

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta pedagogická

Katedra anglického jazyka

Bakalářská práce

**GENERÁL GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. A JEHO VLIV
NA VÝVOJ 2. SVĚTOVÉ VÁLKY**

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Plzeň 2012

University of West Bohemia

Faculty of Education

Department of English

Undergraduate Thesis

**GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. AND HIS
INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF
WORLD WAR II**

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Plzeň 2012

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Jméno Příjmení

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the supervisor of my thesis, William Bradley Vice, Ph.D., for his professional help and patience of this work.

ABSTRACT

Slezak, Vojtěch. University of West Bohemia. April, 2012. General George S. Patton and his influence on the development of World War II. Supervisor: William Bradley Vice, Ph.D.

The object of my thesis is the famous American, George S. Patton, Jr. He was one of the most redoubtable generals in World War II. This work is divided into three parts. The first deals with Patton's roots, including his ancestors, and how and when they arrived to the American continent. It continues with Patton's educational life at Virginia Military Institute and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Included is also the mention of his operation in Mexico and his subsequent entrance to World War I. The first section of the thesis ends by Patton's life at inter-war period.

The second section of the thesis pertains to the Second World War and Patton's performance there. It is divided on the basis of his most important landings which begin in North Africa. From there he moved to Europe, specifically to Sicily. After almost one year his movements continued in Europe. From France his movements moved in an easterly direction. Due to political reasons the movement was stopped a few kilometres behind the West Bohemian metropolis, Pilsen.

The last section speaks of Patton's contribution to the army. There are discussed the findings which can be contributive for next generations of generals and commanders.

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INTRODUCTION

Human history is riddled with violent conflicts in which those involved fought for control over land, mineral resources, or by fielding ethnic conflicts. Each of these conflicts had its major warriors. At the turn of the 19th century it was Napoleon Bonaparte and the Second World War had George S. Patton. World War II was in no doubt the worst battle resulting in casualties of human lives. Even though the young people of my age were not direct participants of the war, we are most certainly influenced by it. Each person of Czech ancestry has or had relatives who were involved in the war and helped influence the effects on the whole surroundings. In that case is not World War II just the part of our history learned in school.

The Second World War mainly took place in Europe. The United States of America became involved in the war due to the Japanese assault of Pearl Harbor at the end of 1941. The uncompromising George S. Patton, Jr., one of the most feared American warriors, came with American armies to Europe. General Patton's army liberated the west part of the Czech Republic. Patton's campaign of almost one year through Europe from west to east ended with the liberation of Pilsen. There he and his Third Army were real heroes. For that reason I have chosen him as the main object of my undergraduate thesis.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first concerns Patton's life before World War II; his student years and then career life. It examines what he was doing in the First World War under command of General Pershing and how Patton became depressed during the inter-war period. He lived for fighting, so that was his hardest time. The second and main part of the thesis deals with Patton in World War II. There I describe Patton's campaign in North Africa, Sicily and from France toward to Czechoslovakia. Many of his battles were very important. The Battle of the Bulge could be said to be the decisive battle of the World War II. Even historians are of the same opinion that who would win this battle would win the whole War. The fighting in the Ardennes was the significant act both for Americans and General George S. Patton. He could be again proud of himself. The third and last part is dedicated to Patton's legacy to the army. That segment describes what Patton contributed to the army, and what of his styles and skills could be beneficial for future use in the army.

In researching Patton's personal and military life in books such as *The Pattons: A Personal History of an American Family* were very informative, and its author is Patton's grandson. Another very useful source was book *Patton: A Biography* by Alan Axelrod.

The perfect description of the real situations in a moment of battle was written by Patton's own hand in his diary which was published by his wife Beatrice, as *War as I Knew It*. In this work Patton shows his feelings and emotions in the moment. Some of the notes were written just after the bloody battle. His actions were depicted clearly, and are also shown in the movie *Patton*, where George C. Scott portrays Patton perfectly. The similarity is evident. The next necessary source for my research was through work written by an army biographer, Martin Blumenson, *The Patton Papers 1940-1945*. As a source I used an electronic publication of magazine *The Patton Saber* and website of the city of Pilsen.

Patton was one of the most brilliant, and at the same time, the most controversial generals, of World War II. Patton can be viewed as a warrior. There is no argument that he was one of the best military leaders of the time, and also a politician. Generals with as many stars as Patton had should also have a honed political characteristic, but Patton lacked that.

Patton's ancestors since time immemorial stood out in politics and army. Since the Patton's childhood he was convinced that want to be a soldier. The war was indispensable part of his life. He was not enthusiastic about politics as his father who worked as the first mayor of a city in California. Also his great-grandfather had connection with politics. He was governor of a Virginia. As a warrior Patton was perfect. People in the United States loved him, while at the same time he was one of the most hated. His commanding was something new. No one till that time saw the direct commanding like Patton's. His style was painful, but effective. Patton was successful at all campaigns in North Africa and Europe. He was not defeated. General Omar Bradley did not accept him because of his selfish behaviour. Patton's motto was "attack, attack and attack". He did not much for his men. There could not be a victory without casualties. That was the main reason why Patton was hated by his own men and other leaders, as well as the people in his own country. Patton as a leader did not have compassion for the needs of others. He maintained that what he did not need himself, other men did not need it, either. General Patton was so amazing commander that he was respected and feared warrior by his opponent. Especially by soldiers from Germans ranks. General Eisenhower knew it and he took it for advantage to use Patton as a threat in Operation Overlord. Patton's function was just to pretend that he is the leader of the main landing. Patton himself did not know about it.

General George S. Patton was led to his career in army from his a very young age. Patton's influence on politics was caused by his own impropriety on the battlefield. He had a different imagination of the surrounding world that was necessary. He could not function

well in a society, and for that there was his friend and superior General Dwight D. Eisenhower. When Patton was in trouble or did anything inadmissible, “Ike” saved his career. But when people read it in newspapers or noticed it from other media, they wanted to stone Patton to death. It was the main reason why was Patton under the command of Eisenhower, despite him being 5 years older. Patton was pretty self-contradictory.

In the research is further ahead discussed particular situations in which Patton occurred in his life. It is criticized how Patton dealt with it and if he could do it in a different way. What could happen in the particular event, if it would be better or not. What Patton could do in a better way and how result would left behind him.

Life of George S. Patton

Roots

About the year 1770, among thousands of immigrants coming from Scotland to the United States of America was also a young man named Robert who announced his last name to be Patton. There are at least three speculations why Robert Patton arrived to the United States. According to Robert Patton (2004) the first one talks of running away from court because he committed an offence. The second theory holds there was a political problem and also a conflict between him and his parents which he solved with his brave and adventurous solution of moving to America. He settled in Virginia, becoming a prosperous businessman.

In 1793 the thriving trader Robert Patton built a sizeable, nice house in Fredericksburg, called White Plains. Then he became the director of the city bank and married Anne Mercer-Gordon, the only daughter of General Hugh Mercer, the hero of War of Independence. One of his sons was John Mercer Patton born in 1797. In 1824 there was a wedding. John M. Patton married Peggy French Williams. Her roots also stem from Europe. Her father, Hugh Mercer, was a doctor originating from France. John Mercer Patton was a lawyer and politician in Fredericksburg and then in Richmond he gained a significant position in Virginian society. He was also a congressman of the United States for eight years. George Smith Patton, the first of this name, the son of John Mercer Patton and Margaret William-French was a grandfather of the famous general in World War II, George S. Patton, Jr. He finished school at the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) in 1852 as the second in the class.

The first with the name George Smith Patton was born in 1833 and also graduated from VMI. He helped to form the Kanawha Rifleman who took part in the opening fights of the Civil War. John Mercer Patton had nine sons and one of them was Patton's grandfather. Seven of them took a part in Civil War, and two of them including George were killed. The second one was Walter Tazewell Patton. He was killed at the battle of Gettysburg in 1863. Patton's grandfather Colonel George S. Patton was mortally wounded in his 31st year in 1864 at the battle of New Market when he was leading his brigade against the Major-General Philip Sheridan.

George's oldest son George William lived in luxury on the Lake Vineyard estate. He changed his name to George Smith to honour his father's memory. His family moved to California from Virginia where George returned in 1871 to attend VMI. As time moved on, his family had financial problems so George S. Patton decided to give up a career in

military and become a successful lawyer. In 1884 George married Ruth Wilson a daughter of one of the first settlers of south California, Benjamin Wilson.

Everyone from a dynasty of Pattons was successful and known from the beginning of their being in the United States. They were successful in business or commanders in important wars. Also they broke through in a politics or private enterprise. Even the next generation after General Patton were successful in their professions. His son was in army as his father, and grandson made himself visible by publishing a Pattons' memoirs. Naturally the most known person with last name Patton was General Patton who became famous during the both World Wars.

Early life

George Smith Patton, Jr. is his whole name. He was born 11. 11. 1885 at Lake Vineyard in California. His family always called him Georgie. He was a spoiled child, the son of a wealthy family and by 10 years old he already had two horses. After many years he thought back to how he was the happiest boy with horses in stable. Due to the money he was for his whole life addicted to it. When he did not have money from his family, he took them from Ayers family – family of his wife. During childhood Patton decided to become a hero. He was especially influenced by the telling of the stories about his famous ancestors and their brave and successful endeavours. Already at that time he wanted to be like them. Hugh Mercer, the father of Robert Patton's wife Anne, was the first of Patton's heroes. At the age of eleven when his contemporaries were interested in adventure novels and crime fiction he was able to quote by heart even whole pages of the Bible or Shakespeare. Patton was one of the most talented and diligent pupils. Most of the contribution to Patton's intelligence can be attributed to the lessons received from Aunt Nannie. She took over much of his early education, and his parents hired a tutor for him. He studied at home until he was 11. According to The Patton Museum Foundation (2007) "his grounding in literature was solid. Patton was schooled in horses, guns and swords, a soldier's tools of the trade, from a young age." ("The Making of Leader") Then he went to private school in Stephen Cutter Clark's School for Boys in Pasadena. From the beginning his favourite subject was history. He was good at literature and languages, too. Patton suffered from a learning disorder, dyslexia which made Patton's life unpleasant. Because of this disease had troubles with reading, he practised his photographic memory and could tell a whole parts of the books or poems by hearth. One of the Patton's biographer, Carlo

D'Este (1995) claimed that dyslexia shows by difficulty in reading, writing, spelling and problems with mathematics. It causes rapid changes of moods, troubles with concentration, and hyperactivity. People who suffer from this disorder may consider themselves stupid and feel compelled to prove themselves to others. We can see also that these people have a tendency for boasting. All of these attributes were without exception exhibited by George S. Patton, Jr. The dyslexia also caused Patton to not know how much time he should spend for a particular subject. Other notable people affected also by dyslexia are Leonardo da Vinci, Albert Einstein, singer John Lennon and president George Washington Bush. When Patton noticed that Napoleon could not spell well too, he stopped looking up words in the dictionary during writing - if it was not an official letter or essay to the public. He suffered from dyslexia whole life. It can be just speculation if his irascibility caused the dyslexia or anything else.

West Point

The next studies which was Patton attending was not easy for him. He was still fighting with dyslexia that was his enemy whole life and never defeated. Patton wanted to follow his antecedents' footprint and not to bring a shame to the name Patton. The men in the Patton family were alumni to VMI, but Patton realized that the U.S. Military Academy at West Point would be the better choice for success. Admittance to the elite school could be granted to students that have a recommendation from a senator, congressman or the president of the United States. Parliament can chose just one new cadet at a time but the president can choose thirty. George S. Patton's father wrote a letter to Senator Thomas Bard who had the power to recommend George to West Point. But at this time Bard did not recommended Patton so he was not able to study at West Point. Rather, he went to VMI for one year. It would perhaps be the ideal place for Patton to gain a year of training education, preparation and maturity before he applied for entrance to West Point. Even that Patton was satisfied at Lexington he hankered after his dream to get to the US Military Academy at West Point. They tried to write to Thomas Bard next year again. Patton's father supposed that his son would have a chance because of the military past of his family. In February 1904 George Smith Patton was as student of the first grade at VMI having been invited to the entrance interview to the first grade at West Point. The exams at the end of the first year in 1904 were critical for the recruits. Those who succeeded were then full cadets. Unfortunately, George S. Patton, Jr. did not pass the exam in mathematics.

Teachers at West Point really appreciated him as a highly disciplined cadet, military and command capable. So they did not perform the hardest penalty – expelling him. They gave him another chance to repeat the first class. The next year Patton was successful. When Patton commenced again into the first class in 1905 at West Point he was not only older by two years than his new classmates, but was primarily an experienced soldier who had two years of hard military life behind him. Just for these assets he became the commander of the whole company of cadets at the beginning of the year. If someone from the older cadets from the higher class were missing, Patton was the commander of the battalion of cadets. Only now Patton started to enjoy being at West Point. My opinion is that the extra two years at military school was for Patton the benefit. It was good not only for more experience but he was the oldest in the class and he felt as superordinate. Patton had felt whole life that is better than anyone else. But his new friends and classmates were not so keen by this commander from their own ranks. No offence escaped without notice. Sometimes they hated him. As a commander Patton was very strict. It is true that his comrades did not like him and gossiped behind his back. This was the beginning of a kind of superiority complex. Due to this attribute many of his classmates considered him as arrogant and unapproachable. Patton was always proud of his origin as a southern gentleman which was developed by his father. In all ways his father was an enormously devoted and principled man. Certainly there is nothing wrong in wanting to be perfect, successful and even the best. However, to be too forthright, untactful and boastful gave the impression of too much ambition to his classmates. When in 1909 lieutenant George S. Patton graduated from the academy at West Point no one thought this soldier would become a legend. The freshly appointed army officer was indeed the best soldier who finished this school since the time of the Civil War. Patton was the best swordsman, and pistol and rifle shooter in his class. He had many laurels in his career. A great future was waiting for him. He was full of self-confidence and determination for great deeds. Patton had lack of just one thing and that was true friends.

At the time when Patton was studying at West Point he met a beautiful, young girl from a wealthy family, named Beatrice Ayer. They dated and exchanged letters during his studies. Beatrice's father did not like that Patton was so dedicated to the army. His notion was to employ him in the family business. But Patton did not think of it. Even Alan Axelrod (2005) in Patton's biography claimed that "There is no evidence that he ever seriously thought about becoming anything other than a soldier" (p.13). Patton and his father-in-law, Mr. Ayer, exchanged a few letters to solve this problem. Mr. Ayer had a

different opinion about making a career in military, but Patton did not bend in his determination of his decision and finally convinced Mr. Ayer in a letter where Patton wrote: “I only feel it inside. It is as natural for me to be a soldier as it is to breathe and would be as hard to give up all thought of it as it would to stop breathing.” (Blumenson, 1996, p. 157)

George S. Patton was right when he wrote to Frederick Ayer. To make people talk about him and take him into account is not a game but the necessary condition for success. A year after Patton left West Point he married Beatrice Ayer-Banning. The wedding took place on the 26th of May, 1910 in the beautiful summer villa Avalon in Pride’s Crossing (Zaloga, 2010). Then the newlyweds ventured on a long honeymoon. At first they went to New York by train where they changed to a steamship to England. It was Patton's first trip outside of the American continent. In March, 1911, the couple welcomed their first born, a daughter. They gave her a name after his mother Beatrice. In December of the same year, Patton was transferred to an elite unit of the Chief of Staff Land Forces in Fort Myer near Washington.

In the summer of 1912 George Patton represented the United States of America at the Olympics in Stockholm in the first Modern Pentathlon. According to curator of Patton’s museum of leadership was Patton “just 26 years old and serving as a second lieutenant. He arrived in Stockholm as the first U.S. Army officer to represent the United States” (Lemons, fall 2004). This very demanding discipline included: “Pistol shooting from 25 meters, sword fencing, a 300 meter free style swim, 800 meters horse-back riding and a 4-kilometer cross country run” (Pistol shooting, n.d.). It was originally open only to military officers. These Olympics were considered as a test of the skills a soldier should possess. In the actual Olympic race Patton showed great will and tenacity. He fought hard for every position and finished in a very nice fifth place. The Stockholm Olympics gave to George S. Patton, Jr. something more than just sporting success. He could personally get acquainted with the French Army Sergeant Cléry. He acted as fencing instructor at the famous French cavalry school in Saumur. While Patton's father, mother and sister travelled through Europe, he and his wife Beatrice went from Stockholm to Saumur. In this peaceful town on the Loire, he received two weeks of high-quality private lessons in fencing, in control of the sword and sabre. Cléry also acquainted Patton with their teaching methods, which was very beneficial for the American. Patton did not expect that after returning to his homeland, he would continue to do work in an office. He wanted more; he wanted to be back with the troops. The Olympics were another significant milestone in his life. We can

just guessed what would be if Patton in Stockholm had not met French Sergeant Cléry. Thanks to this meeting was Patton influenced for upcoming years when was improving sabres and make his name more visible by it.

After the Olympics, Patton was, on December 14th, 1912 temporarily reassigned to the office of Chief of General Staff of the Ministry of War. The time that he spent in the Ministry was primarily used to defend his proposal to re-arm the U.S. cavalry with a new type of sabre. Patton proposed a cavalry sword with a straight blade. In this spirit, he also wrote an article about sabres in the influential professional magazine which met with considerable acclaim. Within a few months in the spring of 1913 it was issued in a ministerial statement War Chief of Staff Land Forces, on the basis of which began with the production of 20,000 cavalry sabres with those specifics that Patton recommended in that article. The curator for the Patton Museum in Fort Knox, Kentucky has written this about it: "Based on a French design, the new sabre had a straight, double edged blade instead of a curved, single edged blade and a fuller, solid sheet metal guard. It would forever be known as the Patton Sabre and would become a symbol for the strength and courage of the armoured force." (Lemons, Fall 2004) In materials published at the time, in the submitted essays and in personal interviews, superiors repeatedly stressed that members of the cavalry of the army of the United States had need to improve fencing. This could only be achieved by accelerated training of a sufficient number of teachers trained in a special fencing course. An ideal place for such a course would be the Mounted Service School at Fort Riley, Kansas, where Patton became the school's first Master of the Sword. He designed and taught a course in swordsmanship while he studied at the school. Patton's quality and natural leadership ability for the role of active and effective commanding were recognized by all. Likewise, he became known for his professional knowledge, loyalty to superiors and enthusiasm with which he performed his duties. It was known that Patton was always willing to give his all. He was contributive to his country not only by his success of commanding in wars but also teaching and training new soldiers new techniques of using sabres and in future it was even tanks.

Punitive expedition

Patton's mood was optimistic on February 28, 1915 when his wife Beatrice gave birth to their second child, daughter, Ruth Ellen. He graduated from the Mounted Service School in June where he was in the unique position of being both a student and instructor.

Patton was there known as “Master of the Sword”, but he was still ordered to return and that meant that he would return to his regiment which was about to be deployed to the Philippines. Patton went to Washington, where he discussed with his influential friends how to get him an alternative assignment. They managed to procure him a new destination.

In September 1915 George Patton was reassigned to the 8th Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss, near El Paso, Texas, on the Mexican border. The Crew was commanded by Brigadier General John J. Pershing, whose brigade was moved from Texas to West California. It was regarded as a safety measure due to political unrest on the other side of the border. Mexico was in chaos in 1910 when the dictator Porfirio Díaz was overthrown. New troubles were coming between Mexico and the United States and Patton felt the possibility of a real action at this post. The troubles along the Mexican border intensified in early 1916 when Pancho Villa began his raids into New Mexico in revenge for US political support of his rival. When Pancho Villa attacked Columbus, New Mexico, and several Americans were killed, President Woodrow Wilson ordered General Pershing to carry out a punitive expedition into Mexico and catch Pancho Villa. Patton was disappointed when he noticed that his troop of the 8th Cavalry Regiment would not participate. Patton asked Pershing to participate in the punitive expedition. And there at the first time appeared opportunity for Patton to participate of some fighting events in his life.

In March 1916, Patton was summoned with his troops to get food supplies. Along the way they stopped in San Miguelito where Cárdenas’ uncle had his own house. Cárdenas was Villa’s bodyguard. When Patton’s men were looking for Cárdenas in the main building, three riders emerged on horses. The soldiers started to fire on them. All three Mexicans were shot in a chaotic gunfight. One of them was Cárdenas. After that expedition Patton was celebrated as a national hero even though no one knew if Patton had killed some of Villa’s men. George S. Patton Jr. became a national hero. The expedition had more important issues for him. Patton’s trip to San Miguelito with automobiles was the first time a United States Army troop had gone into battle by motorized automobiles. Later he would become the expert of the tanks in World War I and the grand American defender of mobile warfare in World War II. In this issue of tanks in war was also of the same opinion of Dwight Eisenhower. And more important was the creation of the relationship between Patton and Pershing. Patton saw General Pershing as the perfect general. Pershing became his idol. Not only for his feeling for good strategy and tactics, but he also admired that Pershing insisted on perfect discipline and loyalty. He wanted to become a general just like John Pershing. Soon after the punitive expedition Patton received a promotion from

Pershing to first lieutenant in May, 1916. A year later the United States engaged in the war in Europe and “Pershing was assigned to command the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) and Patton had little trouble in receiving an assignment on Pershing’s staff.” (Zaloga, 2010, p. 10) When Patton succeeded in Mexico, he suspected that it would be his opportunity to get to the war again under command of John Pershing. Pershing was satisfied of working with Patton. On the other hand if Patton would not have been so purposeful and importunate man with connections in high places who knows where Patton would end and how would be his career in army.

First World War

How I mentioned above General John Pershing had chosen Patton for other cooperation. This time it was in Europe during the World War I. Patton there was in function of commander tanks troops. That was a risk to accept that post. No one could know, how it will continue and if it will be success or failure.

Since the time the Pattons rented a car while on honeymoon in 1910, Patton took a lively interest in the management of cars and trucks. These hobbies helped him later when he transferred his professional interest to the tanks of the cavalry. At the same time it laid new foundations for their future belief that every event and all of his hobbies in some way contributed to his fate as tank commander. Fatherhood, he was, like birthdays and observations related thinning of his hair, just a nuisance. “The master of sword” became one of America’s leading tank experts, significantly contributing to building the first American tank units and forging principles that developed new techniques of warfare. Patton became the first American commander of the brigade of light tanks.

The most discussed thing was now tank. Patton was constantly thinking about this new weapon. He was preoccupied with the idea of light tanks in the U.S. Army. He considered it as another stage in the development drive and not static artillery. Thus he became intensely interested in engines and learned the proper maintenance. As he well understood French, read everything that was in French, or rather by Renault issued and printed on tanks - from popular articles to professional technical manuals for their operation. In his enthusiasm for the technique, however, was on the ground. He always says that “rozhodujícím činitelem v boji není puška, dělo, kůň nebo kulomet, ale člověk.” (Linda, 1991, p. 32) (My translation: “the decisive factor in battle is not gun, cannon, machine gun or a horse, but a man.”) His statement in 1911 that “ žádný stroj není lepší

než jeho obsluha” (Linda, 1991, p. 32) (My translation: “no machine is better than its operator”) had become well known and actually survives to this day.

Pershing was appointed commander in chief of American Expeditionary Forces in Europe. He wanted to offer Patton the personal assistant position for himself, and Patton should have gone by the first transport. He agreed with pleasure. Then Patton was promoted to captain. The first thing he had a fresh tank commander school do was learn about tanks. His current interest was quite superficial and he held totally inadequate knowledge. When Patton became the commander of the school he visited training centre for French light tanks and the Renault factory with the Chief of the French military mission. He went through a two-week course in the training centre in Chamlieu, northeast of Paris. Not all military commanders were at that time able to fully appreciate the importance of tanks, but they certainly had no doubts. Patton’s tanks went to action during the Meuse-Argonne offensive. When the attack against German’s troops stopped he went forward to support his unit to the front. There were seven men who joined him. Five of them were killed and Patton was wounded by a bullet to his upper left thigh. The man who was right behind him, Joe Angelo, dragged him into the shell hole and gave him the first help to the injury. It is hard to find a clear explanation of why such a commander as Lieutenant Colonel George Patton went still further ahead to meet enemy fire. Was it just stubbornness of madness? He did not want to admit defeat and lose face in front of those who were now actually trying just about to reach the ridge and to hide her dark side? He hoped to eventually join him? Or they wanted to show how easy it is to walk among the bullets? I do not know, but it took only a few seconds before a German bullet had found the target. It turned out that he was very lucky. The bullet went into the left thigh and lodged about two inches from the anus. It was a clean shot.

Patton gained invaluable experience which provoked a dilemma as to how to answer the question: where exactly is a tank commander to be during the battle? If he or she remains at their command post that is somewhat behind. From here, certainly he or she has a good overview of the situation, and immediate contact with superiors, subordinates and artillery. We must not forget also less risk to his own safety, which is very important to keep a fighting and bonded team. There is the problem with connection which is often disrupted. Then there was the second option: being directly between their soldiers. In this case, there was great danger of injury or killing. There is much worse possibility for connecting with the superior commander and gunners. However, the immediate presence of the commander fighting alongside men - it has always been the best boost for the

morality of soldiers of all armies, regardless of nationality or continent. Patton decided to make this second option his choice.

After the war, which finished on November 11th, 1918 when the Germans surrendered, Patton returned to the United States as a colonel. He was then assigned to the new Tank Corps centre at Camp Meade, Maryland. There he met the five years younger Dwight D. Eisenhower. They both were confirmed supporters of the tank and military doctrine. Patton chose to go back to the cavalry to Ft. Myer and the 3rd Cavalry Regiment as a major. He attended the Command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, an essential hurdle to high command in 1923. In 1931 he attended the Army War College. Colonel Patton showed remarkable courage, coolness, vigour and intelligence to process control his brigade in valley of river Aire. A disoriented group of infantry later gathered and led her it behind the tanks under heavy machine gun and artillery fire, until he was injured. From the date of the cease-fire the War Department and many other promotions were halted, including senior officers. Patton was clear that a return to the small army of peace times would mean the descent of the provisional military rank to regular or permanent rank. In Patton's case it meant a return to the rank of captain, and even other officers who were then proud of colonel's eagles or general's stars would have their ranks replaced by the rank of a captain, or tape of major oak leaves. Patton waited for the inevitable reduction conferred the rank of colonel in the permanent rank of captain and the unattractive prospect of long boring interwar years.

Interwar period

In 1923, Patton attended the Field Officers Course at the Cavalry School at Fort Riley. Beatrice and her daughters stayed with her parents in Massachusetts, where, on Christmas Eve 1923, she gave birth to a son, whom she named George Smith Patton IV. Now Patton had a joy of their baby. After two girls they had Patton's dreamed of a boy. Patton continued his professional education at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. There he graduated in the top quarter of the class of 1924. Students like Patton, coming up with innovative ideas and nonconforming, often had problems. The best were evaluated, the solutions coincided with the model solutions developed by school teachers and based on universally recognized notions and were promoted by the school doctrine. The reality therefore is that Patton and Eisenhower left Leavenworth with a different philosophy. All the philosophy remained for the rest of their careers. Although, in

many cases still agreed with the other. But further development is clearly evident that while Eisenhower has always emphasized the need for elaborate schemes, Patton insisted on the stage of their implementation. It has also significantly contributed to the rupture in their relationship. Then a feud began lasting until Patton's death. Patton was convinced that the decisive factor in modern warfare was inspiring leadership on the battlefield. Eisenhower argued that leadership is only one element. He thought that Patton operated based on his romantic nature while neglecting more important issues, for example, supplying worldwide strategy and relations with allies. It is true that Dwight D. Eisenhower always behaved according to social codex and written rules and that was the main difference between him and Patton. Patton behaved hot-headed. At first he acted and then thought. Then he had to rectified mistakes and apology to many aggrieved person.

In September 1931, Patton was sent to the Army War College, at the time based in Washington. Eisenhower graduated from this school in 1927-1928. While the Command General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth was only a stepping stone to higher functions, the elite War College students prepared for specifically selected future high command and staff positions. Educational establishments of a higher degree than the War College in the U.S. Army and it ended the complete education for and American officer.

In July 1932 was Patton deputed to commit the act called “Bonus Army” that perhaps he regretted till his death. In Washington the protest of veterans from World War I against the government was occurring. According Axelrod (2005), there were many veterans without work so they had been awarded by forms of certificates but maturity in 1945. The veterans wanted the payment in cash sooner. Patton led the 3rd Cavalry Regiment to suppress the protest. Among the protestors appeared Joe Angelo, the man who saved Patton’s life in World War I when he was injured. During that suppression Patton did not feel well because among the protester were also his comrade-in-arms.

On September 1, 1939 the German armies assaulted Poland, which was the beginning of the new world war. Two years later Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese troops. It was the straw that broke the camel’s back, and in December of the same year the United States was dragged into the war. Patton was charged to establish a training centre for tanks troops. They knew that the first encounter of Patton’s units would be in North Africa against the feared German Africa Korps led by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, called “Desert Fox”. Patton was tasked with finding the right place which would be similar to the African environment – a desert. They found the perfect place in Mojave Desert in California and founded The Desert Training Center in February 1942. Due to the richness

of Beatrice's father, Mr. Ayere, Patton was able to buy his own plane. He used it to control the whole area of the desert and was able to direct the operation from the air. He was even able to visit many of the headquarters and saw how his troops progressed. As the first commander, he started using a voice radio for communication from the air with headquarters in real time. Patton also did experiments with tanks and formations. Under Patton's command was the 2nd Armored Division called "Hell on Wheels" or 'Patton's men'.

Second World War

North Africa

In December 1941 when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese, and president Roosevelt declared war on Japan the next day, general Dwight D. Eisenhower called George Patton to Washington. They needed him. In August Patton was called to London, where Eisenhower's headquarters were situated for the European campaign. It was there that Patton was informed that he was chosen as the "commander of the European Theater of Operations and Allied commander for Torch" (Axelrod, 2005, p. 87) It should have taken a place in the north of Africa, more specifically Egypt and Libya. This part of North Africa, especially Libya, was the colony of Great Britain. The British troops attacked the Italian units. The threat of a total defeat of the Italians in North Africa was almost inevitable. If Hitler wanted to ward off this danger and to save his ally he had to send the expeditionary forces to Libya. The commander of these reinforcements could not have been anyone else than General Erwin Rommel. Due to those movements the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill asked U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt to help Britain in North Africa.

The Operation Torch

The supporting operation of American units to North Africa was called Torch. In October 1942, Patton sailed from Norfolk, Virginia. He shortened the voyage by reading, exercising and writing in his diary. He also spent time "giving everyone a simplified directive of war. Use steamroller strategy; that is, make up your mind on course and direction of action, and stick to it. But in tactics, do not steamroll, but attack weakness. Hold them by the nose and kick them in the pants. (G. S. Patton, 1995, p. 7-8). On the 8th of November on the northern coast of Africa three operating groups landed. One was the

Western Task Force whose ground troops were commanded by General George S. Patton. The Western Task Force consisted of three task groups. North, which landed at Port Lyautey, commanded by major general Lucien K. Truscott, Central was under the command of major general Jonathan W. Anderson and they landed in Fedhale (also General Patton was here) and South, whose commander was major general Ernest A. Harmon who landed at Safi. The arrival of the Americans was an enormous surprise for the French. There was fierce fighting, as evidenced by the amount of losses. The French Navy fiercely fought heroically at sea and on land until the end. On the 11th of November, on Patton's birthday, the French surrendered at the last minute and prevented a widespread and devastating assault on Casablanca. That afternoon a truce was called in Fedhale and General Patton gave a toast in honour of the fallen heroes of both countries with the wish that in the future Americans and French would fight side by side for the destruction of the Nazis. Alan Axelrod (2005) also pointed out this alliance among Americans and the Vichy French by the words: "The enemy officers with whom he was dealing now were potential allies." (p. 92) Patton was now in Morocco, and was a much respected man. He could even boast an invitation from the Sultan of Morocco to his own palace. He had received such accolades that no other foreigners had yet to receive. He became a friend of the French General Noguès¹ who also started to curry favour to Patton. He enjoyed this very moment, as this was his first involvement in World War II and now his first success. However, he could not wait for another war conflict, especially against Nazi Germany. Such was the nature and temperament of General George Smith Patton. He was even decorated with "the Order of the Grand Cross of Ouissam Alaouite, on a pumpkin-coloured ribbon with a white edge that goes over the right shoulder with the medal hanging over the left hip. There is also a huge silver star which you wear normally, only using the ribbon for full dress." (Patton G. S., 1995, p.3) There in Morocco, Patton and his men went through a period of a calm and waited for further orders from headquarters in London, from Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was at that time four stars General. Only once did the German bombers fly over their heads, early in the morning. Fortunately nobody was wounded. Patton was worked up over it, as Axelrod (2005) reported, that he wondered why there was not ensured airspace and why none of the aircraft was shot down: "How in hell did you manage to stage that?" someone was heard to ask. "I will be damned if I know," Patton replied, "But if I could find the sons of bitches who flew those planes, I'd

¹Army General Auguste Noguès, a French resident general (deputy viceroy) in Morocco.

mail each one of them a medal.” (p. 98) In early March of 1943, General Patton was called to Tunis to lead the second corps which had suffered a heavy defeat and great losses in the Kasserine Pass. The aim was to support the operation procedure of the British 8th Army General Bernard L. Montgomery’s threat to the rear of troops of General Rommel. Patton won the Battle of El Guettar.

Kasserine Pass

Operation Torch came off very well for the Americans. Other American troops waged a battle on the land of Tunisia. They were under the command of General Lloyd Fredendall. It was the first time that tanks and motorized vehicles were used. The opponent was led by General Rommel. The U.S. II Corps had been totally devastated and they had taken heavy casualties, both in lives and equipment. It had a terrible effect on American moral. That was the first clash with the Germans. The American Army came out of this fight quite defeated, and even ashamed.

A decision had to be made by Eisenhower. Again he called upon George S. Patton to save the American reputation and to transform the ruined U.S. II Corps and prepare the men for another fight against Rommel and his tank units. Now it was Pattons’s task to transform these sparse lines of soldiers into a victorious army. It was not an easy mission, but Eisenhower trusted him and believed in a good result. The confidence he had in Patton is also proved according to Axelrod (2005) „taking over a difficult task... But I know you can do it and your suces there is going to have far-reaching effects.“ (p. 95) At the time of Patton’s arrival to the 2nd Armored Division he saw its biggest weakness; the lack of fighting spirit. Therefore he began from the first day with his men to pass on everything of military craft that he had learned in thirty years of service. It was a vast amount of exeperience gained by studying, as well as hands-on practice. Patton was starting again from sratch. He taught his men of a discipline, constantly checking their uniforms and how they were groomed. He had to prepare his men to go to the next battle in a few weeks. Patton asked for Omar Bradley² to be his assistant Corps Commander.

It was Patton’s first tank battle in the World War II and the first fight against Rommel’s African Korps in North Africa. For him it was very significant day. Patton had been looking forward to this for many years. He had been dreaming about the usage of

² At that time was Omar Bradley major general and led 2. corps

tanks in battle. Now it was his real chance to show the whole United States of America who their main commander of U.S. Army was. For the first time he showed his real colour. His U.S. II Corps defeated German troops and gave support to the British units helping them to retake the territory occupied by Rommel's troops. Patton was till that day an unknown man for Germans, and thanks to the battle in Kasserine Pass he got deep in their subconscious. Due to this successful campaign George S. Patton, Jr. Was in March promoted to Lieutenant General. It was his third star. After that victory Patton was a hero in his own country and became a much prouder man.

Europe

Sicily

The next of George S. Patton's missions would be on an Italian island, specifically Sicily. There again cooperated the British and American armies. Allied ground troops were commanded by General Sir Harold Alexander. Under him were Eighth British Army whose leader was General Bernard Law Montgomery and the Seventh American Army whose commander was General George S. Patton, Jr. The same as in Africa, Patton was the main commander of the Americans troops and General Omar Bradley was his deputy. The two were polar opposites in temperament and personality. The work of these two men, Generals with different attitudes to commanding the war was perfectly proven in operation Torch in Morocco and especially in the first American tank battle in Kasserine Pass. So the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Eisenhower, recalled Patton to take over the control of plans for the American Operation Husky³. The plan to go ashore on the coast of the island of Sicily was planned for July 1943. George S. Patton, Jr. who for his whole life believed in reincarnation held places of some well-known events in sentimental importance. He decided to land at the same place as in the past the Greeks did, in Siracusa. That was the place where British General Bernard Law Montgomery should land with his Eighth Army and go by the eastern coast to the Messina. General Patton should land in Palermo and on go to the north coast to Messina where they should meet. But everything was different and things changed. Montgomery did not accept this plan and wanted Patton with his troops as his supporting power. Instead, they landed in Gela on the south shore and Montgomery in Siracusa. Patton was disappointed by this, and by how Eisenhower

³ Operation Husky was the codename for the landing on Sicily

behaved. Also biographer D'Este (1995) mentioned Patton's outrage "what you get when your Commander-in-Chief ceases to be an American and becomes an Ally" (p. 494) and the dominance of Montgomery in Operation Husky. "Monty" derided to Patton: "Amusing, isn't it? That the final plans for the invasion of Sicily should have been put forward in an Algerian lavatory." (Schaffner, 1970). How he outflanked him in the Algerian toilets with General Smith⁴. That was retrieved from film *Patton*.⁵

Patton was already upset at being in Montgomery's shadow and doing his dirty work. Then there was another quarrel. Monty could not get through German troops on the coast so he moved his army on the inland road which had been reserved for Patton's forces. With the inland road suddenly appropriated, Patton could not proceed with his drive to Messina. So there was another example of protecting Montgomery's flank and rear. Any objections there were wasted. Patton decided to take the matters into his own hands and started to manage the mission for his Seventh Army; to conquer the Sicilian capital of Palermo on the north shore as he wanted at first. Patton's deputy Geoffrey Keys⁶ commanded the provisional corps that reached Palermo on July 23rd. Then he continued forward to the Messina by the North shore of Sicily. There Patton's men arrived earlier than Montgomery's troops, which made him happy and proud. His campaign on the Italian island was summarized by The New York Times (1945): "The invasion was brilliantly successful, and General Patton's troops cut clear across the island to Palermo; then fought their way along the north coast to Messina."

Patton's dramatic successes on Sicily put him in the premier position for further major commands in the forthcoming European campaign. But his theatrical excesses and temper nearly brought his military career to an end. Patton believed that his strict discipline and leadership style was for the soldier's own good. For that reason he held his field officers to war-fighting principles:

There is only one sort of discipline—perfect discipline. . . .

Discipline must be a habit so ingrained that it is stronger than the excitement of battle or the fear of death. . . .

⁴ Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's chief of staff. Universally called Beetle or Beadle

⁵ Patton – movie about Patton in World War II directed by Franklin J. Schaffner

⁶ General major Geoffrey Keys was deputy of commander of Western Task Force in North Africa; the deputy of commander of Seventh Army and also the commander of provisional corps on Sicily

Officers who fail to correct errors or to praise excellence are valueless in peace and dangerous misfits in war. Officers must assert themselves by example and by voice.

..

There is only one tactical principle which is not subject to change. It is: "To use the means at hand to inflict the maximum amount of wounds, death, and destruction on the enemy in the minimum amount of time." Never attack [enemy] strength [but rather his weakness]. . . .

Casualties vary directly with the time you are exposed to effective fire. . . .

Rapidity of attack shortens the time of exposure. . . .

If you cannot see the enemy . . . shoot at the place he is most likely to be. . . .

Battles are won by frightening the enemy. Fear is induced by inflicting death and wounds on him. Death and wounds are produced by fire. Fire from the rear is more deadly and three times more effective than fire from the front. . . .

Few men are killed by bayonets, but many are scared by them. Having the bayonet fixed makes our men want to close. Only the threat to close will defeat a determined enemy. . . .

Never take counsel of your fears. The enemy is more worried than you are. . . .

A good solution applied with vigor *now* is better than a perfect solution ten minutes later. . . .

IN CASE OF DOUBT, ATTACK! (Blumenson, 1996, p. 262-63)

At the beginning of August 1943 Patton visited the U.S. military hospital, which was placed in field conditions, so in the tents. There among the wounded soldiers he was one without obvious injuries that resulted in him being subjected to suspicion and anger. He hit the soldier who questioned his integrity several times on the head and left the tent. Later he learned that the soldier suffered from malaria. A similar situation occurred a week later in another field hospital on Sicily. Patton again slapped a soldier in the face by leather gloves. He for sure made apologies to the doctors and nurses of the hospitals involved, and to the two soldiers, too. These incidents caused a lot of discussions and confusion about Patton's career. Eisenhower had to intervene and save Patton's neck, allowing him to continue to be present in the fighting of World War II. General George S. Patton, Jr. was always an egocentric man. According to Axelrod (2005) he wanted "to see the battle for himself, but, more than that, he wanted those fighting the battle to see him. Visiting field evacuation hospitals was part of this see-and-be-seen philosophy." (p. 114) We can just suppose that it could be the reason that Patton had not been chosen to organize an army for

the main invasion to the France, those incidents of slapping the injured soldiers. The incidents confirmed for Eisenhower that the decision to pick up Bradley instead of him was the better choice for this job, though the decision was made weeks before the incidents. The truth is that Eisenhower never had in his mind to choose Patton for that task, even though it is also true that after the successful operation on Sicily that Patton was whom the enemy was afraid of, and he commanded their respect. His leadership was not regarded as just for perfect tactic leading, skill, courage and effectiveness against the enemy but also for the saving the lives of the soldiers in his troops. For the planning of Operation Overlord General Omar Bradley was chosen. Bradley was calmer, more focused and more balanced than Patton. Bradley was not a gambler as Patton was. He was not irascible, but acted as resolutely as the sharpest soldier. He had a natural authority. He was an attentive listener of opinions of others, and especially the Allied commanders. He was not and never wanted to be the best star of the U.S. Army. We can say that he was a worker of the staff and on field while Patton was the right opposite.

France and Germany

Patton's slapping incidents did not help anyone, but Marshall⁷ and Eisenhower knew that they needed a capable cavalryman like Patton for reaching their goals in France. Patton was transferred from the Seventh Army to England to command the Third Army in January of 1944. The initial phase of Operation Overlord⁸ in Normandy had been under the command of General Omar Bradley and his First Army. One might think that General George S. Patton was rewarded for his fast and powerful attacks in World War II, but before beginning his campaign in France he was used by the main headquarters in London for the betrayal and deceptions of German troops. The purpose of using Patton as a decoy was to keep the enemy guessing and the Allies meanwhile sought the place for the perfect landing on the French shore to attack the Germans in Normandy. It was a useful role to play decoy, even though it was a rather demeaning role at the beginning of the Overlord operation. The Commander in Chief reserved the right moment when he would notify the public that it had again deployed Patton. It should have had a twofold effect. The enemy was to maintain in the domain that everything that had been proclaimed about Eisenhower

⁷ George C. Marshall, army chief-of-staff in World War II

⁸ Operation Overlord was the code name for the invasion in Normandy, France in 6th of June 1944

and Bradley was only a feint. The real commander of the invasion could not be anyone other than the one who had already succeeded in North Africa and Sicily; Patton. Therefore everything was organized by Bradley – from training to the concentration of troops, materials, supplies and ships – serving a fraudulent misrepresentation to mislead German intelligence. Eisenhower also wanted to pull Patton as an ace from his sleeve until the fire will burn. No one from American newspapers or radio dared to commemorate Patton’s pieces from the last year in Sicily.

A division of General Patton’s army actually rolled forward in a manner which until that time had no precedent on the Western Front. When Patton first landed in France on the 1st of August, the British had only half of Cean and did not get to the plateau from Falaise. Neither Bradley reached more as he imagined by the plan. Patton first deployed in Brittany. He set immediately towards Avranches, and something akin to a miracle happened. What Bradley had failed to accomplish in a month, Patton did in three days. It led to the spectacular breakout of Bradley’s Operation Cobra⁹. When Eisenhower saw Patton’s forces begin well, he changed the plan. Instead of sending the entire the Third Army to Brittany as the original instructions were, Eisenhower gave him the instructions to send there only a part of his troops. He was oriented to the south and east. Patton only welcomed this decision and once again proved in practice his excellent organizational skills. He quickly turned the entire unit and went to the Sein and Loire. An unexpected obstacle to high-tech U.S. military had been petrol. Patton ran so far from them that it was not possible to supply him with fuel or other means necessary. When Patton asked his long-time friend Bradley for gasoline, Bradley briefly and clearly answered no. As Axelrod (2005) mentioned “If the Germans could not stop Patton, Allied logistics could, and did. On the Meuse, at the end of August, Third Army outran its gasoline.” (p. 141) As such, Patton was stuck in one place and could not move. He asked Eisenhower for gasoline to take an advantage of the weakened Germans so that he could attack. Sadly, once again, Eisenhower preferred Montgomery over Patton and supplied Bradley with means necessary for Operation Market Garden¹⁰. Patton of course did not agree with Eisenhower’s decision and argued that “With sufficient gas, I could deliver a decapitating blow to Germany that much faster” (Axelrod, 2005, p. 142).

⁹ Operation Cobra was the offensive launch of the First U.S. Army and the task was to take an advantage of the French city Cean.

¹⁰ Operation Market Garden was a huge airborne attack on the territory of the Netherlands and Germany. The task was to gain control of the bridges across the river Maas and of the Rhine.

The Ardennes – The Battle of the Bulge

George S. Patton also did not get the required amount of supplies because Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Allied Forces were not keen to release Paris so soon, and he was close. Patton and his troops were ready, except for the lack of gasoline, to liberate the French capital. It was not a surprise that Patton could not be the one who would be there first. This was caused by political reasons. At that time General Bradley sent his troops towards to the city of Bastogne. This place was of the tactical good for another advance to the east. Even though Bradley was warned by Patton of the possibility of danger he still went onward, and that was a mistake. Bradley's soldiers were surrounded. Now there were supplies even for Patton, and changed the direction of his soldiers. He turned his army 90 degrees to the north and saved Bradley's troops from the German's siege. "The Battle of the Bulge was in full swing and the German army was dangerously moving forward. The aspect of surprise, as well as their ferocity, knowledge of the terrain, and the weather that made it impossible for American and British bombers, fighters, and tactical air force to be deployed, all played in their favour." (The City of Pilsen, n.d.)

It was on the 19th of December, when Patton on the meeting in Verdun, said that it was possible to send his three divisions to the north. Some of the staff were laughing, believing this to be said in jest, but he meant it seriously. Also, Eisenhower did not stay quiet with his complaints: "Don't be fatuous, George". (D'Este, 1995. p. 680) He did not want to let Patton go with just three divisions. General Eisenhower's son John S. D. Eisenhower (2005) had written an article where he mentioned Patton's brave and quick preparation of his men:

Patton was a bit more optimistic than Ike, but they settled on a three-division attack to be executed in three days from Arlon toward the beleaguered town of Bastogne. Once they had agreed, Patton excused himself from the meeting, went to the telephone, and gave his codeword to his chief of staff. The Third Army was on the move.

Patton saw it as a moment of surprise which he wanted to utilize, and the next day he wanted to send another three divisions. That was one of the most heroic battles in which Patton victoriously participated in. We can now just speculate about what would have been the continuation if the Allies would have lost that battle of significant territory. The weather in this year, and in particular that winter was one of the worst in the previous recent years. After the victorious battle General Patton was very proud of his soldiers. They perfectly handled the terrible cold and fighting for many days without rest. I can dare

to say that in these days the soldiers of the Third Army were glad for his hard training and preparation of them for the war in Europe.

Patton's Third Army took over a half million of the Germans soldiers as prisoners and during the following weeks this number was increasing to over a million. No other army on the Western Front, not even the British, could boast of such a success. Even this apparent "detail" testified about how the corps and division were perfectly controlled. That proved to be true not only still in front, but its success secured from the rear point of view. This obviously required great organizational skills and efforts not only from Patton but also other people that he so carefully prepared and impressed by his enthusiasm.

During the Tunisian campaign Patton's son-in-law was captured. Axelrod (2005) informed that it was in a prisoner camp at Hammelburg, Germany. There were over 5000 POWs¹¹ and some of them were Americans. They were living in terrible conditions and suffered of starvation. Patton decided to launch a rescue mission. That was probably his worst tactical move in World War II. Unfortunately this mission failed and some of the soldiers from the raiders unit were taken back to Hammelburg. However, within two days there were more troops sent forward and the prisoners, including Patton's son-in-law John Waters, were saved. Probably this launch had an impact that Patton and his still not beaten Third Army were turned away from advancing to Berlin and instead they drove southeast into Czechoslovakia and Austria. By the end of April, Patton had learned from newspapers that he had been promoted to full general and that he had gotten his fourth general's star.

Czechoslovakia

Stopping the dynamic movement of American troops across France, especially Patton's Third Army, turned out to be fateful for the overall outcome of the war and its consequences in many European countries. If Patton and other commanders of armies could have moved faster the war would have ended much sooner.

Liberation of western and south-western Bohemia in 1945 took place under the direction of the U.S. 3rd Army. At its head stood the most famous American general of the whole war, George S. Patton. According to Patton, R. (2004) George S. Patton was sent liberate Czechoslovakia under the leadership of Major General Clarence Haubner and Major General Leroy Irwin. Troops of Haubner corps operated in western Bohemia from

¹¹ POW – prisoner of war

Cheb and Carlsbad to Pilsen and Klatovy. Irwin's corps operated in the southeast of Klatovy, over Strakonice to Písek.

The first major combat clashes between Americans and German Nazis in Czechoslovakia took place in late April of 1945, in Cheb. Almost all day soldiers waged difficult fighting. It was often street after street, house to house, because the Germans did not intend to give up. The best of Patton's soldiers in southwest Bohemia were undoubtedly members of the 1st and 2nd Infantry Division. Headquarters were established in Cheb. This First Infantry Division could demonstrate truly outstanding results in their combat deployment. For all the best certainly suggested by the fact that the team, which first landed in the invasion of France and usually always bore the brunt of hostilities on their shoulders. The fame of the First Infantry Division and its dignity is commemorated by the monument which stands at the intersection of roads leading from Pilsen and Carlsbad to Cheb. At Patton's command the elite soldiers entered the land of Czechoslovakia. Each of these tanks went through the hell of war events on the European continent. As Linda (1991) informed "čtvrtá obrněná byla jako jediná z tankových svazků vyznamenána v osobním poselství prezidenta USA" (the Fourth was the only armoured tank of volumes awarded in a personal message of U.S. President.) It was justified. After all, it was this division which cut through Arden's hills in December 1944, and travelled icy roads hit by an enemy to secure the besieged city of Bastogne in Belgium.

Then it was Pilsen's turn to re-claim their freedom from the Nazis.

According to The City of Pilsen, n.d):

On 4 May 1945 General Patton gave the order to resume the offensive in West Bohemia, and the 2nd and 97th Infantry Divisions and the 16th Armored Division pushed forward in the direction of Plzeň. American tanks appeared on the streets of the city from eight o'clock on the morning of Sunday 6 May, to be greeted with immense enthusiasm by local inhabitants.

Patton's tank men with a triangle and division number 16 on the left shoulder were the first American soldiers who entered the West Bohemian metropolis of Pilsen on the 6th of May, 1945. In the morning on the wet streets appeared the first machines of the 16th Armoured Division of the U.S. 3rd Army. The face of the column passed Husova Street, turned by the theatre to Sady Pětatřicátníků and proceeded to the main square. Crowds of people filled the square and the streets following the arrival of the 16th Division. Everywhere there were enthusiastic shouts. The news that the Americans were in town spread like wildfire. The young soldiers did not understand the great enthusiasm that

suddenly erupted around them. The U.S. military equipment was covered with flowers offering welcome. In a warm atmosphere on both sides it was as if everyone forgot that they were still at war. Americans handed out cigarettes, chocolate, and chewing gum. Tankers received reports about the resistance in other places in Pilsen. There appeared a panic again, and the 16th Armoured Division liberated Pilsen for the whole day.

When Patton wanted to go to the Czechoslovakian capital Prague, General Omar Bradley stopped him. Pilsen would be the extent of the Third Army's advance. Patton wanted to liberate Prague as the final prize for his Third Army. We now know how it all happened. However, the common soldiers had no idea that General Omar Bradley under instruction from Eisenhower gave Patton a command to move only 8 km past Pilsen. Neither could they know that Eisenhower agreed with the Chief of General Staff of the Soviet General Antonov on the demarcation line in the line of Carlsbad – Pilsen – České Budějovice – Linz. Patton never found confidence in the Russians. From the beginning he asserted that Prague should be freed by Americans. As informed by his grandson Patton, R. (2004) he claimed that they had not come with the intent of just doing right by the jurisdiction of any nation or country, but should be returned their right to govern themselves. His distrust of the Soviet post-war intentions in light of future events proved to be prophetic. The Soviet Union failed to comply with the agreement, did not withdraw its army and did not allow Eastern European countries to establish an independent government.

There is still a connection in Pilsen with Patton's Third Army. In one of its corps there was the 2nd Infantry Division, which was one of the first who had participated in the liberation of Pilsen. This is probably the reason why Pilsen's hockey club has in its symbol an Indian. If we look at the two pictures below, the Figure 2 is the logo of Hockey Club of Pilsen and has almost the same as Second Infantry Division. Its shape is without differences and the colour of Indian headband is just changed with the logo's background. The logo on Figure 1 wore the soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division on their shoulders.



Figure 1: 2nd Infantry Division Logo
(<http://www.militarycarclub.cz/cs/>, 19.4.2012)



Figure 2: Hockey Club of Pilsen Logo
(<http://www.hcplzen.cz/>, 19.4.2012)

“Since 1990 the tradition has grown of organizing an annual Liberation Festival in May. People come to the city from all over the world to welcome in the spring with music and dance, to meet American veterans and their friends’ relatives, and of course to drink Pilsner beer.” (City of Pilsen, n.d.)

Patton’s Legacy to army

After the end of the World War II, when George S. Patton, Jr. died, it was the perfect time to write the memoirs and publish his own thoughts and attitude concerning the just finished war. General Omar Bradley, and even General Dwight D. Eisenhower, enjoyed the success of the post-war time. Both of them published their own memoirs in a different ways. True, both of them saw the war from a different place and from a different point of view. Unfortunately Patton died before he could write his memoirs¹². Fortunately, his diary which he wrote during World War II helped others to record his experiences for him. His wife Beatrice, with the help of Colonel Paul D. Harkins who was Patton’s deputy Chief of Staff through the war, took to the task. Now after Patton’s death everybody was calling his name and he was said to be the greatest general of World War II. The American people, even those that had called for his resignation after the slapping incidents, cried for him.

After his death it raised another problem. During the war soldiers were not sent home to America for burial. Now there was the question of how people would react in the

¹² *War as I Knew It* – consists of Patton’s notes which are edited by other people and published as a book

case of sending Patton's corpse to be laid to rest in America. When Beatrice heard of this predicament, she reacted with: "Of course he must be buried here! Why did not I think of it? Furthermore, I know George would want to lie beside the men of his army who have fallen." (D'Este, 1995, p. 798) She picked the U.S. military cemetery at Hamm in Luxembourg. Years later there was an interesting event. Patton's grave had to be moved to the side because so many people were coming to visit that there were beaten paths leading to and from his grave.

George S. Patton, Jr. wanted to leave the idea of the fighter leader to the army behind. He wanted an army equipped with the best and newest weapons; a modern army with modern and reliable logistics. With all of this it was necessary to also have perfect technology for communication and reconnaissance missions. If there was no chance to get these things from the government, Patton thought to obtain money from his wife, who had a very rich father. At the beginning of World War II he even bought his own plane for better controlling his army and exploring the ground under him for better orientation and navigation. He also had looked for his inspiration in the past of his belief in reincarnation. It can be seen that every good leader has to find his fighter soul and apply it in praxis in commanding.

Patton believed that a perfect strategy could not compare with tactics on the same level. But on the other hand his idea was that: "good tactics, skilfully and violently executed, could even compensate for poor strategy." (Axelrod, 2005, p. 176) Patton declared that planes should be: "simple and flexible" and they should be "made by the people who are going to execute them." Plans have to be based on the exploration of surroundings and enemy, with the newest information. The plans also should be "simple and short". They should tell "what to do, not how". (Blumenson, 1996, p. 424) As Axelrod expressed Patton's tactics they were always "distinguished by boldness and daring." (2005, p. 176) His planning was always careful. Through my research I have realised that Patton not much cared for the lives of his soldiers. His opinion was that they are here to fight and save the lives of civilians. They had to count on the probability of dying in war. Patton never strictly kept to his plan, and always had something in reserve. In most cases it was improvisation and depended on a given situation.

Another typical sign of Patton's tactics were speed and coordination of the advancement of his troops. He wanted to execute the best attack in the shortest time, so his forces went to the enemy as fast as possible to take them by surprise. In many cases it was a surprise for both the enemy and for Patton's superiors, especially General Omar Bradley

and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Patton's approach for a fast combat has become very important. It was important much more in World War II than ever before. The only way to reach victory, and within that victory cause the lowest measure of lost lives and destroyed equipment, was to defeat the enemy as fast as possible.

Even though Patton loved cavalry and horse riding, and attack from horse saddle in World War I, he realised the advantage of the tank. At the beginning of WWI the United States did not have any tanks. Patton became the first commandant of American's Armoured Army because no one else had better prerequisites to do this job. Patton's training of soldiers was seen as of more important value than as a combat leader. No one can doubt that his soldiers were the better of the whole U.S. Army and the best prepared for the war. It is not a secret that his first Fifth Army which went to North Africa, then the Seventh Army which landed in Sicily, and last but not least the Third Army went through tough and hard training. Patton trained the first American desert soldiers. I would guess that even for training soldiers for the war in Iraq that some of Patton's techniques were used.

George S. Patton was as a perfect example of leadership. Not just because of his sense of leading, commanding and planning. He was besides other things perfect motivator. He had an idea of victory and by his motivation could transfer it to his soldiers. Also today is Patton important and as Axelrod (2005) claim, that "military leaders as well as leaders in business and civil government study Patton's speeches and other pronouncements on leadership to learn something of his motivational techniques." (p. 182) Patton had also natural authority and if he something says, solders believed him and just did it. John Ingles¹³ thought back to times in the war: "We knew what General Patton expected us to do, and we believed that if we did it we would win." (D'Este, 1995, 819)

Today we can just speculate and guess what would have happened if General Patton had been given more freedom in World War II, especially in France and advancement to Germany. Particularly we in the Czech Republic regret until now that it was not Americans who liberated our capital Prague, but Soviets. Many soldiers, historians and even civilians thought that if Patton had had freer hands, and of course the gasoline he had asked for, World War II would have ended in 1944.

¹³ John Ingles – a Third Army Lieutenant

CONCLUSION

The main point of the research was to determine what influence Patton's presence had in World War II. One can only speculate what the outcome would have been had he not been a commanding force of the war. On the one hand my opinion is that the world over can be thankful of Patton and his unscrupulous methods in his leading and training of his armies. Only Patton and his trained soldiers were able to move within a night over 160 kilometres in terribly cold weather to save their comrades-in-arms. Thanks to Patton's determination and unprecedented fighting speed he won the decisive Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne. It is regrettable that he did not have more liberty to choose his own movements and speed.

General George S. Patton wanted at the end of the war to procure one more victory; being the first to arrive in Prague, and as such to liberate it. His commanders did not permit this to him, even though he was less than 80 km from Rokycany, and three days ahead of the Soviet troops. Fear that Patton would over-shadow those in prominent positions is presumably the reason why they did allow him to fulfil his last wish. He simply wanted to be either the chief of the Military Academy at West point, or the chief at another American military school. General Patton was an underdog in his own way. It seemed to be a love-hate relationship. They did not hesitate to call on him and his heroic actions in times of dire need, yet slighted him in areas of career challenges and advancements by large. Despite this, experts consistently point out that he belonged to the elite military leaders throughout the long history of wars and battles, and with this I can agree.

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SHRNUTÍ

Téma mé bakalářské práce je věnováno americkému generálu Georgi S. Pattonovi, Jr. a jaký vliv měla jeho přítomnost na vývoj Druhé světové. Byl to bez pochyby jeden z nejlepších vojevůdců vůbec v celé historii moderních dějin. S trochou nadsázky lze říci, že Patton byl nejúčinnější zbraň spojeneckých vojsk během bojů v 2. Světové válce.

Práce je rozdělena na tři hlavní části. První z nich pojednává o Pattonově původu, jeho raných let strávených s rodinou na Lake Vineyardu. Zahrnuje také kapitoly jeho nelehkých studijních let, které mu byly ztíženy dyslexií, kterou od mala trpěl. Závěr první části je věnován Pattonově účasti v 1. Světové válce a létům v období meziválečném, roky, které pro něj byly utrpením.

Druhá část je věnována období Druhé světové války a Georgovo působení v ní. Popisuje Pattonovo velení v Severní Africe, odkud se přemístil do Evropy a začal své tažení na Italském ostrově Sicílie. Téměř po roce pokračoval z Francie a skončil až za Plzní. Odtud mu nebylo povoleno pokračovat dál.

V poslední části je rozebráno, jaké přínosy si můžeme vzít z Pattonova velení vůbec za jeho celou kariéru. A ne jen velení v bojích, ale řízení cvičení a cvičných operací. Mezi jeho přednosti patřila především rychlost, kterou byl schopen se svými muži postupovat a ničit nepřítele.