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# S. L. A. Marshall's *Men Against Fire*: New Evidence Regarding Fire Ratios

JOHN WHITECLAY CHAMBERS II

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The findings of journalist-soldier S. L. A. Marshall about combat fire ratios—particularly that in World War II less than 25 percent of American combat infantrymen in battle fired their weapons—have been controversial since Marshall published them in his 1947 book, *Men Against Fire*.<sup>1</sup> He continued to apply his methodology—the after-action, group interview with enlisted men—during the Korean War, where he concluded that more than half the front-line soldiers were firing their weapons. In the past 20 years, Marshall's controversial figures have come under more intensive attack, in part because, after his death in 1977, his papers did not include statistical analyses or more than a couple of the field notebooks produced during group interviews.<sup>2</sup> Yet Marshall continues to have supporters as well as detractors, and the controversy rages on, fueled by emotional beliefs, individual vested interests, missing documents, and absent statistics.<sup>3</sup>

One of the key questions concerns where Marshall obtained his figures about the ratio of fire, the proportion of a rifle unit firing its weapons in battle. Marshall claimed it was derived from his group after-action interviews, a method he developed as a field historian in World War II and which as a civilian journalist, Reserve officer, and military consultant, he employed and advocated for use by the US Army and later by the Israeli Defense Force. Although the ratio-of-fire figure was his most famous product, Marshall was proudest of his methodology—informal, open-ended, group interviews of enlisted personnel, as soon as possible after a particular combat action, to learn about the actual behavior of the

soldiers in battle. Timing was sometimes but not always on his side. In the Pacific in November 1943, he was with G.I.'s when a forward unit at Makin Island in the Gilberts sustained a Japanese counterattack at night, and Marshall could interview American survivors the next day. But in the European Theater of Operations the following year, he was not able to interview the combat troops involved in the Normandy Invasion in June 1944 until several weeks afterward.<sup>4</sup> In each case, however, he would interview the men and, he said, take contemporaneous notes and later write up his report on the action.

The following oral history provides some fresh insights into Marshall's methodology and findings. It also raises troubling questions about the reliability of Marshall's statistics on fire ratios.

The oral history comes from a citizen-soldier, Frank J. Brennan, Jr., now a retired high school and community college history instructor and administrator. As a young junior officer in Korea in 1953, Brennan accompanied S. L. A. Marshall on some of the journalist's after-action group interviews along the Main Line of Resistance, including the Battle of Pork Chop Hill.

A native of New Brunswick, New Jersey, Brennan graduated from Rutgers in the spring of 1951 with a B.A. in journalism. Having completed ROTC, he received a commission as a second lieutenant in the infantry. After additional training, including Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia (where Marshall's *Men Against Fire* was among the required reading), and in Japan, he arrived in Korea in May 1952, assigned to the 7th Infantry Division, a Regular Army division that had been fighting in Korea since September 1950. Lieutenant Brennan was sent to the front line with the 32d Infantry Regiment in the 7th Infantry Division's central sector near the 38th Parallel. For six weeks on the line, he served as a rifle platoon leader. His unit was engaged in patrols and in repelling attacks on its position along the Main Line of Resistance.

Perhaps partly because of his journalism degree, Brennan was assigned to G-3 (Operations) at Headquarters, 7th Infantry Division, in late July 1952. He was subsequently promoted to first lieutenant. At G-3, Brennan's main responsibility was to prepare the monthly reports of the division's activity and send them directly to Washington, D.C. Periodically he also served as a liaison officer with

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the press. He performed these functions under Major General Wayne C. Smith and subsequently under Smith's successor, Major General Arthur S. Trudeau. During his tour of duty in Korea, Brennan was twice awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service.

In April 1953, there arrived at 7th Infantry Division a distinguished visitor: renowned military writer and analyst S. L. A. Marshall, syndicated columnist for the *Detroit News*<sup>5</sup> and brigadier general in the Army Reserve. This was Marshall's second visit to Korea. Between December 1950 and April 1951, he had conducted after-action group interviews for the Army's Operations Research Office. Consequently, he concluded that in contrast to the 25 percent combat fire ratio he had reported in World War II, in Korea, more than half of the combat infantrymen were firing their weapons.<sup>6</sup> Now, in the spring of 1953, on his second trip to Korea, he came as a war correspondent, his visit cleared by the Pentagon and more directly by Eighth Army headquarters. But while most of the correspondents went to the truce talks at Panmunjom, Marshall hurried to the 7th Division to visit an old friend, General Trudeau.<sup>7</sup> Thus Marshall was there when the Chinese Communists initiated a series of combat actions, including the Battle of Pork Chop Hill, 16-18 April 1953, as they tested the resolve of the United Nations forces during the peace negotiations.<sup>8</sup> At 7th Division Headquarters, First Lieutenant Frank Brennan was assigned to take Marshall wherever he wanted to go to talk to enlisted men who had just been in combat engagements. As an escort officer, Brennan accompanied Marshall on several of these group interviews and remembers them clearly. The following are his recollections of S. L. A. Marshall's after-action interviews.

### *Interview*<sup>9</sup>

AUTHOR: You told me that you knew who General S. L. A. Marshall was because of his writings, but you were not prepared for what you saw when you first met him. Would you explain that?

BRENNAN: I can remember his general appearance vividly, because it was a shock to me. He was unique. His shirt was hanging out of his trousers, his field jacket not buttoned in a military fashion, his combat boots dirty and unshined. Haircut? Shave? No one believed he was a general officer! He didn't even have a helmet. We gave him a helmet. He had to have a helmet in a combat zone. The first one we gave him had no star on it. He did have his star on his epaulet or on his fatigue jacket. And he certainly had status. He was a brigadier general, and he had been sent by Eighth Army Headquarters.

AUTHOR: Describe what you did with him.

BRENNAN: When he arrived at the division, he was assigned to me at one point to escort him to locations that he selected. He would have a general idea of where some of the serious action had taken place. At that point, it was not a flexible or fluid action, but it was off the Main Line of Resistance. There were a number of actions, including Pork Chop Hill. I know I got him to Pork Chop Hill either during

or immediately after the battle. He would say exactly the type of thing he wanted, and he would be escorted to the geographical area, where these things had taken place. My job was to get him to these areas—and I remained with him until he was finished—and then get him back safely to division headquarters.

AUTHOR: How long would all this take?

BRENNAN: We would leave division headquarters in a jeep. Sometimes I would drive, sometimes we had a motor pool driver. Usually we would get there in less than an hour. We would go to the unit. He would talk with the men involved. Usually not more than one to two hours. When he was finished, we would go back to division headquarters. He would go to the commanding general's trailer—these were very large trailers with private offices and quarters—and they talked.

AUTHOR: Give me a picture of what happened when you and Marshall arrived in an area where there had just been combat.

BRENNAN: I brought him to the area. Then we would go to a unit involved in a recent action. We would check through the company commander as a kind of bureaucratic courtesy. The general said he wanted to see a group of men involved in an action. They are gathered together in a bunker, and he and I go into it.

AUTHOR: Were there any local commanders present?

BRENNAN: When I was there, he only talked to the enlisted men and NCOs. No officers. It was probably a mutual feeling. When a general comes into an area and tries to find out what happened after an action, there is naturally the suspicion by the officers involved in the action. "What is this general doing here?" They avoided each other. He only talked to the NCOs and the enlisted men.

AUTHOR: You say the interviews were held in bunkers. Describe such a bunker and the look of the men.

BRENNAN: It's a sandbag bunker. It's built with sandbags and the top is covered. It's located on the back of a ridge or hill. Inside are about half a dozen enlisted men, sitting in a group. They're haggard, perhaps sleepy. They probably haven't had a good night's sleep. They're probably relieved that they got out of the action in one piece, and they must be wondering what this is all about.

AUTHOR: Did General Marshall interview casualties?

BRENNAN: No, he did not, just the men who were still on the line.

AUTHOR: Give me some details about how he went about his interviews with those men.

BRENNAN: What he would do is request general information about the military action and then he would interview—I accompanied him—interview small groups of enlisted men who were involved in the action. Normally, I was the only other person present with the men except him. I can vividly recall the setting in a bunker area proximate to an action area. His questions were very informally done. They were open-ended questions. He had a pad, a steno pad, and a

pencil, and he would jot things down. He asked: “What did you see? Where were you? What did others do?” Eliciting answers from them. These guys had been away from the particular action for only a matter of hours, a day at most.

His approach, I found to be very effective. The question I asked him was: “Is the information they’re providing really objective information, or are they telling what they think a general officer wants to hear?” He said something like “It’s the best we can do.” I was struck by the objectivity. And the men were so close to the action themselves.

AUTHOR: How would he explain what he was doing?

BRENNAN: He would say: “We’re just trying to find out what happened.” He was nonaccusatory. He always reassured them of anonymity. He would say to me in front of them: “No names.” I said, “Yes, Sir.”<sup>10</sup>

Then he would begin: “Where were you?” “What did you see?” “What did you do?” “Did you see any North Koreans or Chinese?”

AUTHOR: What kind of answers did the men give him?

BRENNAN: It’s difficult for me to recapture that part. I do recall his trying to take an answer from one man and put it together with an answer from another G.I. and trying to get a comprehensive answer from the whole. He was trying to reconstruct the battle.

AUTHOR: What about the issue of men firing their weapons?

BRENNAN: I remember he brought up the question but that he did not push it in regard to the amount of firing. That came up incidentally rather than as a result of a specific question from him. He asked mostly open-ended questions to elicit information about what really occurred.

AUTHOR: You said you knew his book and its assertions about limited firing. Did you and he discuss it?

BRENNAN: I know we discussed the conclusions in his book, *Men Against Fire*. I asked him specifically whether those percentages of his—25 or 30 per cent of the men firing their weapons—were supportable. He assured me that they were supportable, talking to the soldiers at the time.

AUTHOR: What did you mean by supportable?

BRENNAN: I meant was there any attempt to quantify the percentage that he presented in his book, and he said . . . [Brennan paused for thought, then continued]. You know, John, I’m not sure that I got a definite answer from him. I’m just not sure.

AUTHOR: You were a rifle platoon leader in combat in Korea. What did you observe about your own men firing?

BRENNAN: The people I had out on patrol, where most of the firing occurred, they fired pretty consistently after they were told to. It is difficult for me to put a percentage on it, but it was significant. I certainly remember that the first time I tried to fire, I had a carbine, and it wouldn’t fire. It jammed. After that, I

brought a regular M-1 with me. In front of the Main Line of Resistance, we had barbed wire, booby traps, and when you heard noise out there, that attracted fire from us, but the main firing was out on patrol. They did need more ammunition when they returned, so they must have been firing their weapons.

AUTHOR: When Marshall interviewed the men, was he taking notes?

BRENNAN: The general had a steno pad and pencil. He took down cryptic notes. Not lots of notes. Not verbatim. He'd listen to them, and he'd take a few notes occasionally.

I do recall he was pushing very hard to have this type of reporting incorporated in the reports, and I think the general [Marshall] wanted to know what was being done with his after-action reports after he wrote them. I am not very clear about what was done with these. He tried to emphasize to me that these after-action reports that he was so known for should be included in our monthly reports sent from division. They would be valuable. He must have talked to the division commander about this, because the division commander [General Trudeau] talked to me too.

The end result was that we sometimes did include these things. I went down [to the front] and did what he did and included some of this. But the problem was the time and the difficulty of incorporating these things, which had to be signed off by the division commander. The end result was that only from time to time on a limited extent were they done and included.

AUTHOR: What happened to those after-action reports that General Marshall wrote after you and he went to the attack areas?

BRENNAN: I don't know. After I left him with the commanding general of the division, I never found out. He did not show me the reports he wrote. I never did see any.

AUTHOR: How long were you with General Marshall?

BRENNAN: Well, it was not weeks. There were at least two or three specific occasions in which I was involved.

AUTHOR: After you left Korea in July 1953 where did you go?

BRENNAN: I rotated back to the states. I was mustered out through Camp Kilmer . . . in July 1953.<sup>11</sup> I went back to Rutgers on the G.I. Bill and earned a master's degree in history. I taught history at South Brunswick High School and Ocean County Community College [both in New Jersey] and later became business administrator for the South Brunswick School District. [End of Interview]

### *Considering the Comments*

In regard to the controversy over Marshall's methods and findings, Frank Brennan's recollections, while supporting the effectiveness of the journalist's method for recreating the battle experiences of small groups of enlisted men, cast doubt about the validity of Marshall's controversial assertions about fire ratios.



Brennan's oral history indicates that Marshall's interviews typically occurred during daylight hours in bunkers, lasted for one or two hours, never included unit officers or casualties, and that Brennan believed Marshall's interviews were very effective at recreating the engagement. Brennan's account provides support to Marshall's own assertion that he made contemporaneous notes in field notebooks as a part of his after-action group interviews with soldiers. But as Brennan recalls, these were at most sporadic, cryptic notes, not detailed accounts. In fact only a few of Marshall's notebooks have been found.<sup>12</sup> There may not be any more. Frank Brennan's memory of the nature of the military journalist's questioning also suggests that Marshall, at least by the Korean War, was primarily trying to recreate the battle experience of the common soldier rather than to elicit any single piece of data such as the fire ratio.

Brennan's account also reinforces the contention of critics of Marshall's use of statistics, who conclude that Marshall was unscientific in his methodology and that his figures about the percentage of troops firing their weapons were either sloppy, fabricated, or simply guesswork.<sup>13</sup> During the interviews, Marshall took only minimal notes, which suggests that the journalist was mainly putting the reconstruction of the battle together initially in his mind rather than on paper. How much time elapsed before he wrote a full description of the combat action remains unknown, but it could easily have been long enough for some details to be misremembered or lost entirely.

Nor does Brennan's account of Marshall's questions offer reason to put much faith in the journalist's judgments about the percentages of men firing their weapons. It was not a question he asked of every soldier. Instead, it emerged rather incidentally in the open-ended discussion among the group as Marshall sought primarily to reconstruct what had happened in the engagement, rather than who fired and who did not. Nevertheless, unlike the recollection of the Army captain who accompanied Marshall in Europe in World War II that he could not recall Marshall ever asking who had fired his weapon, Brennan does recall the journalist occasionally asking that question directly in his interviews in Korea.<sup>14</sup> While Marshall defended his findings from *Men Against Fire* to Brennan as what he had learned from talking to front-line soldiers, Marshall himself seems to have realized the questionable objectivity of much of the information he acquired. The journalist's written accounts of his experiences, such as at Pork Chop Hill, tended to exaggerate portions of the actual events for dramatic effect.

Unquestionably, Marshall's claims that many soldiers were not firing their rifles brought the attention of the public and the Army to this issue. Those claims contributed to analysis and improvements in infantry training designed to increase rates of fire. As Roger J. Spiller of the Army's Combat Studies Institute has written, the variables in when and why troops fire or do not fire their weapons in certain combat situations involve the kind of terrain, the nature of particular circumstances, the types of weapons, and the trajectory of a soldier's time in combat.<sup>15</sup> But without further corroboration, the source of Marshall's conten-



tions about shockingly low fire ratios at least in some US Army divisions in World War II appears to have been based at best on chance rather than scientific sampling, and at worst on sheer speculation.

It seems most probable that Marshall, writing as a journalist rather than as a historian, exaggerated the problem and arbitrarily decided on the one-quarter figure because he believed that he needed a dramatic statistic to give added weight to his argument.<sup>16</sup> The controversial figure was probably a guess. If First Lieutenant Frank Brennan's experience accompanying Marshall on after-action, group interviews in Korea in 1953 is typical, however, even if more of Marshall's field notebooks are found, they probably will not contain the kind of data necessary to substantiate the controversial assertions of *Men Against Fire*.

#### NOTES

1. S. L. A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War* (Washington: Infantry Journal; New York: William Morrow, 1947), a compendium of a series of articles on "Battle Command in Future War," that Marshall began in the May 1947 issue of the *Infantry Journal*. Samuel Lyman Atwood Marshall used his initials in his writings; but he was known to his friends as "Sam" or, because of those initials and his early career as a sportswriter, as "SLAM" Marshall. On the controversy over Marshall's conclusions, see F. D. G. Williams, *SLAM: The Influence of S.L.A. Marshall on the United States Army*, TRADOC Historical Monograph Series (Fort Monroe, Va.: Office of the Command Historian, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1994, original edition, 1990), pp. viii, 2-4, and passim.

2. Marshall claimed to have filled some 800 field notebooks with his notes from his after-action group interviews, but except for some interview notes located among the 15 boxes of the S. L. A. Marshall Papers, 1918-1970, at the US Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., most have not been located. They are apparently not in the 122 boxes of his papers, 1900-1977, at the S. L. A. Marshall Military History Collection, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso Library, El Paso, Texas. The Finding Guide to that collection reports that "Marshall donated the bulk of his field notes and working papers made during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Sinai Campaign of 1956, and the Six-Day War of 1967 to the US Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pa."

3. Among Marshall's critics are Harold P. Leinbaugh and John D. Campbell, *The Men of Company K: The Autobiography of a World War II Rifle Company* (New York: William Morrow, 1985); Philip Gold, "Flak for a Man and His Claim that Few Soldiers Open Fire," *Insight*, 27 March 1989, pp. 18-19; Fredric Smoler, "The Secret of the Soldiers Who Didn't Shoot," *American Heritage*, 40 (March 1989), 40-45; Roger J. Spiller, "S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire," *RUSI Journal*, 133 (Winter 1988), 63-71; and John C. McManus, *The Deadly Brotherhood: The American Combat Soldier in World War II* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1998), pp. 99-103. In contrast, Marshall's supporters include Hugh M. Cole, "S. L. A. Marshall (1900-1977): In Memoriam," *Parameters*, 8 (March 1978), 2-7; Thomas A. Horner, "Killers, Fillers, and Fodder," *Parameters*, 12 (September 1982), 27-34; William E. DuPuy, "Insights," *Military Review*, 69 (July 1989), 96-98; Marshall's grandson, John Douglas Marshall, *Reconciliation Road: A Family Odyssey of War and Honor* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1993); and Dave Grossman, "Aggression and Violence," *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*, editor-in-chief, John Whiteclay Chambers II (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 9-10. The most recent account accepts Marshall's figures for the Korean War but attributes them to reduced squad size and additional automatic weapons rather than improved training measures based on Marshall's findings. Kelly C. Jordan, "Right for the Wrong Reasons: S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire in Korea," *Journal of Military History*, 66 (January 2002), 135-62.

4. Williams, *SLAM*, p. 25. In the Korean War, during his first visit in the winter of 1950-51, Marshall was not able to interview troops until two or three weeks after an operation, but in his second trip to Korea in the stabilized situation of the spring of 1953, he could generally interview the combatants within a few hours after the action.

5. Except for his military service in World War II, when he served most of the time with the Army's Historical Branch, Marshall was a columnist for the *Detroit News* for most of his career. From 1927 to 1961, his articles, particularly those on the military, were syndicated in newspapers around the country. He had served with the American Expeditionary Forces in France in World War I and received a commission at the end of the war. Thereafter, he had returned to his native Texas, beginning his journalistic career on the *El Paso Herald* from sportswriter to city editor, before moving to Detroit.

6. Williams, *SLAM*, pp. 63-67. On Marshall's assertion that most infantrymen on a defensive perimeter at night in Korea fired their weapons, see S. L. A. Marshall, "Commentary on Infantry Operations and Weapons Usage in Korea, Winter of 1950-51," The U.S. Army's Operations Research Office R-13, 27 October 1951, p. 27.

7. Williams, *SLAM*, pp. 67-68; see also Marshall's autobiography published posthumously, S. L. A. Marshall, *Bringing Up the Rear: A Memoir*, ed. Cate Marshall (San Rafael, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1979), pp. 218-19.

8. The Battle of Pork Chop Hill, so-called because of its geographical configuration, took place 16-18 April 1953, in the 7th US Infantry Division sector in advance of the main UN line, approximately 50 miles north of Seoul. While the hill itself was of no great tactical importance, the Chinese seized the hill in a surprise attack by two companies that overwhelmed the two American platoons defending the position. During the two-day battle to capture the position, nine artillery battalions of the US 7th and 2d Infantry Divisions fired more than 77,000 rounds at the Chinese troops, and the equivalent of two US infantry battalions retook the hilltop entrenchments, overcoming the Chinese defenders who had been reinforced to the equivalent of a full battalion. Both sides suffered heavy casualties. Subsequently each army reinforced its position, so that by the time the armistice was signed on 27 July 1953, there were five US battalions holding the hill and a full Chinese division arrayed against them. S. L. A. Marshall's account of the battle is in his *Pork Chop Hill: The American Fighting Man in Action, Korea, 1953* (New York: William Morrow, 1956). United Artists, Inc., turned Marshall's book into a motion picture, *Pork Chop Hill*, directed by Lewis Milestone and starring Gregory Peck, released in 1959.

9. Frank J. Brennan, Jr., interviewed by John Whiteclay Chambers II, 10-11 February 2001, in Cranbury, New Jersey. Transcript of the interview is in the possession of the interviewer; copies are to be deposited with the Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II, Department of History, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, and the S. L. A. Marshall Military History Collection, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, University of Texas at El Paso, Texas.

10. This anonymity represented a change in the practice Marshall had advocated during World War II. When he explained his after-action group interview method to Army field historians in Europe in 1944, he recommended that the names and rank of each "witness" should be identified in full (e.g. "'S/Sgt. John J. Smith' not 'Sgt. Smith.'"), S. L. A. Marshall, "Company Interview after Combat," 28 June 1944, Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, rpt. as Appendix A in Williams, *SLAM*, pp. 99-108, quotation at p. 107.

11. Frank J. Brennan, Jr., was commissioned a second lieutenant in the US Army in June 1951, he served on active duty from 11 August 1951 through 24 July 1953; he then remained a member of the US Army Reserve until 1958. Certificate of Service, Honorable Discharge, and other original documents in his possession, copies are in the possession of John Whiteclay Chambers II. Among Frank Brennan's personal papers concerning his military service are these official documents, the published history of the 7th Infantry Division, his personal photograph album of his service in Korea, and an original newspaper clipping of S. L. A. Marshall's obituary from *The New York Times*, 18 December 1977, p. 44.

12. Those few are at the US Army Military History Institute, Carlisle, Pa.

13. Even some of those who respect Marshall's development of the after-action interview idea doubt his claim for a reliable "systematic collection of data." See Spiller, "S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire," p. 68; Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behavior of Men in Battle* (New York: Free Press/Macmillan, 1986), p. 13.

14. Frank J. Brennan, Jr., telephone response to a question by John Whiteclay Chambers II, 27 February 2002. The officer assigned in 1944 as military assistant to then-Colonel S. L. A. Marshall and who accompanied him on many of his after-action interviews in the European Theater of Operations was Captain John G. Westover. See Westover's published recollections, including "The Colonel Goes Interviewing," *Newsletter of the S. L. A. Marshall Military History Collection*, No. 12 (Winter 1985-1986), pp. 1-3; and Westover's 15 June 1987 interview with Roger J. Spiller quoted in Spiller, "S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire," p. 68.

15. Spiller, "S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire," pp. 68-69.

16. Marshall's propensity to exaggerate for dramatic effect plagues his autobiography. For example, in regard to his visit to the 7th Infantry Division in Korea in the spring of 1953 (Marshall, *Bringing Up the Rear*, pp. 218-20), his autobiography overinflates his role and the amount of assistance put at his disposal. As one example, Marshall's contention that "I was given a military staff, a van, a chopper, and three sergeant assistants" is disputed by Frank Brennan, who said it was instead a lieutenant, a jeep, and sometimes a motor pool driver. In the same account, Marshall claims he did his interviewing "from around midnight until 0500 or so," but interviews that Brennan observed took place from late morning to early afternoon. Nor did Brennan see the three psychiatrists, two of them lieutenant colonels, who Marshall says "followed me around for two weeks listening in on the group critiques" and expressed awe at his ability to get the troops to "open up for you in a way that they never do for us." Brennan, follow-up phone interview with John Whiteclay Chambers II, 27 February 2002. In accounts of his military service in World War I, Marshall seems to have gone beyond exaggeration. He claimed to have participated in the 1918 campaigns at St. Mihiel, Soissons, and the Meuse-Argonne and won a battlefield commission, when in fact he was a sergeant in the 315th Engineers constructing roads behind the lines. It was not until several months after the armistice that he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the reserves. Marshall, *Bringing Up the Rear*, pp. 11-23; Susan Canedy, Introduction, in Williams, *SLAM*, p. 3.