

THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
AND GEORGE S. PATTON JR.

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ABSTRACT

THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER AND
GEORGE S. PATTON JR., by MAJ Lawrence F. Camacho, 148 pages.

Global tensions and threats such as terrorist acts continue to pressure America's effort to provide peace and stability to regions around the world. Consequently, military leaders have traditionally been called to protect American interests at home and abroad. Today's Army is faced with the important task of producing competent leaders who can successfully accomplish America's worldwide endeavor to combat the contemporary challenges it faces. Yet, the process of developing individuals into consummate leaders requires a great deal of time, planning, resourcing, and a collection of skilled cadre. Illustrating the meaningful development of victorious wartime leaders is one way to educate today's aspiring leaders. General Dwight D. Eisenhower and General George S. Patton Jr. demonstrated superb leadership in World War II. Their childhood upbringing, military education, Army assignments, as well as the mentoring they received during the interwar period essentially strengthened their development, making them triumphant leaders. Therefore, Eisenhower and Patton's leadership growth, coupled with their personal determination to become successful commanders in World War II, is an indispensable model and a valuable lesson for today's leaders.

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ACRONYMS

AWC	Army War College
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CCSS	Command and General Staff College
DA PAM	Department of the Army Pamphlet
GSL	General Staff List
NDA	National Defense Act
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
VMI	Virginia Military Institute

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Organizational transformation is a complex process. It is intricate, multifaceted, and challenging. As the operational environment changes, so too must the institution alter its course in order to adapt to the complexities of the shifting environment.¹

Organizational success therefore depends on a key component--transformation. Like most organizations, the United States Army is a learning organization, and thus recognizes the importance for change. What stimulates the Army to transform? Technological advancements and massive societal changes cause the Army's operational atmosphere to shift. Uncertainty in the nation's future also energizes the Army to transform. Such prevalent uncertainty pressures the Army to envision a different kind of warfare, demanding a military transformation.

Today's Army is experiencing a shift in its operational environment because of technological advancements, globalization, and the international threat of terrorism. As the Army adapts to environmental changes, the enemy is also changing its tactics and strategy.² In the same way, the Army went through a similar situation after returning from World War I. As a result of the rapid advancements in technology and the uncertainties in Europe caused by the Treaty of Versailles, the Army during the interwar period re-examined its organizational structure, doctrine, and equipment. As a result of the environmental pressures during the interwar period, the Army had no option but to transform in order to prepare for future conflicts.

The U.S. Army today maintains conventional military superiority; however, it is now faced with an unconventional threat. Uncertainties like these generate a different

kind of battlefield. For this reason, the Army's challenges rest in developing and preparing its officers to overcome the demands of this new brand of conflict--21st Century warfare. The Army has established the proud tradition of producing competent officers, making success on the future battlefields dependent on the quality of leaders it creates today.³

Historically, the Army has always changed its practices in order to confront new challenges. Despite the budget constraints resulting from the National Defense Act of 1920, the Army during the interwar years recognized the need for change in order to prepare for the next big conflict. One of its most significant initiatives during that period was the officer development process. The Army recognized that in addition to restructuring the organization through changes in doctrine, training, and equipment, it needed to develop officers who would eventually lead and guide the forces in future conflicts. New innovations were to be tested for their function, and World War II became the ultimate testing laboratory for the Army's transformation. Accordingly, it also became the testing ground for the leader development that was instituted by the Army during the interwar period.

Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize opportunity to change things for the better.⁴

President Truman's words are so true that leadership and leader development have received constant attention throughout the U.S. Army's history. Developing competent and confident military leaders continues to be the "most enduring legacy to the future of the Army and the nation."⁵ Developing future leaders, considering a decrease in resources and a downsizing of the force, challenges the Army to maximize its

developmental process. Professional leaders who exemplify the traditional Army values and ethics will always be the cornerstone of our trained and ready Army.⁶ The Army's leadership developmental model is shown below in Figure 1.⁷

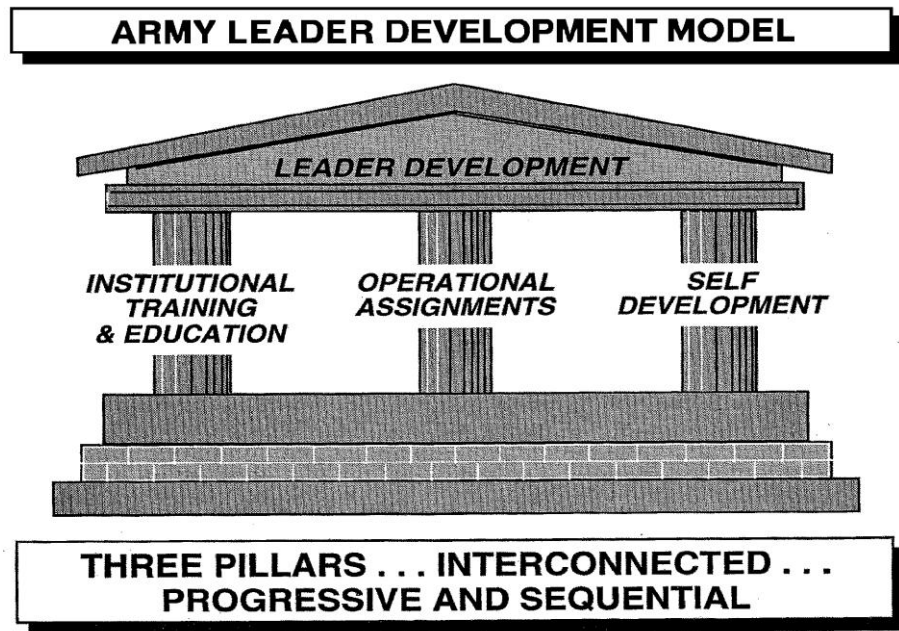


Figure 1. Army Leader Development Model

Source: Department of the Army, Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet 350-58, *Leader Development for America's Army* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 1.

This leader development model shows the three pillars that uphold leader growth: institutional training and education, operational assignments, and self-development. How different or similar is this model from that of the interwar period? What was the leader development practice during the interwar period that produced the victorious general officers of World War II? Two prominent generals, General Dwight D. Eisenhower and General George S. Patton Jr. demonstrated superb leadership in World War II.

Eisenhower and Patton's leadership growth, coupled with their personal determination to become successful commanders in World War II, is an indispensable model and presents a valuable lesson for today's leaders. Interestingly, Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development model resembles today's model found in Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet 350-58. This thesis demonstrates how the Army during the interwar period groomed successful World War II commanders like Eisenhower and Patton. The thesis focuses on Eisenhower and Patton's leader development. Furthermore, the thesis investigates their upbringing and background, military education, Army assignments, and mentorship. The development of successful wartime-leaders like Eisenhower and Patton is a worthy lesson to talk about and a great way to educate today's aspiring leaders.

Dwight D. Eisenhower and George S. Patton Jr. confirmed their leadership competencies when they effectively commanded massive Army organizations in Europe during World War II. Eisenhower became the supreme commander for the Allied forces in Europe, and was ultimately responsible for the Allied victory when he directed the invasion of Normandy and the eventual capitulation of the German war machine.⁸ Patton rose in rank to command Third Army and was one of the largest contributors to the German defeat. Additionally, Patton's record-breaking victories in his campaigns continue to amaze military historians to this day.⁹ Both commanders worked with other leaders to achieve the ultimate Allied aim of liberating Europe from the Nazi and Fascist threats in World War II. The purpose of this thesis is to examine how Eisenhower and Patton were developed and examine how they achieved their remarkable accomplishments during the war.

Eisenhower and Patton had different personalities during their childhood upbringing. Nonetheless, they benefited from the Army's educational system, designed to develop officers during the interwar period. The educational experiences throughout Eisenhower and Patton's career largely improved the leadership traits they already gained from their background. The Army's educational system at the time became the vital link for the development of officers. It reinforced individual character and introduced military leadership traits such as discipline, confidence, standards, and compassion for soldiers.

Army cadets were instructed at West Point or at the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs at select universities throughout the country during the 1920s. Commissioned officers then received additional education at their respective branch schools as they advanced in rank between assignments. Top-notch field grade officers were then selected to attend graduate-level studies at the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Those officers who scored high and graduated in the top 25th percentile of their class at Leavenworth were placed on the General Staff List and were also chosen to attend the U.S. Army War College (AWC) in Washington, D.C.¹⁰

Effective leaders know their profession. They are thoroughly competent in combat operations, training, and technical aspects of their basic branch--regardless of their current assignment. Leaders demonstrating technical and tactical competence inspire confidence in young soldiers. Combat won't allow for detailed preparation of leaders to assume new leadership positions. This principle entails staying abreast of current military doctrinal and policy developments through service school training, experience in units, exposure to senior leaders, and personal study. Leaders will never know everything; the key is to always keep striving for proficiency.¹¹

Eisenhower and Patton benefited from the Army's institutional training and education, but as this thesis reveals, there were other influential factors like mentorship, character, and self-determination that played a huge role in their development.

Chapter 2 of this thesis discusses how Eisenhower developed to become a great military leader. General George C. Marshall once stated that Eisenhower was popular with his subordinates and his superiors. He possessed a high degree of intelligence, integrity, commitment to basic principles, dignity, organizational genius, tremendous energy, and diplomatic ability.¹² Eisenhower's life presents the image of a great leader who developed during the interwar period. His background, Army education, professional assignments, training capacity, self-development, mentorship, and his individual determination to succeed were the dominant factors that shaped his leadership development.

Chapter 3 focuses on Patton's leadership development. The chapter discusses Patton's growth from a young boy into one of the most famous leaders in American history. The chapter centers on Patton's determination to work hard in order to achieve greatness. Patton's life-changing experiences impacted his leadership growth. His background, Army education, professional assignments, combat experience, self-development, mentorship, and his determination to excel were certainly influential in his leadership development.

Chapter 4 is a discussion about the Army's officer education system during the interwar period. This segment is important because it lays out the kind of military education Eisenhower and Patton received. Thus, it also describes the kind of education

their staff officers and subordinate commanders who worked for them in World War II received.

Chapter 5 analyzes Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development model. The chapter provides a clearer perspective in understanding how Eisenhower and Patton shaped themselves to generalship. Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development models illustrate how their background, Army education, assignments, mentoring, and training and combat experiences considerably impacted their development. The models furthermore exemplify how these influential events in their lives interconnected to become the fabric that made them triumphant commanders in World War II.

Patton graduated from West Point in 1909 and Eisenhower in 1915. After their West Point Years, Eisenhower and Patton embarked on their way to leading troops in their company grade assignments. Although they had different experiences during those years, they both gained the requisite leadership traits that made them successful in commanding troops. The Army also had an education system designed to develop officers as they progressed in rank. As a result, both Eisenhower and Patton attended their branch-specific schools provided by the Army as part of the officer education system. Eisenhower attended the infantry courses at Fort Benning, Georgia, and Patton went to the cavalry course at Fort Riley, Kansas. Along the way, they honed their leadership skills, working in various assignment positions. Eisenhower emerged to be an excellent trainer. Patton's combat experiences gave him exceptional tactical skills.

Eisenhower and Patton's field grade years were filled with staff positions and additional officer education. Both attended the Army's Command and General Staff School and the Army War College. Along the way, they had mentors who provided

guidance and wisdom for the up-and-coming officers. Essentially, Eisenhower developed to become an outstanding officer who was well liked and admired for his diligent staff efforts. Patton, on the other hand, found fame and glory through his troop leading and tactical achievements.

Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development models show their development into competent officers who became well-versed in the art and science of military affairs. Their leadership development models illustrate how they established themselves to be disciplined, courageous, and dedicated to the mission and caring of the troops. The influential phases such as: background, military education, Army assignments, mentorship, training and combat experience, self development, and determination essentially meshed to become the framework that made them so dominant in their roles as wartime commanders. Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development is therefore applicable in educating present-day leaders and resembles today's leader development model depicted in DA PAM 350-58.

¹ Margaret J. Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Keller Publishers, Inc., 2006), 170.

² Ibid., 180

³ Major Robert A. Fitton, "Leadership Doctrine and Training: A Status Report" (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 29.

⁴ Words from President Harry S. Truman.

⁵ U.S. Army Doctrine, Department of the Army (DA) PAM 350-58, *Leader Development for America's Army* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 1.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁸ Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect, 1890-1952* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 409.

⁹ Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1995), 811.

¹⁰ Peter J. Schifferle, *Anticipating Armageddon: The Leavenworth Schools and U.S. Army Military Effectiveness 1919-1945* (Manuscript, University of Kansas, December 2008), 143.

¹¹ Robert A. Fitton, *Leadership: Quotations from the Military Tradition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 325.

¹² Ambrose, 9.

CHAPTER 2

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

Greatness does not simply materialize without hard work; rather, it is developed over time. Greatness is shaped through hard work and immense dedication. America has a proud tradition of producing its own set of heroes. These heroes, successful American champions, demonstrated commitment to duty and honorable service to country. How do we measure a person to be great? Eisenhower himself said that “the best measure of success is the distance between one's origin and one's final achievement.”¹ Throughout America’s young history, brave individuals have been famed for their gallantry, boldness, and daring courage. These heroes possess distinct characteristics of greatness.

A number of American general officers who commanded successfully during World War II fit this definition. Historians have written memoirs and accounts describing how U.S. Army generals led during the war. One general whose leadership during World War II remains important is Dwight D. Eisenhower. A large number of books have recorded the story of his life and professional experiences. Therefore, his exemplary actions during World War II as well as his extraordinary life continue to be of considerable interest.

One of Eisenhower’s famous quotes is: “Our real problem, then, is not our strength today; it is rather the vital necessity of action today to ensure our strength tomorrow.” How did General Eisenhower develop to become such a successful commander in World War II? His years at West Point, the Command and General Staff School, and the War College were significant in developing him as a professional leader. Along with the mentoring he received from his superior officers, the leader development

he grasped while attending these institutions was momentous. Nevertheless, Eisenhower's professional development throughout his various Army assignments certainly meshed with his own determined attitude for success. Although he was not an overseas veteran of World War I (perhaps an invaluable experience that may have helped to develop him as an Army officer), the Army's interwar years provided Eisenhower an opportunity for training and leader development that he later used as Supreme Allied Commander during World War II.

According to another celebrated Army general, George C. Marshall, Eisenhower was a leader who was professionally competent and well-versed in the history of war. He was decisive, well disciplined, courageous, and dedicated. Furthermore, in Marshall's terms, Eisenhower was popular with his subordinates and his superiors. He possessed a high degree of intelligence, integrity, commitment to basic principles, dignity, organizational genius, tremendous energy, and diplomatic ability.² Eisenhower's life presents the image of a great leader who developed during the interwar period through a leadership development model. Eisenhower's leadership development model describes the significant stages in his life that made an impact in his leadership growth. His background, Army education, professional assignments, training capacity, self-development, mentorship, and his self determination to succeed were indeed influential. This chapter covers General Eisenhower's life.

Eisenhower's Childhood

The story of Dwight D. Eisenhower's early childhood years illustrate how he accumulated admirable traits and sensible qualities that eventually enhanced his path to success. His deep-rooted background can be credited for developing him early with the

characteristics of a leader. His upbringing instilled the American values that later became important in his Army career. The principles and standards that he learned early in his life are the essence of Army leadership.

Eisenhower was born in Denison, Texas on October 1, 1890. However, his family relocated from Texas back to Kansas before his first birthday.³ So, Eisenhower hailed from Abilene, Kansas, a place he said was the heart of America. It is interesting that he said Abilene was the heart of America given that just twenty miles east is the exact geographic center of the United States.⁴ Eisenhower came from successful German Mennonite Pennsylvania farmers who moved to Dickenson County, Kansas in 1878 in search of land. His grandfather Jacob and his family moved to Kansas when his father David was only 14 years old. In 1885, David married Ida Stover who had come westward from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.⁵

Eisenhower grew up with five brothers in a household that was religiously focused and hardworking.⁶ His father David was financially unsuccessful; yet he established a strong work ethic and a disciplined way of life in his sons. Throughout Eisenhower's childhood years, his parents taught them the simple virtues of honesty, integrity, self-reliance, credence in God, and ambition.⁷ His parents wanted their sons to succeed beyond Abilene. These attributes followed Eisenhower throughout his life as he developed into a leader. His close relationship with his mother also reinforced the strong work ethic and disciplined lifestyle that his father characterized.⁸ These qualities were introduced early in his life, and as a result, he valued discipline early on in life. Although Eisenhower developed such traits at a young age, these mental models followed him and led to his competitiveness and his dislike for sloppy mistakes.⁹

In his youthful years Eisenhower excelled in sports such as baseball, football, and skating. After high school, he valued other activities such as poker, hunting, and camping. Nevertheless, sports taught him the value of gaining acceptance from his peers as well as the lessons of leading others. His experiences with sports and athletics exposed him to organizational, teamwork, and problem solving skills. For example, when his school did not have enough funds to transport the team during away games, Eisenhower solved the issue by writing to schools in the area and hustling his teammates onto freight trains for a free ride so they could make the games.¹⁰ Additionally, he organized the Abilene High School Athletic Association to raise funds in his senior year and was voted as the association's first president. Accordingly, the association raised funds through contributions and it inspired many students to support the team; which as a result promoted a successful sports season.¹¹ These invaluable early experiences increased Eisenhower's leadership foundation over time.

Even with their youthful activities, Eisenhower and his brothers kept up with their Bible study and school attendance, which broadened their principles in faith and education. Their mother made sure that the boys completed their chores and daily school requirements first before she allowed them to rush off and have fun. Although he was athletic and popular, Eisenhower was also strong in mathematics and history.¹² He was very interested in reading ancient history as a youngster. He enjoyed reading historical accounts and then playing them out as games. He found the battles of Marathon, Zama, Salamis, and Cannae appealing, and his childhood favorite was Hannibal.¹³ In his memoirs, *At Ease*, Eisenhower explained that his childhood favorite was Hannibal because he always appeared to be an underdog who was neglected by his government,

generally fighting a more powerful enemy, and mostly in his own territory. Eisenhower also admired George Washington, especially his accomplishments at Princeton, Trenton, and Valley Forge. He revered Washington's stamina, determination, and endurance in difficult and harsh conditions, and his audacity, boldness, and self-sacrifice.¹⁴

When Eisenhower and his brother Edgar graduated from high school in 1909, they worked at the creamery where their father also worked. Eisenhower initially wanted to attend University of Kansas, but instead he worked to support Edgar's first year at the University of Michigan. He and his brother Edgar had an arrangement. Eisenhower worked and supported Edgar in his first year at Michigan, and then would join him at the University of Michigan a year later.¹⁵ Along the way, Eisenhower became good friends with Swede Hazlett, a young man from Abilene who was preparing to retake the Naval Academy's entrance exam. In his interaction with Hazlett, Eisenhower liked the idea of a free education at the Naval Academy. His long interest in military history made it easy to persuade him that the academy was a good move.¹⁶ So, he joined Hazlett in his studies that summer and then applied for Senator Joseph L. Bristow's authorization to take the competitive exam for the academy. At the time, the senator also had a vacancy for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.¹⁷

Eisenhower and his friend studied diligently and after several weeks of cramming, they were off to Topeka to take the exam. Eisenhower ended up placing second out of eight candidates. He later learned that he received an appointment. However, the appointment was not to the Naval Academy, but rather to West Point.¹⁸ Eisenhower's energy and concentration at the time focused on moving ahead in life and he was not distracted about the West Point appointment. Instead, he saw it as an opportunity. He

always sought self improvement and had a curious attitude. He was also known for his potential and competence and had no doubts about himself. When he boarded the train headed to West Point, Eisenhower was sure about what he thought he was getting into.¹⁹

Eisenhower's West Point Years

Eisenhower's West Point experiences were the basis for his exceptional achievements as an Army officer. He was one of the 265 plebes (new cadets) who arrived at West Point on June 14, 1911. Eisenhower that afternoon raised his right hand and swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.²⁰ Almost immediately, he felt a sense of duty and obligation. He later wrote about that experience, admitting that as he was taking the oath of office, he felt as if the "United States" had a totally different meaning. From then he understood that it was the nation he would be serving and not himself.²¹ Eisenhower's employment at the creamery for two years between high school and West Point helped him become a lot more mature than most of his classmates, especially when tolerating the plebe system and its hazing program.²²

Although Eisenhower endured and was resilient in carrying out the plebe responsibilities, he did not totally agree with the hazing concept. While he accepted the tradition of hazing, he kept his calm demeanor and when it got difficult, he reminded himself of the free education he was receiving.²³ He once told his roommate, who was about to quit that hundreds of others had gone through the same tribulation successfully, and they could do the same. Nonetheless, what really captivated Eisenhower about West Point were the traditions and the idea of being a part of the Long Gray Line. He was especially impressed with the sense of duty and service.²⁴ West Point's first and foremost goal was to build character in the cadets--to mold them into becoming officers and

gentlemen. The United States at the time was going through fast and severe changes in politics, economics, and lifestyles, and a rapid advancement in technology. However, West Point intended to cultivate a sense of correctness in its military students.²⁵ The academy shaped cadets with the emphasis on “Duty, Honor, and Country,” making them instruments of national policy.²⁶

West Point’s curriculum was largely technical because it was an engineering school. Cadet Eisenhower’s strength was in English, and he was quite content to be in the middle of the class standings when it came to technical subjects.²⁷ His analytical and problem solving skills were good. Thus, he was also good at crafting methods of problem solving. When called upon one day to explain a solution to a problem in integral calculus, he displayed a unique ability in developing his own method. He did not memorize the solution; instead he developed his own method of solving the problem. Eisenhower’s solution was simpler, but it was not an approved approach and his instructor questioned it. However, while Eisenhower was explaining his approach, an associate professor happened to be visiting the class. The professor found Eisenhower’s solution to be more logical than the approved solution, so he declared that it be incorporated.²⁸

Eisenhower ranked 125 out of 164 members of his class who graduated, but he did not mind at all because it was athletics that really motivated him. He was particularly passionate about football and made the varsity squad during his sophomore year in the fall of 1912. However, his football glory was brief because he injured his knee while playing the sport in November of 1912.²⁹ He was hospitalized for a few days and upon his release, was instructed to be careful with his movements. He injured his knee again when he conducted riding drills the following week. When Eisenhower was still injured,

his instructor accused him of malingering when he failed to go through all the mounted and dismounted exercises. But instead of explaining his medical conditions, Eisenhower took this as a personal challenge to his code of honor and conducted the drills until he tore the ligaments in his knee.³⁰ The injury ended Eisenhower's football career. Afterwards, he settled for a coaching job with the plebe football team and became a cheerleader, but he overcame the personal challenge he had experienced.³¹

Eisenhower was commissioned in the United States Army on June 12, 1915. The guest speaker, Secretary of War Linley Garrison reminded the cadets that the world was in the midst of a world war. He explained that young men were dying on the battlefields of Ypres and Gallipoli. The secretary told the cadets to be ready to sacrifice for their country. Another famous officer who graduated with Eisenhower on that day was Omar Nelson Bradley, who served with Eisenhower in World War II. In fact, fifty-nine graduates of that particular class became general officers, making the class of 1915 the most famous in West Point history. It was "the class the stars fell on."³²

Eisenhower as a Company Grade Officer

Throughout his Army career Dwight D. Eisenhower worked hard to advance through the ranks. Contemporaries and superior officers saw excellent leadership traits in his performance. Eisenhower learned from his parents about opportunity--it was his heritage to grab it.³³ Therefore, he made sure that when opportunities came, he was ready to reach out and seize them. His career path exemplifies these fine qualities. How did the Army capitalize on this future star? Did it provide the proper assignments, mentoring, and training schools to this ambitious young officer?

Eisenhower's Army career began at the height of World War I. However, the United States was at peace in the fall of 1915 when Second Lieutenant Dwight D. Eisenhower reported to the 19th Infantry Regiment at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. He requested the Philippines as his first duty assignment because he thought that going to the Far East would give him a chance to see the world.³⁴ A year later, on the day he was promoted to first lieutenant, he married Mamie Doud at her parents' home in Denver, Colorado. The war in Europe still dominated the news and it was becoming clear that the United States would soon enter the war. On April 6, 1917, Congress declared war on Germany.³⁵ After the United States entered the war, Eisenhower stayed at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio training the 57th Infantry Regiment. While at Fort Sam Houston, he made lasting friendships with other young officers such as: Walton Walker, Leonard Gerow, and Wade Haislip--all of them later became four star generals.³⁶

Eisenhower did well training the 57th Infantry and his superiors also recognized his leadership abilities as a football coach. While developing a good reputation as a trainer and football coach, he was promoted to captain on June 1, 1917.³⁷ Like most career officers, Eisenhower wanted to get into combat. Thus, he was eager to serve in France, but his other abilities prevented him from being assigned to overseas combat duty. Eisenhower's enthusiasm for combat illustrated his passion for service and his commitment for sacrifice. After all, according to him, he had more than his share of the normal American male's attitude regarding combat. He had been trained to fight and he thought his place was on the fighting lines, not on the sidelines.³⁸

According to Eisenhower, he was sure that he shaped the 57th Infantry into one of the best outfits in the whole Army. He was ready to fight with his unit. However, he

received orders assigning him to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia to instruct officer candidates. It was upsetting because he wanted to stay with the regiment that he thought would soon see action.³⁹ The regimental commander wanted to keep Eisenhower and asked the orders to be changed, but the request was disapproved. Eisenhower was excellent at training troops and continued to train soldiers at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.⁴⁰

Eisenhower helped construct a miniature World War I battlefield at Fort Oglethorpe. The training ground was complete with trenches and dugouts and served as the place for trainees to live while they practiced assaults.⁴¹ He continued to push the War Department requesting an overseas assignment but was turned down each time. Instead, by September of 1917, he was sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to teach provisional lieutenants, who had passed their examinations but had not yet received any training.⁴² Before he reported to Fort Leavenworth, he once more sent a request to be sent overseas. This time, the post commandant called Eisenhower in and read a letter from the War Department's Adjutant General, reprimanding him for his frequent requests to be transferred. At Fort Leavenworth, his duties consisted of supervising the unit's physical training such as bayonet drills, calisthenics, and exercises. The job was neither challenging nor as much fun as coaching football, but he still managed to impress his superiors.⁴³

Eisenhower as a Field Grade Officer

In February 1918, he received orders assigning him to Camp Meade, Maryland. He was assigned to the 65th Engineers, the parent organization of the 301st Tank Battalion (Heavy), another unit slated to go into combat.⁴⁴ The men of the 301st Tank Battalion were volunteers with high morale and high expectations. They were all

convinced that they could break through German lines with their new weapon even though none of them had actually seen a tank.⁴⁵ Eisenhower studied the Battle of Cambrai (the battle where the British for the first time achieved a breakthrough using tanks) fought in November 1917. Although they did not have enough tanks to exploit the victory, the British demonstrated what could be done with them. Eisenhower was informed in mid-March 1918 that he would command the 301st Tank Battalion which was set to deploy to France that spring. He was so excited that he rushed to New York to ensure that port authorities there were prepared for his unit. This was an opportunity he did not want to slip away.⁴⁶

Eisenhower was once more disappointed to hear that the War Department had changed his orders. Although his superiors praised his prolific organizational skills, they decided to send him to Camp Colt, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Eisenhower was chosen to train the newly formed Tank Corps. This was a result of the War Department's effort to give armor units an organization of their own. At the young age of twenty-seven Eisenhower was in command of thousands of volunteer soldiers. It was a prime assignment because he would be working with futuristic weapons. The only problem was that there were no actual tanks, training manuals, or skilled armor officers to work with.⁴⁷

Eisenhower arrived at Camp Colt in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to command the tank training center. He did very well and was soon promoted to the temporary rank of lieutenant colonel. Although Eisenhower thought the War Department had made a terrible mistake with the assignment, he worked hard and soon changed the historic ground of Pickett's charge from an open wheat field into an unmatched Army camp.⁴⁸ His experiences in this command developed his skills as a leader who cared about his

soldiers and prepared them for whatever uncertainties lay ahead. He was always looking for ways to improve the training of his men and was eager to increase their morale. He sought suggestions and ideas from his subordinates and never asked for praise. One day, one of his lieutenants praised every aspect of his administration. Eisenhower cut the young officer off in the middle of his sentence and told him to get out and find something wrong with the camp. Further, he said that the young officer was either “not being frank, or was as big a fool” as Eisenhower himself.⁴⁹

As an energetic commander, Eisenhower marshaled supplies for his men. He taught them to drill and got them in fine shape. He even established a telegraph school and a motor school. By mid-July Eisenhower had ten thousand men and six hundred officers under his command, but they still lacked tanks at their training center.⁵⁰ Eisenhower went to Washington to press officials to give him at least some old Navy cannons to train with. His effort was successful and the soldiers drilled on these weapons along with machine guns he managed to obtain. Eisenhower also mounted machine guns on the back of flatbed trucks and trained his men to fire the weapons on a moving platform. He was extremely successful as a trainer that he was later awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his outstanding performance.⁵¹

According to his sergeant major, Claude J. Harris, Eisenhower was a strict disciplinarian and his men responded to his leadership. Although he was young, he possessed the knack for understanding his organization and was good at figuring out where his men fit in the best. He coached and mentored his subordinates, receiving high admiration and loyalty in return.⁵² His ability to get the most out of his officers and find them the right job was later his hallmark in World War II. Eisenhower hoped to

participate in the gigantic offensive that Marshal Ferdinand Foch, supreme commander for the Allied forces, planned to launch in the spring of 1919.

However, on November 11, 1918, Germany signed the Armistice and World War I ended. Eisenhower was depressed and felt that he had missed an opportunity to participate in the greatest war in history.⁵³ His job quickly changed from preparing for combat to supervising the discharge of thousands of men, tearing down Camp Colt, and moving the remnants of the Tank Corps to Fort Benning. The wartime Army of 2.6 million was quickly discharged. As a result, the Army went all the way down to 130,000 by 1919. The decline cut temporary promotions so Eisenhower was back to being a major again.⁵⁴ In March of 1919, he was reassigned to Camp Meade, Maryland. Although the job of demobilizing soldiers at Camp Meade was not challenging, Eisenhower always jumped at challenges.

While at Camp Meade, the Army decided to drive a truck convoy from the East Coast to the West Coast in an attempt to test its vehicles. Eisenhower found this an interesting concept, so he volunteered to go on the trip. He was not just interested in what the trucks could do, but also in how the Army used them. After returning to Camp Meade from the convoy, Eisenhower sensed how the changes in the Army opened up more challenges.⁵⁵

Eisenhower later determined that his lack of experience in the trenches during World War I would not interfere with his ambitions. While it was true that Eisenhower did not have firsthand experience of leading Soldiers under the extreme conditions of combat, he did have the valuable experiences of establishing and operating a thousand-man camp, developing a training schedule and supervising the actual training, as well as

maintaining morale in preparation for combat.⁵⁶ Perhaps Eisenhower not fighting in the trenches of World War I was an advantage in the next war. World War II was radically different from World War I and he was not burdened by old ways of operating. Likewise, his association with tanks from the beginning turned out to be positive.⁵⁷

Eisenhower used the opportunity to work with combat veterans at Camp Meade to broaden his horizon.⁵⁸ One veteran he admired was George S. Patton Jr., although they had very different personalities. Patton was five years older and came from a wealthy family. Still, they had common interests in where the Army was headed with its tanks and the impact they would have on the Army's future doctrine. The War Department transferred the Tank Corps into the Infantry and Eisenhower and Patton were tasked with making this new concept work. The idea was to let the two officers be both students and instructors at the newly formed Infantry Tank School. The Army had the right combination in selecting these two officers.

One was a successful veteran of World War I, and the other a successful trainer during the war. Eisenhower was an infantryman and Patton was a cavalryman. Each of them would command a battalion of tanks and experiment with the new innovation.⁵⁹ The two officers spent a year at Fort Meade, often analyzing problems together while Patton prepared to attend the Army's Command and General Staff School. Patton received tactical problems from the school and the two developed solutions and compared them with the school's approved solution. In their analysis, they factored in their own field experiences in tank tactics and procedures.⁶⁰ They were delighted to note that their concept of incorporating the tanks in tactical situations won each battle.

One of the problems the two officers identified, however, was that tanks in World War I were slow and were primarily used to precede infantry attacks and destroy machine gun nests.⁶¹ Nevertheless, Eisenhower and Patton had a different theory on how to use tanks in future warfare. The two officers debated their tank theories at length and agreed that the fundamental components for successful tank warfare were speed, reliability, firepower, mass, and surprise.⁶² Both were convinced that the tank would have a major role in future conflicts so they led the way in developing a new doctrine for it. They were certain that slow moving tanks needed to be faster. With speed, these tanks could be used for surprise attacks in mass.⁶³

Eisenhower and Patton worked for a year trying to describe and specify the type of tank they wanted. They worked with tanks and terrain to determine the most appropriate for successful tank warfare. They wanted a tank with speed and firepower and one with armor that could survive machine guns and light artillery.⁶⁴ The two conducted their tests with a light Renault tank, but this particular tank stalled too easily in rough terrain. Furthermore, they discovered that the American Mark VII tank bogged down in rough terrain. During their experiments, they used strong steel cables to tow their experimental tanks when they got stuck.⁶⁵

Eisenhower and Patton's association during this experimental phase of the Army's interwar period was indeed an important episode. However, Eisenhower's leadership development did not end with his assignment at Fort Meade. He soon encountered an outstanding senior officer and mentor to whom he attributed his successes in his later life. It was Eisenhower's association with Patton that allowed him the opportunity to meet this senior officer.

General Fox Conner attended the School of the Line and the Generals Staff School (later known as the Command and General Staff School) and the Army War College prior to World War I. In the war, Conner served as General Pershing's operations officer in France. Eisenhower met Conner in 1919 at a dinner hosted by Patton. At the dinner, Patton discussed the work he and Eisenhower were doing in regards to their tank experimentation. When dinner was over, Conner asked the two energetic officers to take him to their shops so they could further discuss the subject. Conner and Patton had previously discussed the idea, so Conner directed most of his questions to Eisenhower. During their conversations, Conner listened intently and found their ideas interesting. When the conversation was over, Eisenhower thought that the meeting would be his last acquaintance with the general.⁶⁶ Conner found Eisenhower's competency and sound analytical approach to problems impressive.⁶⁷ Months later, Conner was selected to command an infantry brigade in Panama and asked Eisenhower to join his staff.⁶⁸

General Fox Conner as Eisenhower's Mentor

Dwight D. Eisenhower's tour of duty in Panama began a new chapter in his life. He was assigned as Conner's executive officer at Camp Gaillard. Eisenhower was experienced and loyal which made him the perfect right-hand man for Conner's headquarters.⁶⁹ Conner's unit was charged with the mission of reorganizing the defense of the Canal Zone. The general was unrelenting in his effort to accomplish his mission and Eisenhower became the enforcer of the general's policies. Conner directed him to submit a five-paragraph field order on a daily basis. The order included mission analysis, training, and logistic concepts.⁷⁰ The two men regularly planned and charted routes on

map overlays for rapid deployment of troops. The logistics lines of communication were also depicted on these maps.⁷¹

As a graduate of the Army's staff college at Leavenworth, Conner encouraged Eisenhower to prepare for his attendance at the Command and General Staff School. Over time, Conner arranged Eisenhower's Panama assignment into an intellectual laboratory for what he envisioned necessary for a future wartime commander.⁷² With a reputation as one of the smartest officers in the Army, Fox Conner was very interested in military history. Accordingly, Conner's mentorship and guidance deeply influenced Eisenhower's life. Conner had Eisenhower read such works as Clausewitz, Tacitus, the Napoleonic campaigns, Jomini, and Mahan. Since Eisenhower had a childhood fondness of military history anyway, he enjoyed the assignment.⁷³ He even claimed that he read Clausewitz at least three times during his assignment in Panama.⁷⁴

Conner asked Eisenhower questions about the books he read and the decisions the commanders made, the alternatives they had, and the circumstances of the situation.⁷⁵ As they analyzed the reasons for the decisions, Conner and Eisenhower looked into how effective the decisions were to the outcome of the battles. These discussions took place either at Conner's quarters, or on the frequent horseback reconnaissance they did along the Panamanian jungle trails.⁷⁶ Conner's library soon became a fascinating place for Eisenhower as he learned more from his teacher. Eisenhower was so fascinated with military history, especially the American Revolution that he ended up turning the screened porch at his quarters into a war room covered with maps. He pinned up maps he used to associate with the historical campaigns he studied.⁷⁷

This interaction between the teacher (Conner) and student (Eisenhower) demonstrated how senior Army officers understood the value in shaping the future leaders. It was a practice that continues to this day shape the future of the U.S. Army. Fox Conner understood this very notion so he used the opportunity to develop a promising officer. He sensed the potential and aptitude in Eisenhower. Therefore, he invested a great deal of time, which paid huge dividends a decade later. Conner primed Eisenhower for future assignments as well as upcoming advance schooling. In Eisenhower's mind, the military education that Conner instilled in him over the course of their two and half years in Panama was equivalent to a graduate course.⁷⁸

Conner even convinced Eisenhower that another European war was inevitable. He backed his case by pointing out the harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles. He viewed the failure of the U.S. to join the League of Nations as further influencing the state of affairs. At the time Conner explained this to Eisenhower, he also predicted that the United States would participate in this future war and that a unified allied command would be necessary.⁷⁹ The general went further and explained that the unified command he had in mind would avoid the national power struggle and uncoordinated operations that he observed during his service at General Joseph Pershing's headquarters in World War I.⁸⁰

Eisenhower's Command and General Staff School Experience

As Conner's executive officer, Eisenhower received superior ratings in most categories from the general. Conner's evaluations of Eisenhower always concluded with his mention that Eisenhower should be sent to the course at the Army Service Schools.⁸¹ Eisenhower made his formal request to attend the Command and General Staff School on August 3, 1924. By January 1925, his foreign service in Panama was coming to an end

and he submitted his application to the Adjutant General. He closed his letter stating that he is not a graduate of any service school except the Infantry Tank School. Nonetheless, Conner endorsed the letter, noting that Eisenhower had the qualities for general staff training, despite his lack of service school attendance. Conner explained that Eisenhower kept up with the recent Benning graduates because he designed his professional development and mentoring program around the requisites for the staff school.⁸²

The Adjutant General's office received the endorsement on August 28 and without delay forwarded the letter to the Office of the Chief of Infantry for comment. A response came back with a handwritten note stating that Eisenhower was placed on the tentative list of officers considered to attend the 1925-26 course at the Command and General Staff School.⁸³ When Eisenhower received an order sending him to another assignment, he went to see the Chief of Infantry and asked if it was possible for him to be sent to school. The Chief of infantry refused to change his assignment and ordered him to Fort Benning to command a light tank battalion. Later, a telegram arrived from Conner who was then serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff to General John L. Hines. Conner knew of Eisenhower's disappointment and the telegram simply stated that Eisenhower should not protest any orders he received from the war department, no matter what they were. Eisenhower was puzzled, but his faith in Conner outweighed his confusion.⁸⁴

New orders arrived several days later, detailing Eisenhower to recruiting duty in Colorado, which relieved him from the Infantry. Eisenhower thought this was unreasonable since being assigned to recruiting duty in those days was felt to be detrimental to an officer's career progression, unless it was only to fill a temporary personnel requirement.⁸⁵ Soon another letter came from Conner explaining that he

arranged for Eisenhower's transfer from the Infantry on a temporary basis to the Adjutant General's office to help get him into the Command and General Staff School. A final order then came informing Eisenhower that he had been selected to attend the Command and General Staff School. The Adjutant General's office had a requirement to send one of its officers to the school, and Eisenhower was their candidate. Eisenhower was delighted about the news.⁸⁶

Eisenhower credited Conner for his ability to attend the Command and General Staff School. Eisenhower had benefited by watching and learning from those who knew more and did better in terms of their professional career. He explained in his book, *At Ease, Stories I tell to Friends*, that, "apart from the rewards of friendship, the association might pay off at some unforeseen time--that is only an accidental by-product. The important thing is that learning will make you a better person."⁸⁷ However, Eisenhower had some concerns about how he was being sent to CGSS without the usual preparatory infantry instruction at Fort Benning. To him, it was like being sent to college without going through secondary schooling and it put him in an uncomfortable situation with his classmates at Leavenworth. Graduation from the CGSS meant better assignment prospects and if one graduated high in the class, it was an achievement that enhanced an officer's career advancement. He did not want to ruin this grand opportunity to excel, so he decided to fully prepare himself for it.

Eisenhower wrote to Conner asking him what he could do to get ready for CGSS. Conner told Eisenhower that he was the most qualified and best trained officer he knew. Conner explained that because of the readings and analysis they did during their years in Panama, he had already received the preparatory work he needed. Eisenhower found this

encouraging but also thought it would be a good idea for him to learn what he could before getting to the school. Therefore, he reviewed copies of Leavenworth problems and spent a significant amount of time solving them and checking his answers against the schoolhouse results. In essence, he did the same thing Patton did to prepare himself while getting ready for the same course.⁸⁸

The opening days of the school were filled with welcomes and advice from the school director and various faculty members. Instructors made sure students understood the intent of the school. Students were assured that there were no trick problems and that they should not carelessly follow previous solutions or methods. Conversely, they were encouraged to deal with the problems with an open mind and realistically put themselves in the situations as if they actually existed.⁸⁹

According to Eisenhower, Leavenworth was an exhilarating experience. There were no exams to test one's memory. In addition to its combat arms and tactical lessons, the school also covered medical, ordnance, quartermaster, and signal services. The school integrated case studies into its curriculum for problem solving and decision making. The students were presented with a scenario where a fictitious enemy force was positioned on a particular piece of terrain. The scenario also gave enemy strength, along with the mission the friendly units (students commanded these forces) had to accomplish. First, playing the commander's role, the students decided on what actions to take for the particular situation. Then after they submitted their decisions, the correct solutions were provided and the students went back and adjusted their plans.⁹⁰ The task was not too difficult for Eisenhower. He and Conner had done this type of wargaming in Panama.

They practiced developing similar courses of action prescribed by the schoolhouse's case studies.⁹¹

Time management became a large part of Eisenhower's success at Leavenworth. To Eisenhower, allocating appropriate amount of time for studies was important because he realized that he needed a fresh mind and an optimistic outlook each day he entered the "problem room."⁹² The thought process and self reflection that Eisenhower had regarding time management and fresh minds for analyzing problems and making decisions is a leadership quality. Most members of his class put together study groups. Although Eisenhower was invited, he did not join any of the groups because he wanted to study alone. He also thought that the time he allocated for his studies would be more productive by not using it in a group setting. For instance, if he wanted to work for two and a half hours, he did not want to get into too much conversation and discussion, taking away most of his individual studying hours. Yet, he figured out that perhaps two-man teams were more productive--one could plot maps while the other read out the instructions. This legitimate teamwork according to Eisenhower saved them precious hours.⁹³

Leonard T. Gerow, Eisenhower's friend from his days in San Antonio with the 19th Infantry was attending the staff course that same year. Gerow's feelings about study groups were similar to Eisenhower's so the two decided to study together.⁹⁴ At Fort Leavenworth, Eisenhower and his family were assigned quarters on the second floor of Otis Hall (converted from 24 bachelor apartments to 8 apartments for married couples) with a third floor dormer. Eisenhower and Gerow turned the dormer into a model command post where they isolated themselves for their studies and war gaming. It did not take long before they covered the walls of this room with maps. They also had a large

work table in the middle of the room and bookshelves stacked with reference materials from class.⁹⁵

When school started, the school commandant, Brigadier General Edward L. King, presented a lecture on September 11, 1925 to the entire class on the subject of command. He argued that the intrinsic power and authority of command lay in the individual commander's unique abilities and personality. Eisenhower enjoyed the presentation because King used football as an analogy to explain many of his command principles. He described the commander as the one who gives the signal. Then he went on and associated the staff with members of the team.⁹⁶

The Class of 1926 started off with 248 students, and it was not long before the students began feeling the rigors of the Leavenworth course schedule. Of the 248, three did not graduate; one transferred, one resigned, and one was relieved for medical reasons. Solutions to problems were not graded in the first months, as the early subjects were designed to reinforce important military principles. The mornings were divided into three periods beginning at 8:30 a.m. and went to noon with scheduled breaks in between. Lectures were given and students were called on for comments during these periods.⁹⁷ The afternoon sessions which started at 1:00 p.m. consisted of map problems and practical exercises. Students prepared an estimate of the situation and were evaluated by the instructors. Then they were given a large part of the afternoon on their own. However, they had extensive readings to do in preparation for upcoming classes which took most of the afternoons and evenings.⁹⁸

Eisenhower enjoyed the tactical rides that provided a welcome change of pace. As a result of his Panama experiences, he was prepared for such rides. Conner had

methodically gone over this process with Eisenhower in Panama. The rides were designed to get the entire class on horseback to an unknown location and conduct reconnaissance. Instructors provided the students with maps that had the principle terrain features. Then the students conducted detailed analysis of the ground through their physical observations. Students were also given the tactical situation and other requirements that involved drafting orders for troop movements and logistics. Grades were given as student submitted their solutions. The rides concluded in October and resumed in the spring. But during the winter season, map problems were conducted indoors. The Gettysburg and Leavenworth maps were used for these map exercises. Eisenhower had an advantage over his classmates because he knew the Gettysburg terrain from his tour at Camp Colt.⁹⁹

Eisenhower shared his views of the Command and General Staff School and how to prepare for it in an article that was addressed to prospective students. The article was titled: “The Leavenworth Course” and was published in the *Infantry Journal*. In it, he advised incoming students to trust the instructors and to have a positive mental attitude about the course. He also discussed his ideas about study habits and offered his techniques to problem solving. He felt that students made errors when solving problems because they failed to methodically visualize the problems. He explained that visualization was important because it helped the leader not just understand the problem but also see himself in the middle of it.¹⁰⁰ Eisenhower further explained that the problems given at CGSS were designed to make Army officers practice their leadership competencies under various tactical conditions.¹⁰¹ Additionally, his article gave details about a variety of other features the school and Fort Leavenworth had to offer.¹⁰²

When the course began in October, Eisenhower's performance relative to his peers was his lowest of the year, as he ranked 14th in a class of 248.¹⁰³ Although this rank was commendable, he finished in the top ten every month afterward. His increasing achievement was due in part to his study program and his determination to excel. Eisenhower's hard work paid off in the end. The CGSS Faculty Board met on the morning of June 16, 1926 and confirmed the final student standings and approved the graduation of students. The board, chaired by the commandant, Brigadier General King, also made recommendations on the students' potential for command and staff assignments as well as attendance at the Army War College. Out of 245 graduates, Eisenhower came out with the highest class standing.¹⁰⁴ He was number "1" in his class and was classified as honor graduate--a distinction extended to the top ten percent of the graduates. He achieved 930.79 units out of the 1,000 possible points, giving him a 93.08 percent, slightly in front of Charles M. Busbee, who finished with 92.85. His friend and study associate, Major Gerow, finished eleventh with 91.37 percent. The board recommended Eisenhower and Gerow for higher-level command and staff duties, along with advanced schooling.¹⁰⁵

Eisenhower's Army War College Experience

In 1923 Congress established the American Battle Monuments Commission to memorialize the war dead and to establish cemeteries in Europe for them.¹⁰⁶ Retired General John J. Pershing was its first chairman and he wanted to publish a guidebook. To do so, he needed someone who could assemble all the materials together in a logical manner. The intent was to write this guidebook in an appealing style for the general reader. Conner recommended Eisenhower for the job in the winter of 1926.¹⁰⁷

Eisenhower was working on the guidebook for only a short time when he received word that he was selected for the Army War College, the Army's top school. It was quite an achievement for an officer to be chosen to attend the War College only twelve years after commissioning. Eisenhower graduated from the Army War College on June 30, 1928.¹⁰⁸

Eisenhower considered the Army War College as the ambition of almost all officers. He thought that the course was a relaxed assignment which was seen as a reward for a successful career and a way into the general officer ranks.¹⁰⁹ The War College further enhanced his knowledge and experience in dealing with the strategic issues of war. He learned the relationship of logistics with large masses and movements of troops as well as relations with allies, and national strategy. At the War College, students were required to determine the time and space factors for moving division and corps size units.¹¹⁰

Students also participated in writing four staff studies. These studies focused on war preparations, two complete historical analyses of past campaigns, and drafted a simulated war plan. Along with month-long war-games, there was also a command post exercise and strategic reconnaissance that the students participated in. Finally the students had to write a staff memorandum proposing an action to improve the Army. Eisenhower wrote on "An Enlisted Reserve for the Regular Army." His seven page long paper argued against isolationist mentality. He also argued for developing an expeditionary force that could rapidly expand in order to save resources and lives.¹¹¹

Eisenhower discovered that the guidebook revision was still waiting when his course at the Army War College ended. This was an opportunity to return to the project and get a chance to visit France, since the project entailed a year in France to study the

actual battlefields. Eisenhower and Mamie enjoyed their time overseas, but what was more important for him was his opportunity to study the terrain, roads, and railroads of France. In due time, he was also studying the French Army and the country's political system. These experiences would later pay dividends in the next war.¹¹²

Eisenhower's Years with MacArthur

The Great Depression had started in the U.S. by the time Eisenhower returned from France in 1929. Eisenhower was assigned to the office of the Assistant Secretary of War in Washington. The National Defense Act of 1920 stressed the importance of peacetime planning for industrial mobilization in the event of war. The act also charged the assistant secretary of war to supervise this planning. Major General George Van Horn Mooseley who managed Pershing's logistics requirements in the Army Expeditionary Force was Eisenhower's immediate boss¹¹³

Mooseley and Eisenhower faced the basic question of how the U.S. economy would shift its market orientation and support the war effort in time of war. The planners had to consider political concerns as they examined plant conversions, sources for significant raw materials, and price controls. Eisenhower took every opportunity to learn what he could while he met with industrialists and high government officials. He used his previous Army studies in strategy and tactics to approach this task. His previous studies assisted him as he realistically looked at the logistical requirements for supporting large mechanized armies in the future. Although the job was occasionally tough, Eisenhower thought it was an intriguing experience because it allowed him to examine what he later termed as the industrial military complex.¹¹⁴

Eisenhower enjoyed working for Mooseley who he thought was an excellent boss and at the same time a good friend. However, about a year into the job, in November 1930, General Douglas MacArthur was appointed Chief of Staff of the Army. MacArthur became a general officer at the age of thirty-eight when he commanded an infantry brigade in World War I, and the age of fifty, he now held the Army's highest position.¹¹⁵ MacArthur was very involved in the planning matters that his office undertook and he began looking into mobilization planning early in his term. In the process, he came across Eisenhower and was impressed with his writing ability. MacArthur arranged for Eisenhower to author the Chief of Staff's annual report for 1931, and he soon had Eisenhower working on other matters besides just writing reports.¹¹⁶

In 1932, Eisenhower was transferred to MacArthur's immediate office and worked on reports, statements, and important letters. During this period, Eisenhower realized that MacArthur's interest went beyond normal military matters and extended into political affairs. Perhaps Eisenhower did not realize it, but he was developing another dimension to his experience.¹¹⁷ By spring the following year, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had created a host of new federal programs. One of them was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which turned out to be a major undertaking for the Army.

As MacArthur's assistant, Eisenhower prepared reports on the program. The Army was required to organize and supply approximately 200,000 unemployed men in small camps across the country, where they worked on conservation projects throughout the 1930s. Even though this project deviated from the Army's primary mission, it provided many benefits over the years. The CCC gave leadership training to thousands of reserve officers who served as camp commanders in the 1930s.¹¹⁸ Besides the experience

Eisenhower gained from his involvement in the program, he later benefited as many of these reserve officers were called to serve for him in World War II.

In 1934, President Roosevelt extended MacArthur's tenure for another year and Eisenhower's tour as MacArthur's assistant was also extended, especially since the general became increasingly dependent on him. In his time with MacArthur, Eisenhower was impressed with the general's mastery of details as he presented them with logic and authority. The general had a quick mind that made him respond persuasively to counterarguments.¹¹⁹ Even though they had different personalities, Eisenhower was learning a great deal from his boss. How different were they? Eisenhower had an enthusiastic personality and was very considerate of others, while MacArthur was egotistic.¹²⁰ Despite their differences, Eisenhower found himself working for the general for a few more years in the Philippines.

The President of the new Commonwealth of the Philippines, Manuel L. Quezon asked MacArthur to be his military advisor when he completed his term as Chief of Staff. Before the offer was even made, MacArthur had started work on preliminary plans to develop a Philippine defense force. Eisenhower's role was no longer just a writer. The general's satisfaction with Eisenhower's successes with various projects caused him to rely on Eisenhower more and more. Eisenhower headed to Manila to join MacArthur in his new advisory role, where he served as MacArthur's chief of staff, along with being the liaison between the general and Quezon. One major issue they faced was the development of a defense plan for the Philippines with limited resources.¹²¹

With the few resources the new nation had to rely on a small regular force and large numbers of reserves. The plan was designed to react to an invasion, and after

inflicting as much damage as possible on the invader, the Philippine force would fall back to a defense and wait for help from the United States. This plan required training thirty thousand young men each year for the reserves. Obtaining required equipment for such training was difficult for a poor country like the Philippines. Eisenhower continued to learn and develop as a leader, given these complicated situations. Although MacArthur and Eisenhower often did not agree on a lot of things, Eisenhower maintained tremendous respect for the general. Eisenhower later realized how important the experience was because it prepared him for the great responsibilities of leading the war in Europe.¹²²

The international situation, especially in Europe convinced Eisenhower to return to the U.S. and get back to the mainstream Army. In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, which began World War II. MacArthur and Quezon pressured Eisenhower to stay, but Eisenhower was determined to get back to the real Army. Before he sailed back to the U.S. in December 1939, Quezon awarded Eisenhower with the Philippine Distinguished Service Cross.¹²³

Onward to World War II

Eisenhower returned to the United States in January 1940 and was assigned to the 15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. He was then promoted to full colonel in March 1941 and became chief of staff to the IX Army Corps. In June 1941, he was transferred to be the chief of staff of Third Army at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He was promoted to the temporary rank of brigadier general and served as one of the principal planners during the Louisiana Maneuvers in September 1941.¹²⁴ The

exercise involved more than half a million troops and Eisenhower's key role in it drew the attention of the Army's chief of staff, General George C. Marshall.¹²⁵

Marshall quickly summoned Eisenhower to Washington after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Marshall explained the situation in the Pacific, and then directed Eisenhower to propose a course of action. As Eisenhower laid his views, Marshall quickly recognized that Eisenhower was able and willing to provide realistic solutions even in hopeless situations. Marshall afterward named Eisenhower assistant chief of the Army operations division. In March 1942, Eisenhower was promoted to the rank of major general and was tasked by Marshall to prepare a strategy for an Allied invasion of Europe.

On June 15, 1942, Marshall chose Eisenhower over 366 officers (more senior to Eisenhower) to command all of the U.S. troops in the European theater of operations. He commanded the amphibious assault on Sicily in July 1943, and then the invasion of the Italian mainland in September 1943. On December 24, 1943, Eisenhower was appointed supreme commander of Allied expeditionary forces. He was responsible for directing the Allied plans and subsequently commanding the largest and the most risky, yet the most significant invasion in the history of warfare. Eisenhower successfully commanded more than 156,000 troops in the initial assault of Europe via the English Channel in Operation Overlord. His leadership during World War II marked the victorious outcome of a war fought between the forces of democratic civilization and Nazi totalitarianism.¹²⁶

Conclusion

Dwight D. Eisenhower aimed high in his aspirations and recognized the values for success that developed him to be a great leader. These qualities allowed him to

effectively command U.S. and other Allied troops in our country's most trying days during World War II. His road to success is indeed a fascinating account. Many lessons are learned from this hero's chronicle. This chapter illustrated how this young Mennonite boy grew up, entered West Point, and progressed in his Army career to become an American icon. More importantly, however, this chapter depicted how the Army developed this soldier and how it prepared him to become the epitome of Army leadership.

Throughout his Army career, Eisenhower's leadership pushed soldiers to accomplish difficult tasks. His eagerness to train and equip his men demonstrated his determination to prepare for victory. Eisenhower revealed these qualities in his speech to Army pilots graduating from Kelly Field in Texas on December 12, 1941; just five days after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. He stated that "this opportunity, that of becoming a real leader of fighting men is the part of soldiering that challenges the best that's in the officer--and it's the one part in which he must not fail. It is his high and almost divine duty." His speech confirmed his development as a leader.¹²⁷

¹ Quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower.

² Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect, 1890-1952* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 9.

³ Major James R. Hill, "Comparative Analysis of Marshall and Dwight D. Eisenhower" (Thesis, Command and General Staff College, 2008), 17.

⁴ Douglas Kinnard, *Eisenhower: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century* (Dulles: Brassy's Inc., 2002), 3.

⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁶ Hill, 17.

- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ambrose, 23-24.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 35.
- ¹¹ R. Alton Lee, *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Soldier and Statesman* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981), 18.
- ¹² Kinnard, 5.
- ¹³ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I tell to Friends* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 41.
- ¹⁴ Major Mark C. Bender, *Watershed at Leavenworth. Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Command and General Staff School* (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army, CGSC, 1990), 7.
- ¹⁵ Ambrose, 37.
- ¹⁶ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 104.
- ¹⁷ Kinnard, 6.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ambrose, 42.
- ²⁰ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 4.
- ²¹ Ibid., 4.
- ²² Ibid., 5.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ambrose, 44.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 45.
- ²⁶ Lee, 30.
- ²⁷ Kinnard, 7.
- ²⁸ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 19-20.
- ²⁹ Lee, 31.

- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Kinnard, 8
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Lee, 11.
- ³⁴ Ambrose, 55.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 60.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 57.
- ³⁷ Lee, 40.
- ³⁸ Ambrose, 60-61.
- ³⁹ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 132.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Ibid., 133.
- ⁴³ Ambrose, 61.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 62
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Kinnard, 10.
- ⁴⁸ Ambrose, 62-63.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 63.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Kinnard, 9-10.
- ⁵² Ambrose, 63.
- ⁵³ Kinnard, 10.

- ⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid., 11.
- ⁵⁶ Ambrose, 63.
- ⁵⁷ Kinnard, 11.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ Ambrose, 70.
- ⁶⁰ Bender, 20.
- ⁶¹ Lee, 47.
- ⁶² Bender, 20.
- ⁶³ Ibid., 47.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ⁶⁵ Lee, 48.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid.
- ⁶⁷ Kinnard, 12.
- ⁶⁸ Ambrose, 75.
- ⁶⁹ Bender, 22-23.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., 23.
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² Lee, 51.
- ⁷³ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 187.
- ⁷⁴ Bender, 23.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid.

- ⁷⁸ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 187.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid.
- ⁸⁰ Kinnard, 14.
- ⁸¹ Lee, 52.
- ⁸² Ibid.
- ⁸³ Bender, 37.
- ⁸⁴ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 199.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid., 200.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid., 200-201.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid.
- ⁸⁹ Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, KS, September 11, 1925. Fort Leavenworth, KS: GS Schools, 22 September 1925. CARL. 414.
- ⁹⁰ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 202.
- ⁹¹ Ibid.
- ⁹² Ibid.
- ⁹³ Ibid.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid., 203.
- ⁹⁵ Bender, 41.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid., 43.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., 44.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., 44-45.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 47.
- ¹⁰¹ Eisenhower, *The Prewar Diaries and Selected Papers*, 43-58.

- ¹⁰² Ibid.
- ¹⁰³ Bender, 53.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁶ Kinnard, 14.
- ¹⁰⁷ Lee, 55.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 56.
- ¹⁰⁹ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 204.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid., 205.
- ¹¹¹ Bender, 60.
- ¹¹² Kinnard, 15.
- ¹¹³ Ambrose, 90.
- ¹¹⁴ Kinnard, 15.
- ¹¹⁵ Ibid., 16.
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid., 17.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid., 17-18.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 18.
- ¹²⁰ Ibid.
- ¹²¹ Ibid., 19.
- ¹²² Ibid., 20.
- ¹²³ Ibid., 20-21.
- ¹²⁴ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 242.
- ¹²⁵ Alan Axelrod. *Eisenhower on Leadership* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 9-11.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 12.

¹²⁷ Eisenhower, *The Prewar Diaries and Selected Papers*, 195.

CHAPTER 3

GEORGE S. PATTON JR.

Great leadership requires hard work and determination. These essentials coupled with self discovery and ambition push one to achieve distinction. Many leaders with these traits came to the fore in World War II. One American hero who demonstrated great leadership in that war was General George S. Patton Jr. How did this American icon emerge to be a great commander? What did the Army do to develop him? Was it his own outlook about leadership that made him successful? Patton is remembered for his military brilliance. Moreover, his victories in World War II continue to inspire people to this day. He was a patriot who loved his country, and he had a great sense of duty. On the subject of patriotism, Patton wrote:

The too often repeated remark that the country owes me a living is nothing short of treason. The nation owes all of its citizens an equal chance, but it is not responsible for the faults and follies of those who fail to avail themselves of these opportunities.¹

Patton was much more than the infamous egomaniac character that journalists portrayed him to be. Furthermore, he was larger than the outspoken commander that people considered him. Martin Blumenson, author of *The Patton Papers*, wrote that Patton was “a complex, paradoxical, and many faceted figure.” Patton was impulsive but at the same time he was dependable and was very loyal. He was brutal but sensitive. The man was passionate and happy, but he also suffered inner anguish. Therefore, Patton’s blend of arrogance and humility made him a complicated individual.² Patton also coupled his military brilliance with political skills to work his way through the ranks in the Army. He captivated people through his toughness and competency. Most of all, he gave his

troops the determination to win and he turned them into some of the best fighters in the U.S. Army.

Ironically, those who faintly knew him or saw him from a distance stayed away, while those who understood him were captivated. Corporal Donald H. Baker, a soldier who was leaving Patton's unit, wished to let his superior officer know how much his leadership meant to him. The corporal wrote a note to Patton saying, "you have been an inspirational leader, a good friend and a wise counselor . . . may the next time I see you, and I sincerely hope that it will be in the not-too-distant future, that your eagles have turned to stars."³

Growing up in California, Patton enjoyed many things like the quiet countryside and the excitement of climbing ragged hills and hunting goats. He also enjoyed the thrill of riding horses as well as training his ponies. Equally, he enjoyed sailing across wide bodies of water and found pleasure in fishing and swimming. As he grew older, he loved being lost in the concentration of fencing (a swordsmanship sport), and he especially treasured his uninterrupted evenings when he read books and wrote his thoughts for hours. However, Patton had to learn to conquer his fears, his doubts, and his lack of confidence in order to enjoy group activities.⁴ What drove him to pursue life the way he did? This chapter discusses the life of George S. Patton Jr.

Patton's Childhood

George S. Patton, Jr. came from a wealthy family who lived in the San Gabriel Valley of Southern California. He was born at Lake Vineyard on November 11, 1885 and was named after his father and grandfather.⁵ Patton's family supported and encouraged him along the way. They shaped and influenced him as a child. His father, George Smith

Patton, did all he could to maintain sufficient wealth for his family. He was elected district attorney of Los Angeles shortly after he married Ruth Wilson, the daughter of Benjamin David Wilson, a successful California tycoon. Did their status influence young Patton? What activities did young Patton occupy himself with during his childhood years?

Patton lived a vivacious childhood, especially since his parents allowed him to express his high spirits in outdoor activities.⁶ His father took him fishing, sailing, and also taught him how to ride a horse and shoot a rifle.⁷ Young Patton and his father had a special bond. His father gave him tremendous love and encouragement. His father, for example was not fond of the outdoor activities, but he tolerated them because he wanted to make his son happy.⁸ Above all, Patton's father did everything he could to insure his son's success.

Patton's mother had a sister named Nannie who also spoiled the young Patton. She protected him like her own son and forbade any criticism of him.⁹ Patton was rarely punished, even with his mischievous childhood pranks. However, one day his mother punished him when he conducted his first experiment in armored warfare. He and his cousins converted farm wagon into a make-believe armored vehicle, which Patton later claimed to be just like the one employed by John the Blind, the king of Bohemia (1296-1346), a highly regarded and heroic warrior-king. Patton led the boys with their youthful warrior-spirit behind the security of old wine barrels and rolled downhill causing a 'dreadful toll upon the enemy' --his family's flock of turkeys.¹⁰

Patton was generally interested in learning about his ancestors, especially those in the long line of military service. His ancestors who served in the military dating all the

way back to the American Revolution were his heroes.¹¹ His family's military service extended to his maternal great-grandfather, Major David Wilson, who was an officer in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. His maternal grandfather, Benjamin David Wilson, held a captain's commission and fought Mohave Indians during the Mexican War.¹²

His paternal great-great grandfather was Brigadier General Hugh Mercer who fought in the American Revolution. Patton's paternal great grandfather, John Mercer Patton had nine sons who attended the Virginia Military Institute. Seven of them served in the Confederate Army during the American Civil War. Patton's paternal grandfather, George Smith Patton, graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1852. He was killed in 1864 while commanding the 22nd Virginia Cavalry in the battle of Cedar Creek at Winchester, Virginia during the Civil War. On her way to California, his grandfather's widow married another 1856 Virginia Military Institute graduate, George Hugh Smith, who was also a colonel during the Civil War. George Hugh Smith frequently shared war stories with the young Patton who truly admired him for his achievements.¹³

Patton's father, the second George Smith Patton, also graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1887. Mr. Patton did not pursue a military career but he instilled great pride in his military ancestry to young Patton.¹⁴ As a youngster, Patton spent hours sitting at his father's side listening to the stories his father shared. The Patton family read aloud to young Patton, who was unable to read and write until he was eleven years old. Historians believed that Patton suffered from dyslexia. However, his parents hired tutors to help him with his disability, which also kept young Patton from being taunted and laughed at in school.¹⁵

Patton's dyslexic was perhaps a source for his drive to do well. Carlo D'Este, in his book, *Patton: a Genius for War*, stated that Patton's feeling of inferiority and need to prove as a person of intelligence and ability is "key to understanding his authoritarian, macho, warrior personality he deliberately created for himself."¹⁶ As Patton grew up, his dyslexia blended with his "ancestor-hero worship" that his father and his Aunt Nannie taught him. D'Este further stated that to prove himself worthy of his ancestral military heritage, did not just drive Patton, but it haunted him so much, so obsessively, so outrageously, that it was difficult to imagine how one's life could be subjected to such craze.¹⁷ Despite his dyslexic condition, Patton developed a photographic memory. He had an amazing capacity to memorize and quote verbatim at length. He gained this ability from his family who read to him and required him to memorize long passages from the bible, classics, ancient history, and romantic poems which broadened his horizon.¹⁸

In September 1897, Patton's father finally decided to send him to school in preparation for his future. Young Patton was sent to Mr. Stephen Clark's School for Boys in Pasadena, California. There he studied with sons of elite southern California families over the next six years.¹⁹ They learned a curriculum that concentrated on mathematics, English, geography, and drawing. They also studied four languages: Greek, Latin, French, and German. Additionally, the school focused on ancient and modern history. Patton developed his deep interest in military commanders and their political roles during those early years. Entries to his private journals and written essays showed how much he reflected on those curiosities. He discussed ancient leaders like: Miltiades, Epaminondas, Themistocles, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar in his written works.²⁰

At an early stage in his life Patton was able to explain military tactics, leadership qualities, and moral character. His entries at the Clark School were thoughts that shaped his future. He reflected on the importance of patience, hard work, and unrelenting study. He understood how much effort he needed to put forth on those leadership qualities in order to achieve his destiny of fame and glory.²¹ He learned these virtues and began to implant them into his own character as a youngster. He also had an enduring encounter with déjà vu. Throughout his life, Patton had visions, claiming that he was there in the battles he read and studied. His passion for war came from his readings of these biblical and classical figures.²²

He considered war to be noble, and that patriotism and sacrifice were the essentials in the war of good versus evil. He believed that a person's character eventually determined whether his life would be a success or a letdown.²³ Hence, he declared that his character must have the rudiments of war, patriotism, and sacrifice. An example of his sensible observation at such an early age comes from one of his last entries at the Clark School. He wrote his thoughts on Carthage stating:

Carthage stood for eastern slavery, wealth, and all the evils that accompany it, while Rome stood for freedom and purity of mind and body. Also, these states were commercial rivals. No wonder they fought.²⁴

Patton constantly reflected on these kinds of ideas which drove him to strive for eminence; and although he could not overcome his dyslexia, he persevered because he was ambitious. Nonetheless, he benefited from the studies he obtained at the Clark School and by the time he went to Virginia Military Institute in 1903, he had an outstanding education.²⁵

Virginia Military Institute and West Point Years

Patton made up his mind to become an army officer when he was sixteen years old. But to him, being a soldier meant that he had to pursue what he termed as the education and training of “military gentleman.” He also found himself tied to his own belief that he came from an affluent ancestry that was responsible for maintaining an orderly society.²⁶ His parents were not surprised about his decision, and in fact Patton’s parents supported him. They considered this an obligation for carrying the Patton tradition of great soldiers. Patton made his decision to seek admission to West Point in the summer of 1902. His father was pleased with the decision to attend West Point even though three generations of the Patton family went to the Virginia Military Institute (VMI).²⁷

Patton’s goal was to complete West Point’s four-year course and then head off to the Regular Army. His father used his political savvy and wasted no time petitioning for his son’s nomination to the academy through United States Senator Thomas R. Bard. The senator was intensely lobbied to select Patton when the 1904 slot became available.²⁸ A number of letters recommending Patton came from several California judges, a bank president, a army colonel, a number of well-known lawyers, the Los Angeles postmaster, and the naval aide to the governor of California. Senator Bard, however, did not easily give in to the recommendations. The only thing he offered at that time was the opportunity for the young Patton to compete with the other applicants.²⁹

Nevertheless, Patton had other options. He took the entrance exam to Princeton University and in June 1903 was granted admission to the Princeton class of 1907.³⁰ This was encouraging news for Patton and his father who was doing everything in his power

to obtain his son's nomination to West Point. However, Patton never entered Princeton; instead he enrolled at the Virginia Military Institute. His father thought that VMI was the logical choice to prepare him for Senator Bard's West Point slot, which he expected to be available the following year. Mr. Patton thought VMI would provide his son an additional year to mature, as well as provide insight to the academy's courses and military life. Additionally, West Point's entrance exam was waived with one successful year at VMI.³¹

Patton had early reading problems at VMI. However, his father continually corrected him on his grammatical mistakes. He additionally urged his son to work hard and never give up. As a result, Patton's reading problems improved. However, he agonized over his spelling troubles in succeeding letters to his father. His father also reminded him to be a good soldier first and then a good scholar. Patton followed his father's advice and it worked, since he received excellent class grades for his good conduct in his first two months at VMI. He also received no demerits for personal appearance and behavior and he continued to do well at VMI while he waited for his West Point nomination.³² Patton was slowly becoming the model soldier he envisioned he could be.

Patton was well liked and had no trouble carrying out the rules at VMI. For example, he was the first member of his class to be initiated into a secret fraternity. However, he was not too thrilled by being treated almost as an equal with his upperclassmen because it violated the chain of command system. He did not mind the benefits though. He told his father in a letter that "theoretically, I do not approve of this but practically I do." This idea on Patton's young military mind demonstrated his regard

for rules and policies which he understood to be within military culture. Patton was captivated with military traditions. He was sure that the military was an organization filled with members of an elite brotherhood; thus, he felt a sense of belonging to the institution.³³

Meanwhile, Patton increasingly reminded his father about his continued desire to enter West Point. He wanted the appointment so much that his father once more worked hard at getting him the nomination. Eventually Patton was permitted to take a test with the other candidates in Los Angeles. In February 1904, he took leave and rode a train to Los Angeles. During the long ride Patton studied hard. He took the exam and returned to VMI. Patton's name and two others appeared later in the Los Angeles paper as finalists for Senator Bard's nomination. As the senator contemplated on his choice, he received three more letters from Mr. Patton's prominent friends.³⁴

On March 3, 1904, Patton's father received a telegram from Senator Bard, informing him of Patton's selection for West Point.³⁵ Patton's dream of attending West Point finally emerged. His father's hard work, along with his (young Patton's) personal perseverance eventually paid off. This was young Patton's first real challenge in life and he achieved it through hard work and resolve, since he knew that the path to his success in the profession of arms went through West Point. He understood what was in front of him and realized that it was a larger task. His youthful and "pampered" days were over, and his fantasy of becoming a great general was now in his hands.³⁶ Ironically, West Point also became the place where he learned to be humble.

Patton found himself failing in English only a few months into his arrival at West Point. He wrote to his father saying: "I've got an instructor who in an evil moment found

out my utter lack of knowledge about English grammar so he has been questioning me on it with much regularity and I with equal exactness have flunked; still it is not all his fault for I don't spend enough time even on the part I know about.”³⁷ This example was only one of Patton's many reflections about how he was doing and where he needed to improve. He clearly exhibited the leadership quality of self-reflection and quickly learned to take responsibility for his actions. West Point gave him the opportunity to discover those attributes. These were traits he held throughout his Army career. By the time his first year at West Point came to an end, Patton started to do well in English. However, he failed his examinations in both French and mathematics. As a result, he had to repeat the entire year. So he spent a total of six years (three of them as a plebe) in military schools before eventually graduating from West Point in 1909.³⁸

In the summer of 1905, Patton did something significant in his pursuit for greatness. He took the first step in what later became his lifetime habit, writing his thoughts and activities on paper. His first entry confirmed his complete passion for success: “Do your damndest always.” He started a second notebook the following year with entries that were military in nature. He had entries about the principles of war as well as phrases he valued such as: “daring is wisdom . . . it is the highest part of war.”³⁹ He also documented phrases like: “Genius is an immense capacity for taking pains.”⁴⁰ Patton also sent letters to his father, mother, his Aunt Nannie, sister Nita, and his girlfriend Beatrice, the love of his life who soon became his wife. In those letters, especially letters to his father and Beatrice, and even in his personal accounts he repeatedly revealed his self-doubts. Amazingly, the more he doubted himself the more it motivated him to do better. When he explained his weaknesses, he always closed his

thoughts with a plan to work harder in order to advance. For example, he told himself in one of his journals: “Always do more than is required of you.”

Another entry in 1906 illustrated his personal growth when he planned and envisioned his own library. He named it: “List of books I should read,” and the list included an inventory of notable literature on warfare such as: *History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*; *Three Years War*, *Strategy and Tactics of Mountain Ranges*; *Some Lessons for the Boer War*; *Napoleon’s Maxims de la Guerre*; *Adam’s Great Campaigns*; *Operations of War*; *Military and Political Memoirs*; *Nations in Arms*; *Science of War*; *Letters on Tactics*; *Art of War and Dictionary of Battles*; *Russian Campaigns in Turkey*; *Letters in Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery*; *Armies of Europe and Asia*; *McClelland Campaigns or Stewart’s Cavalry*; and *Life of Napoleon*.⁴¹ He was only a sophomore at West Point when he developed the list. What inspired him to read those books? Was it his exposure to the West Point military culture, or was it his own obsession for military distinction?

He entitled one of his essays, “The Necessity of a Good Library at West Point,” and wrote, “We are sorry to say that there are comparatively few men in the Corps who realize the importance of military study and military history which is, as Napoleon says, the only school of war.”⁴² According to Roger Nye, author of *The Patton Mind*, Patton received more of his support for his reading from home than from the academy. His family who frequently visited him at West Point delivered books he requested. One example of this is when he received C.W. Robinson’s *Wellington’s campaigns, Peninsula-Waterloo, 1808-1815*. In 1908, Patton’s father also sent him a volume of

Major General Henry Lloyd's *The History of the Late war in Germany between the King of Prussia and the Empress of Germany and Her Allies*.⁴³

Patton and his father regularly exchanged letters during his years at West Point. Accordingly, he paid attention and followed his father's guidance. But he also liberally expressed his thoughts and feelings to his father. He appeared to allow his father's counsel on heroic death, and not heroic defeat into his philosophy. In the spring of 1908 Patton made an entry in his notebook:

Remember that you have placed all on war. Therefore you must never fail . . . Never, never, never stop being ambitious. You have one life. Live it to the full of glory and be willing to pay.⁴⁴

He also wrote to his parents in January 1909 saying,

I have got to--do you understand got to--be great--it is no foolish dream--it is me as I ever will be. I am different from other men my age. All they want to do is to live happily and die old. I would be willing to live in torture, die tomorrow if for one day I could be really great.⁴⁵

By the time Patton's last year at West Point came around, he made sure that he satisfied his yearning to read and learn what he could from military history. His notebook entries had bits and pieces that referenced military history such as, "Napoleon at Jena made three mistakes in two days and won the battle." He believed that in order for a man to become a great soldier, it was necessary for him to be familiar with all facets of the military. He said that to attain this, one must read military history "in its earliest and hence crudest form and to follow it down in natural sequence permitting his mind to grow with his subject until he can grasp without effort the most abstruse question of the science of war because he is already permeated with all its elements."⁴⁶

Patton's one year at VMI set the stage for his West Point undertaking. VMI gave him a glimpse of the challenges that were ahead for him at West Point. Most of all, It

gave him an extra year of maturity. West Point on the other hand, offered Patton the conduit to reach his ambition for prominence in the world of military affairs. It gave him the tools he needed to exploit his desire to lead. Furthermore, it allowed him to reflect deeply about his future as an Army officer. Before his graduation from West Point and Army commission in the spring of 1909, Patton thought seriously about his profession and continued to write with caution and reminders to himself in his notebook. He wrote of his observations as to what his profession meant to him. He also continued to write military adages, rules of war, and his perceptions about battles that were won and lost in the past.⁴⁷

He told his soon-to-be wife, Beatrice that his reasons for deciding in favor of an Army career were his heredity, his love of excitement, and his desire for reputation.⁴⁸ Patton also deeply considered his choices for branch of service during his last year at West Point. He did not choose artillery because the guns were too far from the action. Although the infantry attracted him because of its bigger chances for promotion, he liked the cavalry more because of the horses and the reputation of their officers--he understood cavalry officers to be a better class of gentlemen. He eventually chose the cavalry after seeking advice from almost everyone at West Point, including the commandant of cadets.⁴⁹

After five years at West Point, Patton finally graduated on June 11, 1909. His hard work paid off, as he ranked 46 of the 103 graduates.⁵⁰ Right before his graduation from West Point, Patton wrote to his girlfriend, Beatrice saying, "Whatever happens I will now as ever enter with the hope of making the other people run like hell to beat me."⁵¹ He carried this mindset with him and used it in his leadership philosophy on

competition. The guest speaker for the class of 1909's graduation ceremony was Secretary of War Jacob McGavock Dickinson. The secretary in his speech called on the cadets to dedicate their lives to the nation.⁵²

Patton's Early Years as Company Grade Officer

Patton gave a great deal of thought about his objectives and how to achieve them during his junior years as an Army officer. Additionally, he was always thinking about his ultimate goal of becoming famous. He knew that he had to learn his profession and be proficient in his trade in order to reach his goals. This required intense study and diligent application which became his habit. But in the process, he had to gain favorable attention to himself. Patton used his family's influence as well as his own social connections to develop the approval of those who could help him advance,⁵³ but he generally also demonstrated his hard work ethic and determination to succeed. Patton's superior officers recognized and documented these qualities in him, and hence mentored and developed him throughout his Army career.

Patton's first duty assignment was with Troop K of the 15th Cavalry Regiment at Fort Sheridan, Illinois in 1909. His troop commander was Captain Francis C. Marshall.⁵⁴ Marshall had his new lieutenant follow him around for several days to learn the unit routine. They inspected the dining facilities to insure sanitation policies were being followed. They also observed the target range, did paperwork at the office, and supervised the stable. Along the way, Patton observed the quality of the officers on post and judged Captain Marshall to be the best. He even tried to emulate his first commander who worked his way to become a brigadier general in World War I.

Patton also observed that the enlisted men on post were for the most part well disciplined. Yet, he preferred outdoor activities and field exercises over the garrison routines. In the field, he performed his duties energetically. When back in garrison, he hunted, played polo, and coached a football team to stay occupied.⁵⁵ He and a colleague also started a course on military reading and studying for their unit. This initiative demonstrated the leadership competency of developing others and building the team. Marshall wrote Patton's first efficiency report and commented on the lieutenant's attention to detail, professional zeal, intelligence, and judgment in instructing others.⁵⁶

Patton began his notoriety with his peers through his recklessness on the football field, his track and sword activities, and his impeccable appearance at West Point. However, he started his legendary reputation in front of the enlisted ranks at Fort Sheridan. Patton was drilling his men one day when a horse bucked and immediately threw him to the ground. He remounted at once but the horse bucked again and the horse fell to the ground. However, Patton stayed on the horse and when the horse finally got back up, it threw its head back and gashed Patton's eyebrow. Patton, dazed by the blow was unaware that he was severely bleeding and kept on training his men. Afterwards, he dismissed his men, washed his face, went to teach his noncommissioned officers and then Patton attended the class for junior officers before he saw a doctor. He was embarrassed that he was thrown by his horse. Nonetheless, his ensuing behavior showed his poise which pleased him because it demonstrated strength and will. The enlisted men who saw Patton's courage spread the word. They saw a young officer perform his duty even while bleeding profusely. Thus, they admired and had confidence in this lieutenant who continued to lead despite being injured.⁵⁷

Patton finally asked his girlfriend Beatrice to marry him, but her father, Mr. Ayers, tried to persuade Patton to resign from the military and enter business. Mr. Ayers was a very successful businessman who had great business opportunities for the young man. Patton explained his feelings to Mr. Ayers saying that as far as soldiering, it would “be as hard to give up all thought of it as it would to stop breathing.”⁵⁸ After correspondence between Patton and Mr. Ayers, the latter finally approved the marriage of his daughter to Patton. Beatrice Ayers and Patton were married at Beverly Farms, Massachusetts, in May 1910. His lifetime partner came from a very wealthy family, but she graciously took on the duties of an Army wife. Furthermore, she assisted her husband in overcoming his inadequacies in terms of roughness and outspokenness; yet she dedicated her life to his development.⁵⁹

Patton bought a typewriter and started to produce articles on military subjects. He set his thoughts on paper and soon developed recurring themes that followed him. An example was his continued insistence on attacking and pushing forward, and then attacking again. He became very much in tune with offensive warfare, stating that blow followed blows in the ideal battle. Furthermore, he laid out his thoughts on training saying that “no machine is better than its operator.”⁶⁰ Patton also regularly turned his thoughts to the future asking himself how he could gain the fame he had looked for. He determined that his dream could not come true if America remained at peace. He mentioned his yearning for war to his father in several letters. War in Patton’s mind was where he could gain distinction and preserve the Patton legacy.

However, in the meantime Patton had to make decisions about his role in the peacetime army. He wanted to attend the cavalry’s Mounted Service School at Fort Riley,

Kansas to enhance his military knowledge but he was too junior in rank. He also considered the French Cavalry School at Saumur, France.⁶¹ But meanwhile, he had to complete his tour of duty at Fort Sheridan. Patton took temporary command of the machine gun platoon in K Troop. He initially did not want to command the troop because it was a poor outfit. However, when he finally took charge, he reshaped the unit and impressed his superiors with his ability to command troops. He also learned the valuable skills of firing, deploying, and using machine guns in combat.⁶² Patton was arguably accumulating leadership competencies at this early stage in his military career.

When Patton realized his tour at Fort Sheridan was ending, he considered his choices for future assignment. He made the decision to go to Fort Meyer, Virginia near Washington, D.C. where many important officers lived. He sought help from both his boss, Marshall, and a friend who was stationed in D.C. In December 1911, orders reassigned Patton to Fort Meyer, Virginia, where the 15th Cavalry headquarters was located. Fort Meyer was also where the Army's Chief of Staff resided; and to Patton's delight, where the best gentlemen exhibited graceful horsemanship and played first-rate polo.⁶³ He was assigned to A Troop, 15th Cavalry, and soon impressed his new commander, Captain Julian R. Linsey. He showed his new boss his studious and hardworking demeanor, and continued his practice of writing professional military articles. In February 1912, Patton produced a monograph for his troop, written in the form of Napoleonic saying, called *Principles of Scouting*.⁶⁴

Patton Makes a Name for Himself

Although he preferred field exercises over garrison duties at Fort Sheridan, Fort Meyer offered something different. He learned the leader competencies of training,

developing, and building small unit teams at Fort Sheridan. Fort Meyer, on the other hand was the place he developed his diplomatic and politicking skills. While he gained fame at Fort Sheridan through his courageous acts and his leadership, he gained fame in a different way at Fort Meyer.⁶⁵ Fort Meyer provided Patton with the opportunity to exercise his growing knack of self-promotion. He quickly learned that no matter how good he was as an officer, the influence from people in powerful positions was vital to attain his dream of becoming a general.⁶⁶ Coincidentally, one day Patton was riding his horse at a Fort Meyer equestrian trail and he met Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. They soon developed a lasting friendship. Mr. Stimson was impressed by Patton's riding abilities, and the two often rode together. Stimson also had Patton serve as his aide at social events.⁶⁷

Patton was reassigned as the squadron quartermaster after working in Troop A for three months. This gave him the time to practice and play on the Fort Meyer polo team. Patton also enhanced his fame at Fort Meyer by being mentioned as a participant in the Fifth Olympic Games held in the summer of 1912 in Stockholm. He represented the United States in the Modern Pentathlon consisting of five events suited for Patton's strengths. In the end, Patton placed 5th overall. He was 6th in swimming, 3rd in fencing, 3rd in horseback riding, 3rd in running, and placed 21st in shooting which ruined his average.⁶⁸

Patton had an issue with his shooting because a couple of his shots could not be identified on the target. Some believed those shots went through the same holes his previous shots had made. Patton did not complain and instead commented that:

the high spirit of sportsmanship and generosity manifested throughout speaks volumes for the character of the officers of the present day . . . each man did his best and took what fortune sent like true soldiers . . . yet the spirit of friendship in no manner detracted from the zeal of with which all strove for success.⁶⁹

The Stockholm Olympics ended on July 17 and the King of Sweden later awarded Patton and other competitors a commemorative decoration which was similar to a military medal.⁷⁰

The senior officer in charge of the Army's Olympic representatives, Lieutenant Colonel Frederick S. Foltz, highlighted in his July 26, 1912 report that Patton had given the fencing champion of the French Army the only defeat he had suffered. Patton in the meantime was thinking about perfecting his fencing skills. He and his family had about ten days to spare while waiting to board the ship for their return home. Patton used this opportunity to take private lessons from Adjutant M. Clery, the Master of Arms and instructor of fencing at the Cavalry School in Saumur, France.⁷¹

Patton's overseas adventure was his first step in living up to the Patton name by becoming a great soldier. His name appeared in the newspapers and was noticed by the Washington elites. He had dinner with the Army Chief of Staff, General Leonard Wood and Secretary of War Henry Stimson upon his return. Patton shared his Olympic experience and his fencing training with the two men, and soon his morning horse rides included General Wood. Patton took advantage of this relationship later when he wrote to the general suggesting improvements to the cavalry drills and procedures.⁷²

In December 1912, Patton was detailed to the office of the Army's chief of staff and was an occasional aide to General Wood and Secretary Stimson. He was an action officer and at the same time, Patton was beginning to learn the intricacies of powerful positions in the Army. His rank was still only second lieutenant, but he wrote several

important papers that were read by the Army's most senior officer. His knowledge of military history and the way he incorporated it in his papers paid dividends.⁷³ He wrote documents on the war in the Balkans as well as other documents that featured his knowledge of military history and his commanding writing style. He was achieving his goals for making his name known--his concept of marketing himself. However, the most successful part of his popularity movement was his connection with the cavalry saber.⁷⁴

Patton's detail to the War Department also ended in March 1913. General Wood wrote a letter noting his appreciation for Patton's work and praised his performance. Second lieutenants did not normally work for the army's most senior officer and uncommonly received such admiration, but it was a significant boost for Patton's confidence. Additionally, his good work with the saber also enhanced his chances for attending the French Cavalry School in Saumur, France.⁷⁵ Patton engineered a plan to get to Saumur and then to the Mounted Service School at Fort Riley, Kansas.

By March 1913, Patton had been advising the Ordnance Department on the design of the new cavalry sword. His work appeared in the prestigious *Cavalry Journal*. The sword was later manufactured in 1913 at the Springfield Armory and was called the U.S. Saber, M-1913. It became known as the "Patton Sword."⁷⁶ He had also promoted his plan for a course in swordsmanship with friends, colleagues, and superiors around Fort Meyer and at the War Department. He sent his draft proposal for the course to the Commandant of the Mounted Service School at Fort Riley on June 18, 1913. His plan was endorsed and approved by senior cavalry officers. Then he received a letter dated June 25, 1913 from the War Department Adjutant General thru Commanding General, Eastern

Department authorizing him to go to France and then to Fort Riley, Kansas.⁷⁷ How significant was this development?

Patton trained in Saumur, France, with Adjutant M. Clery that summer and then reported in October to Fort Riley, Kansas as student at the Mounted Service School, and at the same time the school's instructor for fencing. He did exceptionally well as a student and instructor and Patton was given the title of Master of the Sword. Patton was the first to hold this prestigious title and was recognized as the foremost fencing expert in the entire Army. His plan for getting to Washington, then getting an assignment to Fort Riley's Mounted Service School, along with receiving training at Saumur had come true.⁷⁸ But he was not totally satisfied because on November 1914 when he reached his twenty-ninth birthday, he informed his father of his dissatisfaction. Patton said that he put twenty-seven as the age he would make brigadier general; yet there he was at the age of twenty-nine, not even a first lieutenant.⁷⁹

The Mounted Service School commandant Colonel J.A. Gaston evaluated Patton as an expert swordsman and an excellent instructor.⁸⁰ He also noted that Patton was best suited for duty with troops or as an aide to a general officer which eventually came true. Patton went on to both lead troops and became a general's aide in Mexico and in World War I. Before leaving Fort Riley, Patton contributed a cup to be awarded annually to the winner of the mounted saber competition. The name of the cup was the Troop Officer's Class Cup, later known as the Patton Cup, which became highly sought after.⁸¹ Patton also contributed another publication to the cavalry branch. The Army Chief of Staff, General Wood, approved Patton's manual entitled *Sword Exercise, 1914*. It contained sections on nomenclature as well as mounted and dismounted drill instructions. The

publication explained the training and use of the saber in warfare. It was thorough, detailed, and logically organized; and became a standard manual for the cavalry branch.⁸²

Patton in Combat

Patton graduated from the Mounted Service School on June 17, 1915. He was subsequently assigned to duty at Fort Bliss, Texas. Brigadier General John J. Pershing was in command of the 8th Infantry Brigade, to which the 8th Cavalry Regiment was assigned. Troubles at the Mexican border threatened to break into open conflict and Patton wanted to be a part of the action. He was also eligible to take an examination for his promotion to first lieutenant when he reported to his new unit.⁸³ Patton was assigned to Troop D of the 8th Cavalry.⁸⁴ His unit was away on field duty so he took the break to study and prepare himself to take his promotion exam. He passed the exam and was qualified for promotion.

On March 9, 1916, Pancho Villa raided Columbus, New Mexico and killed seventeen Americans. President Woodrow Wilson ordered General Pershing to take a punitive expedition into Mexico to hunt down and capture Villa.⁸⁵ While Pershing organized and selected units to execute the mission, Patton worried that he would not see action. His regiment was not selected to go into Mexico. Therefore, he did everything he could to convince General Pershing to take him as his aide. The general already had two aides, but Patton served as a third. He worked diligently and proved himself essential.⁸⁶

Patton's reputation increased in May 1916. He went to the town of Rubio, Mexico to search for Pancho Villa's well-known collaborator named Julio Cardenas. Then he proceeded with ten men in three automobiles to San Miguelito, six miles away when he did not find Cardenas in Rubio. Patton stopped short of the ranch they were about to

search and laid out his plan. The operation became the first time in U.S. Army history that a unit used motor vehicles in combat. It was soundly executed. After several shots were fired, Patton found Carranza and killed him and two of his men.⁸⁷ Pershing authorized a press release of the story to the newspapers. Patton finally saw action and once again heightened his reputation. He later wrote to his father stating, “At last I succeeded in getting into a fight.”⁸⁸ Additionally, in June 13, 1916, Patton was permitted to accompany a troop that was sent to look for another outlaw named Pedro Lujan. He spent three days riding with Captain Frederick G. Turner’s Troop M of the 13th Cavalry. The troop finally surrounded a house and captured Lujan.

Pershing’s Punitive Expedition returned from Mexico in February 1917. On February 1, Patton was assigned to the 7th Cavalry, but he remained as Pershing’s acting aide. On February 19, Pershing left Fort Bliss and took command of the Southern Department in San Antonio. He gave Patton an excellent rating on his evaluation.⁸⁹ Patton reflected on his experiences and the things he learned during the Punitive Expedition in Mexico. He was promoted to first lieutenant. He gained fame by killing Carranza and assisting with the capture of Lujan. He also had experiences with the Army’s latest innovations such as the familiarization and employment of motor vehicles in extended operations. Likewise, he noted the effectiveness of the Aero-Squadron as well as its difficulties in landing on undeveloped fields. Patton also understood the importance of carrying spare parts for it. He learned the impact of executing good logistics operations on the battlefield. Moreover, when delivering Pershing’s messages between well dispersed units, he learned the importance of staff coordination and synchronization of effort. In particular, he came to know Pershing really well as he

watched and learned how Pershing carried himself and issued orders. Patton closely observed how Pershing demanded discipline and loyalty, as well as Pershing's attention to detail. Patton told his wife Beatrice in a letter that he had learned more useful soldiering in Mexico than in all of his previous service put together.⁹⁰

On February 27, 1917, Patton took command of A Troop, 7th Cavalry. He also passed the promotion examination and became eligible for promotion to captain.⁹¹ The United States declared war on Germany just two months after he returned from Mexico. On May 2, 1917, General Pershing received orders to organize, train, and prepare to deploy a division of four infantry regiments and one artillery regiment. Patton's name was on the compiled list of officers Pershing wished to have. On May 15, 1917, Patton was promoted to captain.⁹² He reported to Pershing's office in Washington and on May 28, 1917, Patton departed for Europe with Pershing's advance headquarters. In Europe, Patton looked after orderlies, posted guards, and handled drivers.⁹³ His first few days were full of excitement because he followed Pershing during their meetings with dignitaries who dined and discussed war plans. Patton was the most junior officer Pershing had in his entourage. He was learning important leadership traits from powerful wartime leaders.⁹⁴ In essence, Patton was being exposed to the vast information and details of waging a war on a massive scale.⁹⁵ This experience developed skills Patton later used when he dealt with state leaders in World War II.

When Pershing decided to move American troops to the front lines in September, he also moved his headquarters to Chaumont, France. Patton was the post adjutant at Chaumont and he took command of the headquarters company; a company composed of about 250 soldiers, and supervised an automobile detachment of ninety automobiles.⁹⁶ He

did extremely well keeping his enlisted men disciplined but, more importantly, he learned the intricacies of synchronizing logistics and straightening out the chaotic atmosphere his unit operated in.⁹⁷ Later, Patton considered an assignment with tanks after hearing that a tank service was being organized. He sent forth a letter stating his qualifications to the Chief of Cavalry. Pershing asked Patton where he preferred to serve if he were to be promoted to major. Patton wanted the opportunity to lead in the front lines where he could demonstrate his competence. Patton met Colonel Fox Conner and asked him for his advice. Conner swayed Patton towards the infantry so he settled tentatively with the thought of changing his branch. Then Lieutenant Colonel LeRoy Etlinge advised him to consider tanks, saying:

Patton, we want to start a tank school. To get anything out of tanks, one must be reckless and take risks. I think you are the sort of darned fool who will do it.⁹⁸

Patton accepted, so Pershing sent a message to the War Department Adjutant General on October 20, 1917, recommending Patton be transferred to the National Army as a major of infantry.⁹⁹ Patton still contemplated his future and whether to venture forward with tanks. He wrote in his dairy on November 4, 1917, that he saw Colonel Paul B. Malone, who told him his name went to the general for detail to the Tank School. He also received advice to try tanks from a couple of majors. Reflecting, Patton said, "I did not sleep a bit that night and decided to try the Tanks as it appears the way to high command if I make a go of it."¹⁰⁰

Patton finally decided to go with tanks because he thought it was the ultimate opportunity to fulfill his destiny. Although both Conner and Pershing recommended the infantry, Patton decided to go with the tanks. He wanted to stand on his own and insure that his success would not be credited to Pershing. Besides, he thought that as an infantry

officer, he would compete against hundreds of majors; yet he would be the only one with light tanks. He also thought that infantrymen were mostly in the trenches, and tanks on the other hand fought only in attacking operations.¹⁰¹ He told his father that the tanks had a fifty percent chance that they will not work, but if they did work they will “work like hell.”¹⁰² He went on explain his ultimate dream saying, that he will run the Tank School, and then organize a battalion which he will command. He will do a good job with the tanks, and if the war lasts, he will get a regiment and again do well so he could get his brigade and his brigadier general rank.¹⁰³

On November 10, 1917, Patton became the first U.S. Army soldier to be assigned to the new Tank Corps.¹⁰⁴ His orders directed him to report to the Commandant of the Army Schools in Langres, France. He was to establish the First Army Tank School there with the assistance of a young artillery officer named 1LT Elgin Braine.¹⁰⁵ Patton spent two weeks at the French tank training center located in Chamlieu to familiarize him with the tanks. He drove the Renault, fired its gun and worked tactical problems.¹⁰⁶ He was very pleased with the tanks and asked many questions about its machinery when he inspected the repair shops. He had long discussions and took notes on how to best employ tanks in combat.¹⁰⁷ While training with tanks at Chamlieu, the British successfully employed the tanks in combat at Cambrai.

In a letter to Beatrice, Patton wrote, “Since the English success the other day, lots of people have suddenly discovered that in the tanks they have always had faith and now express a desire to accept the command of them but fortunately, I beat them by four days.”¹⁰⁸ After his training at Chamlieu, Patton decided to learn about the Battle of Cambrai firsthand so he visited with Colonel J.F.C. Fuller. With the assistance of LT

Braine, Patton later submitted a 58-page memo to the Chief of the Tank Service titled, *Light Tanks*. The paper outlined Patton's proposal and rationale for the organization, tactics, equipment, and training of the Tank Corps. His paper presented a historical and technical perspective of the Renault tank and effectively analyzed the success and failures of both the French and British tanks and tactics. Patton's detailed and diligent work demonstrated in his memo reflected his visionary mindset.¹⁰⁹ Before finally heading to Langres to open his Tank School, Patton wrote in his diary saying:

This is my last day as staff officer. Now I rise or fall on my own. God judge the right.¹¹⁰

Patton was promoted to major on January 26, 1918.¹¹¹ He later conducted the first close-order drills on February 1, 1918. He received a cable from the War Department that 100 American built Renaults would arrive that April. Additionally 300 would be delivered in May and 600 would arrive every subsequent month.¹¹² Patton then expanded the provisional drill regulations for tanks. The introduction chapter of the *Tank Drill and Training (proposed)* was purely his philosophy on the destruction of the enemy stating, "This is brought about by killing and wounding his men so as to reduce his strength and destroy his morale."¹¹³ In March Patton wrote another paper which consisted of instructions for training the Tank Corps. He went on to explain that the object of training is creating a "Corps d'Elite" where the body of men being trained are determined to win the war. They had to possess high efficiency and high morale. They had to be mentally alert, fit, disciplined, organized, skilled, smart, and proud. He charged commanders to lead with these attributes and instill them in their training.¹¹⁴ In essence, Patton was training his officers to teach uniform doctrine and create an elite body who were aggressive and offensive minded at every rank.¹¹⁵

Patton was promoted to lieutenant colonel in April 1918.¹¹⁶ On April 28, he organized and commanded the 1st Light Tank Battalion with three companies. He then received permission to visit the French front in May to visualize the battle in case his newly innovated outfit was committed. When summer came Patton was hopeless because he thought he would never receive enough tanks to fight when the AEF was committed to battle.¹¹⁷ However, through a large effort from Pershing and his senior staff, the French had been delivering Renaults to fill his brigade's requirements since June. Patton also managed to attend the twelve-week course at the General Staff School in near Langres.¹¹⁸ He had no intentions of being a staff officer at the time, but he thought the school was a good training ground to cultivate his experience. The school's staff and visiting speakers were those who later became famous for their achievements; including: MAJ Adna R. Chaffee, General Hugh Trenchard, Major Alexander M. "Sandy" Patch, and LTC George C. Marshall.¹¹⁹

By August 1918, General Pershing assumed command of the U.S. First Army which was being deployed to the Meuse-Argonne.¹²⁰ Patton by then was in command of the 1st Brigade, Tank Corps which included the 344th and 345th Tank Battalions. He had fifty officers, 900 men and 25 tanks.¹²¹ His brigade was among the first units scheduled to conduct operations in support of the Saint-Mihiel offensive. He was still at the General Staff School when someone handed him a note reading: "You will report at once to the Chief of the Tank Corps accompanied by your Reconnaissance officer and equipped for field service."¹²² Patton's brigade was originally intended to support the V Corps' attack in the north. The plan was later changed after detailed planning. Instead, his brigade's

mission was to support the 1st Division, also known as the Big Red One, and the 42nd Division, also known as the Rainbow Division.¹²³

Because of the change, Patton had limited time to develop not just a new tactical battle plan, but also his new plan to synchronize his logistical operations. Patton had to get his tanks to railheads near the IV Corps front and set up fuel dumps adjacent to the front line. Although he managed to establish his fuel dumps, he could not get the critical oil and lubricants he needed. Patton faced the extensive challenges of communicating his logistical requirements to the higher headquarters staff. The higher command staff was not familiar with the Tank Corps, and logistics of tanks was complicated. Therefore, the logisticians had no concept of the unique requirements that tanks had. He also faced challenges with the 42nd Division who had never trained with tanks. The 42nd Division leaders were receptive to the support that Patton's tanks provided for them; but they were not too clear as to the effects they would receive from it. For instance, when Patton requested smoke as part of the preparatory artillery barrages to protect his tanks from German antitank guns, the 42nd Division's G-3 refused because he did not want to rewrite and re-issue the entire division fire plan.¹²⁴

Patton was relentless in his pursuit to make tanks work in combat. He was determined and continued to push his unit. Patton wanted to fight with this new kind of firepower, and accordingly inspired his men to be just as eager. There were moments when his tanks were slow getting to the front lines and his men would pray that the fighting did not start until they got there.¹²⁵ Patton also designed a creative system for overcoming the communication challenges between tanks. He had each tank marked with playing-card suits such as: spades, hearts, diamonds, and clubs. Each suit represented one

of the platoons in a company. A number followed the suit to represent the particular tank. For example, the third tank in the “spades” platoon from Bravo Company, 344th Tank Battalion was therefore known as the Three of Spades.¹²⁶ Patton issued his letter to motivate his troops as soon as he finally brought all of his tanks to the front. He told his men that as tankers, they were the champions of the future of the Tank Corps and their mission on the battlefield was their test.¹²⁷

During the battles, Patton recognized his challenges with command and control. Radio communications between commanders and their units were lacking. The method he used to address this problem was not popular with his boss, General Samuel D. Rockenach, Chief of the Tank Corps. Patton realized that he needed to see what his tanks were going through, so he left his brigade command post and went to command from the front lines. His aggressive leadership inspired his officers and soldiers to never fall behind the infantry they supported. Patton’s units demonstrated the highest standards of behavior on the battlefield and succeeded beyond his expectations. He certainly sent the message that he practiced what he preached.¹²⁸

Patton experienced the dilemma of command and began to ask himself where he should be in the battle. His command post offered good communications with his reserves, artillery, and higher headquarters where his superiors offered advice and mentoring, as well as new orders and missions. Patton could also offer his feedback and recommendations from his command post. Yet, if he followed his forward units and led by personal example, he became vulnerable and also lost contact with his superiors. However, Patton’s personal presence would boost the performance of his men. So, he decided that his presence leading in the front was important because it would allow him

to adjust his units. Furthermore, it allowed him to ignite the morale of his soldiers. In essence, as Blumenson stated in his book, *Patton: the Man behind the Legend*, “He embraced the notion that a leader belonged in the midst of the action as a visible symbol of skills learned and attitudes inculcated.”¹²⁹ Was this the only reason he chose to go to the front lines, or did the excitement of combat become too attractive and did Patton believe he needed to prove his courage?

Patton reflected on a number of occasions about his command performance. He assigned the most difficult missions to his 344th Battalion for the operations in the Argonne Forest. The operation required the most imaginative plan because of its tactical complexity and inhospitable terrain. Patton attached with his operations order a memorandum that contained a detailed assessment of the terrain and how the infantry and his tanks could be employed in the upcoming offensive. However, he became frustrated with how the preparations were going a few days into the offensive. His staff was having a difficult time solving some logistical issues; mainly resupplying the tanks with fuel. Nevertheless, Patton was determined to fix the problem. His solution was simple. Tanks had an immediate requirement to be refueled, so he required every tank moving into position to carry two 20-liter fuel cans tied to its back.¹³⁰

Patton became increasingly irritated when things went wrong because he micro-managed his staff and subordinates that they became helpless. He reflected on his responsibility to empower and guide his staff; and vowed to improve. Carlo D’Este writes in his book, *Patton: Genius for War* that: “Mostly his reaction was the result of fatigue, frazzled nerves, and his never ending frustration, when, despite his powerful personality, his troops were unable to respond to the high (some would say, impossible) standards he

set for them.”¹³¹ Moving forward on the battlefield, Patton reached St. Baussant under heavy shelling. He proceeded to Essey and found infantrymen lying in shell holes. As shells passed by overhead, Patton continued walking until he reached Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur who stood on a little hill. Patton joined him for a moment, and then proceeded to personally lead the attack with tanks and infantrymen.¹³² The offensive was fairly successful, and although the Germans did not entirely test Patton’s tankers, his soldiers gallantly performed like veterans who were cool and efficient in their initial test under fire.

Patton was wounded in action on September 26, 1918, during the Meuse-Argonne offensive. A bullet from about 50 meters away went through his left leg. On the way to the hospital, he ordered the ambulance to stop at the division headquarters to submit a report regarding the conditions on the front.¹³³ Patton had inspired his soldiers to continue fighting even in his absence. His contribution to the continued exploits was a result of his training and determined character. According to Blumenson, “he had passed the final test of leadership, leaving behind him in other men the conviction and will to carry on.”¹³⁴

Patton was promoted to colonel on October 17, 1918. World War I ended on November 11, 1918, Patton’s thirty-third birthday. By then, Patton had achieved great recognition for his leadership and his unit’s accomplishments during the war. The United States tested the latest innovation in warfare--the tank, and Patton became its leading expert. He established the necessary training at his tank school and center. Then he led his soldiers in combat, validating his teaching methods. The way he shaped and developed soldiers contributed to victory in America’s last WWI campaigns. He proved his leadership to work in the preparation and execution of combat operations.¹³⁵ He was

awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on December 16, 1918, and was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his performance in WWI.¹³⁶ On January 3, 1919, Patton was ordered to shut down operations and prepare for redeployment back to the United States. Newspapers back home described him as a war hero, especially for his work with the latest innovation.¹³⁷

Patton's Early Interwar Years

Patton tried on four separate occasions to be the commandant of cadets at West Point. He wanted to pass his lessons to the younger generation. He failed to get this appointment, despite support from some of his powerful friends, including Pershing.¹³⁸ Nonetheless, he faithfully and undoubtedly preformed his Army duties. He did more than required and strived to be the best and win the continued approval of his superiors. Patton had very high standards and combat became his venue for testing his greatness. The interwar years made him constantly examine himself to see whether or not he was merely an ordinary rather than outstanding officer.¹³⁹

In April 1919, Patton requested assignment as a military attaché in England or admission to the School of the Line, later known as Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. However, he did not get either of his choices.¹⁴⁰ Instead, his brigade settled at the Tank Corps' new permanent home, Camp Meade, Maryland. He was assigned the primary function of demobilizing the massive military force from WWI. He also was ordered in April 1919 to a temporary duty in Washington to serve on the tank board. The purpose of the board was to examine and recommend the basic doctrine of the Tank Corps in peacetime. The board was to recommend the Tank Corps'

organization, training, and employment in future warfare. When Patton returned to Fort Meade, he was assigned to command the light tanks of the 304th Brigade.

During this time period, Patton made good friends with MAJ Dwight D. Eisenhower, another advocate of tanks. Eisenhower commanded a battalion of newly manufactured Mark VIII Liberty medium tanks. The drawdown period after WWI returned the two officers back to their regular ranks of major. Patton and Eisenhower shared a profound understanding of tanks and a passionate belief that tanks had a great role in the Army's future.¹⁴¹ They studied in great detail the potential benefits of using tanks in future warfare. In his book, *At Ease*, Eisenhower explained that: "Tanks could have a more valuable and more spectacular role."¹⁴²

Patton wrote reports and essays dealing with the technical aspects of the tank- discussing their design, maintenance, and operation. He even wrote to the Naval War College inquiring how the navy maneuvered and fought warships because he thought tank actions would be like a sea fight. In 1920, Eisenhower and Patton published confrontational articles in the *Infantry Journal*.¹⁴³ They studied and evaluated how tanks would be used in combat by solving the tactical problems produced by the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth. Patton thought that the Leavenworth instructors were overly cautious. The two officers then added tanks to the scenario and were pleased to discover that tanks were a contributing factor to the winning side.¹⁴⁴

Patton and Eisenhower were compatible in their thoughts and ideas about tanks and the tanks role in warfare, but they had a basic disagreement. Inspired leadership on the battlefield was Patton's idea for winning in modern warfare. Eisenhower believed that Patton neglected other important matters such as logistics, a strategy for massive war, and

getting along with allies. After the assignment at Fort Meade, the two officers did not serve together again until WWII but they continued their passionate discussion about the subject of tanks through correspondence¹⁴⁵ and remained close friends.

The National Defense Act of 1920 (NDA of 1920) prescribed major changes for the Army. In addition to the downsizing of the force, the NDA of 1920 abolished tanks as an independent corps. Instead the tanks went to the infantry branch. Patton once again had to make a decision on branches. He thought about going to the infantry with the tanks, but his advancement to general was doubtful since he was originally a cavalry officer; otherwise he could return to the cavalry where he was admired and respected. He was transferred back to the cavalry branch in September 1919. On October 1920, Patton was assigned with the 3rd Cavalry at Fort Meyer.¹⁴⁶

Upon his return to Fort Meyer, Patton reopened the Patton School, an informal training for his officers and soldiers. He trained his officers to be trainers using the fundamentals of discipline and individual skills. He elevated the training to his platoons and troops using more advanced forms of combat techniques for offensive and defensive operations. In just one month, Patton delivered twenty two lectures and lessons for his officers, delivering sixteen of them himself. He tested his officers in 1921 through a series of exercises and drills, demanding that they develop solutions to the problems he taught them.¹⁴⁷ He kept his officers' intellectual level high by requiring them to practice leadership and command. He compiled the many experiences he learned about war and his style of leadership from his ten years of army service. Besides his offensive-minded, aggressive style, and leadership philosophy, he preached about caring by saying that: "Officers must be made to care for their men. That is the sole duty of all officers."¹⁴⁸

Cavalry School and Command and General Staff School

Patton attended the Cavalry School at Fort Riley and completed the advance course in early 1923.¹⁴⁹ He went up to the instructor one day and asked to be given more lessons on the machine gun because others claimed it was the most lethal weapon on the battlefield. He asked to be given personal lessons on Saturday afternoons. Patton had mastered every detail of the weapon by the time he left Fort Riley.¹⁵⁰ The commandant of the school, Brigadier General Malin Craig, remarked that Patton was a “very energetic, enthusiastic and versatile officer.” He did “everything exceptionally well . . . a combined opinion of 28 instructors, 4 directors, and the Commandant.”¹⁵¹ Patton was selected to attend the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth because of his high class standing and he entered the school in September 1923.”¹⁵²

Officers who were fortunate enough to be selected took the Leavenworth school seriously. The Command and General Staff School was well structured with long days and requirements for extensive off duty study. It was considered the most demanding year in an officer’s peacetime career. Patton was one of the most competitive students at the school and he remarked that he had been “studying to beat hell.”¹⁵³ The school placed students under great pressure and demanded them to think and react even when they were exhausted in order to test their determination. Despite the long days spent in conferences, lectures, and map reading exercises, Patton studied far into the night.¹⁵⁴ He emerged as an Honor Graduate in June 1924, finishing twenty-fifth out of 248 students. His overall average grade was 88.948. This score placed him on the General Staff Corps, a much sought after status.¹⁵⁵

Patton kept a detailed one-hundred page notebook illustrating his Leavenworth experience. He sent Eisenhower his notebook when Eisenhower attended the school in 1925-1926.¹⁵⁶ Carlo D'Este wrote in his book, *Patton: A Genius for War* that, "it must have helped, for Eisenhower finished first in his class and earned a letter of praise from his friend."¹⁵⁷ Brigadier General Harry Smith, the commandant and an old friend of Patton's, tried to keep Patton at Fort Leavenworth as an instructor. He explained that Patton was an excellent soldier who demonstrated his knowledge of the theory and application of war. However, Smith was unsuccessful and Patton ended up being assigned to the First Corps Area Headquarters in Boston.¹⁵⁸

New Field Grade Assignments

Up until the beginning of World War II, Patton served in staff positions most of his time. The staff position is a place he said "for which God never intended me." Staff officers serve the commander and aim to foresee his wishes. A good one takes detail off the commander's mind allowing him time to think and plan future operations. The staff officer is industrious and content to subordinate himself to his boss.¹⁵⁹ Did Patton have these qualities? In his book, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*, Martin Blumenson claimed that:

These qualities were hardly Patton's strengths. Temperamentally, he was fit for command . . . he preferred being with troops in the field to the sedentary deskwork. Yet he persisted and persevered as a staff officer, giving his all, willing to endure that confining duty because of his devotion to the Army, his loyalty to his superiors, and his own habit.¹⁶⁰

Patton reported for duty at the First Corps Headquarters in July 1924.¹⁶¹ There he also took the time to write several important papers, and actually published one in the *Cavalry Journal*. The article highlighted Patton's vision of the future. He discussed many

new mechanical devices he envisioned would be invented in the near term. As a result, he recommended a short-term solution with his armored car idea. In January 1925, he was assigned to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii where he served as G-1 (director of personnel) as well as G-2 (director of intelligence).¹⁶² On board the S.S. Grant en route to Hawaii, Patton's household goods were damaged by fire. One of his book boxes was burned badly and others were damaged from the fire hoses. He undertook a massive rebinding process to fix his damaged lifetime collection of books.¹⁶³

Patton gave a lecture on leadership at Schofield Barracks. He remarked that, "Since we cannot breed our leaders, our efforts must be bent towards the fullest possible development of this trait . . . The leader must demonstrate his superiority in the technique of combat."¹⁶⁴ Patton continued to create impressive statements for the purpose of stimulating thought and suppressed it with belief. His first division commander in Hawaii stated that Patton was priceless in war; yet he was a troubling component in time of peace. By the time his tour ended, Major General Fox Conner was the division commander. He rated Patton as a superior staff officer but better suited for command.¹⁶⁵ In 1928, Patton was transferred to Washington D.C. and served in the office of the chief of cavalry as a staff member. He became thoroughly involved with the burning topic of mechanization.¹⁶⁶ By 1930, he advised the cavalry saying that

The fighting machine is here to stay, and if our cavalry has not lost its traditional alertness and adaptability, we will frankly accept it at its true worth. If the 14th Century Knight could adapt himself to gunpowder, we should have no fear of oil, grease, and motors.¹⁶⁷

Army War College and Beyond

Patton arrived at the U.S. Army War College in August of 1931 and enrolled in the 1931-1932 academic course that September.¹⁶⁸ Patton worked hard while a student at

the Army War College and in February 1932 submitted a 56-page paper. The document was titled *The Probable Characteristics of the Next War and the Organization, Tactics, and Equipment Necessary to meet them*. The commandant of the War College commended Patton for his hard work and forwarded the memo to the War Department for review and use. Patton was also appointed to chair the student committee which presented a report on mechanized units. The committee was tasked to study and assess the contemporary interest in mechanization. It was also tasked to make direct and realistic recommendations to the General Staff.¹⁶⁹

The committee also defined the terms: mechanization and motorization since they were frequently used interchangeably. They wrote that the mechanized force was transported in motor vehicles and fought from some or all of the vehicles. A mechanized force had weapons and protective armor. A motorized force on the other hand, was transported in vehicles and dismounted from their vehicles to battle. The War Department accepted the definitions and made the definitions official a year later.¹⁷⁰ Patton graduated from the War College with a superior rating from the commandant. He received an outstanding evaluation describing him as “an aggressive and capable officer of strong convictions, an untiring student.”¹⁷¹

Patton returned to Fort Meyer in July 1932 and worked as the executive officer of the 3rd Cavalry. While there, he stayed up to date on advances in military thinking in foreign armies. For instance, Patton studied a May 1933 translation of Colonel Fabre de Faur’s “Operative Reconnaissance in Future Wars.”¹⁷² Patton was then promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in March 1934. After his three year tour at Fort Meyer, he was reassigned to Hawaii in May 1935. He assumed duties as the G-2 of the Hawaiian

Department at Fort Shafter.¹⁷³ In 1937 he role-played as the commander of an invading force in maneuvers of the Hawaiian Division. Prophetically, Patton selected Pearl Harbor as his objective. He planned to put enemy troops ashore and assumed a large invasion fleet offshore, using the element of surprise. His intense study of amphibious warfare perhaps led to his selection to command the Western Task Force that invaded North Africa in 1942.¹⁷⁴

Patton reported to Fort Riley in the summer of 1937, as a member of the Cavalry board and on the faculty at the Cavalry School.¹⁷⁵ Then on July 1938, he was promoted to colonel and subsequently assumed command of the 5th Cavalry Regiment out of the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Clark, Texas. He enjoyed the assignment and location, especially since his unit was training for war. He found much excitement during the Third Army maneuvers in the late summer and fall. He was having a wonderful time in the assignment when he received a phone call from Washington, D.C. He was ordered to replace Jonathan Wainwright in command of Fort Meyer. In the spring of 1939, the Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall recognized Patton's qualities.¹⁷⁶ Marshall was impressed with Patton's performance during the northern Virginia maneuvers with III Corps that summer and declared Patton eligible for promotion to brigadier general.¹⁷⁷

Patton served as an umpire during the maneuvers in Louisiana in the spring of 1940, where horses and tanks demonstrated the significance of the Army's dynamic modernization. Patton's experience with tanks and the horses were invaluable. The experience made him current with the latest equipment, innovation, and mindset of American tankers.¹⁷⁸ The shocking events of blitzkrieg in Europe and the concluding results of the Louisiana maneuvers prompted Marshall to establish the Armored Force in

July 1940. It was to be a combined organization designed to match the power and mobility of the German blitzkrieg. Major General Adna R. Chaffee, the commander of this new organization, had the immediate task of creating two armored divisions. He had two locations designated for these units, one at Fort Knox, Kentucky and the other at Fort Benning, Georgia. He selected Patton to assist him in generating the new units. Chaffee had Patton promoted to Brigadier General to command the division at Fort Benning.¹⁷⁹

Patton formally relinquished command of the 3rd Cavalry on July 24, 1940.¹⁸⁰ He reported at the end of July to the 2nd Armored Division at Fort Benning. Blumenson wrote that, “after twenty years, he was back with the tanks, instruments of his earlier success . . . perhaps it was not too late; perhaps he still had time to achieve a measure of fame.”¹⁸¹ Patton achieved national prominence just two and a half years after he took command of his armored unit at Fort Benning. He certainly gained the measure of success he yearned for. Leading his troops in combat was the test he had been waiting for.¹⁸²

Conclusion

This chapter discussed George S. Patton Jr.’s leadership development. Patton developed from the young Southern California boy into one of the most famous icons in American history. His childhood years were filled with innocence and curiosity. As he matured, Patton encountered the dreadful dyslexic condition that could have put him behind. Yet, he persevered and tenaciously took control of his destiny. Patton’s life was full of adventure and excitement in terms of his leader development. He struggled through the Virginia Military Academy and West Point years, spending six years as a cadet. As a young officer, he promised himself to do his utmost, and he did. He yearned

to be famous, so he did what he could to attract attention. He also found his politicking savvy fit for his progression and he used it wisely. Patton also demonstrated his toughness in the field amongst his soldiers. As he discovered his own bravery and leadership attributes, he applied it in combat. These leadership attributes inspired his soldiers tremendously.

Patton may not have enjoyed being a staff officer, but he carried on and did his best like a true officer. Most notably, he was a superb student of military affairs. His passion to study and analyze commanders and battles dated all the way back to his childhood years. He established his library at a very young age and used it to enhance his military mind. His studious attitude paid dividends at the various Army schools he attended. More importantly, it allowed Patton to discover unique leadership ideas and successfully employ them in combat.

¹ Military Essays and Articles by George S. Patton, Jr. General, U. S. Army 1885 – 1945. Edited by Charles M. Province, President and Founder of the George S. Patton, Jr. Historical Society 3116 Thorn Street San Diego, California 92104-4618.

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³ Martin Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend, 1885-1945* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1985), 6.

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⁹ Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), 35.

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¹⁵ Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*, 16.

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²⁰ Ibid., 47-48.

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- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.
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- ⁴⁰ Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 62.
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- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 15-16.
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- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.
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- ⁴⁸ Letter, GSP to Beatrice, May 23, 1909 compiled in Martin Blumenson's *The Patton Papers*; 1885-1940. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), 174.
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- ⁵² Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 175.
- ⁵³ Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*, 61.
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- ⁶⁰ Ibid., 69.
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- ⁶⁷ Ibid., 130.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid., 134.
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- ⁷¹ Ibid., 233.
- ⁷² Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*, 71.
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- ⁸⁹ Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, 379.
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- ¹⁶⁰ Ibid.
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¹⁷¹ D’Este, 350.

¹⁷² Nye, 99.

¹⁷³ Nye, 102

¹⁷⁴ Nye, 107-108.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 109.

¹⁷⁶ Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*, 140.

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¹⁸² Ibid., 145.

CHAPTER 4

THE INTERWAR PERIOD'S OFFICER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development models produced important questions about the Army's design for educating its officer corps during the interwar period. What kind of leadership development did the Army provide its officers through its education system during the interwar period? What lessons did the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College focus on to prepare Army officers for future conflicts? The answers to these basic questions lead to further information as to the Army's design for developing successful commanders during the interwar period.

Eisenhower and Patton's roads to generalship were structured around the indispensable education they received from the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and the Army War College (AWC) in Washington, D.C.

This chapter discusses the Army's officer education system during the interwar period--focused primarily on the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College. This segment is important because it lays out the kind of advanced military education Eisenhower and Patton received during the pinnacle years of their leadership growth. Additionally, it also suggests the kind of education Eisenhower and Patton's staff and subordinate commanders in World War II received during the interwar period.

General George C. Marshall, who served as General Pershing's chief of staff in World War I, had a lucid insight behind the intellectual preparation of officers after the war. He said that the idea of studying the necessary skills in order to be competent officers on the future battlefields must be focused on the correct subject matter and have clear mission intent. The lessons and methods learned from World War I must be taught

in a rigorous atmosphere to students who were ready and willing to learn.¹ As indicated previously, both Eisenhower and Patton were ready and willing to learn. They were determined to study hard and prepare themselves to become the Army's premier senior commanders who eventually led our Allied forces to victory. Both gentlemen persevered through the schools. Yet, their hard work and determination paid off because they ultimately ranked extremely high at the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College. What was it like at these schools? What did Eisenhower and Patton study at CGSS and AWC to widen their military leadership competencies?

Three tiers made up the Army's officer education system during the interwar period. All officers attended the first level--the basic and advanced course specific to their assigned branches. For example, Eisenhower and his infantry cohorts attended the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and Patton and his cohorts attended the Cavalry School at Fort Riley, Kansas. Other officers also attended the Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, or the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama. The mid-tier education was the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. A much smaller number of officers attended the CGSS. The final level was the Army War College located at Washington Barracks in Washington, D.C.²

Leavenworth's Command and General Staff School

It is fitting at this point to present a brief history of Leavenworth's Command and Staff School. In 1881, General William T. Sherman, the Commanding General of the Army, established the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry. This institution eventually established Fort Leavenworth's modern reputation as the Army's intellectual crossroads for developing officers.³ Then in 1902, the General Service and Staff College

at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas evolved into two establishments: The School of the Line and the General Staff College.⁴ The Leavenworth schools had a cadre who instructed on maneuver and supply operations for large military formations. Their curriculum provided Army officers with a common language on how these operations were conducted. Accordingly, the “Leavenworth men” (what the Leavenworth graduates were called) dominated the staff functions of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) and major subordinate commands during World War I.⁵ Eight of General Pershing’s chiefs of staff and primary staffs were Leavenworth graduates. In addition, nine of the ten officers who served as corps chiefs of staff, along with the chiefs of staff for both AEF field armies, graduated from the Leavenworth schools.⁶

CGSS focused on developing officers to master non-theoretical staff work at the division and corps with some emphasis on echelons above corps.⁷ The course was initially two years long with the first year focused on division operations and the second year covering corps and army procedures.⁸ There were two schools at Leavenworth from 1919 to 1923 that were based on the pre-WWI model. There was the School of the Line and the General Staff School, each lasting about a year. The officers who graduated in the top 50 percent of their class were selected to attend the General Staff School. However, in 1923, the War Department directed the two schools be combined and maintain the term “general” to the school’s name. The intent for the consolidation of the schools was to provide general staff education to the large number of officers who entered the service during WWI. Thus, the school was renamed as: Command and General Staff School.⁹

Later, the Army went back and made the course a two year course in 1928 when it reached its goal of educating the oversupply of WWI officers. However, the Army did

not go back to its previous system, where half of the officers who attended the first year were selected for the second year. Instead, the Army made all of its students selected to attend CGSS complete the entire two year course. This additional time on the curriculum allowed for a thorough review of the fundamentals of combined arms, which by then was largely focused as the approach to fighting the next major conflict. The extra time was also focused on combined arms in a separate brigade as well as a complete concentration of the various division level operations. Furthermore, the school also used the time to provide an extended study of corps maneuvers within a theater of operations.¹⁰ Then in 1936, the War Department directed CGSS to revert back to a one year staff course “until 1940 when CGSS was suspended and a special short course in staff work was instituted to meet the demands of full mobilization.”¹¹

When the Army leadership returned from World War I, there were some concerns regarding the Army’s leader development, specifically the mid-level and advanced education process. The Army learned a great deal from its experiences in World War I and wanted to improve procedures for developing future leaders. Additionally, the thought that the Army would again be called to fight a major war further troubled the Army’s senior leadership about developing officers. One of the chief concerns was how officers analyzed problems and developed solutions. As a result, the commandant and course directors in their first lectures in 1919 introduced the new design of the coursework, requiring students to develop solutions as they reasoned through problems. Theoretical and practical instructions in large unit operations were presented. The faculty then measured how the students approached the problems to make sound decisions. The intent was to increase the students’ confidence level and their ability to approach difficult

military situations.¹² The three fundamental proficiencies taught at the Leavenworth Schools were: (1) problem-solving and decision-making; (2) knowledge and an improved capacity to lead large army formations; and (3) improved confidence as the officers worked through problems.¹³

The school taught organization first, and then trained tactics, techniques and capabilities of the different branches. The school then focused on tactical principles, decisions, plans and orders and how they were applied to division level operations. Supply operations and how they were tied to division operations were also taught. The school then focused on the duties and functions of the commander and the general staff within a division. Finally, the school taught the details of leading troops within a division. These lessons were concentrated on developing officers through tactical principles using historical research and examples.¹⁴ Nevertheless, senior officials at Leavenworth argued that personal qualities such as character were beyond the school's ability to influence, given that students should have already developed those qualities at this stage in their career.¹⁵ It is also important to point out that graduation from the CGSS was required in order to become eligible for general staff assignments, a competitive and very important professional development for future generals.¹⁶

However, another burning issue the Army faced within its education system after World War I was how to balance the instruction on the art of command and staff officer functions. The Army did not want to over emphasize one over the other. The art of command was naturally expected to be taught in the school system. CGSS was focused on teaching staff functions, and was criticized for not putting greater emphasis on the art of command in its curriculum.¹⁷ The Leavenworth school was criticized for over-

emphasizing staff skills and insufficiently paying attention to the skills required for senior commanders. As a result, the school leadership frequently discussed whether to educate officers to be commanders or staff officers.¹⁸

Leavenworth's concept was that general officers must recognize the required skills of their subordinate staff officers. They would acquire this knowledge through their own education of being good staff officers themselves through the school's methods. The same holds true for those general staff officers at the division and corps who were required to know the skills of the commanding generals they worked for. In other words, commanders must have a full understanding of the intricacies of staff work, and at the same time, staff officers must be intimately knowledgeable of the commander's point of view.¹⁹ Colonel Drum, the school's assistant commandant in 1922, stated in his Annual Report that training was not the settling factor in distinguishing between command and staff education. Rather, personal qualities and primarily the dynamics of experience, judgment, character, leadership, determination and aggressiveness make good commanders.²⁰

The Army referred to the "art of command," instead of the word "genius" in its approach to military leadership during the interwar period. It defined command in the Field Service Regulations (standard Army doctrine developed after World War I) as the legal authority an individual exercised over subordinates. As a result, the War Department issued a general order in September of 1920, directing the commandants of the General Staff School and the Army War College to increase their instruction in the art of command.²¹ The Field Service Regulation described the commander as the central controlling figure where all subordinate energy must be derived from. He was to keep in

close contact with his subordinate units through personal visits and observation. The commander must do this in order to understand the mental, moral, and physical conditions of their soldiers through personal contact.²² Harold Winton referenced the Field Service Regulations in his discussion on the art of command in his book, *Corps Commanders of the Bulge*, stating, “The art of command was understood to mean the ability of the commander to direct the efforts of his unit to the accomplishment of a mission and was generally felt to require a combination of intellectual and psychological qualities particularly adapted to the conduct of war.”²³ Eisenhower and Patton learned these traits from their vast Army schooling because both commanders in World War II certainly demonstrated the flair of checking on troops and making sure their subordinate commanders did so as well. Eisenhower and Patton effectively commanded in World War II because of their understanding and application of the Leavenworth concepts.

The U.S. Army War College

In November 1899, Secretary of War Elihu Root submitted his recommendation, through his annual report, for the establishment of an army war college. He explained that the college’s curriculum would be “theoretical (with the science of war) as well as applicatory (duties of the staff) and would be at a high level (application of military science to national defense).”²⁴ Officers enrolled in the college would be expected to employ original research.²⁵

By the 1920s, the lessons at the Army War College (AWC) matched the doctrine contained in the *Field Service Regulations* and the lectures given by the CGSS commandants.²⁶ However, the War College experience gave Eisenhower and Patton greater insights on the subject of command. The AWC was envisioned as an institution

that would develop officers, and at the same time, joined with the newly created Army General Staff. Besides the mobilization and deployment difficulties the Army went through in World War I, there was an important paradigm that senior Army officials recognized. It was that the graduates from GCSS and the AWC enabled the Army to go to war in a much more efficient manner than compared to the debacle it experienced during the Spanish-American War in 1898.²⁷

The first post war commandant for the AWC, Major General James W. McAndrew, served as Pershing's chief of staff. He and twenty four faculty members with experience as general staff officers in World War I revised the college's curriculum. The faculty categorized the lessons into two branches, comparable to Clausewitz's idea of military art: the preparation for war and the conduct of war.²⁸ The Army War College maintained a close working relationship with the general staff as it analyzed war plans generated by the general staff. Yet, over time, the college modified its curriculum placing more emphasis on the art of command.²⁹

Colonel John L. DeWitt, the Army War College assistant commandant in 1929, emphasized that although intellectual development was an important and required component for successful command, it was not enough. The AWC increased the intellectual capacities of the attending officers, but much more was asked from the future commanders of large units.³⁰ DeWitt gave his thoughts on the subject of high command. He explained that a commander would be judged on certain standards that relate to his operational plans, his imagination, and his sheer determination to see his plan through. Furthermore, DeWitt declared that the highest attribute for a commander is the courage to take responsibility. He went on to say that the commander has the responsibility for his

actions and the authority to put his plan into effect. The staff on the other hand, has “neither ultimate responsibility nor any authority apart from that of the commander.” Thus, character becomes the main ingredient and absolute requisite for the commander.³¹

The Conduct of War course at the AWC, along with various lectures, provided additional instructions dealing with command and staff functions. The lectures included a number of historical lessons that commanders and staff officers encountered in World War I. These instructions on the art of command became a valuable mixture of theory and practice.³² Although Eisenhower and Patton were not present at the speeches DeWitt presented in 1929, the extended benefit of these instructions and lectures lent a common perspective for the future commanders and general staff officers who worked for Eisenhower and Patton in World War II.

Moreover, Eisenhower and Patton went through the same curriculum when they attended the War College in 1929 and 1932 respectively. By the late 1920s and into the next decade just prior to World War II, a number of lectures given in the Conduct of War course were instituted into a new course called Analytical Studies. The analytical studies focused mainly on comparative historical studies that theater commanders and their staff faced. These problems included the early organizational stages and administration of theaters. A great emphasis was also placed on the expeditionary force embarkation and debarkation process as well as offensive and defensive operations under various scenarios.³³ In essence, the Army War College taught its student during the interwar period “the preparation for and the conduct of war.”³⁴

¹ Peter J. Schifferle, *Anticipating Armageddon: The Leavenworth Schools and U.S. Army Military Effectiveness 1919-1945* (Manuscript, University of Kansas, December 2008), 143.

² Harold R. Winton, *Corps Commanders of the Bulge: Six American generals and Victory in the Ardennes* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007), 14-15.

³ Edited by Dr. John W. Partin, *A Brief History of Fort Leavenworth: 1827-1983* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990), 43.

⁴ Winton, 13-14.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 13.

⁷ Schifferle, 143-144

⁸ Ibid., 149.

⁹ Winton, 15.

¹⁰ Ibid., 16.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Schifferle, 143

¹³ Ibid., 143.

¹⁴ Ibid., 144.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Winton, 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., 13.

¹⁸ Schifferle, 143-164

¹⁹ Ibid., 143-164

²⁰ Ibid., 165.

²¹ Winton, 15.

²² Ibid., 17.

²³ Ibid., 13.

²⁴ Harry P. Ball, *Of Responsible Command: A History of the U.S. Army War College* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: 1983), 57.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 15-20.

²⁷ Ibid., 20.

²⁸ Ibid., 21.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 22.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 23.

³⁴ Carl J. Cartwright, “The Education and Development of the Strategic Leader from 1919-1940-Is there Relevance Today?” (Monogram, U.S. Army War College, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990), iii.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSES AND CONCLUSIONS

While earlier chapters described Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development over the years, this chapter analyzes and discusses their development through a model. The current chapter evaluates what Eisenhower and Patton gained in terms of their leadership competencies through their background, military education, assignments, combat and training experiences, and mentorship. Beginning with Eisenhower and Patton's Leadership Development Models, the chapter depicts how their life experiences impacted their leadership growth. The analyses in this chapter also describe how their self-development and personal determination became the driving force behind their leadership expertise. In essence, Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development models illustrate how their influential life-changing events meshed and interconnected with other facets of their lives, becoming the fabric that made them successful commanders in World War II.

Eisenhower and Patton took their character, which they developed during their upbringing and used them to advance through their military education, Army assignments, and operational experiences. In addition, the mentorship they received from their senior leadership provided invaluable education as well. Nevertheless, Eisenhower and Patton's desire and will to learn and gain competencies in their profession paved the way for their leadership development; thus, making them successful wartime commanders.

Eisenhower's Background

Eisenhower's upbringing and childhood years proved to be invaluable to his leadership development. He grew up in a community that introduced him to the principles of hard work and perseverance.¹ His family exposed him to society's very important ethical behavior and moral values. He was brought up with good character and admirable ethics, which became useful throughout his career as an Army officer. Eisenhower's childhood environment not only taught him the merits of being part of a team, but it also engrained in him the individual drive to do well for the team. For example, his passion for sports and athletics as a youngster instilled in him the concept of team building, team contribution, and problem solving skills. Furthermore, Eisenhower learned early in life that leaders must inspire their teams to have an enthusiasm to do well and win. He also learned early in life the importance of gaining acceptance from subordinates and peers.

Eisenhower had a fondness for reading military history. As a result, his knack for history shaped his military understanding when he progressed through West Point and the rest of his Army career. As a youngster, his parents taught him to recognize and seize opportunities. He used this philosophy at every level in his career. More notably, Eisenhower learned to value determination, a quality he exercised when compelling him and others toward mission accomplishment. In fact, his own determination pushed him through the many challenges he faced while developing his leadership qualities. Eisenhower became increasingly confident as he learned the key American values that motivated individuals to thrive during those years. Thus, Eisenhower's background became the groundwork for his character as a leader. His background set the stage for his future and laid the foundation for his leadership development.

Eisenhower's Military Education

As noted earlier, Eisenhower's Army education consisted of his experiences at West Point, the Infantry School, the Command and General Staff School, and the Army War College. West Point shaped Eisenhower's leadership skills which he accumulated over the years of his upbringing. The academy toughened his standards for individual growth. West Point laid the foundations for small unit leadership, and it instilled in him a sense of pride and the zeal to serve his country. The academy trained him to be a bold and confident leader in difficult situations. Additionally, the leaders at West Point taught him to be a loyal and caring leader with integrity. Therefore, the officers at West Point inherently took Eisenhower's character, which came from his background, and improved it with a military essence.

During his company-grade years, Eisenhower increased his technical and tactical expertise as an infantry officer through the Infantry School. As a field grade officer, the Command and General Staff School qualified Eisenhower to serve on the General Staff. Eisenhower also received instruction on the subject of command while at CGSS. He listened to speeches and lectures given by senior officers like Brigadier General Edward L. King who was the commandant of the General Service Schools at the time. Eisenhower and his classmates received a lecture from King who devoted his speech to the subject of command; which focused on the commander's personal qualities and knowledge of the organization, as well as the commander's executive ability to make the greatest use of his organization.²

General staff officers within their own limits do and should exercise command functions. A general staff officer should possess the qualities of a commander. He is part of the command and should make himself a part of the commander . . . A commander, in order to use his staff properly, must understand its workings, its

powers and limitations, what to expect from the staff and how to use it to the best advantage. This knowledge and its use . . . constitute command.³

The Command and General Staff School additionally groomed Eisenhower to become an excellent general staff officer. In essence, CGSS gave him the tools to succeed as a commander and staff officer at the division and corps level. The Army War College on the other hand groomed him to be a future commanding general. The War College experience shaped him to understand the intricacies of leading at the army and the theater level commands. The experience taught Eisenhower the art of war at its most advanced and comprehensive form. At the Army War College, Eisenhower learned how armies were organized, mobilized, supplied, and used in combat.

Eisenhower's Army Assignments

Eisenhower's military experience prior to World War II was a combination of command and staff positions. His career path started with his junior infantry officer experience at the company level. As a company-grade officer, he learned the traits of small unit leadership and increasingly prepared himself for the next level of responsibility. He coached football during his early days as an Army officer. As a result, he learned the traits of picking out men to form a team and then making them work cohesively. He continually improved and displayed this leadership skill throughout his military assignments. His background as football coach also developed him to be an excellent trainer; teaching and preparing teams to face the opposition. These traits gave Eisenhower the fundamental tools he needed for his following staff and command assignments as an organizational leader. Accordingly, his assignments became

fundamental for his developmental process; thus shaping his leadership philosophy along the way.

As a commander in the Tank Corps, he practiced the trait he learned at West Point--to be a caring leader who was always enthusiastic in raising troop morale and preparing his soldiers for uncertainties. Likewise, his experiments in Tanks during the interwar period were also significant because it gave him a clear vision of what equipment the next conflict would be fought with, and the kind of battlefields the Army would be fighting in. He also acquired a good deal of knowledge in motorization when he went on the cross-country convoy to experiment what trucks could do for the military. Finally, he increasingly developed the skill for understanding his organization and figuring out where his men fit in the best. He coached and mentored his subordinates, receiving high admiration and loyalty in return.

Eisenhower was not just great at commanding units; he was groomed to be a great staff officer, especially in his field grade years. During his years as a field grade officer, Eisenhower worked for generals like Conner, Pershing, MacArthur, and Marshall who all showed him how to analyze problems and develop solutions at the general staff level. He accumulated enormous knowledge in the staff process and understood what commanding generals required. He saw the caliber of staff officers and the staff work that was necessary for activating the Army, when he worked for these generals during the interwar period. His work at the War Department, his studies at the CGSS, and the War College, along with his experiences in Panama, France, and the Philippines were instrumental in shaping him as an ideal general staff officer.

Therefore, Eisenhower's leadership experiences and staff roles during the interwar period gave him the edge throughout World War II as he organized his team of advisors and selected his subordinate commanders. By the time he became the Supreme Allied Commander in World War II, Eisenhower knew what sort of quality staff work needed to be produced in order to win the conflict. More importantly, the tremendous skills he acquired during the interwar period gave him the ability to direct his subordinate staff officers to plan and direct massive military operations. Thus, he influenced his staff to work cohesively to solve critical problems while developing decisive results.

Eisenhower had a team of Allied staff officers who came from various backgrounds, countries, and who had diverse political agendas. They were initially unfamiliar with each other's societal culture, military paradigms, and political aims.

Eisenhower showed his wisdom for teambuilding when he stated that:

The teams and staffs through which the modern commander absorbs information and exercises his authority must be a beautiful interlocked smooth-working mechanism. Ideally, the whole should be practically a single mind.⁴

Furthermore, Eisenhower's prior diplomatic experiences, as well as his command and coaching skills helped him lead his team of unproven staff officers. In the end, the generals who worked for him put their efforts together to plan and direct one of history's most decisive Allied victories.

Eisenhower as Trainer

Eisenhower's experiences in creating the training centers discussed earlier became significant, especially when he was planning and preparing massive mobilization efforts for World War II. Eisenhower learned to appreciate the value of drilling soldiers and getting them in shape. He truly embraced the value of training military units to save

Soldiers' lives. Yet, although he never saw action in World War I, Eisenhower was always renowned for his exceptional competence as a trainer. As the Army moved him from one assignment to another, Eisenhower demonstrated an outstanding capacity to establish training centers, as he did at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia and Camp Colt, Pennsylvania. His experience in developing training centers and training troops for combat paid huge dividends later during his tenure as the commanding general in World War II.

Eisenhower's Mentorship

Eisenhower gained a great deal of knowledge and improved his leadership competency through the mentorship he received from senior officers. When he served under Fox Conner in Panama, Eisenhower learned to be a resourceful and well-organized staff officer. He also learned to be relentless and he accomplished tasks to precision. Conner directed Eisenhower to develop field orders that included their mission analysis for training, logistics, route networks and rapid troop deployments.⁵ As noted earlier, Conner turned Eisenhower's Panama assignment into an intellectual laboratory for what he envisioned was necessary for a future wartime commander.⁶ Accordingly, Conner's mentorship profoundly influenced Eisenhower's life. Conner prepared Eisenhower for future assignments and advanced schooling at the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College. Conner's mentorship was comparable to a graduate course.⁷

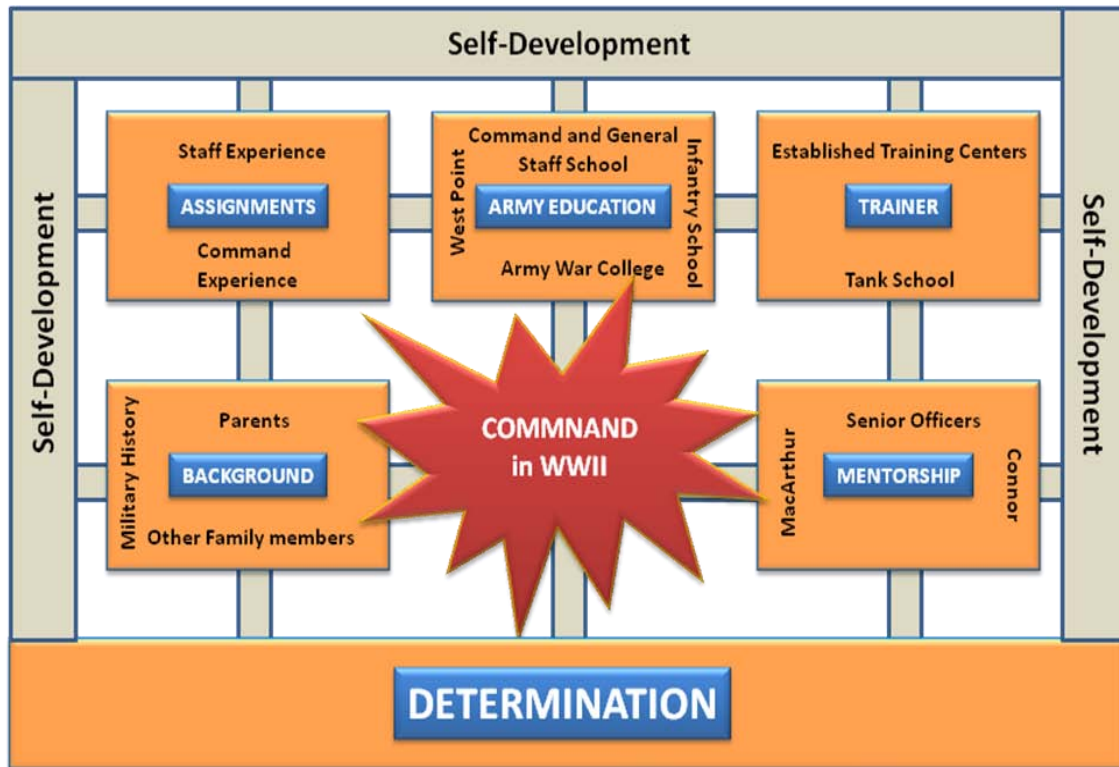
Yet, Eisenhower also received mentoring from other prominent Army generals and senior officers throughout his army profession. For instance, Eisenhower worked for General Pershing who was the chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission at the time. Pershing mentored and coached Eisenhower during the production of the

guidebook for the American battle monuments. At the War Department, Eisenhower also worked with other senior general staff officers such as Major General George Van Horn Moseley who coached and mentored him along the way.

General Douglas MacArthur also influenced Eisenhower's leadership development. Although Eisenhower had a different personality than MacArthur's, he still took every opportunity to learn what he could from his unyielding mentor--MacArthur. For instance, Eisenhower took every opportunity to learn what the nation would be faced with, in terms of wartime resources, in a major conflict. He gained a great insight on this subject, as MacArthur coached him during his meetings with industrialists and high government officials. The job with MacArthur and the projects they were working on were tough; yet, Eisenhower considered the experience intriguing because it allowed him to examine what he later termed as the industrial military complex.⁸ As discussed in earlier, Eisenhower worked as MacArthur's executive officer during MacArthur's tenure as military advisor to the president of the Philippines.⁹ MacArthur mentored Eisenhower as they worked through military, political, and diplomatic affairs with the Philippines government.

Eisenhower's experiences broadened Eisenhower's leadership dimension which notably enhanced his command responsibilities during World War II, especially when he worked with the Allied nations to organize a united effort against the Axis powers. Eisenhower's leadership development model is shown below in Figure 2. The model depicts all of Eisenhower's major developmental stages, jointly connecting to finally demonstrate his leader competencies in World War II.

Eisenhower's Leadership Development Model



Eisenhower's Leadership Development Model

Source: Created by author.

Eisenhower's Self-Development

Eisenhower's leadership development model illustrates his individual and self-development as the component that enveloped his background, his military education, his Army assignments, and his ability to train units, as well as his mentorship. His individual desire to develop as a leader sealed all of the influential phases in his life, which successfully shaped him into an excellent leader. In other words, his consistent self-development throughout his growth as a leader sustained his experiences and kept him on

track throughout his military career. For example, growing up, Eisenhower learned to value education and used his various opportunities to exploit it; hence his initiative to study hard for the Naval Academy's entrance exam. Eisenhower also used his West Point experiences to develop himself to become a more confident and capable leader. Throughout his company and field-grade years, he used every assignment as a means to broaden his horizon, and expanded his leadership skills by taking advantage of assignment opportunities.

He consistently developed himself and increasingly became a better leader of Soldiers and units because of his proactive attitude about self-development. His staff assignments and his Army education were connected to the mentoring he received from senior military leaders because he trusted and attentively listened to his instructors and his mentors. Another example of Eisenhower using opportunities to self-develop was his involvement in the convoy to test the army's latest innovation--trucks. He not only learned the capabilities of the trucks; but he also discovered how the Army would use trucks in future conflicts. When he returned to Camp Meade from the convoy, Eisenhower sensed how the drastic changes in the Army provided more challenges.¹⁰ He wanted to continue to develop so he decided to work with combat veterans at Camp Meade to broaden his experiences and learning.¹¹

His self-development continued as he and Patton commanded a battalion of tanks and experimented with the new innovation. Both were convinced that the tank would have a major role in future conflicts so they helped develop a new doctrine for it.¹² Additionally, when Eisenhower moved from one assignment to another, he came across mentors who saw great potential in him. Eisenhower's mentors developed and prepared

him for the staff school and future key assignments.¹³ Perhaps realizing the value of self-development, he once said that: “the important thing is that learning will make you a better person.”¹⁴

Eisenhower’s Determination

Eisenhower had immense determination to succeed at every stage in his life. As a youngster growing up in Abilene, Kansas, he picked up the traits and values for perseverance. Therefore, he was resolute in leaving his town to pursue his personal ambitions. An early example of his determination was witnessed at West Point. Eisenhower loved sports and athletic opportunities and he was determined to make the varsity football team which he worked hard for and achieved shortly after he enrolled at West Point. Although he never reached his goal to gain battle experience in World War I, Eisenhower impressed his superiors with his determination to establish first-rate training centers. He additionally demonstrated his superb abilities in training troops and preparing them for combat. Another example of Eisenhower’s determination was seen at Camp Meade when he and Patton were experimenting with tanks. Eisenhower was determined to help pioneer the U.S. Army’s newest innovation in tanks and motor vehicles--the innovation later helped him win his campaigns in WWII.

As a student at the Command and General Staff College, Eisenhower understood what he needed to do to be competitive. So, he worked hard to get his selection to attend CGSS. When he got to Fort Leavenworth in 1925, he was determined to learn and acquire as much knowledge as he could from the school’s curriculum. He and his friend Gerow studied tirelessly and eventually Eisenhower and Gerow graduated with high honors and were recommended for higher command and staff assignments as well as the

Army's War College. His determination to study and work hard paid off because he was selected to attend the War College after only 12 years of service.

Eisenhower was determined to succeed throughout his life. He learned the value of determination early, and used it to progress in his military profession. While self-development enveloped and sealed his background, military education, assignments, experience as a trainer, and mentorship, his determination turned out to be the foundation that upheld the influential elements of his leadership development model.

Patton's Background

Patton's background influenced his evolution into an excellent leader. His childhood upbringing, as highlighted earlier, shaped the early stages of his leadership development. He grew up in a household that permitted him to explore his childhood interests in outdoor activities. Consequently, Patton's fondness for the outdoors in his formative years enhanced his ambition to chase what he perceived to be a military calling. Patton's parents influenced his character further by protecting him; and although, Patton's dyslexic condition concerned his parents, they never gave up Patton's potential and abilities and did everything possible to support him.

Patton was also exposed to his ancestral lineage of military service at a very young age. He was extremely proud of his ancestors' renowned reputation for their military experiences, and the Patton family history encouraged him along the way. For that reason, Patton accepted the idea that serving in the military was a family tradition. The idea inspired him and solidified his dream to become a famous military officer. His enthusiasm to become a celebrated commander extended beyond his childhood,

pressuring him to capitalize on his performance at every level. Accordingly, he decided to work hard in order to uphold the Patton family legacy.¹⁵

Patton's early education at the Clark School in Pasadena, California, also set the foundation for his future. His education in math, science, and reading at the Clark School were influential to his growth. However, Patton's appreciation for classical military history certainly suited his character. His passion for history played the largest role in his early leadership development, because it gave him an early appreciation for tactics, leadership qualities, and moral character. As stated in earlier, Patton considered war to be noble, and he believed that patriotism and sacrifice were the essentials in the war of good versus evil. He strongly believed at an early age that a person's character ultimately determined success or failure in life. As a result, he decided to incorporate the basics for warfare, patriotism, and sacrifice as part of his character.¹⁶ The character he built from this creed was influential in pushing him to reach excellent results. Patton's background set the stage for his future endeavors--his experiences with military education and his ensuing leadership duties.

Patton's Military Education

The Virginia Military Institute (VMI) introduced Patton to the military culture. The officers at the school taught him the virtue of discipline. Furthermore, the Institute caused Patton to value the regulations and guiding principles behind military traditions. His experience at VMI convinced him that the military was a society of an elite brotherhood and he belonged in the military.¹⁷ Patton's year at VMI was a good experience because it laid the foundation for his subsequent military education at West Point. Although Patton's West Point experience humbled him, West Point provided an

environment where he learned to reflect on his progression. West Point also taught him the valuable leadership trait of responsibility. Patton clearly matured and learned to take responsibility for his actions throughout his West Point years and beyond. For example, he accepted the responsibility for his failure to advance in his first year at West Point. As a result, he worked harder in the following years and steadily improved until he eventually graduated, ranking 46th out of 103 graduates.

Patton's West Point experience too influenced Patton's character, which he developed over the years, and significantly improved it. At West Point, he appreciated the educational value that history imparted on officers as they developed their leadership competencies. It was Patton's West Point experience that also prompted him to launch his own library of military literature. Furthermore, his time at West Point encouraged him to begin writing his personal journals, which improved his written communication skills. His habit of writing his personal accounts helped him get better at the valuable leadership trait of reflection. Quintessentially, West Point prepared Patton for the challenges that stood in front of him as an officer. It inspired him to be competitive, encouraged him to seize opportunities, and stimulated him to accept personal responsibility.

During his company-grade years, Patton increased his technical and tactical skills as a cavalry officer through the Cavalry Schools at Fort Riley, Kansas. As a field grade officer, the Command and General Staff School gave Patton the tools he needed to be successful in his general staff positions. Patton also received instruction on the subject of command while at CGSS. He listened to speeches and lectures given by senior officers like Brigadier General Harry A. Smith, who was the commandant of the CGSS at the time Patton was a student. Smith made it clear to the students that CGSS's applicatory

method was designed around the commander's need to give a "clear, simple, and complete"¹⁸ decision. He told them to make decisions definite because "a weak or wobbly decision, or one that can be read in two ways, will always be unsatisfactory."¹⁹ Patton and his cohorts in World War II used the applicatory method Smith mentioned in his speech to make them successful commanders.

The Army War College (AWC) groomed Patton to be an exceptional commanding general at the operational and strategic level. The AWC shaped him to recognize the fundamentals that made Army leaders at the army and theater level of commands successful. The AWC taught Patton the operational art of war at its most complex and extensive form. Patton learned at the Army War College how field armies were organized, mobilized, sustained, and maneuvered in combat. One of the most telling features regarding what Patton learned from the AWC came from his written work entitled: *The Probable Characteristics of the Next War and the Organization, Tactics, and Equipment Necessary to Meet Them*.

Patton's Army Assignments

Patton's military experience prior to World War II was a combination of command and staff positions. His combat experiences in the Mexican Punitive Expedition and World War I significantly increased his leadership development. Additionally, Patton's company grade assignments exposed him to the art of leading troops and small units. Patton listened and emulated his superior officers, and because of his excellent work ethic and concern for building winning teams, superior officers rated him highly. Patton demonstrated an enthusiasm for leading troops, especially in field and tactical environments which his superiors recognized. He learned to master the small unit

leadership qualities of training, leading, developing, and building small unit teams during his early Army experience at Fort Sheridan. Later, at Fort Meyer, Patton developed his diplomatic and politicking skills.

Patton's initiative to establish temporary tactical schools at both Fort Sheridan and Fort Meyer, as a second lieutenant, demonstrated his ability to identify training requirements and develop ways to improve unit potential at an early stage in his leadership career. Furthermore, as an action officer for General Leonard Wood, then the Army Chief of Staff, Patton learned the intricacies of powerful positions in the Army. This was significant for Patton's leader development because he wrote and discussed several important papers that were read by the Army's most senior officers, boosting his confidence.²⁰ Patton also showed his studious character by writing professional military articles throughout his company grade years. For example, in February 1912, Patton produced a monograph called *Principles of Scouting*, a document that discussed the principles of warfare.²¹

Patton's field grade assignments were filled with command and staff positions and although he enjoyed being in command more than being on a staff, Patton did his best to learn from all of his superior officers. His field grade assignments increased his understanding and appreciation for the art and science of command and the intricacies involved in leading massive Army organizations. His years and experiences as a field grade officer shaped his command potential at the organizational and strategic levels which later became his forte in World War II--successfully commanding Army units at the operational level of war. Patton was groomed to be a great field commander at the

operational level of war. His tremendous combat and field command experiences prepared him for his operational command duties during World War II.

Patton's Combat Experience

Patton's experiences in combat tremendously developed him to be a wartime commander. He grasped a wide range of skills during the Punitive Expedition in Mexico with General Pershing. For example, Patton saw how the Army's motorization improved operations during the expedition. His experiences such as familiarization and employment of motor vehicles in extended operations were invaluable. As Pershing's aide, Patton also learned about the importance of logistics, as well as the importance of staff coordination and synchronization of effort. He also watched and learned how General Pershing carried himself and issued orders. Patton further developed as a leader in World War I, where he took command of a company composed of about 250 soldiers and a motorcar detachment of ninety automobiles.²² Patton then commanded a tank battalion and later a brigade which he successfully led. Patton's brigade was one of the first tank units in the U.S. Army's history to be employed in combat.

As discussed in earlier, Patton did well keeping his enlisted men disciplined throughout World War I, resulting in their exceptional performance. However, an important lesson for Patton during his command assignments in combat was the synchronization of logistics and bringing order to a chaotic atmosphere which his units operated under.²³ Patton also used his combat experiences to develop his visionary mindset, a key component for organizational and strategic leaders. For instance, after his training at Chamlieu, France during World War I, Patton submitted a 58-page memo to the Chief of the Tank Service titled, *Light Tanks*, outlining Patton's proposal and

explanation for the organization, tactics, equipment, and training of the Tank Corps.²⁴

Patton's tremendous combat experience complemented his character, especially his excitement for leading in tactical conditions. Therefore, his combat experiences toughened his role as commander in World War II.

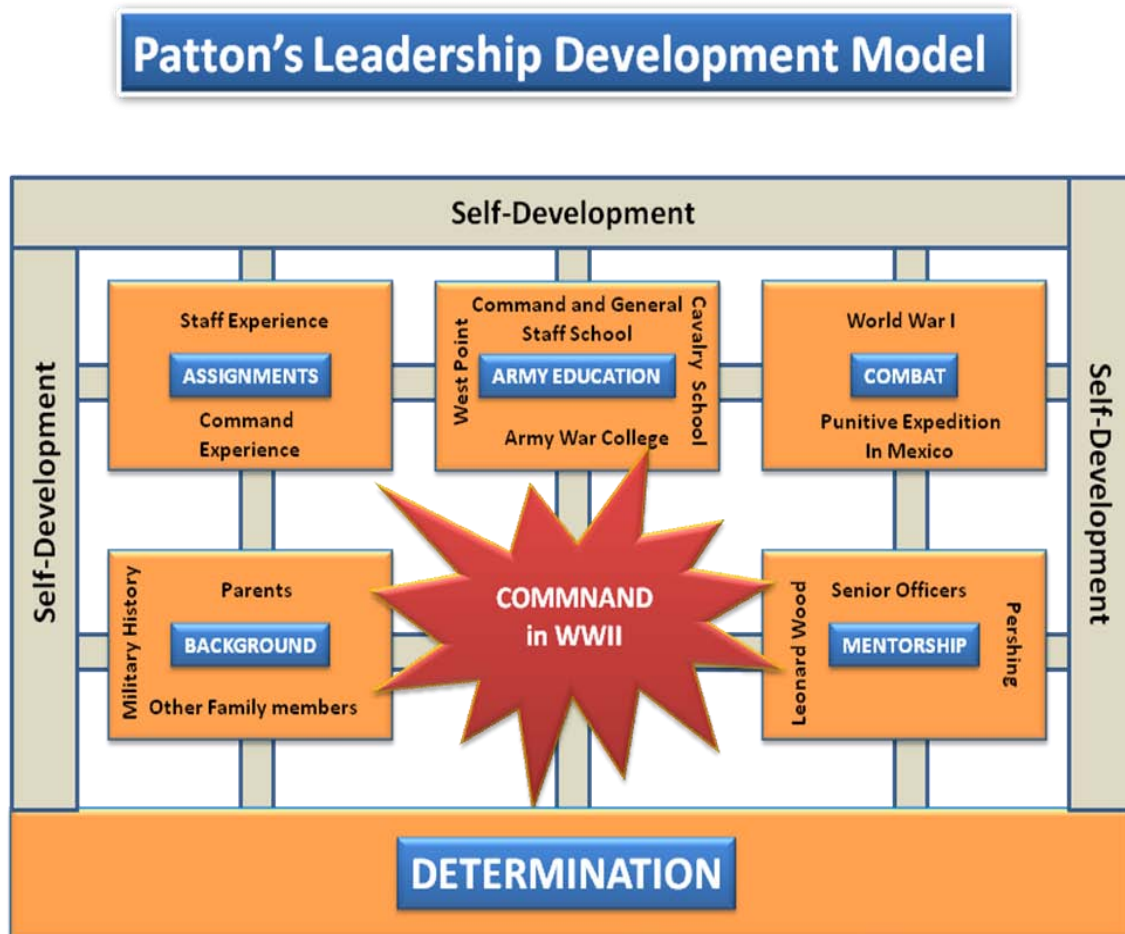
Patton's Mentorship

Patton's superior officers recognized and documented his passion for leading troops; and accordingly mentored and developed him throughout his Army career. In his early days as a company grade officer, Patton received mentoring from high Army officials like, Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War, and General Leonard Wood, the Army Chief of Staff, when Patton was a junior officer at Fort Meyer. Patton also received mentoring from General Fox Conner when Patton was a field grade officer in Hawaii. However, the most important of Patton's mentorships came from General Pershing, who saw Patton's potential, and thereby proceeded to guide him along the way. Patton, in turn, admired Pershing's command presence and insightfulness.

Patton truly desired Pershing's wisdom, and as a result, listened attentively to Pershing's views about command and leadership. Pershing saw and liked Patton's enthusiasm for taking charge and accomplishing tasks beyond expectations. Therefore, Pershing systematically increased Patton's level of responsibility in order to maintain his development. For instance, Pershing accepted Patton's plea to be one of his aides during the Punitive Expedition in Mexico. As a result, the moment Patton was given the responsibility; Patton took his tasks seriously and demanded full closure on each one of them. This made Pershing confident in Patton's abilities, and therefore he selected Patton to be on his team of officers in World War I. Consequently, Patton did extremely well

due to Pershing's mentoring in World War I; he took Pershing's wisdom and teachings and used them to further his development as a leader.

Patton's leadership development model is shown below in Figure 3. The model depicts all of Patton's major developmental stages interlocking together to finally demonstrate his leader competencies in World War II.



Patton's Leadership Development Model

Source: Created by author.

Patton's Self-Development

The individual and self-development component in Patton's model cemented his background, his military education, his Army assignments, his combat experiences, and his mentorship, creating a relentless leader. Patton's individual desire and initiative to continually develop interlocked all of the influential phases in his life; thus, effectively shaping him into a first-rate leader. For example, Patton used his character, which he developed in his upbringing, to achieve his dream of graduating from West Point. He then used what he learned at the military schools, like the Cavalry Officer's course and the Cavalry Mounted School at Fort Riley, to soundly execute his duties in Mexico during the Punitive Expedition. Then Patton used his Mexico experience to successfully command his units during World War I. Moreover, Patton took his years of service and combat experiences to develop his visionary mindset. He used his combat experience to widen his proficiency by envisioning future warfare and doing something about it.

Patton wrote professional articles and military manuals to continually express his thoughts about future warfare and the application of the Army's latest innovations. Patton always looked for ways to strengthen his leadership competencies. For example, Patton bought a typewriter and started to produce articles on military subjects. He set his thoughts on paper and soon developed recurring themes like his offensive approach in tactical operations. Patton's persistent mindset followed him throughout his career, and especially gained him a marked advantage over the enemy in World War II.

Patton used his Army assignments as a way to broaden his leadership skills by putting deep thoughts into every assignment opportunity. His thoughts, reflection, and inquiries on the assignment opportunities he had, meant that he cared for his professional

growth. Patton also persistently developed himself, and increasingly he became a better leader because of his will to improve himself and others. Interestingly, Patton's self-development worked as a two-fold concept. His Army assignments and his military education enhanced his combat performance. Equally, his combat experience improved his leadership performance in his Army assignments and military schooling. Yet, it was his character and his strong will to be great that played a large role in his leadership development.

Patton's Determination

Patton was determined to thrive throughout his leadership development years. He learned the value of willpower early in life and was self-disciplined. So, Patton used his determination to progress in his military profession.²⁵ While Patton's self-development surrounded and preserved his background, military education, assignments, combat experience, and mentorship, his determination became the foundation that supported all the influential elements of his leadership development model.

Patton's admission into West Point demonstrated his resolve to reach the goal he set at an early age. Getting into West Point was his first real challenge and he realized that it was his hard work and sense of purpose that caused him to achieve his aim and graduate. This experience was invaluable to Patton's leadership growth because it solidified his character. Patton understood from this experience that developing personal requires hard work and resilience. He learned that to be successful, one must find ways to individually improve; achieving goals requires perseverance.

Patton also heeded his father's counsel that heroic death, and not heroic defeat builds noble character. So Patton included the idea of, it is better to die than to lose, in his

philosophy on determination. For example, his notebook entry in the spring of 1908 stated:

Remember that you have placed all on war. Therefore you must never fail . . . Never, never, never stop being ambitious. You have one life. Live it to the full of glory and be willing to pay.²⁶

Patton also wrote to his parents in January 1909 saying,

I have got to--do you understand got to--be great--it is no foolish dream--it is me as I ever will be. I am different from other men my age. All they want to do is to live happily and die old. I would be willing to live in torture, die tomorrow if for one day I could be really great.²⁷

Letters and journal entries like these from Patton demonstrated his strong desire to succeed, making him tenacious in his pursuit to provide excellent leadership. Patton's military education strengthened his sense of determination and his unwillingness to accept failure. His VMI and West Point years taught him that a sense of purpose and hard work resulted in success. He also applied his persistent attitude in his Army assignments and the schools he attended. It was his drive for reaching his goals that also pushed Patton to develop his leadership traits in order to be competitive. As a result, he consistently received high ratings from his superior officers.

Patton also understood the competitiveness of the Command and General Staff School and what it meant to graduate with high grades. Graduating with honors meant a placement on the General Staff List and a subsequent slot at the Army War College. Therefore, he studied extremely hard at CGSS, graduating with honors and eventually making it to the Army War College where he again used his resolve to perform well. More importantly, Patton used his sense of determination to exploit his ambition to win in combat. His men looked up to him and he delivered great leadership because of his

resolve to be great. As a result, Patton successfully commanded his units in World War II with record-breaking results.

Closing Comments

In conclusion, the events that influenced Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development illustrated the complex turn of events that conceivably shaped Army officers prior to World War II. It is also worth noting that Eisenhower and Patton's leadership development is analogous to today's leadership development pillars of: institutional training and education, operational assignments, and self-development.²⁸ For example, today's institutional education for developing officers is similar to how Eisenhower and Patton benefited from the Army's education system during the interwar period. During the interwar period, the Army saw Leavenworth as its intellectual crossroads; therefore it aimed at creating self-confident officers out of potential leading commanders and general staff officers through its educational system. Students listened to lectures that emphasized and increased the confidence levels of the officers.²⁹

Key to the success of the U.S. Army's educational model during the interwar period was the idea of requiring commanders and staff officers to be competent in adapting to new and changing situations.³⁰ As a result, the focus on teaching problem solving skills and the application of military principles through confident decision makers provided a remarkable advantage for the U.S. Army during World War II. The Army focused its approach of attack--offensive mindset during the interwar years. Technological advancements also contributed to exercising the future staff officers and commanders during the interwar period. Later, combined arms as prescribed in the subsequent doctrines became the mode for offensive operations.

Although the Army during Eisenhower and Patton's era did not have operational assignments as a blueprint for developing officers, Eisenhower and Patton still used all of their assignments as an opportunity to develop themselves. Additionally, they thrived on the mentoring they received from their assignments. In terms of self-development, it was Eisenhower and Patton's character and determination that caused them to emerge as great leaders. Nevertheless, although Eisenhower and Patton grasped the Army's concept of command and application of military principles, it was indeed their character and sense of determination that made them successful during their developmental years.

Modern Army doctrine on leadership, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, states that "Becoming a person of character and a leader of character is a career-long process involving day-to-day experience, education, self development, developmental counseling, coaching and mentoring."³¹ Eisenhower and Patton's personalities fit today's description of character. In terms of determination, Eisenhower expressed his sense of understanding of it when he said, "What counts is not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog."³² Patton on the same note about determination also expressed that, "By perseverance and study and eternal desire, any man can be great."³³ Eisenhower and Patton, along with their cohorts, received extensive military education during the interwar period. Army officers who later commanded in World War II took in stride what education was offered to them, learned the lessons well, and applied their intellectual and leader competencies in combat. In addition to their Army education, they used their character, assignments, and mentorship to develop themselves through determination and individual drive to succeed.

¹ Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect, 1890-1952* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 25.

² Lecture Delivered by Brigadier General Edward L. King, Commandant, The General Service Schools to the Command and General Staff School.

³ Ibid., 5.

⁴ Quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower.

⁵ Major Mark C. Bender, *Watershed at Leavenworth. Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Command and General Staff School* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990), 22-23.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I tell to Friends* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 187.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Douglas Kinnard, *Eisenhower: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century* (Dulles: Brassy's Inc., 2002), 15-16.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Bender, 20.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 200-201

¹⁵ Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 47.

¹⁶ Ibid., 48.

¹⁷ Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend, 1885-1945* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1985), 46.

¹⁸ Harold R. Winton, *Corps Commanders of the Bulge: Six American generals and Victory in the Ardennes* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007), 21.

¹⁹ Ibid.

- ²⁰ D’Este, 138.
- ²¹ Ibid., 130.
- ²² Blumenson, *Patton: The Man Behind the Legend*, 96.
- ²³ Letter, GSP, Jr. to Beatrice, September 14, 1917. Extracted from *The Patton Papers: 1885-1940* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), 421.
- ²⁴ D’Este, 208.
- ²⁵ Martin Blumenson, *The Many Faces of George S. Patton Jr.* (United States Air Force Academy: United States Air Force Academy, 1972), 24.
- ²⁶ Roger H. Nye, *The Patton Mind: The Professional Development of an Extraordinary Leader* (Garden City Park: Avery Publishing Group Inc., 1993), 16.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ U.S. Army Doctrine, Department of the Army (DA) PAM 350-58, *Leader Development for America’s Army* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 1.
- ²⁹ Peter J. Schifferle, *Anticipating Armageddon: The Leavenworth Schools and U.S. Army Military Effectiveness 1919-1945*. (Manuscript, University of Kansas, December 2008), 143-158.
- ³⁰ Winton, 21.
- ³¹ U.S. Army Leadership Doctrine, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 4-12.
- ³² Quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower, extracted from: Robert A. Fitton, Editor, *Leadership: Quotations from the Military Tradition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 221.
- ³³ Quote from George S. Patton Jr. extracted from: Robert A. Fitton, Editor, *Leadership: Quotations from the Military Tradition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 224.

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