

American Jews Serve in World War II

by Seymour "Sy" Brody

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the United States declared war on Japan and Germany, American Jewish men and women responded to their country's call for the armed forces. **Over 550,000 served in the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II. About 11,000 were killed and over 40,000 were wounded. There were two recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor, 157 received the Distinguished Service Medal and Crosses, which included Navy Crosses, and 1,600 were awarded the Silver Star. About 50,242 other decorations, citations and awards were given to Jewish heroes for a total of 52,000 decorations.**

Jews were 3.3 percent of the total American population but they were 4.23 percent of the Armed Forces. About 60 percent of all Jewish physicians in the United States under 45 years of age were in service uniforms.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt praised the fighting abilities and service of Jewish men and women. General Douglas MacArthur in one of his speeches said, "I am proud to join in saluting the memory of fallen American heroes of the Jewish faith." At the 50th National Memorial Service conducted by the Jewish War Veterans of the United States, General A. Vandergrift, Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps, said, "Americans of Jewish faith in the Marine Corps have served with distinction throughout the prosecution of this war. During the past year, many Jewish fighting men in our armed forces have given their lives in the cause of freedom. With profound sympathy and respect, I join you in paying homage to them at this memorial service."

The recognition of the bravery, dedication and sacrifice made by Jewish men and women in combat was expressed by the military leaders of the American Armed Forces. General Mark W. Clark, Commander, 5th Army Group, said, "Thousands of Americans of Jewish faith are serving under my command, carrying their share of the burden in the battle in Italy. Many of them have been killed in the service of their country. To American soldiers of Jewish faith go my most sincere thanks for their faithfulness, diligence and bravery in battle. To those who have passed on must go a nation's gratitude."

The role of Jews in the Navy was best expressed by Admiral Harold R. Stark, Commander, United States Navy in Europe: "The officers and men of the United States Naval Forces in Europe join to honor those gallant Americans of Jewish faith who, during the past year, have laid down their lives for their country ... We mourn them as brothers - brothers who cannot be with us to share this European triumph toward which they gave their lives."

The comments made extolling the sacrifices and bravery of Jewish men and women by the military leadership of the United States in World War II were based on their exploits in the field.

Jewish Heroes at Pearl Harbor

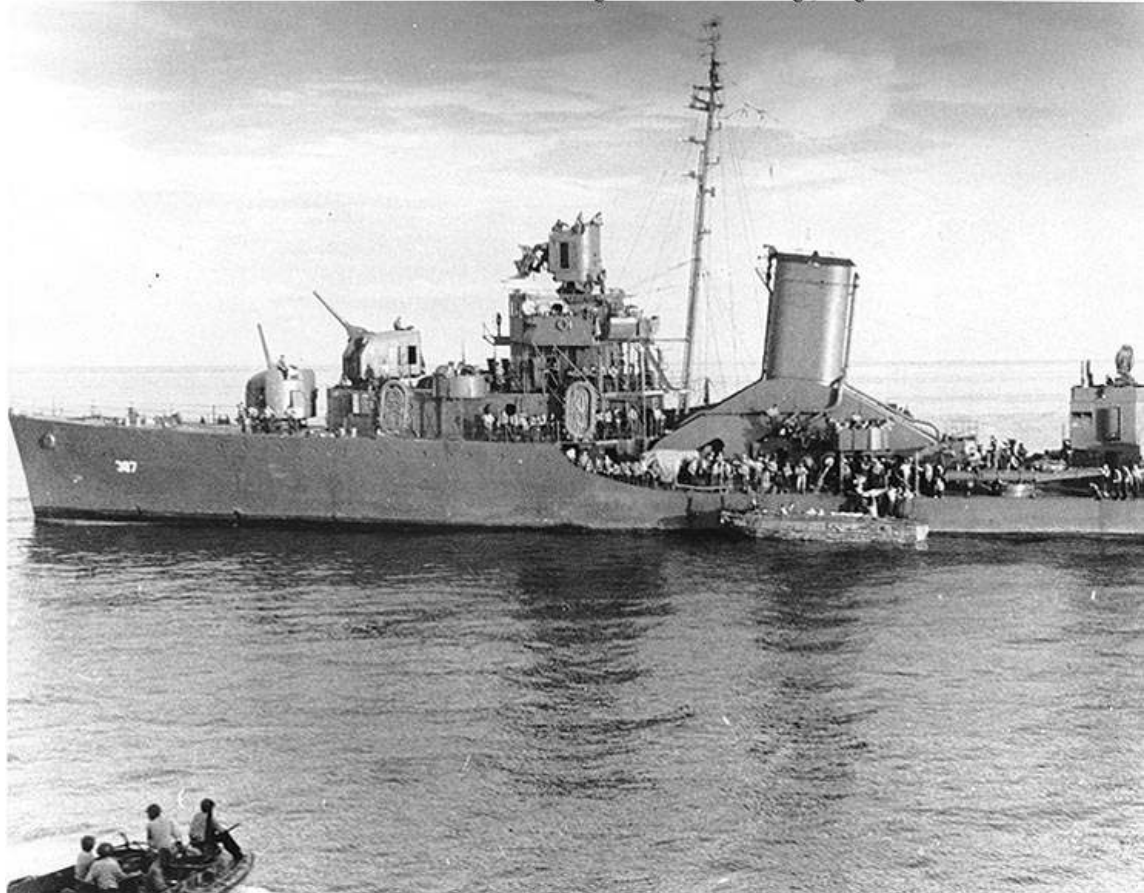
When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on that Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, Jewish fighting men stationed there quickly responded to the call to repulse the attack. **Ensigns Nathan Asher** and **Milton Moldane** were aboard the **U.S. S. BLUE**, a destroyer that was at sea protecting the shores of Pearl Harbor. That morning, the BLUE was docked for refueling. The skipper of the destroyer was on shore and Ensign Asher was in charge of the ship.

Ensign Moldane was a graduate of the Washington University Law School and a native of St. Louis. Ensign Asher was a graduate of the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Both men were having breakfast when they were informed that the Japanese had attacked the battleships anchored at Ford Island in Pearl Harbor and that they were to take the BLUE out to sea.

Asher directed the crew in heading the BLUE out. Moldane took charge of the forward machine guns and watched the ARIZONA, a battleship, take a direct hit and sink. He describes what he saw as the BLUE battled its way out to sea:

"I could see Japanese planes coming down about 30 or 40 feet over our heads, dropping bombs and shooting at anything that happened to come along. Our ship kept firing at the planes as it headed out to sea. I went out to the bridge to help Asher when we both saw a Japanese plane that the BLUE's guns had hit go into a pineapple field. The men gave out a cheer when they saw the plane burst into flames. It took the BLUE one hour and a half to reach the open seas."

Photo # NH 97799 USS Blue transferring casualties off Tulagi, August 1942



At **Hickam Field** young Private **Louis Schleifer, U.S. Army Air Corps**, of Newark, New Jersey, was on his way to breakfast when he heard the sounds of airplane motors. He looked out his window and saw Japanese planes dropping bombs on the field and strafing American planes. Schleifer grabbed his helmet and his .45-caliber revolver and dashed onto the field to help the other men move some of the planes into hangers. As he was moving the planes, he saw Japanese planes headed his way strafing the men and planes before them. He drew out his revolver and kept firing at the planes until he was mortally wounded. There is a memorial fountain for Private Louis Schleifer in the garden of Temple Beth Shalom, Livingston, New Jersey. Every year on December 7, the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association holds services at this fountain.



Lee Goldfarb, Jersey City, New Jersey, was a 3rd Class radioman on the **U.S.S. OGLALA**. He had just finished his watch at 7 a.m. and was preparing to get some sleep when he heard the sounds of aircraft motors. He looked out of his porthole and he saw Japanese planes attacking the seven battleships tied up at Ford Island, one ship after another getting hit with torpedoes. He went to his battle station to defend his ship against the enemy, when it was struck by a torpedo and sank.



There were many other Jewish fighting men at Pearl Harbor. Radio Mechanic 3rd Class **Rosenthal** gave his life aboard the **U.S. S. CALIFORNIA**. From Philadelphia, there were **Alex Sherman**, of the **U.S.S. NEW ORLEANS**, **Ben Lichtman**, of the **U.S.S. WEST VIRGINIA**, and **Irvin Greben**, at the Naval Air Station in Kaneohe Bay. From Overland Park, Kansas, **Stan Levitt** was aboard the **U.S.S. RIGEL**, and **Bernard Rubien**, of Rancho Mirage, California, was at **Hickam Field**.

Jewish fighting men served, fought and died at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked the United States. The heroism that these men displayed has been recorded in the military records of our country. We can be proud of them!

Photo # 80-G-10115 USS New Orleans in Hawaiian waters, 8 July 1942



Photo # 80-G-32456 USS California sinking at Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941



Three Jewish Heroes in the Pacific

Many Jewish men and women emerged as heroes during combat in World War II. At times they sacrificed their lives and at other times, they suffered serious wounds. Whether on land, or in the air or at sea, Jews were there fighting alongside their fellow Americans.

It was on the first day of the war that **Sergeant Meyer Levin** and his teammate, Captain Colin Kelly, gave America something to cheer about. They were flying off the coast of the **Philippines** when they spotted the Japanese battleship HARUNA. Captain Kelly flew his bomber over the **HARUNA**. At that moment, Levin, who was the bombardier, launched his bombs scoring a direct hit to sink the HARUNA. They were recognized for their bravery in America and songs were written about them.

In the Battle of the **Coral Sea, in the Pacific**, Levin launched the bombs that destroyed a large transport filled with enemy troops. In January 1943, Levin had flown more than 60 missions. It was on the way back to his base from a mission that Levin once again became a hero in an incident which cost him his life.

His plane found itself in a severe thunderstorm and the fuel tank was reading empty. The pilot tried to gain altitude but couldn't and he landed the plane on the rough seas. Levin climbed out of his bomb bay and started to unhook the life rafts for the men to use. The plane was struck by a large wave which broke the plane in two, trapping Levin. The crew in their rafts watched in horror as they saw the plane go down with Levin in it.

Sergeant Meyer Levin was only 25 when he was killed. In the few years that he served, **he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Silver Star and Oak Leaf Cluster, the Purple Heart and the Certificate of Merit.**



Fighting on land in the Pacific was a Marine named **Barney Ross** (Beryl David Rosofsky - "The Pride of the Ghetto" <http://www.cyberboxingzone.com/boxing/ross-b.htm>), who was a **world champion in three classes of professional boxing** - light-weight, junior-welterweight, and welterweight. When Pearl Harbor was attacked, he was an old man in boxing - 33 years. He appeared at a Marine recruiting station to enlist. While his fighting days were over, they weren't over in fighting his country's enemies.



It was on **Guadalcanal, in the Pacific**, on November 20, 1942, that Barney Ross was on a patrol when he and his attachment ran into an advance party of Japanese. A hard fought skirmish began with close quarter combat. The Japanese had wounded most of his patrol. After tending to the wounded, Barney Ross began attacking the enemy by himself. The fighting lasted until the morning when help arrived. He had used up his ammunition and had to use what was left by the wounded. He received **the Silver Star for his bravery**.

Sergeant Theodore Billen was a gunner on a bomber. He was in the Pacific and flew over **250 missions** under enemy fire. He helped evacuate men and equipment from Northern Australia and Java. His plane was in combat over **Rabaul** where he was credited with shooting down two Zeroes.



Sergeant Billen was in many combat missions. He received the **Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, two squadron citations and a third citation signed by Generals MacArthur and Kenney**. He was one of the many Jews to be recognized in the Pacific for their bravery, in combat.

Two Jewish Medal of Honor Winners in World War II

Isadore S. Jachman and his parents came to this country from Berlin when he was two years old. They settled in Baltimore, where he graduated from Baltimore City College. After Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the Army.

Sergeant Jachman was a **paratrooper** who saved his company from annihilation at **Flamierge, Belgium**. There was a fierce and bitterly fought engagement there on January 4, 1945. Jachman, without regard for his own safety, pushed through the enemy's wall of concentrated fire and single-handedly saved the day.



He received the **Congressional Medal of Honor** posthumously. The citation reads as follows:

“Sergeant **Jachman, Company B, 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment**, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty at Flamierge, Belgium, on the fourth day of January 1945. When his company was pinned down by enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire, two hostile tanks attacked the unit inflicting heavy casualties. Sergeant Jachman, seeing the desperate plight of his comrades, left his place of cover, with total disregard for his own safety, dashed across open ground, through a hail of fire and seizing a bazooka from a fallen comrade, advanced on the tanks, which concentrated their fire on him. Firing the weapon alone, he damaged one and forced both to retire, Sergeant Jachman's heroic action, in which he suffered fatal wounds disrupted the entire enemy attack, reflecting the highest credit upon himself and the Parachute Infantry”.

Second Lieutenant Raymond Zussman was the other **Congressional Medal of Honor** recipient in World War II. He was raised in Detroit and he entered the Army when he was 23 years old. He was killed in **France**, several days after the engagement that won him the Congressional Medal of Honor. He was 26 years old.



Zussman was a tank officer and it was in a street-fighting battle at [the village of Noroy-le-Bourg, in the Rhone Valley](#), that he displayed his heroism. He was the officer in charge of a tank which became disabled in the field. He took a carbine and on foot proceeded in front of another tank to guide it through the village streets. With his own weapon, while directing the tank's fire as they went through the streets, he killed 19 enemy soldiers, took 93 prisoners and captured two anti-tank guns, a flak gun, two machine guns and two trucks.

Zussman guided the tank through booby traps that were setup by the Germans and directed its fire to destroy the enemy machine gun positions. When his carbine ran out of ammunition, he picked up a Tommy gun to use. Fearing a trap at one intersection, Zussman went in alone to seek out the enemy. When the tank came around the corner of the intersection, he had 30 prisoners and two anti-tank guns that they were using.

Jachman and Zussman, noncommissioned officer and officer, exemplified the bravery and courage of Jewish fighting men in World War II. Their stories of valor are the answer to those who would question the fighting ability and courage of Jews serving in the armed forces of America.

[Capt. Ben L. Salomon: Jewish Medal of Honor Recipient in World War II](#)

Captain Ben L. Salomon was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously, 58 years after he sacrificed himself to save wounded troops in [the Battle of Saipan](#) in World War II.



He was a dentist on the medical staff of the 107th Infantry Division when the Japanese launched a major offensive in his area. They sent thousands of Japanese soldiers in an overwhelming attack which killed or wounded the medical doctors in charge. Captain Ben Solomon was the only one able to take command of his first aid area.

Captain Salomon was in a tent with wounded soldiers when the Japanese began to appear. He ordered the enlisted medics to evacuate the wounded to the rear area. He stayed behind to provide cover and hold back the enemy.

He took a rifle and went to the front of the tent when he saw a machine gun with two of our soldiers lifeless and slumped over it. He took over the machine gun and started firing. In the morning, they found him dead on top of the machine gun with his hand on the trigger. In front of him they found 98 dead Japanese soldiers.

One of the reasons that delayed the awarding the Medal of Honor to Captain Ben Salomon, was the mistaken concept that medical personnel couldn't receive the Medal of Honor for bravery in combat. They overlooked the fact that you can't receive it if you are on the offensive. You can receive it if you are on the defensive as was Capt. Salomon.

Captain Salomon was a 1937 graduate of the School of Dentistry, University Of Southern California, Los Angeles, California. Dr. John Ingle, formerly Dean of the School of Dentistry was present on May 2, 2002, at ceremonies in Washington, DC, when the award was officially given. His Medal of Honor is on display in the School of Dentistry.

Dr. Ingle had interviewed his father, who told him that Ben was Jewish and so, was his deceased mother and himself.

Rabbi Alexander Goode: Chaplain/Hero of World War II

On February 3, 1943, the [S.S. DORCHESTER](#), carrying 900 American servicemen headed for combat, was working its way through the icy churning waters off [Greenland](#) when it was [struck by a U-boat torpedo](#). It was forced to leave the convoy and it didn't take long before a second torpedo scored a direct hit killing 100 men in the hull of the ship.



Throughout the ship there was confusion, terror and chaos as men scrambled about to get their life jackets and in many cases to get dressed. Trying to calm the men were four chaplains: Rabbi Alexander D. Goode; John P. Washington, a Roman Catholic priest; George L. Fox, a Methodist minister; and Clark P. Poling, a minister of the Reformed Church of America.

The extra life jackets were handed out but there were still many servicemen without them. Standing in front of the four chaplains were four men without life jackets. They were cold and afraid. The four chaplains took off their jackets and gave them to these men. The ship was quickly sliding into the sea. Many lifeboats were filled with men in the water and others were being launched. The four chaplains went about the deck helping the men get into lifeboats and comforting those that were terrified. Finally, all the lifeboats were on the waters filled with the remaining troops.

The last sight that these survivors saw of the DORCHESTER was the four chaplains clinging to each other on the slanting deck as it slowly went into the sea. Their arms were linked together with their heads bowed as they prayed to their God: "Shma Yisroel Adonai Elohenu Adonai Echod ... Our Father...which art in heaven ... Hallowed be Thy name ... Thy kingdom come ... Thy will be done."

Benjamin Epstein, a survivor of New York, recalls that fateful night. He personally knew each of the chaplains and he will never forget watching them go down with the ship. Of the 900 men aboard, only 229 were saved.

Rabbi Goode was the son of a rabbi in Washington, D.C. He won many medals for tennis, swimming and track while going through Eastern High School in Washington D.C. While he was studying to be a rabbi, he was an active participant in the National Guard. Goode married a high school classmate and they had one daughter. When he got his first synagogue, he traveled to Johns Hopkins University, 45 miles away, to earn a Doctorate in Oriental languages.

On February 13, 1951, President Harry S. Truman dedicated the Chapel of the Four Chaplains on the corner of Broad and Berks streets in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This inter-faith chapel is a memorial, for these four chaplains who gave their lives to save others. There are three altars: Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant. Above the entrance burns an eternal light which calls all men to the unity these four chaplains heroically demonstrated. The Chapel of the Four Chaplains has been relocated to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

Rabbi Goode was one of 309 rabbis to be commissioned in World War II. He was one of many to give his life.

Herbert P. Grossman: A World War II Hero of Leyte

Herbert P. Grossman was awarded the Silver Star By President Harry Truman, in 1945, for his heroism and complete disregard for his own life in fighting the enemy on **Leyte, Philippine Islands**, in World War II.



He is the son of the late Rose and Max Grossman and was born on June 10, 1917, in Plains, Pennsylvania. He was inducted into the Army on March 19, 1942, with his older brother, Abner. After his basic training, he was sent to the Pacific where he joined [the Statue of Liberty Company, 307th Infantry, 77th Division](#).

In 1944, Grossman was a first scout and his unit and the Third Marine Division were in the initial invasion of Guam. After the island was secured his outfit was shipped to the Philippine Islands, where they encountered the enemy.

As they fought the Japanese, he and thirty other men were separated from their unit. Grossman realized that the machine gun men had to be protected. In defending these men, he bayoneted five attacking Japanese soldiers.

Once this area was cleared of the enemy, Grossman's outfit was sent to [Ie Shima, an island near Okinawa](#). It was here that Grossman and a Japanese sniper fired upon each other. As Grossman shot the sniper, the sniper's bullet shot off the ring finger on Grossman's left hand.

[Grossman received the Silver Star Medal and Purple Heart. He has the Asiatic-Pacific Theater of Operations Ribbon with three bronze battle stars, Philippine Liberation Service Ribbon, Bronze Arrowhead and Good Conduct Ribbon.](#)

He was an Acting Sergeant when he was discharged on October 27, 1945. His citation for the Silver Star Medal was by the direction of the President of the United States:

["Private First Class Herbert P. Grossman \(Army serial number 23175861\), Infantry, United States Army. For gallantry in action at Leyte, Philippine Islands, on December 20, 1944. As a heavy machine gun section was moving into a new firing position, it was subjected to intense enemy fire and was badly in need of fire protection. On his own initiative, Private Grossman rushed to the aid of the machine gun section and killed five of the assaulting Japanese, one of whom was in the act of hurling a grenade into the section. Later, while the gun was being moved a few yards to the right front, withering fire was encountered. With complete disregard for his life, Private Grossman charged the enemy position, shot one enemy soldier, bayoneted another and neutralized the enemy strong point. His display of courage and leadership were an inspiration to all who witnessed it."](#)

Herbert P. Grossman died on July 22, 2006, and he will always be remembered for his bravery and service in defending our country.



Lieutenant Frances Slanger: Jewish Nurse Killed In World War II

On the morning of October 21, 1944, **Lieutenant Frances Slanger of the U.S. Army Nurses Corps** mailed a letter to STARS AND STRIPES telling the GIs how proud she was of them. That evening her unit was the target of a German artillery barrage when one of their shells burst near her. She and three other nurses were hit by shell fragments. While she lay there dying, she never uttered a word of complaint. She was concerned about the other nurses who were hit and she was worried about the grief her death would bring to her family back in Boston. That evening, she died. Her letter was published on November 7, 1944.

Slanger was raised in Roxbury, Massachusetts. She was commissioned a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Nurses Corps and was stationed in the U.S. field hospital.

She was short and a brunette and **she was one of the first nurses to land in France, wading ashore with the hospital platoon**. She had to hold on to the belts of the soldiers to keep from being swept off her feet in the waves. Once she landed, she started to take care of the wounded and sick soldiers who were sent to the back lines for medical treatment.

It was while taking care of the wounded that Slanger began to appreciate the sacrifices that these men were making. She felt that she had to express this feeling and she decided to write her letter to STARS AND STRIPES, the newspaper for the GIs:

I'm writing this by flashlight. The GIs say we rough it, but we in our little tent can't see it. We wade ankle deep in mud. You have to lie in it. We are restricted to our immediate area, a cow pasture or a hay field, but then who is not restricted? We have a stove and coal. We even have a laundry line in the tent. Our GI drawers are at this moment doing the dance of the pants, what with the wind howling, the tent waving precariously, the rain beating down, the guns firing... Sure we rough it. But you, the men behind the guns, driving our tanks, flying our planes, sailing our ships, building our bridges and the men who pave the way and the men who were left behind - it is to you we doff our helmets. To every GI wearing the American uniform, for you we have the greatest admiration and respect.

Slanger was buried in a military cemetery in France. Her grave was flanked by the fighting men that she admired and respected. Over her grave was the Star of David telling the world that here lies a Jewish heroine who died fighting for her country. Years later, her remains were moved to a Jewish cemetery in the Boston area. Jewish women veterans of World War II formed an all women chapter of the Jewish War Veterans of the USA and named it the "Lieutenant Frances Slanger Memorial Post."



Two Jewish Heroes in the Pacific

Heroes are not born; they are made when confronted with a situation that calls for action beyond the expected. So it was for two young Jewish fighting men in the Pacific fighting the Japanese in World War II. **Army medical aide Hyman Epstein** of Omaha, Nebraska, and **Marine Corporal LeRoy Diamond** of New York City, are two such heroes.

Epstein's outfit was in **New Guinea**, fighting the Japanese along- side the Australians. George Weller, an American war correspondent, wrote about the last 12 hours of Epstein's life as it was related to him by his commanding officer, Major Bert Zeff. Epstein's unit was sent to the front lines to bring supplies and to take care of the wounded of a platoon that had been pinned down by the enemy. The Japanese had staked out their snipers in the trees and set up two machine guns that would give them crossfire. When Epstein's unit arrived, the Japanese opened up with their machine guns, while the snipers gave them additional support. A number of Americans were killed; Major Zeff wouldn't let his medics risk their lives to go out to help the wounded.

Epstein decided that he would help the wounded and started to crawl toward them, becoming the target of the Japanese machine guns. He went from one wounded soldier to another applying sulfanilamide and bandages to their wounds. This continued all night until a bullet found its mark and he was mortally wounded. He was buried the next day by his men who had felt that he had gone beyond the call of duty. **Guadalcanal** was the beginning of the American counter offensive to retake the islands that the Japanese had captured after Pearl Harbor. It was here, in August 1942, that **Marine Corporal LeRoy Diamond**, along with Privates Albert A. Schmidt and Johnny Rivers, were in their machine gun nest next to a stream, waiting for the Japanese to stage a counter attack.

A few scattered shots from the enemy built up to a crescendo as hundreds crossed the stream, firing their guns. Johnny Rivers was killed immediately. Schmidt kept firing his machine gun as Diamond kept feeding it belts of bullets. The fighting was fierce; Japanese bodies kept falling from Schmidt's gun. Diamond kept feeding the gun until he felt a burning sensation in his arm and he knew that he was wounded. He picked up Rivers' automatic weapon, firing it with his good arm. The Japanese managed to get a few snipers in the trees behind them and one of them shot Schmidt in the face, blinding him. Diamond verbally told him what direction to keep firing the machine gun and they continued to shoot down the enemy.

When they were finally rescued, there were about 200 Japanese dead in front of them. The heroism displayed by Diamond and his squad became the plot of a great war movie, *The Pride of the Marines*. **Diamond received the Navy Cross and Purple Heart for his heroism** and his name will always be part of that long list of Jewish heroes in America.



David "Mickey" Marcus A Hero in Both America And Israel

David "Mickey" Marcus is a hero who fought for the two countries he loved, America and Israel, and was recognized for military exploits by both their armies. Born on New York's Lower East Side, he graduated from West Point in 1924. While in the Army, he studied law and when he entered civilian life in 1927, he joined the U.S. Attorney General's Office. New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia admired Marcus and persuaded him to join the city's Department of Corrections in 1934; he was appointed commissioner in 1940. When World War II erupted, Marcus went back to the Army as a lieutenant colonel. Appointed a divisional judge advocate and later division commander, he attended the meetings of the "Big Five" in 1943. **When the Allies decided to invade Normandy, Marcus volunteered to join the D-Day airborne assault. With no previous training, he joined paratroopers and parachuted into Normandy.**

In 1945, Marcus joined General Lucius D. Clay's staff to help oversee a military government in Germany after the Nazi's defeat. Marcus was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Bronze Star, and British decorations. In 1947, he retired from the Army with the rank of colonel. **Marcus couldn't forget entering the Dachau concentration camp at the head of a tank column and seeing the living and dead Jews.** He resolved that he would help Israel survive so that Jews would have a place to live there if they chose.

The Haganah and the Jewish Agency contacted him, asking him to go to Israel to help build up the fledgling army. Using the name of Mickey Stone, he was smuggled past the British soldiers in January 1948. At one check-point, he was stopped and asked to produce his identification. The British sentry, who wasn't too alert, accepted the forged papers with the name of Mickey Stone. If he had looked carefully, he would have seen Marcus' West Point ring. Marcus worked day and night training the raw Israeli recruits, trying to shape them into soldiers. It was expected that the Transjordan Arab Legion would be attacking at any time in the hope of destroying Israel. Marcus returned to America briefly, returning to Israel in May 1948. He was appointed commander of the Jerusalem front and was the first officer to receive the new rank of "Alluf". Marcus was instrumental in organizing schools for officers, writing manuals, teaching the various uses of armament and helping to develop a fighting spirit within the army.

During the early morning hours of June 11, 1948, Marcus was inspecting the perimeter fence of his military headquarters in Abu Ghosh when an Israeli sentry mistook him for the enemy and accidentally killed him. He was honored by the Israeli military for his leadership and contributions to the defense of Israel.

Taken back to the United States, David "Mickey" Marcus was buried at West Point with full military honors. Mishmar David is a village in Judea that is named for him. Marcus was a person blessed to become a hero in two countries that he loved.



Two Jewish Junior Officers of World War II

Milton A. ("Mickey") Waldor of New Jersey exemplified the Jewish hero in the American junior officer corps. **First Lieutenant Waldor was bombardier in the Tenth Air Force in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operation in World War II.**

Waldor flew on 68 arduous missions bombing the Japanese installations in captured Burma. Many times his B-24 was the target for enemy fighter planes and anti-aircraft guns. Flying the China-Burma-India hump was always an extremely dangerous mission. For his bravery in action, **Waldor was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Nationalist China Award and other American medals.**

On his many missions he met and became friendly with General Claire Chennault, the leader of the Flying Tigers, who was later to become the commander of the U.S. Air Force in China. When Waldor left the Air Force to return to civilian life, he was a captain. He became a successful lawyer and he got involved in politics and in veterans organizations. He was elected national commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the USA in 1965. He served as a senator in the New Jersey Senate and wrote a book which exposed the John Birch Society called *Peddlers of Fear*. His younger brother, Jerome N. Waldor, is a retired Major General of the U.S. Air Force and he is a leader in the United Jewish Federation of MetroWest.



In the Pacific, the **United States Marines** were fighting to regain the major islands that the Japanese had captured in the early stages of the war. **Major Irving Schecter** of New York, with his assault unit, landed on the beach in **Tinian, one of the Marianas islands.** They were met with gunfire from the enemy as they established a beachhead to protect the left flank of the invasion force. After a quiet night, Major Schecter and his Marines were awakened by a barrage of Japanese gunfire and hand grenades. His men quickly responded with their own gunfire to keep the overwhelming force of Japanese from breaking through the lines. The skirmish lasted for many hours, and Major Schecter's fighting Marines were diminishing in number as they suffered many casualties. Finally a relief force came to their rescue and pushed the Japanese back to their own lines. Major Schecter found himself once again fighting the enemy when the Marines invaded **Saipan.** He led his rifle company into battle with the Japanese, exposing himself so that he could better guide his men with their rifle fire. His unit suffered many casualties and he directed the evacuation of the wounded until they were relieved by another Marine Corps unit. Major Schecter was recognized for his bravery when **he was awarded the Navy Cross, the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart and a Presidential Unit Citation.**

Milton Waldor and Irving Schecter were the prototypes of the many Jewish heroes in the junior officer corps in World War II.

Jewish Army Generals Who Served With Distinction in World War II

General Maurice Rose proved to be a hero in World War I and World War II. Rose was the son of Rabbi and Mrs. Samuel Rose was born November 26, 1899 in Middletown Connecticut. In World War I, he was a second lieutenant in the American Expeditionary Force that fought the Germans on French soil. When the war was over, he decided to make the Army his profession. In World War II, **he served as chief of staff of the 2nd Armored Division and was promoted to brigadier general in 1943.**

The Second Armored Division was shipped to **North Africa**, where Rose was involved in many tank battles with the Germans. When the German Army surrendered, General Rose negotiated the unconditional surrender of the Germans in **Tunisia**. He received the nickname of "**Old Gravel Face**" because he was very brusque in his dealings with the Germans. He was then assigned to command the **3rd Armored Division in Europe**. **In 1944, he was promoted to major general. He led his tanks in combat against the Germans through France, Belgium and into Germany.** It was in a fierce battle in Germany that General Rose was killed.

Rose was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star Medal and the Purple Heart. The French Army bestowed upon him the Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre. The American press mourned his death as they extolled his bravery and feats in combat. *The New York Times* wrote: "The American Army was deprived of one of its most skilled and gallant officers and a man of rare personal charm besides..." *The Chicago Daily News* said: "He had the reputation of a remarkable leader of men. German prisoners talked of him as the only successor of the status of Rommel..."

The North American Newspaper Alliance wrote: "I think in Maurice Rose's death this Army has suffered its greatest single loss - great as the loss of Stonewall Jackson in the Civil War. He was a perfect example of the American soldier at his best..."

General Rose's 3rd Armored Division had many singular feats: it was **the first division to cross the German border; the first to breach the Siegfried line; the first to shoot down an enemy plane on German soil; and the first to fire an artillery shell into German soil.** On March 29, 1945, in central Germany, Rose's troops made the longest one-day advance by any Allied Division during the war. Tragically, the next day, Rose was killed in action while trying to locate a forward 3rd Armored unit that had been cut off by German tanks. He was only 45 years old. WWII in Europe was to end five weeks later. He was buried with military honors in 1945.



Brigadier General Julius Ochs Adler is another decorated hero of World Wars I and II. In World War I, he was the commander of a battalion of infantry on the Western Front in France. He was in many battles with the Germans and was gassed.

In World War II, General Adler **commanded the 77th Infantry Division, responsible for the defense of Hawaii from 1941 to 1944.** For his leadership and bravery in World War I, he received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star with Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart, the French Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre with Palms. In 1948, he was appointed as major general in the Army Reserve.

After World War II, he joined *The New York Times* as vice-president, later to become general manager. He was also the publisher of the *Chattanooga Times*. He and 17 other newspaper executives were invited by General Eisenhower to visit the liberated concentration camps in 1945. This visit inspired him to write a series of articles for *The New York Times* describing his experience and feelings.

Jewish Naval and Marine Corps Officer Heroes

In World War II the Japanese propaganda featured the myth that their fighting men are never taken as prisoners. The purpose was to create an illusion that they were invincible. **Major General Melvin Krulewitch, the highest-ranking Jewish officer in the U.S. Marine Corps,** was one of the first to destroy that myth. He personally captured Japanese prisoners in one of his engagements. Major General Krulewitch was **the first to fly the American flag on Japanese territory.**

Fighting in World War II to defend America from its enemies was nothing new to Major General Krulewitch. In World War I, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps as a private. His outfit went to France to fight the German Army, and he proved himself to be a hero in Belleau Woods. After World War I, he returned to civilian life to raise a family and establish a successful law practice. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, he rejoined the Marine Corps as an officer.

Major General Krulewitch was awarded the Bronze Star with Clusters, the Purple Heart, a Presidential Unit Citation and the Naval Unit Citation. He also received a Special Commendation Ribbon of the Secretary of the Navy. During the Korean War, he was sent on special assignment,

When the nation of Israel was born and needed skilled military officers to instruct and develop its fledgling army, Major General Krulewitch joined other World War II Jewish heroes in going there to be of service.



When Admiral **Ben Moreel** received his **fourth star**, he became **the highest-ranking Jewish officer in Navy history**. Admiral Moreel was another hero who fought in two wars for his country. In World War I, he enlisted in the Navy and was commissioned to be a lieutenant Junior grade). He was assigned to the Civil Engineering Corps and promotions followed swiftly. In the 1930s, he served as public works officer at Pearl Harbor, and then became **chief of civil engineers of the Navy**. He was promoted to the rank of rear admiral and in 1944, President Roosevelt made him a **vice admiral**.

Admiral Moreel, starting with 3,000 men, formed the Seabees when World War II erupted. It had grown to about a quarter of a million men when the war ended. His Seabees developed airfields, roads and housing in undeveloped islands in the Pacific.



Rear Admiral Louis Dreller was a veteran and hero of World Wars I and II. In June 1918, he was commissioned a lieutenant Junior grade) in World War I and he was assigned for engineering duty. After the war, he remained in the Navy and rapidly rose through the ranks to become a **rear admiral in 1943**. In World War II, he saw action as **a member of the staff of Commander Amphibious Force, Pacific** (April 10 to May 7, 1942).

Returning to the United States, he reported to Headquarters, Fourth Naval District, Philadelphia, designing destroyers which were built there for the Brazilian Navy. Admiral Dreller was recognized for his services for many assignment by being awarded the Legion of Merit.

From the Revolutionary War through World War II, Jews have distinguished themselves in the United States Navy, from seamen to a four star admiral, in serving our country.

Staff Sergeant Max Warsaw: A Highly Decorated Hero of World War II

Staff Sergeant Max Warsaw was awarded 11 medals and a Combat Medic Badge in World War II and he never carried or fired a firearm. **He was an Army medic attached to the 26th Infantry Regiment of the First Division, nicknamed "big red one."**

Warsaw was born in December 1913, in Korbin, Poland. He was the son of Blanche, nee Pollack, and Jacob Warsaw. They came to the U.S. in 1923 seeking freedom and the opportunity to earn a living. He was educated in the public schools of New York City and later became a linen supply salesman. In March, 1941, he entered the Army. When Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese and the United States was at war with Japan and Germany, his division was sent to **North Africa**. As a medic, Warsaw never carried a firearm. The only apparatus he carried was medical to help the wounded. Warsaw always volunteered for the dangerous assignments. As a Jew, he felt that he had to show the others that Jews weren't afraid to face danger. He received his first **Bronze Star medal on November 8, 1942, in the North African Campaign**. His regiment was fighting the Germans in **Oran, Algeria**. He risked his life by exposing himself to the enemy to help his regiment's wounded lying in open areas. Two days later, on November 10, in Algeria, Warsaw was wounded by shrapnel. "An artillery shell blew up right near me," he recalled, "it didn't knock me out and I didn't require hospitalization. However, for many years I would still need to have artillery shrapnel removed."

Warsaw received his first **Silver Star medal** for gallantry in action in the vicinity of **El Guettar, Tunisia, March 25, 1943**. The citation reads, "...when a heavy enemy artillery barrage had compelled two drivers to abandon their vehicles, Sergeant Warsaw fearlessly entered this area and removed the vehicles, thereby saving valuable equipment from destruction." **On D-Day, he landed with his outfit in Normandy, where he was one of the first to hit Omaha Beach**. It was for his heroism on June 14 and 15, 1944, that he received his second Bronze Star medal.

His division kept pushing the German Army back to its own country. It was in Aachen, Germany, on October 13, 1944, that Warsaw received his third Bronze Star medal. He constantly exposed himself to the enemy to administer first aid to the wounded. Three days later, on October 15, 1944, he was again awarded the Silver Star medal for heroism and gallantry beyond the call of duty.

On November 25, 1944, Staff Sergeant Max Warsaw was captured by the Germans. They gave him a medical kit to care for the other prisoners of war. He was liberated five months later and sent to England for medical care. Max Warsaw returned to civilian life after the war and he became active in many veterans' organizations. In 1956, he and his wife, Evelyn, moved to Fair Lawn, New Jersey, where he held many positions in the Jewish War Veterans of the USA. **Warsaw is one of the most highly decorated Jews who served in World War II. He has two Silver Star medals, three Bronze Star medals, the Purple Heart, the Ex-Prisoner of War Medal, the Pre-Pearl Harbor Medal, the European Theater of Operations Medal with six campaign clusters, the Victory Medal, the New York State Conspicuous Cross Medal (for highly decorated veterans), and the Army Combat Medic Badge. Max Warsaw is not only a hero, but a legend in the Jewish heroes in America.**

"Hank" Greenberg: A Baseball Great and War Hero

Henry "Hank" Greenberg was one of the first men in baseball to seriously challenge Babe Ruth's record of 60 home runs and Lou Gehrig's league record of 184 runs batted in. Greenberg had a chance to shatter Ruth's home run record of 60 in 1938. He had hit 58 home runs and still had five games to play. But the weather was dismal and he faced several erratic pitchers. He failed in his attempt to hit a home run. Greenberg batted in 183 runs in 1937, failing one short of tying Gehrig's record. He did set a major league record of hitting two or more home runs in one game (11 in 1938). Greenberg was elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame and was twice named the Most Valuable Player of the Year. Greenberg was born on New Year's Day in 1911. His parents had immigrated to New York City from Bucharest, Romania. He attended public schools in the Bronx, New York, and was on the baseball and basketball teams of James Monroe High School. Major league teams were interested in having Greenberg play for them. Greenberg's father turned away the baseball scouts since he wanted his son to attend college. He attended New York University on a baseball scholarship. His parents let him play professional baseball in 1930. Greenberg spent three years in the minor leagues, perfecting his hitting and working on his clumsy movements on the field. He was called up to play with the Detroit Tigers in 1933. He had a .301 hitting average for the season. The following year, at the age of 23, Greenberg had become the star of the team. The Detroit Tigers were in contention for winning the pennant in 1934. An important game was scheduled to take place on Rosh Hashana. After much soul searching, Greenberg decided to play that day. His two home runs made it possible for the Tigers to win. However, when a game was scheduled for Yom Kippur, he did not play. He spent the day at the synagogue praying and fasting. The Tigers lost the game, but they did win the pennant for the first time since 1909. They lost the World Series to the St. Louis Cardinals. When Greenberg was drafted into the Army in May of 1941, he was the highest paid player in major league baseball. He was discharged two days prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor because of a new government policy to release those soldiers over the age of 28. Greenberg immediately re-enlisted. For the next four years, **he served as a lieutenant and then as a captain in the Army Air Force. He was involved in the fighting in the China-Burma-India area.** Greenberg returned to baseball on July 1, 1945. The Detroit Tigers' ball park was filled to capacity to greet him. He needed to hit one more home run to have a total of 250. After he hit a home run, the fans gave Greenberg a standing ovation as he trotted around the bases. Greenberg's last year with the Detroit Tigers was 1946. He led the league with 44 home runs and 127 runs batted in. He was waived out of the American League to the Pittsburgh Pirates. Greenberg was with the Pirates for one year and hit 25 home runs and drove in 74 runs during 125 games. In 1947, he was given his unconditional release. Greenberg turned his talents to Wall Street and became a millionaire. On the field, Greenberg demonstrated his playing powers. In World War II, he didn't shirk his duty as an American. As a Jew, he didn't forget his heritage. Greenberg died on September 4, 1986,



P.F.C. Charles Feuereisen

P.F.C. Charles Feuereisen's unit in the **511th Parachute Infantry Division** had a fierce battle with the Japanese in 1945 in **Leyte, Philippines**, during World War II. The unit overran the enemy and captured many of them.

In a dead Japanese officer's briefcase, a map of California with Japanese site marks for their invasion was found by the unit. Feuereisen and P.F.C. Ralph Merisiecki were assigned to take the map back to the 11th Airborne headquarters near Buraueng. They delivered the document and proceeded to Tacloban, where General Douglas MacArthur had established his headquarters and where they were to get an airlift back to their unit. "Ralph, we'll never get this close to General MacArthur again," Feuereisen said to his friend, "Why don't we visit him?"

Merisiecki thought that Feuereisen was crazy, but he decided to go along with him. They came to the Price House, where MacArthur had his headquarters. It was full of bullet and shrapnel marks. The two worked their way through a maze of officers and reporters, finally reaching Lieutenant Colonel Roger O. Egeberg, the supreme commander's physician and aide, and explained their purpose for being there. Before long, MacArthur appeared and warmly greeted them with a smile and handshake. He took them into his private office to talk about the military actions of the 11th Airborne paratroopers. Feuereisen was surprised to find how much information the general knew about his outfit. MacArthur spent about 10 minutes talking with them. Before leaving, Feuereisen asked him why the paratroopers were not jumping behind the enemy lines. MacArthur assured him that they would be jumping soon.

Feuereisen made 38 jumps with the 511th Parachute Infantry Division. He joined the division in 1942 and rose through the ranks to become a sergeant. He led a patrol to find the enemy on April 6, 1945, in **Lipa, Philippines**. As the patrol members proceeded, a booby trap went off, killing the lead man. Feuereisen was wounded by a sniper in the back of the neck, paralyzing his legs and his left arm. He was hospitalized for nine months before he was able to overcome the paralysis.

Feuereisen received many decorations, including the Silver Star Medal, the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart Medal and the Asiatic Pacific Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters.

He was born on May 18, 1918, in New York City, to Regina, nee Fuchs, and Henry Feuereisen. His mother had emigrated from Vienna and his father came from Cracow. Feuereisen's father was in the grocery store business. His young son learned the skills that he used to make a living in the food industry.

After Feuereisen's release from the service, he became involved with veterans organizations. His first love was the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) of the USA. He worked hard and held many JWV chairs.

At the JWV convention in August, 1968, Feuereisen was elected to be the national commander for one year. Feuereisen has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Jewish War Veterans Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. He says he feels that this museum, located in the heart of the nation's capital, is a beacon that reminds America that Jews have served, fought and died for their country from colonial days to the present.

Major Melvin Garten was a highly decorated hero of World War II. He had received the Silver Star Medal, the Bronze Star Medal, a Presidential Unit Citation, and the Purple Heart Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters for having been wounded four times in battle.

Major Joseph Gurfein was a West Point graduate. He was involved in months of combat in World War II. His fearless and calm leadership under enemy fire in Korea earned him the Silver Star Medal.



Captain Lou Lenart arrived in the United States as Layos Lenovitz, a 10-year-old farm boy from a small Hungarian village near the Czech border. His family settled in the Pennsylvania coal-mining town of Wilkes-Barre, where the Jewish kid with the funny accent was the regular target of anti-Semitic taunts. In 1940, at 18, Lenart joined the U.S. Marines. After 18 months of infantry training, he talked his way into flight school, then was almost given up for dead after a midair collision. Despite the doctors' dire predictions, Lenart came back, flew an F4U Corsair in the Battle of Okinawa and took part in numerous attacks on the Japanese mainland.

When the war ended, he learned that 14 relatives in Hungary had been killed in Auschwitz. It took little additional incentive for the ex-Marine Corps captain to join the effort of the struggle for the independence of Israel. On May 29, some 10,000 Egyptians with tanks and artillery were 16 miles south of Tel Aviv, and, in a desperate move, Israel unleashed its entire air force. It consisted of four Czech-made planes — the Avia S-199, a version of the German Messerschmitt Bf109g. The Egyptian troops had been assured that the Israelis had no aircraft and the surprise of the attack so unnerved the Egyptians that they halted their advance on Tel Aviv. Lou Lenart was the commander of attack "I think it was for this precise moment in history that I was born".



Lt. Col Robert (Rosie) Rosenthal was born in June 11, 1917. He was a graduate of Brooklyn College and Brooklyn Law School, and had been working at a law firm in Manhattan when the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked Pearl Harbor. He enlisted in the United States Army on December 8, 1941 and requested to be trained for combat. In August 1943 he joined the 418th Squadron of the 100th Bombardment Group, stationed at Thorpe Abbots in England, as a pilot and aircraft commander of a B-17 Flying Fortress crew. In March 1944, Rosenthal's crew nicknamed "Rosie's Riveters", with their B-17F, serial number 42-30758 bearing the same name, completed their 25-mission combat tour and returned to the United States, but Rosenthal extended his tour, eventually flying a total of 53 missions. He later became commanding officer of the 350th Squadron. In September 1944, Rosenthal's plane was shot down over Germany, in

which he broke his arm and nose. He was rescued by the Free French and returned to duty as soon as he had healed. On his second to last mission on February 3, 1945, Rosenthal led a mission to bomb Berlin. Although his bomber was in flames from a direct hit, he continued to the target to drop his payload; then stayed with the plane until after the rest of the crew had bailed out, just before it exploded at only 1,000 feet altitude. He was recovered by the Soviet Army and again returned to duty.