

# WORLD WAR II

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THIS SS OPERATIVE DELIVERED**

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FEBRUARY 2019



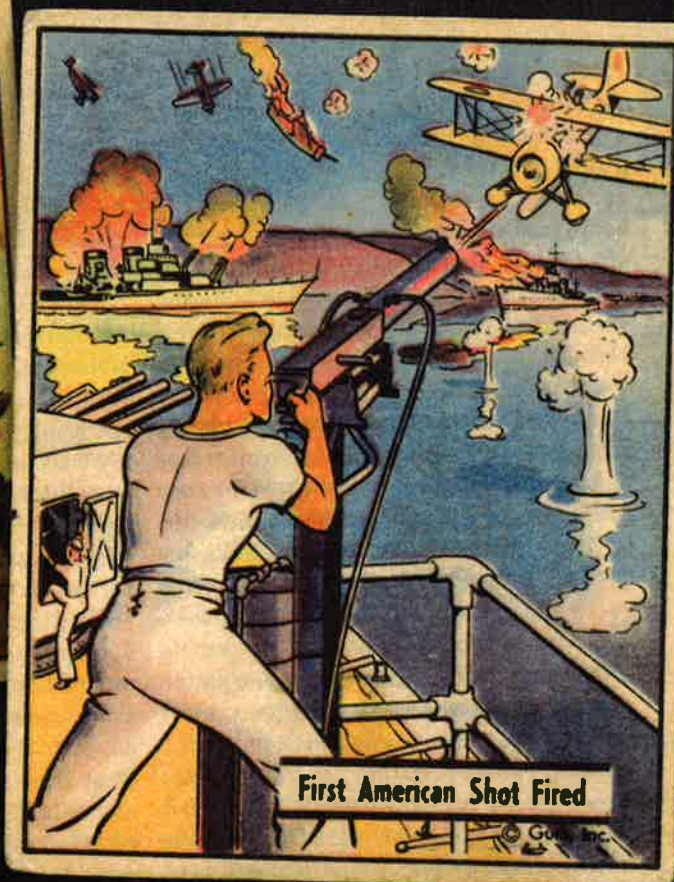
# STACKED FOR WAR

A children's pastime is transformed after the Pearl Harbor attack sets America reeling



**A VIGILANT** General Douglas MacArthur (above) "placed his entire command on alert," the card informs collectors. MacArthur and his forces were nonetheless overpowered and forced to retreat when Japanese forces invaded the Philippines.

**THE FIRST DEFENSIVE SHOTS** at Pearl are wrongly attributed to an unnamed sailor (below) who, the reverse reads, "single-handedly" shot down a Japanese plane—pictured, also inaccurately, as a biplane.





**F**or America's youth, war brought dramatic fears and uncertainties, with fathers and brothers going off to fight in Asia and Europe, and threats of attack at home. It even touched upon young people's everyday fun. Comic heroes like Superman and Batman battled Nazi and Japanese brutes, and a new nonmelting chocolate, called "M&Ms," was suddenly limited to exclusive military use. Amid worrying developments in the war, American children were eager for inspiring news and found it in an unusual source—bubble gum cards. Dubbed "War gum" and created in 1941 by J. Warren Bowman, each pack cost a penny and came with a piece of gum and a card featuring a comic-like illustration of Allied action on the frontlines, or a portrait of a world leader or heroic soldier, along with informative text on the back.

Young collectors were likely already familiar with Bowman's prewar sets—particularly the wildly popular "Horrors of War," produced in 1938. That set, which featured violent images of conflicts from around the world, angered some parents. It may even have had an impact on the president. Some sources say Franklin D. Roosevelt used the set to provoke Americans about the need for international leadership in peacemaking.

When the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred, Bowman became inspired to make a set focusing on Allied war efforts—and "War gum" was born. This time, the set was branded as a "series of educational cards"—clearly an effort to appease parents—while retaining high popularity among kids, excited to rip open their packs and read about the latest hero or battle, then collect and trade them with friends. Unfortunately for these young collectors, the war intervened in their fun yet again: due to wartime rationing of sugar and latex—two key gum ingredients—production lasted only a year. —*Lee W. Jones*

**PACKS OF WAR GUM** (top, right) contained one of 132 cards—which young people could collect and trade—along with an omnipresent admonition to buy war bonds.

**BRITISH PRIME MINISTER** Winston Churchill (right) surveys damage after a 1940 bombing of London. Text on the back of the image pointedly notes that Churchill's mother was American.





A



Japs Kill U. S. Hero Bailing Out

B



Russian Girl Sniper Wins Coveted Medal

D



Stalking the Axis Submarine Raiders

C



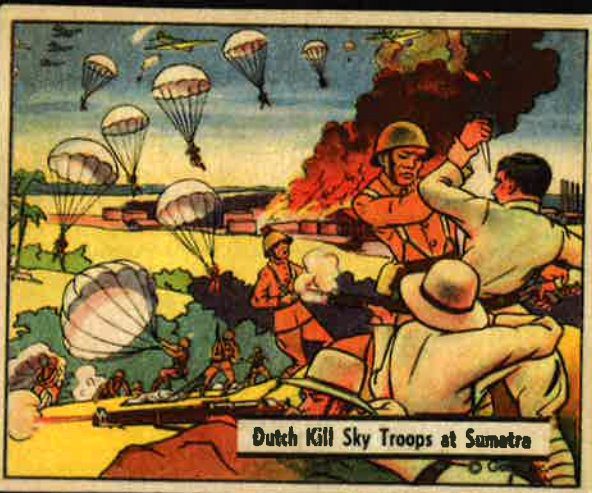
Singapore's Last Hours

F



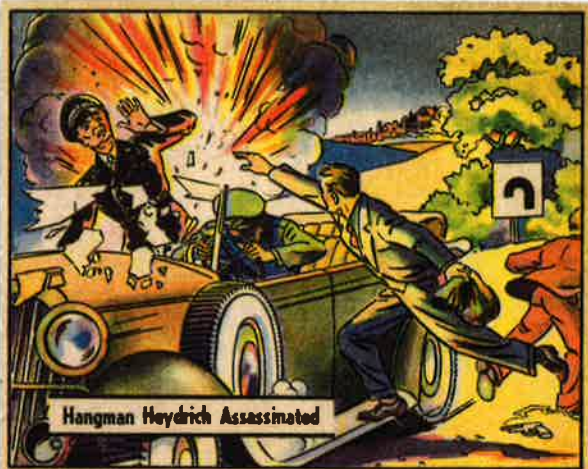
"Ace" Lieut. Edward H. O'Hare

E



Dutch Kill Sky Troops at Sumatra





Hangman Heydrich Assassinated

## 73. Hangman Heydrich Assassinated

On the afternoon of May 27, 1942, Reinhard Heydrich, Hitler's No. 2 Gestapo Chief, was mortally wounded when a bomb exploded in his automobile, killing the driver, wrecking the car. Two men lay in wait for the car as it rounded a hairpin turn. Suddenly one of them jumped forward with an automatic pistol. It failed to go off and the other man threw a bomb at the right inner-side of the car. Both of the attackers escaped. Scene of the action was the road from Prague to Berlin. Although the Nazis at first asserted that "The Hangman" was not seriously injured, he died in a few days after the bomb was thrown. It was believed that the assassination was in protest against Heydrich's order conscripting Czech youths for war service on the Russian front; or against his announcement that there would be a reorganization of the administrative setup in Bohemia and Moravia. Terrible reprisals were carried out.

This is one of a series of educational cards which come wrapped in packages of War Gum. Save to complete your collection.

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Buy War Bonds and Stamps for VICTORY

G

**A. DRAMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS**, like this one of American pilot Marshall Anderson being gunned down by Japanese fighters, helped drive support for the war by stoking outrage toward the enemy—particularly Japan.

**B. STORIES OF** heroes from other Allied nations were told as well, like that of Soviet sniper Lyudmila Pavlichenko, who in 1941 at age 24, joined the Red Army. Within a year, she had amassed a record 309 confirmed kills. Her reputation became so well known, the Germans tried—and failed—to bribe her with "lots of chocolate" and an officership within their ranks.

**C. ACKNOWLEDGING** a military loss, this card shows retreating British fighters facing off against scores of invading Japanese in Singapore in February 1942. The reverse aims to lessen the blow of defeat by stating that British surrender came only after heavy losses and a shortage of resources.

**D. AN ANTISUBMARINE** crew of the U.S. Coast Guard targets and destroys an enemy vessel—the oil in the water an indicator of success. The reverse explains how these crews escorted merchant ships and took part in rescue missions.



Negro Swimmer Tows Survivors

## 129. Negro Swimmer Tows Survivors

After the sinking of the Destroyer "Gregory" off the Solomons, in October, 1942, a raft-load of wounded seamen from the stricken ship was towed to safety by a Negro mess attendant, known only as "French." With a young Ensign and weary seaman clinging to the overloaded raft's sides the frail craft started drifting seaward. It was then that the brave colored man stripped off his clothes and tied a tow-line around his waist. He braved shark-filled waters to bring the raft and its occupants to safety. After six hours in the water the powerful swimmer was sighted by a barge as he neared the shore and the seamen were taken off. The young ensign who reported the brave act had to be hospitalized, as a result of injuries sustained, and thus never learned the full name of the heroic swimmer.

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H

**E. AN INTENSE BATTLE** is depicted in this scene as Japanese paratroopers invade the northern coast of Sumatra, a province of the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) in February 1942. The Allies were forced into retreat after just two days, the reverse notes—but not before Dutch defenders "cut down 700" of the enemy.

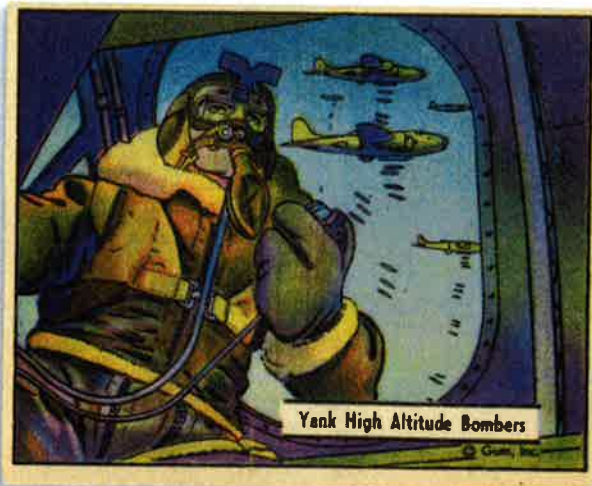
**F. THE NAVY'S FIRST** ace in World War II, Edward "Butch" O'Hare, is praised for downing six Japanese bombers attacking his ship, the USS *Lexington*; the actual count was five. The reverse notes "no damage" was done to U.S. surface forces.

**G. NOT SHYING AWAY** from violence, "War gum" depicts the attack in Prague on SS commander Reinhard Heydrich by Czech commandos. Text on the back of the image accurately details the events that left Heydrich mortally wounded, but wrongly states that his driver also died.

**H. AN UNNAMED** rescuer—later revealed as 22-year-old U.S. Navy messman Charles Jackson French—is hailed for his derring-do, swimming his shipmates via raft to safety after Japanese naval gunfire sunk their ship, the USS *Gregory*.



# STACKED FOR WAR



Yank High Altitude Bombers

## 121. Yank High-Altitude Bombers

For daylight bombings, the United States Bomber Command, stationed in England, uses Flying Fortresses operating at an altitude of 25,000 feet. They drop bombs on German factories, railroads, ships and oil refineries with amazing accuracy. Because of the intense cold of the upper air and the lack of oxygen, these daring fliers must wear extra warm clothing and masks, much as if they were going on a trip to the North Pole! Sunshades, goggles, parachutes and bulky mittens complete the equipment. Even at 20,000 feet the temperature is frequently 40 degrees below zero! Before taking off, the bomber crews must empty their pockets and strip their clothing of all pictures, letters and other clues to identification so that if they are forced down in enemy territory they will have only their Army identification tags. Each bombardier is under oath to protect his precious bomb-sight from falling into enemy hands.

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Buy War Bonds and Stamps for VICTORY

I

**I. AMERICAN BOMBER CREWS** based in England unleash a raid from B-17s high over Germany. The reverse makes passing reference to the U.S. military's coveted Norden bombsight—a tool that helped bombers increase their accuracy—and the military's efforts to keep the bombsight out of enemy hands.

**J. ECHOING NEWSPAPER** accounts of fighting in the Philippines, this card notes that the U.S. 60th Coast Artillery stationed in Luzon in January 1942 was "eager for enemy planes to come!" The men managed to hold off the Japanese invaders in the Bataan and Corregidor region until that May.

**K. BRITISH, FRENCH,** Canadian, and American fighters raid German forts in Dieppe, in northern France. The card calls the event a victory, noting the destruction of German weapon supplies and a radio station. In reality, the raid failed, with the objectives going unmet and the Allies retreating.

**L. THE ARMY'S** first ace in the war, and, at 25, its youngest lieutenant colonel, Boyd "Buzz" Wagner is credited with having downed "40 or 50 Jap planes." He, in fact, downed eight.



Luzon's Star Anti-Aircraft Unit

## 25. Luzon's Star Anti-Aircraft Unit

The Anti-Aircraft men with the 60th U. S. Coast Artillery on Rocky Batan Peninsula, during the January, 1942, defense of Luzon, were eager for enemy planes to come! It was partly because of the fun they got out of shooting them out of the air, and also because every plane downed meant one plane less to bother the ground forces of General MacArthur. Captain A. A. Abston from Tuscaloosa, Ala., veteran in charge of a star anti-aircraft battery on Batan, was modest about their accuracy in downing planes. Said he, "We are just part of a smooth-working anti-aircraft organization which supplies us with information. We happen to be in a good spot to get at the Japanese." The more Japs they brought down the better the men's spirits. The Japs paid a high price for each raid.

This is one of a series of educational cards which come wrapped in packages of War Gum. Save to complete your collection.

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Buy U. S. Defense Savings Bonds or Stamps

J

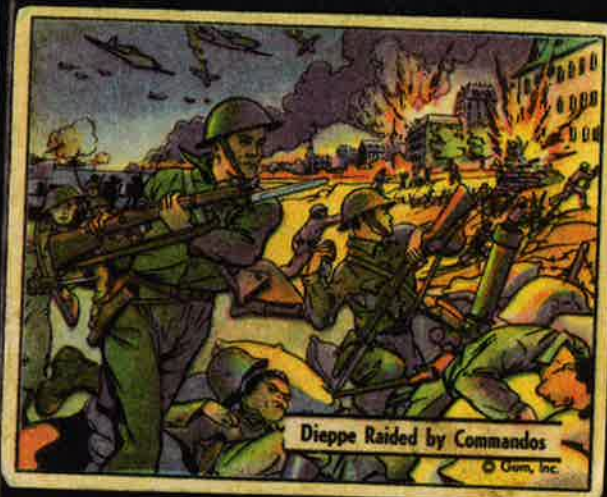
**M. CHILDREN ON** the island of Malta take cover as incoming Axis planes fly overhead, in an image offering American youth a glimpse of how the war affected their peers overseas.

**N. MARKING REVENGE** for Pearl Harbor, the Doolittle Raid's April 1942 bombing of Tokyo sends Japanese industrial workers scattering. The reverse boasts—accurately—that the raid came just as a Japanese broadcast was "gloating" about the "peacefulness and security of life in Japan."

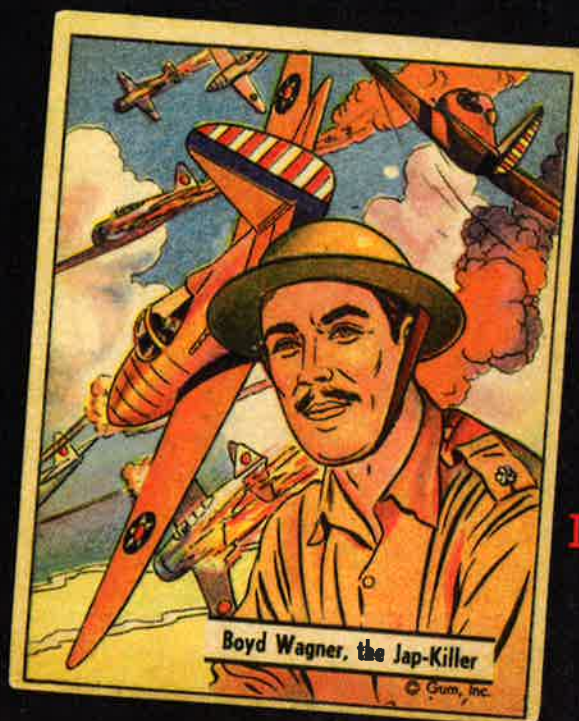
**O. THE EXILED** and unpopular King George II of Greece retreats a second time, which the text on the reverse notes was necessary only "to prevent capture" after German paratroopers invaded the Greek island of Crete. The king hid inside a cave with the help of local shepherds until a British destroyer picked him up to convey him to Egypt the next day.

**P. THE FINAL CARD** produced in the set depicts one of the war's major battles—praising Soviet forces for holding out against the Germans in Stalingrad and accurately predicting that winter will change the Soviets' fortunes.





K



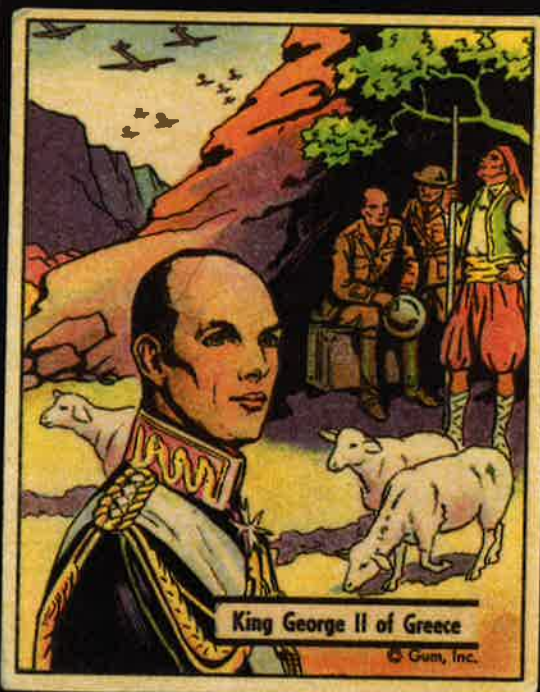
L



M



N



O



P