

## Chapter 1 by Kay Hively

# Three Generals

**A**fter looking over the battlefield very carefully, Eddie Barnes reached down and picked up a jeep full of men. Carefully, he set it down in front of the formation he had created with his toy soldiers.

Michael Nelson watched closely as his opponent made the move. Now, he had to reconsider his own formation to counter Eddie's move.

Ever since Eddie's father had brought home a box of toy soldiers, these two best friends had played "army." For months, the two 10-year-olds had battled each other, trying to out think and out maneuver each other.

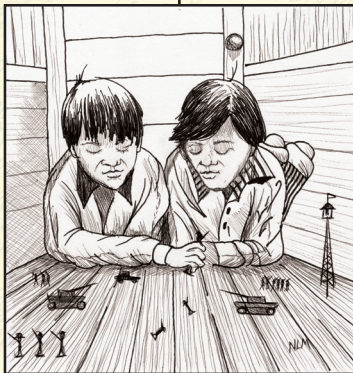
The boys had fun planning their attacks and counterattacks. As they made their plans, they tried to offer something new every night. The soldiers were a lot of fun.

With their own money, the boys had added other things

such as jeeps and tanks to their armies.

Most of the time, the boys never actually clashed their soldiers against each other. They mostly just set up attack positions.

Almost every night after supper, Michael went to the Barnes' home where the two boys played their strategy



game in Eddie's room. When the boys had their best plans set, Eddie's father came to the bedroom.

He would stand with his

legs spread wide, looking over the battlefield on Eddie's bedroom floor. After studying the scene, he would choose which army was best positioned to win.

Which boy set up each army was always a secret, so Mr. Barnes did not know who commanded which soldiers.

After choosing the winning side, Eddie's father explained why one army was better. He might say one army would win

because its soldiers were in a position to outflank the other army. Or sometimes, he would say one side's artillery was in a better spot to trap the enemy.

The more Eddie and Michael played their game, the more they learned about being a soldier and how to be a leader. Each night, the game was harder to win, but it was also more fun to play.

One of the things they liked best was having Eddie's father decide the winning army. The boys called him their "general."

Mr. Barnes had never been a general, but he had been a soldier in the war.

Eddie could faintly remember the day his father came home when the war ended. He remembered his father coming through the front door in his uniform, and how his mother cried. He also remembered his father lifting him high into the air and then hugging him very hard.

As he got older, Eddie learned that his father had fought in what everyone called World War II. That was a very big war, which was fought in many areas around the world. His father was a soldier in Europe, fighting across that continent until the war ended.

Sometimes Eddie looked at a small photograph of his father that was on a table in the dining room. His father looked young and handsome in his uniform.

When he looked at the picture, Eddie often thought that he might be a soldier — maybe even a general. But his father said that becoming a general was a very hard thing to do. Mr. Barnes had said only a very special kind of person had the qualities and character to be a general.

Thinking about what his father said, Eddie wondered if he had the qualities and character of a general.

## Next Chapter: A general and a president

### Things to Think About and Do

- Mr. Barnes fought in Europe. On a map locate five countries in Europe.
- What years was World War II? Name three Allied countries and three Axis countries.
- Look in your newspaper for stories about local citizens who are serving in the military.

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