



The U.S. Cavalry - Time of Transition, 1938-1944: Horses to Mechanization

Gary W. Palmer

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During the 1930s and into World War II, the U.S. Cavalry wrestled with a fundamental question: should its horses be retired and replaced with tanks and other mechanized vehicles—or should the horse remain the mainstay of the cavalry? *Time of Transition* is historian Gary Palmer's colorful, detailed look at this game-changing period for the American military establishment. Ten years in the making, *Time of Transition* is Palmer's tribute to his father, who served in the 106th Cavalry Group during World War II. Deftly blending official wartime records with fresh interviews, stories and rare photos from personal and archival collections, Palmer follows the 106th, a unit of the Illinois National Guard, as its 1,500 personnel make the transition from horses to mechanization and participate in the landmark Louisiana Maneuvers of 1940-41. Palmer shares the personal experiences of the many National Guard soldiers who, due to the constant juggling of personnel, trained and served with Regular Army units such as the 4th, 14th and 27th Cavalry Groups during World War II. In addition to the Guardsmen, Regular Army cavalry troops relate their inspiring wartime stories. Palmer also uncovers the behind-the-scenes activities of the War Department, Army General Staff, and other military units as they test the firepower of the traditional horse cavalry against the new technology of tanks, jeeps and other mechanized vehicles. Packed with action and analysis, *Time of Transition* is a volume of military history that salutes the pioneers who stood at the crossroads of tradition and modernization—and courageously grappled with the challenges of change.

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