Eisenhower, SUBJECT: List of Officers Contributing to War Effort," 1 December 1945, Omar N. Bradley Papers, MHI. Bradley's memorandum read: "The following list is submitted in accordance with your recent letter in which you asked me to submit to you a list in order of priority of those officers whom I considered had contributed the maximum to the war effort. I have placed certain officers who have had great opportunity to contribute to the war effort below others who have had less opportunity, because, reading over your letter carefully, I felt that that was what you wanted; in other words, a Corps commander who had less opportunity than an Army commander and still contributed much more when his opportunity is considered." The names on the list were: 1. W. B. Smith; 2. Carl A. Spaatz; 3. C. H. Hodges; 4. Elwood R. Quesada; 5. L. K. Truscott Jr.; 6. George S. Patton Jr.; 7. J. Lawton Collins; 8. L. T. Gerow; 9. Mark W. Clark; 10. Harold R. Bull; 11. A. M. Gruenther; 12. W. B. Kean; 13. L. C. Allen; 14. Troy H. Middleton; 15. Alexander McC. Patch; 16. W. H. Simpson; 17. James H. Doolittle; 18. M. S. Eddy; 19. Wade H. Haislip; 20. Charles H. Corlett; 21. Jacob L. Devers; 22. Ira C. Eaker; 23. W. H. Walker; 24. Edward H. Brooks; 25. R. S. McLain; 26. Hoyt S. Vandenberg; 27. R. McG. Littlejohn; 28. John C. H. Lee; 29. C. R. Heubner; 30. Ernest N. Harmon; 31. Matthew B. Ridgway; 32. J. A. Van Fleet.

35. Letter received from Omar N. Bradley, 8 May 1971; Dwight D. Eisenhower, letters to George C. Marshall, 31 August and 1 October 1944, in *The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, ed. by Alfred D. Chandler (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1970), IV, nos. 1925 and 2016; Simpson interview, 26 January 1972; John D. Horn, "War Diary," entry of 28 January 1945, John D. Horn Papers, Darien, Conn. Horn had been Simpson's senior aide.

36. Dwight D. Eisenhower, letter to Marshall, 14 January 1945, *Papers of Eisenhower*, IV, no. 2238. Marshall's message of 12 January 1945 is mentioned in n. 1.

37. Memorandum dated 1 February 1945, *Papers of Eisenhower*, IV, no. 2271 and n. 1. Eisenhower's meeting with Marshall is mentioned in Eisenhower's letter to Marshall, 9 February 1945, *Papers of Eisenhower*, IV, no. 2276. In this message Eisenhower explained that he had prepared a list of "outstanding" general officers, and that the list was composed after he had reviewed similar lists submitted by Bradley and Smith. He offered to send a copy to Marshall. The names on the list were: 1. & 2. Bradley and Spaatz (equal); 3. Smith; 4. Patton; 5. Clark; 6. Truscott; 7. Doolittle; 8. Gerow; 9. Collins; 10. Patch; 11. Hodges; 12. Simpson; 13. Eaker; 14. Bull; 15. Cannon; 16. & 17. Ridgway and Brooks (equal); 18. Walker; 19. Lee; 20. Gruenther; 21. Vandenberg; 22. Haislip; 23. Quesada; 24. Devers (Eisenhower had not definitely made up his mind concerning where to place Devers); 25. Eddy; 26. Rooks; 27. Crawford; 28. Larkin; 29. Weyland; 30. Norstad; 31. L. Allen; 32. McLain; 33. Littlejohn; 34. Fred Anderson; 35., 36., & 37. Huebner, E. Harmon, and J. A. Van Fleet (equal); 38. Nugent.

38. Horn, "War Diary," entry of 28 January 1945; "Orders, SEC/WAR DIRECTS," 7 February 1945, Simpson 201 File, Simpson Papers; Eisenhower, letter to Marshall, 2 March 1945, *Papers of Eisenhower*, IV, no. 2307. The six officers Eisenhower planned to recommend for promotion were Bradley, Spaatz, Devers, Patton, Hodges, and Simpson.

39. B. L. Montgomery, letter to Simpson, 10 March 1945, Simpson Papers. Eisenhower's forwarding letter to The Adjutant General for inclusion in Simpson's official record contained the following paragraph: "The commendation from Field Marshal Montgomery has been fully earned. In the entire operations of the Ninth Army, Lt. General Simpson has performed in a superior manner. This includes the operations for crossing the Rhine, just initiated yesterday" ("Memorandum to: The Adjutant General, United States Army," 25 March 1945; Eisenhower Papers 1916-62, James A. Ulio folder, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kans.).

40. General Simpson died at the age of 92 at Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio on 15 August 1980. For a brief recapitulation of his life, see Wolfgang Saxon, "Gen. William Hood Simpson, 92: From Pancho Villa to World War II," *The New York Times*, 17 August 1980, p. 44.