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CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

BOOK REVIEW

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Issue 13

The “David Irving Trial” and the Practice of History

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“More women died on the back seat of Senator Edward Kennedy’s car ... than died in the gas chamber at Auschwitz.” – David Irving¹

“I will leap laughing into my grave because the feeling that I have five million people on my conscience is for me a source of extraordinary satisfaction.” – Adolf Eichmann²

Richard J. Evans, **Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial** (New York: Basic Books, 2001), \$41.50 US, 318 pages, ISBN 0-465-02152-2.

Robert Eaglestone, **Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial** (Duxford, Cambridge: Icon Books, 2001), \$9.99 US, 75 pages, ISBN 1-84046-234-5.

D.D. Guttenplan, **The Holocaust on Trial** (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), \$35.99 US, 328 pages, ISBN 0-393-02044-4.

Deborah Lipstadt, **Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory** (Toronto:

Penguin, 1995), \$21.95 paper, 288 pages, ISBN 0-45227-274-2.

As an undergraduate I was profoundly puzzled one afternoon by the famous William Carlos Williams poem that goes,

So much depends
Upon

A red wheel
Barrow

Glazed with rain
Water

Beside the white
Chickens.³

When my professor asked us what we thought the poem was about, a classmate of mine said, “I think it’s about communists.” The professor

looked incredulous. “Why?” she asked. “Because the wheelbarrow is red,” my classmate replied. “All wheelbarrows are red,” the professor sputtered. “I still think it’s about communists,” my classmate insisted. “Well, no,” the professor said firmly, “it’s not. There’s no evidence for that.”

Her insistence that there was a right and wrong way to understand the poem was at once refreshing and rather unsettling. It was certainly unfashionable in a discipline dominated by literary critics who argue that the postmodern condition is such that no single interpretation of a text can be privileged over another. While agreeing that works of literature allow many possible interpretations, my professor also believed that when a given interpretation, such as the one offered by my classmate, goes beyond what the evidence can support, a reasonable person is entitled to say that it is wrong.

In the last twenty years, the theories of postmodernism have established a beachhead in the historical profession. At their most innocuous, the postmodernists claim that old-fashioned notions such as historical truth and objectivity are no longer tenable. Every historian perceives the past through

a socially conditioned lens, and his or her view is obstructed by deeply-rooted biases. In this perspective, pretensions to objectivity are just that, while absolute “facts” and “truth” are relics of an era when the profession spoke in one voice – the voice of a white, male elite. None of this strikes me as particularly objectionable. Common sense alone suggests that when an historian “factors-in” ideology, race, class, and gender, things start to look rather different. One need not be a postmodernist to comprehend this: “Who am I to say what was ‘moral’ or ‘immoral’ in the abstract?” A.J.P. Taylor asked in a similar context more than forty years ago. “From what point of view – that of the Germans, of the Allies, of neutrals, of the Bolsheviks?”⁴

In its extreme form, however, postmodern theory contends that it is impossible to adjudicate between one version of historical events and another, that all textual interpretations are equally valid, and a few postmodernists have even proposed the absolute equivalence of history and fiction. In some respects, I am less hostile to such views than many of my colleagues seem to be. For one thing, I recognize that these theories are mostly a revival of very old epistemological questions and that their practical impact on the discipline of history has been far less than some hypersensitive purists contend. Furthermore, the notion that perception creates reality will come as no surprise to anyone who has read Shakespeare: “For there is nothing either good or bad,” Hamlet mused, “but thinking makes it so.” These amusing exercises in sophistry have their place, but many postmodernists doggedly attempt to apply them even in circumstances where they are entirely inappropriate.

We have come to the point. For if it is true (how odd to use that word when describing such theories!) that no one historical account is privileged over another, that there is no “truth”, no “fact” which cannot be retold or recast, then a Holocaust denier’s account of Nazi atrocities is as good as anyone

else’s. The Holocaust deniers are not postmodernists (although some postmodernists have been sympathetic to the deniers), but in Deborah Lipstadt’s view postmodernism creates an atmosphere of excessive “permissiveness towards questioning the meaning of historical events”, an environment which has of late fostered the “growing assault on history and memory” that she studies in her book, *Denying the Holocaust* (18-19)

Holocaust denial, too, is nothing new, as Lipstadt, a professor of history at Emory University, demonstrates. Incredulous dismissals of reports of the Nazi death camps began even before the war ended. It was this realization that prompted Eisenhower to urge Allied governments to send representatives to visit the liberated concentration camps. Present-day denial is centred around the activities of the California-based Institute for Historical Review. Founded in 1978, the IHR, which describes itself as “devoted to truth and accuracy in history”, has sought to imbue Holocaust denial with a veneer of academic respectability, publishing a professional-looking quarterly journal and holding annual conferences.

The IHR and its supporters claim that there was no Nazi extermination policy, no gas chambers used for the purpose of mass killing, and that those Jews who did die (far fewer than 6 million) were indirect victims of war, not deliberate murder. In short, they argue that the Holocaust is a hoax, a post-war fabrication of Allied propaganda, while the persistence of the myth into the present owes itself to a wealthy Jewish elite who seek to exploit the Holocaust for the benefit of the state of Israel. The deniers depict themselves as embattled researchers whose efforts to uncover the truth are hamstrung by a conservative historical establishment unwilling to pose difficult questions about the Holocaust.

It is of course true that no reputable historian denies the *existence* of the Holocaust, but this does not

mean, as the deniers claim, that the Holocaust itself is “off-limits” as an historical topic. The field of Holocaust studies is rife with very lively (and sometimes acrimonious) debates about the origins, nature, and meaning of the Holocaust, as anyone who has followed the debate between Christopher Browning and Daniel Goldhagen over the role of ordinary Germans in Nazi atrocities knows. In particular, two schools of thought have emerged regarding the role of Adolf Hitler in the Holocaust. To the intentionalists, Hitler harboured genocidal intentions from the moment he attained power, intentions which festered until the moment was right to convert them into action. The war itself provided the cover necessary to carry out murder on a vast scale. By contrast, the functionalist school, of which Hans Mommsen and Christopher Browning are leading scholars, has argued that what culminated in mass extermination began as a series of increasingly brutal, functionally related anti-Semitic policies hatched by senior Nazi bureaucrats. While Hitler knew and approved of these schemes and might have been their prime instigator, he did not necessarily plan on extermination all along, if only because he may not have believed it was technically feasible.

Perhaps in its original form, British writer David Irving’s depiction of the *Führer* in his best-selling *Hitler’s War*, as a leader too absorbed with military matters to be bothered with the details of the extermination program, seemed close enough to what would later become the functionalist view to be graced over by the many responsible historians who lauded Irving’s scholarship. Irving, a divided individual who rapidly went from doubting that Hitler ordered or approved of the extermination program to denying the existence of the program altogether, is nonetheless by far the most historically sophisticated of the deniers. He is certainly the only one to have ever produced any respectable body of historical work.

In the 1970s, Irving earned a reputation as a tireless archival researcher with a perfect command of the German language. The author of nearly thirty books, his work has been cited by first-tier military historians including Richard Overy, Williamson Murray, and Donald Cameron Watt. John Keegan has called *Hitler's War* one of "the half-dozen most important books on 1939-1945" and lavished similar praise on Irving's more recent biography, *Göring*.⁵ By the late 1980s, however, Irving's eccentricities regarding Hitler and the Jews had hatched into full-blown Holocaust denial. He began to consort with the most notorious of the Holocaust deniers, Robert Faurisson, Ernst Zundel, and others at the Institute for Historical Review, and he purged the 1991 edition of *Hitler's War* of all references to the gas chambers and the extermination program. Irving now insists there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz, no intentional program of mass murder, and that the confessions of Nazis at Nuremberg and other trials were elicited by threats and force.

In *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt called Irving "one of the most dangerous spokespersons for Holocaust denial." In retaliation Irving brought suit in Britain against Lipstadt and her publisher, Penguin Books, alleging that Lipstadt had defamed his character and undermined his public credibility as an historian. In an American court, Irving would have had to demonstrate that the claims made against him were made in total disregard for the truth. In all likelihood, his case would never have been heard. Under British libel law, however, the plaintiff's claim is taken in good faith and it is up to the defendant to demonstrate that the words in dispute are true.

Irving claimed that the label "Holocaust denier" was malicious and defamatory because the Holocaust itself was a hoax, leaving Lipstadt and her lawyers the task of persuading the court, in effect, that the Holocaust really happened.

To this end they recruited Richard Evans, Professor of Modern History at Cambridge and an authority on modern Germany, to coordinate the historical case for the defense. Evans tells the story of his efforts and discoveries about Irving in *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial*.

Evans would be the first to confess that the new book is mistitled. From a legal perspective it was, of course, Deborah Lipstadt and not David Irving who was on trial. Journalists who fretted that Irving's freedom of expression was under attack missed the point entirely: it was Lipstadt whose academic freedom was threatened by Irving's suit. In a broader sense, however, the trial was indeed about David Irving and his standing as a historian. It became, moreover, a contest between legitimate historians and the forces of Holocaust denial, a debate, in short, over the methods of historical inquiry of which Irving claims to be a legitimate practitioner.

Irving's claim to legitimacy has been bolstered over the years by certain members of the academic elite. The softcover versions of *Hitler's War* and its prequel, *The War Path: Hitler's Germany 1933-1939*, are peppered with praise from some of the gatekeepers of the British historical profession: A.J.P. Taylor, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Donald Cameron Watt, and John Keegan. But publisher's blurbs are like Valentine's Day cards – their sentiment is never to be fully trusted. Thus we find that Irving's publisher (or perhaps Irving himself) has been more than normally selective in his choice of what portions of review sto blurb and what not to. On his book-jackets and on his web-site, Irving has grandiloquently vandalized reviews for words of praise.

By itself, this is hardly surprising – everyone does it. But in Irving's case, it is the essence of his historical method as well, as Evans demonstrates quite conclusively. In preparation for the trial, Evans and two of his graduate students embarked on a nearly two-year-long, footnote-by-footnote examination of

Irving's work. Evans describes himself as entirely unprepared for what he discovered: a consistent pattern of highly selective editing of primary documents, deliberate misquotation (for Irving's German is too good to explain away misquotations as mere accidental mistranslation), and outright suppression of key evidentiary passages. The portrait of Irving that emerges from Evans's demolition is not one of a bold outsider daring to ask questions that mainstream historians are afraid to, but of a virulent anti-Semite and conscious charlatan seeking to exonerate Hitler and the Nazis.

Evans' book details the defense's preparation for the trial but has comparatively little to say about the trial itself. It is therefore perfectly complemented by D.D. Guttenplan's *The Holocaust on Trial*. A journalist who covered the proceedings for *Atlantic Monthly*, Guttenplan gives the reader a broad perspective on what happened inside the court. The result is an engrossing (if at times overly dramatized) account of what Guttenplan calls a "massive confrontation" between Irving, who represented himself, and some of the world's foremost Holocaust historians. While it was unlikely that Irving could persuade the court's intelligent and detail-minded judge, Justice Gray, that the Holocaust was a hoax, there was a danger that he might successfully convey the impression that his views on the Holocaust were the results of legitimate research, findings no different in principle from the honestly-held differences of opinion that all historians have between them.

Guttenplan describes the outcome of the case as hanging in the balance until the very end, but Justice Gray's verdict found that virtually all of Lipstadt's charges against Irving had been true. Irving, Gray concluded, had "for his own ideological reasons persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence...portrayed Hitler in an unwarrantedly favorable light...is an active Holocaust denier...is anti-

Semitic and racist...and associates with right-wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism." The judgment could not have been more damning. Irving had met his Stalingrad.

"Perverse," is how Irving described the verdict outside the court, and he announced his intention to launch an appeal. He declared personal and moral victory, denying the verdict as surely as he denies the Holocaust. Moreover, he challenged Lipstadt's personal integrity and courage: she had been afraid, he claimed, to take the stand herself. (In fact, Evans points out, she had been perfectly willing to, but defense counsel had decided it was unnecessary.)

However, it was Sir John Keegan, not Irving, who made the most unkindest cut of all. In his regular column in the *Daily Telegraph*, Keegan wrote after the trial that Irving has "many of the qualities of the most creative historians. He is certainly never dull. Prof. Lipstadt, by contrast, seems as dull as only the self-righteously politically correct can be. Few other historians had ever heard of her before this case. Most will not want to hear from her again."⁶

I do not profess to fully understand what "politically correct" means, although of late it seems to have become an all-purpose label conservatives use for anything they dislike. Even so, it is difficult to see how criticizing an admitted fascist and Holocaust denier constitutes "political correctness." Keegan's bizarre attack on Lipstadt only needlessly complicates matters, and it has already been construed as a defense of Irving and used by him for that purpose.

In fairness, it must be admitted that Keegan has little interest in the Holocaust. It warrants about a page in his one-volume history, *The Second World War*. Out of all of the hundreds of scholarly works on the Holocaust, Keegan chose the very first, Gerald Reitlinger's *The Final Solution*, then over forty years old, in his 1996 historiographical study, *The Battle for History*. Reitlinger's book was based in large measure on tes-

timony from Nuremberg, and scholarship has long since passed it by. Significantly, this early study, which Keegan confessed in court was the basis for everything he knows about the Holocaust, settled on a number of deaths now universally recognized as far too low – just over 4 million.

Very clearly, Keegan continues to regard Irving as a legitimate historian who merely professes some peculiar views about Jews. He is wrong. Evans and his colleagues exposed Irving as a conscious charlatan whose goal is to exonerate Hitler and the Nazis. Keegan's failure to perceive the difference is inexplicable. Even the most hyperrelativistic postmodernists must recognize that there is a difference between viewing historical documents through certain socially and historically conditioned lenses and consciously distorting documents for a political purpose. Or do they?

Robert Eaglestone, a professor of English at the University of London, addresses that question in his *Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial*. Referring specifically to the Irving case, Eaglestone argues that postmodernism, far from contributing to an academic environment where Holocaust denial can emerge, is in fact a "very strong weapon in the fight against Holocaust denial" (7). His argument is singularly unconvincing. Rejecting the existence of an objective basis for historical knowledge, Eaglestone argues instead that history as a discipline or "genre" operates according to a set of conventions that the deniers refuse to respect. The deniers, therefore, are not wrong because they're wrong, they simply are not doing history and therefore cannot be assessed in historical terms. In some respects, this line of argument resembles Lipstadt's own conviction that to debate the Holocaust deniers is to presume the legitimacy of discussion where there is none. In most other respects, however, Eaglestone's argument strikes me as typical postmodernist obfuscation. One can imagine, by way of analogy, a grade-school student who

protests that he isn't wrong about 2 + 2 equaling 5, he's just doing a different kind of math from everyone else.

Eaglestone does not address what seems to me to be the crucial issue. Cultural relativism was born, in part, out of the revelation of Nazi atrocities and the realization that a decent society must respect other people's beliefs and way of life. But many postmodernists have embraced relativism to such a degree that they have dispossessed themselves of the capacity to condemn the very thing that pushed them towards relativism in the first place. The result is a state of hopeless moral confusion.

Having said that, the mere fact that postmodern theory may lead to moral confusion does not by itself undermine its veracity (nuclear physics has led to moral confusion as well, but this does not mean that nuclear scientists have not accomplished something real). The trouble is that I am not aware of any means of debating postmodern theory because it rejects on principle all rational means of argument. Arguing with a postmodernist is like trying to have a fistfight with a wave. There is no basis for combat.

The positivist historian who regards him or herself as a scientist of the past is a common strawman that the postmodernists like to hack away at. Ironically, I know of very few historians who claim that their conclusions are any more than provisionally true, while to say, as postmodernists do, that "there is no truth" is to make a positive claim of the strongest kind. Older historians, like aging heavyweight champions, know that they hold the title only until some young contender takes it from them, for the whole essence of the historical discipline is to build upon and in some cases tear down the works of those who came before us. Like science, history reserves its highest accolades for those who break new ground by overturning some old and established truth. It is this fact that has made the label the deniers have claimed for themselves

– “revisionists” – so unfortunate, because revisionism is the essence of the legitimate historical profession.

Nevertheless, the recognition that our perception of the past changes as new facts are uncovered or new ways of looking at the past are devised does not mean that all truth claims are equal, as many postmodernists insist. Like the professor who guffawed at the suggestion that Williams’ wheelbarrows were communists, historians are entitled to dismiss historical accounts, like Holocaust denial, that are utterly at variance with the facts.

Perhaps it would be fitting to conclude this essay with another anecdote from my undergraduate career. One day when the class was discussing Descartes my first-year philosophy professor remarked, “Well, we can’t know anything for certain, but come on,” by which he meant that sophistry may be a useful intellectual exercise, but the exigencies of living in the real world require us to take for granted that certain things are true and unchanging. Epistemologically speaking, I may not know for certain that any historical event occurred, but in the realm of practicality, it would be perverse to question the existence of Julius Caesar, Queen Victoria, or the Holocaust.

A postmodernist at 30,000 feet is a hypocrite, the biologist Richard Dawkins once observed, because airplanes are built according to unchanging scientific principles. This is something which so many of the followers of the postmodernism have never understood, and why, I think, so few of them have produced anything of lasting value. In reading some of their work, one gets the impression of having stepped through the looking glass, into a weird world where red wheelbarrows can signify communists and where, to take their position literally, David Irving’s Holocaust is as good as anyone else’s. It is not so. Postmodernism reaches its limits when confronted with Auschwitz, Belzec, Chemno, Treblinka, and Sobibór. Nice theo-

ries propagated by pop philosophers ensconced in ivory towers vanish to nothingness next to the unfathomable suffering of millions.

The six million Jews, the three million Soviet POWs, the millions of civilians in occupied regions of Eastern Europe, the half-million gypsies, the hundreds of thousands of political opponents and the tens of thousands of elderly, incurably sick, and mentally ill whom the Nazis murdered did not represent the totality of the capacity or the willingness of the regime to commit murder. They represent those whom the Nazis were able to murder before the Third Reich was defeated militarily. Millions of Jews and other perceived racial inferiors survived the Nazi era. If the war had lasted longer, or if the Nazis had won, no one, ultimately, would have been safe. The persistence of those, like David Irving, who continue to champion the limitlessly cruel cause of Nazi fascism is proof enough of that fact.

Notes

1. Quoted in Richard Evans, *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 132.
2. Attributed to Eichmann at Nuremberg by Fritz Sauckel. See *The Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. 3 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1946), 289.
3. William Carlos Williams, “So Much Depends,” in *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams*, vol. 1, 1909-1939, A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan, eds. (New York: New Directions Press, 1986), 224.
4. A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (New York: Penguin, 1963), 7.
5. John Keegan, *The Second World War*, (Toronto: Penguin, 1989), 596. Many critics of *Hitler’s War* and its prequel, *The War Path*, were less impressed. Dennis Showalter, writing in the *American Historical Review*, criticized Irving for pushing “every bit of evidence to the limits of credibility” and concluded that *Hitler’s War* was “essentially a 900 page seminar paper of the kind often produced by intelligent beginning graduate students...a work too clever by half, and certainly too clever to be sound history,” while Robert Waite

referred to aspects of *The War Path* as “a very sick joke” in his profoundly negative review in the same journal. 6. Quoted in Evans, 242.

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Peter Brock and Nigel Young, **Pacifism in the Twentieth Century** (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), \$24.95 paper, 436 pages, ISBN 0-8156-815-9.

Pacifism is an age-old concept, but the term itself was first used in 1901. In a revised and expanded version of a 1970 book, Brock and Young describe the shape of pacifism in the last century, with particular emphasis on the United States, Britain, and the Commonwealth countries. It was here that the movement has historically been strongest, not only with the historic peace churches like the Quakers and the Mennonites, but also with more secular groups like the Peace Pledge Union and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. The pacifist movement, however, was much more diffuse than these categories might suggest. Indeed, as Brock and Young reveal, the movement’s greatest problem was fragmentation. There were many people and organizations which adhered vaguely to pacifist goals, but there were innumerable shades of belief. At one end of the spectrum were the absolutists, who would not accept any form of military or alternative service under any terms. These people were more than willing to face imprisonment or even death for their beliefs. At the other end were people who drew the line at being asked to kill, but would undertake other forms of national service. They were willing to wear a uniform and carry a weapon, so long as they were not required to use that weapon against another human being. There were also a considerable number of pacifists who felt unable to hold to their beliefs when push came to shove. They may have been pacifists in an abstract sense, but when social justice or the survival of their homeland was at stake, they felt they had to fight to defend it.

What emerges most clearly from this book is the complexity of the pacifist position, especially during the Second World War. In this, perhaps the best example of the just war in the twentieth century, pacifism reached its nadir. In many countries, it became equated with sympathy for fascism, and many devoted pacifists were willing to turn to non-violent and violent resistance to stop the Nazi regime, which they regarded as a greater evil than war itself.

DR

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Betty Eckgren, **A Changed Man: An Old Army Mystery** (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2000), \$21.47 paper, 169 pages, ISBN 1-55212-388-X.

At the heart of this book is a mystery: an American First World War veteran, stricken with Alzheimer's disease in a Victoria, British Columbia, hospital, in occasional moments of lucidity refers to himself by a name that his loved ones have never heard before, and to his siblings, who are equally unknown to the family. Years after Thomas Burton's death, his daughter decides to do some research and discovers that her father was really named Ruskin Friton, and that he had concealed his true past from his family since the First World War.

Eckgren eventually determines that her father served in the U.S. Cavalry before the war, and also served in some capacity with the medical corps during the war (she is never able to determine for certain whether he went overseas), but that he discarded his old identity (and severed connections with his family) at some point during that period. Was he involved in some crime that necessitated him going underground? If so, was the army complicit in his deception? Or was he an undercover agent? For which side? Unfortunately, these questions, which could draw the matter to a conclusion, remain unanswered. Eckgren has done some excellent detective work, but the

final missing pieces in the puzzle have thus far eluded her.

DG

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The Garrison Mentality: Art and the Military in the Maritimes, 1837-1871 (Charlottetown: Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum, 2000), \$20.00 paper, 20 pages, no ISBN.

We are indebted to military artists and topographers for many of the earliest views of this country, but we are most familiar with their precise and detailed views of Upper and Lower Canada and Nova Scotia. One would hardly expect to have found them in Prince Edward Island (which the book admits was "strategically trivial"), but in fact the land of Green Gables and golf did attract its fair share of military artists. The British garrison had been withdrawn from PEI in 1854, during the Crimean War, returning briefly to police the collection of rents in 1865-67. It was during this period that Lieutenant Henry Buckton Laurence of the 4th King's Own Royal Regiment (a short biography of Laurence is included in the book) executed a series of sketches depicting his fellow officers in off-duty recreational pursuits. Other military artists, like Charles Randall, a contractor with the Royal navy, and Lieutenant Robert Petley, a military surveyor, also captured the impact of the garrison on Island life.

This fine exhibition guide is very handsomely presented (except for the consistent misspelling of Northrop Frye) and includes five colour reproductions of works from the gallery collection. It will be a welcome addition to the library of anyone interested in military art or garrison life in nineteenth-century Canada.

AF

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Blair Beed, **1917 Halifax Explosion and American Response** (Halifax: D'tours Visitors and Convention Service, 1999), \$19.95 pa-

per, 134 pages, ISBN 0-9684383-1-8.

There are few signs today of the explosion that struck Halifax in 1917. There are monuments dotted around the city, and the keen eye can discern the changes in house construction in the north end that came about in the wake of the explosion. It was probably the most significant event in the city's history, and this book focuses on a single element: the amazing outpouring of aid (and not strictly American aid, as the title implies) that came in the days and weeks after 6 December 1917.

It must be said that this is not a particularly well written book; the prose is tortuous at times (Beed would have benefitted from the services of a good editor), and large sections are simply lists of donors of money or supplies from around the world. However, it reprints some fascinating contemporary documents and excellent photos, and covers the experiences of a number of local families whose lives were changed by the explosion. It is also a good book to have handy while touring Halifax, because it allows you to compare the photos to the neighbourhoods as they look today. The city has certainly taken advantage of the Titanic for purposes of tourism; it should do the same with the explosion.

CT

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Norm Marion, ed., **Camp Borden: Birthplace of the RCAF, 1917-1999** (Borden, ON: 16 Wing [available from Wing Public Affairs Officer, 16 Wing HQ, PO Box 1000, Station Main, CFB Borden, Borden, ON, L0M 1C0] 1999), \$25.00, 199 pages, ISBN 0-9684862-0-7.

It was at Petawawa that Doug McCurdy first demonstrated his flying machine to officials from the Department of Militia and Defence in 1909, but that fact is not sufficient to declare Petawawa as the birthplace of the Royal Canadian Air Force. That distinction, as this fine

book amply shows, must go to Camp Borden, in central Ontario.

First conceived as part of the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the RCAF, this book traces the complete history of the base from January 1917, when it was established as the main aerodrome of the Royal Flying Corps - Canada, to its present incarnation as the home of 16 Wing and 400 Tactical Helicopter Squadron. Many of the articles in the compendium have been published before, but it is valuable to have them assembled together, especially as many of the foremost aviation writers in Canada are represented, including Fred Hitchins, Hugh Halliday, Frank Ellis, R.K. Malott, Wayne Ralph, and Larry Milberry. Just as fascinating are the many photographs, plans, and graphic materials, dating back to Borden's earliest days as an air force establishment.

Norm Marion and the members of 16 Wing are to be commended for putting together a wonderful book, and one with such high production values; this is a sturdy, well manufactured book that will stand the test of time. It will bring great memories for anyone who was ever stationed at Borden, and will give the rest of us a feel for what it must have been like.

DG

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George Perkovich, **India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation** (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), \$39.95 US, 597 pgs, ISBN 0-520-21772-1.

Perkovich, director of the Secure World Program of the W. Alton Jones Foundation, has published widely in international relations periodicals, although this is his first major monograph. He describes in comprehensive detail the evolution of India's nuclear policy; at times the detail is a little too comprehensive, but it is fascinating to follow the twists and turns that marked the path taken by the nation of Gandhi on its way to joining the nuclear club. The book's central argument

broadens its significance well beyond India. Perkovich suggests that a study of India's nuclear "behaviour" is more valuable today than much of the existing literature. Most theories of nuclear proliferation have been inferred from the conduct of the US or the USSR, but those theories are of limited value when dealing with new nuclear states like India, Pakistan, or Israel, or with nuclear states-in-waiting. It is from these sources, most experts agree, that the real danger in the future comes.

Perkovich explicitly rejects the Structural Realist interpretation (which has grown out of studies of the US or Soviet experience), and disagrees with the claim that India went nuke because of external threats. Instead, he argues that India was motivated largely by domestic factors, including the desire to demonstrate its scientific and technical expertise and to join the front rank of world powers, which have used nuclear arms as symbols of power and prestige. (Ironically, these both proved elusive: India was forced to rely heavily on foreign technical assistance, and was not catapulted to world prominence, because by the time it joined the nuclear club, the possession of nuclear arms was relatively less important than economic might.) Perkovich makes the trenchant point that the new and emerging nuclear states tend to view nukes from a post-colonial perspective. India sees the US-led non-proliferation regime as a form of colonialism, in which the old colonial powers try to keep all other states in a subservient position. The fact that India is a democracy merely complicates things. India wants desperately to be seen as equal to the great powers, and Indian leaders will never be able to sell to their voters any disarmament plan which ensures that India remains in an inferior position vis à vis the great powers. So, preventing the expansion of the nuclear fraternity is not simply a matter of eliminating any one state's external concerns. It depends on promoting equity, so that emergent states no longer see the

acquisition of nuclear weapons as a sign that they have arrived on the international stage.

Perkovich's is an exhaustively researched and carefully argued study that refuses to engage in demonization. It deals sensitively with the historical background, and provides a fresh and convincing interpretation that has broad implications.

JFV

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Susan R. Grayzel, **Women's Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood, and Politics in Britain and France during the First World War** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press [distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services], 1999), 334 pages, ISBN 0-8078-4810-7.

Over the last decade or more, the historiography of the First World War has largely split into two camps: those interpretations which stress the revolutionary forces unleashed by the war and the degree to which it acted as a catalyst for rapid, massive change; and those which emphasize the resilience of the old order, and the persistence of traditional attitudes and assumptions in the face of cataclysmic events.

Susan Grayzel weighs in on the side of the traditionalists in this comparative study which examines notions of motherhood and the resistance to change of gender attitudes. She looks at the subject through a number of lenses: the role of women as child-bearers during a time of perceived demographic crisis; the problem of sexual licentiousness; the treatment of babies born out of wedlock, including those produced by rapes in the occupied part of France; and the figure of the mother in postwar commemoration. In each case, she draws some interesting distinctions between the British and French experiences, and concludes that the gender system was remarkably resilient to the upheaval of war.

In a few places, Grayzel oversteps the mark. Siegfried Sassoon's

poetry was not really anti-women, as she suggests (16-18). He certainly did write bitter attacks on women, but he wrote equally bitter verse about fathers, clerics, politicians, factory owners, journalists, and anyone else who was not in the firing line. For Sassoon, the most significant division of the war was not based on gender but on location; anyone who had not been in the trenches themselves was, almost by definition, objectionable.

Still, there is much of merit in Grayzel's book, for she effectively mines a wide range of popular culture and more conventional sources to support her arguments. In sum, her conclusions seem entirely unsurprising, which suggests that she has more than made her case.

LT

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Fred Halliday, **Revolution and World Politics: The Rise and Fall of the Sixth Great Power** (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), \$19.95 US paper, 402 pages, ISBN 0-8223-2464-4.

Fred Halliday, of the London School of Economics, is a prolific scholar with a number of highly regarded books to his credit, including *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation*, *Rethinking International Relations*, and *Arabs in Exile*. In some ways, this is his most ambitious book, for it ranges over an impressive array of material.

His sixth great power (in addition to the five dominant nations) is the revolution, and his subject is the impact of revolutions on world politics from the great liberal revolutions of the late eighteenth century to the fall of communism. He is particularly interested in the desire of revolutionary leaders to export their ideologies to other countries, as an explicit or implicit challenge to the state system. To this end, he examines the foreign policy of revolutionary governments at some length, before entering into a consideration of the impact of counter-revolutions and war on the world system.

The book has many merits. His first two chapters provide excellent, succinct discussions of the notion of revolution and the theories which have been advanced for understanding revolutions; he is especially good when testing the theories of people like Theda Skocpol. There is also no disputing his mastery of the subject matter. His analysis is drawn from an incredible variety of sources (in English, French, Italian, German, and Spanish), and he is equally comfortable writing about the French Revolution as the Iranian Revolution. And his concluding chapter is a fine attempt to synthesize the historical and the theoretical in international relations. Interestingly, he leaves the reader with three lessons from history that every revolutionary or counter-revolutionary leader (and every student of revolutions, for that matter) should keep in mind: the determination of people to dream of a better life; the ability of events to confound all predictions; and the inability of those with wealth and power to comprehend the depth of hostility towards them. He ties this last point into the disappearance of the notion of respect in human affairs, something which long acted as a mitigating factor but is in short supply in the early twenty-first century.

The book's one weakness is that it is not terribly readable. It is very dense and closely written, and the jargon ('etymological reductionism,' 'detached semanticism,' 'discursive, generative, and paradigmatic') is likely to scare away the general reader. Still, it wades into some lively theoretical debates, and the effort required to get through the book is amply rewarded at many stages.

JFV

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Jonathan F. Vance, **Encyclopedia of Prisoners of War and Internment** (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2000), \$75.00 US, 408 pages, ISBN 1-57607-068-9.

Reading this volume, one soon realizes how extensive an insti-

tution captivity has been throughout human history. From famous prisoners like Charles De Gaulle and Winston Churchill to captivity in popular culture, internment has been a pervasive influence in virtually every society. As Vance points out in the introduction, its reach has been much wider than that of armed combat. In the Second World War, for example, fighting occurred only in certain regions around the world, but the sting of captivity was felt in virtually every country, from Switzerland to Peru, including many which saw no actual fighting on their soil. This fact gives an encyclopedia of internment broad, general utility.

As is to be expected, there is considerable Canadian content in the encyclopedia, both in terms of the subject covered (Japanese-Canadians, the shackling incident, the War of 1812, and William Stephenson, for example) and the contributors (Charles G. Roland, George Sheppard, Robert Ventresca). And there is a good mix of the standard (concentration camps, escape, Andersonville) and the obscure (mutilation, pay, the Great Northern War), as well as entries that bring the volume right up to date (the Bosnian War, Kosovo). Despite a few notable gaps (perhaps the most obvious of which is the absence of an entry on war crimes), good illustrations, a comprehensive bibliography, and a selection of reprinted documents (the Lieber Code, the Hague Convention, and the Geneva Conventions of 1929 and 1949) make this a most useful reference book.

CA

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Tom Didmon, **Lucky Guy: Memoirs of a World War II Canadian Soldier** (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2000), \$18.95 paper, 195 pages, ISBN 1-55212-375-8.

It's not often that we get the memoirs of a company clerk, but Didmon fills the gap with this short account based on hundreds of letters he exchanged with his wife while the two were separated. He

worked at Canada Packers before the war and could have received an exemption from service based on his employment in an essential industry, but instead he joined the army in 1942 and served in the Queen's York Rangers in Canada. After going overseas, he was posted to the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, and served with that unit through the campaign in north-west Europe. He left the Rileys at the end of the war, and served out his time with an administrative unit in Belgium.

Didmon provides some interesting details on the administrative functioning of an infantry battalion at the front, although he is not entirely clear about how close he got to the actual fighting. His duties were many and varied, from sorting out the kit of dead soldiers to dealing with disciplinary cases. As the book's title suggests, he considers himself very lucky to have come through the war unscathed when so many of his friends from Canada Packers didn't come home.

LF

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Anthony Cowling, **My Life With the Samurai** (Richmond, BC: privately published [available from the author at 3751 Lockhart Rd., Richmond, BC, V7C 1M4], 1996), \$24.00 paper, 184 pages, ISBN 0-86417-812-3.

Reading a memoir of captivity in the Far East during the Second World War requires a certain amount of perseverance, because the studied brutality of the captors is altogether too depressing. Cowling's book is no exception to this rule of thumb; it is an absorbing read, but the episodes he describes are often nauseating.

Cowling was the son of a wealthy businessman in the Far East, and he went to work for his father before he reached the age of 18. After the Japanese invaded Malaya, he joined the RAF but saw little action before his inevitable capture. Japanese-run camps were among the worst of the Second World War, and Cowling spent time

in the worst of a bad lot, especially the camp on Haruku, a small island in the Celebes. There, he and his comrades spent months hacking the tops off two coral mountains and using the rubble to fill the valleys below and make an airstrip. The death rate from overwork, disease, starvation, and ill-treatment was appalling. Cowling arrived on Haruku with over 400 men; only 76 survived. Nor were the Japanese any kinder to the natives. Despite slogans like "Asia for the Asiatics" and talk of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere, they treated their Japanese captives as badly as the whites.

Although it is a little scattered, *My Life With the Samurai* is a fascinating account of those grim days. Cowling does not hide his bitterness over his treatment, but we can hardly expect him to. We can only marvel at how a teenager, wracked with disease and his weight reduced to 75 pounds, was able to survive such horrors.

JFV

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Marlene Epp, **Women Without Men: Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), \$21.95 paper, 275 pages, ISBN 0-8020-4491-3.

Epp, who has written extensively on Mennonite history, presents here the story of the thousands of Soviet Mennonite women who, having lost their fathers and husbands to Stalinist work camps and the Second World War, made an arduous journey through war-torn Europe. Many eventually emigrated to Canada.

The drama of the story and the vivid anecdotes Epp recounts make the book an interesting read. But it is more than a narrative. *Women Without Men*, based partly upon interviews and memoirs, addresses the issues of popular memory, and how personal experiences are reshaped and woven into the larger history of a group. The focus of the study is on the intersection of gender, war, and immigration. The

identities of the refugees were complex – woman, widow, Soviet, ethnic German, Mennonite. The women used ingenious strategies to protect the fractured and reconfigured families they headed, yet were often depicted as weak or helpless. Their experience represents a microcosm of the circumstances surrounding the lives of many postwar immigrants, especially refugees, to Canada. And it broadens the scope of military history by tying it to the issues of gender, individual and ethnic identity, and immigration with which it is intimately connected.

AS

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Clarence E. "Bud" Anderson, with Joseph P. Hamelin, **To Fly and Fight: Memoirs of a Triple Ace** (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Military History, 1999), \$29.95 US, 306 pages, ISBN 0-935553-34-7.

If there was ever a stereotype of a hot-shot American fighter pilot, it is not Tom Cruise in *Top Gun* but Clarence "Bud" Anderson. In this fast-paced memoir, written in a breezy conversational style that nicely captures the idiom of the period, Anderson's persona as a top-level fighter jockey comes through loud and clear. Young, aggressive, talented, cocky, and perhaps a little reckless, Anderson and his squadron mates hurled their Mustangs through the skies over Europe as they sought to protect the American bomber streams from Luftwaffe attacks. He finished the war with sixteen and a quarter kills, went on to a postwar career as a test pilot (involved in some bizarre and exceptionally risky test flights), flew fighters in the Pacific in the 1950s and 1960s, and finished his service flying combat strikes in the Vietnam War.

Perhaps more impressive than Anderson's longevity as a fighter pilot are two statistics about his career. In the first place, he never once aborted a mission, something he credits to his ground crews, although his own skill as a pilot probably had more to do with it than he

admits. Secondly, in all his combat missions (including 116 in the Second World War), Anderson sustained just one single bullet hole in the airplanes he was flying. For someone who was in the thick of the fighting as often as he was (he was the first member of his unit to pass the 300-hour mark to complete his first combat tour), this is a remarkable accomplishment, perhaps one that no other fighter pilot with his experience can claim.

SL

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Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angela Principe, eds., **Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), \$29.95 paper, 429 pages, ISBN 0-8020-8235-1.

In 1990 Brian Mulroney apologized, albeit unofficially, to Italian Canadians for their treatment by the Canadian government during the Second World War. In 1988 *On Guard for Thee*, an examination of internment during the Second World War, concluded that the behaviour of the Canadian government constituted a "war against ethnicity." *Enemies Within* is a response to these two events.

It is a very readable work of scholarship, and one of admirable breadth. In an attempt to contextualize the Italian experience the editors include essays on the experience of other interned groups in Canada during the war, including Communists, Jews, and German and Ukrainian Canadians. They also examine the experience of Italians in the United States, Britain, and Australia, and include work by scholars of diverse, even opposed viewpoints. Resisting the ease of laying unmitigated blame on the King government, Iacovetta et al usefully problematize the relation between internees, the state, and each other. The editors' conclusion is a condemnation of the version of history offered by the National Congress of Italian Canadians in their campaign for redress. They argue against a selective view of the evi-

dence that glosses over the fascist past of some Italian Canadians. Debates on the subject of internment are emotionally charged, but have often lacked historical context. The Canadian government's well-intentioned apologies, made without sufficient research, have contributed to what the editors see as a "politics of shame" that, in its simplistic focus on ethnicity (of which the Japanese-Canadian experience is perhaps the only justified example) does as much harm to the Italian-Canadian community as it does to Canadian historical scholarship in general.

AS

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Deborah Cowley, ed., **Georges Vanier: Soldier – The Wartime Letters and Diaries, 1915-1919** (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2000), \$32.99, 333 pages, ISBN 1-55002-343-8.

In 1998, Georges Vanier topped a *Maclean's* magazine poll of the greatest heroes in Canadian history. The gallant soldier and governor-general was described as Canada's moral compass, "the leading Hero – the most important Canadian in history." The fact that Vanier is held in such high esteem makes this volume even more fascinating than it might otherwise be.

The letters and diaries offer wonderful insight into both the soldier and the man, particularly with their mixture of idealism and practicality. Vanier was deeply moved by the fate of French and Belgian civilians under German occupation, and regarded it as the duty of French Canadians to come to the defence of their mother country. In his own mind, it was a unique opportunity for Quebeckers to show their gratitude to France by coming to her aid. As he wrote on 17 September 1915, "never in my wildest flights of imagination could I have foretold that one day, I would march through the country I love so much in order to fight in its defence" (59). At the same time, the letters are very human and down to earth. Vanier had a typical sol-

dier's obsession with his feet, and was constantly badgering his relatives to send him socks (very thick and heavy ones, he reminded them). He was also deeply attached to the men in the 22nd Battalion, and bore very heavily the losses of his friends in battle. But he never doubted that his place was at the front. His family pulled enough strings to have him re-assigned to a staff position after he was hospitalized with a bad case of shell-shock, but Vanier would have none of it. He returned to the trenches and served gallantly until he sustained the wound that cost him his leg.

Cowley has done a nice job of integrating the letters with diary entries, and has limited her contribution to a few well chosen contextual passages and footnotes. From these documents, it is clear that Vanier must have been a remarkable person to know, "a man of courage and sacrifice,...duty, obligation and service to a higher ideal than self" (303).

DR

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Charles G. Roland, **Long Night's Journey Into Day: Prisoners of War in Hong Kong and Japan, 1941-1945** (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001), \$28.95 paper, 450 pages, ISBN 0-88920-362-8.

The thesis of Charles Roland's exhaustively researched book seems so self-evident that one is surprised it has never been explored in any detail. And yet few historians have admitted what Roland proves so conclusively: that the story of Allied servicemen captured in Hong Kong is explicitly a medical story, and that their captivity experiences can best be understood by exploring them from a medical perspective. Most other historians have discussed the impact of tropical ailments and deficiency diseases without really investigating their specifics; Roland, a medical doctor as well as an historian, is able to do both.

The result is a compelling account which sensitively yet graphi-

cally documents the agonies endured by Allied prisoners in Japanese captivity. Beginning with a description of the Hong Kong garrison and its battle to resist the Japanese invasion, Roland moves quickly to his major concern. He demonstrates that the survivors of the garrison were already in ill-health as a result of the seventeen-day campaign, and that their health rapidly deteriorated in captivity because of poor sanitation, dietary deficiencies, overwork, physical abuse at the hands of the guards, shortages of medical supplies, and disease. The situation was even worse for the drafts of prisoners shipped to Japan. There, even more arduous labour, a reduced diet, and severe winter weather combined to weaken their physical condition still further. Small wonder, as Roland proves so convincingly in a concluding chapter, that Hong Kong POWs never escaped the physical consequences of their imprisonment.

Roland also delves into important areas which have not yet drawn the attention of historians. Noteworthy in this regard is his discussion of tobacco in prison camp. Cigarettes performed an important social role in camp society, often serving as the most universal form of currency, but they also had pernicious effects. It was not unusual for prisoners to become so addicted to tobacco that they would trade cigarettes for food, opting to smoke and die rather than eat and survive: "Men died of starvation, clutching one last cigarette between nicotine-stained fingers" (112).

Another impressive feature of *Long Night's Journey Into Day* is the depth of research. Roland, who has published widely on a variety of aspects of POW history, has culled archives in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Britain, the United States, and Singapore, supplementing that material with interviews with former prisoners and published and unpublished memoirs. Indeed, the thirty-page bibliography is surely one of the most complete ever compiled on Hong Kong POWs. Such extensive source

material, and such a nuanced and convincing argument, guarantees that *Long Night's Journey Into Day* will be the authoritative source on the subject for many years to come.

JFV

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F.J. Whiting, **Getaway** (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2000), \$23.95 paper, 194 pages, ISBN 1-55212-427-4.

One doesn't expect to come across a new escape memoir over eighty years after the First World War, but *Getaway* is just such a book. Whiting joined up from a Saskatchewan agricultural college in 1915 and saw some pretty tough fighting on the Western Front before he was captured in August 1918. The bulk of the book is concerned with his experiences in captivity, or rather his determination to get out of captivity. Given that the war lasted just a few more months after Whiting was captured, he seems to have spent more time on the run than in the bag. It was often ridiculously easy for him to get away from his captors; often he only had to step out of line and dodge into a field. However, he found it much more difficult to get back to British lines, even though he was only imprisoned at Valenciennes, not far from the front. In the end, after a number of attempts to get through the lines, he was persuaded to go into hiding in a small village and await the war's end.

It would be interesting to know a little more about the genesis of this memoir. Whiting, who died of pneumonia in 1937, was a freelance writer after the war, but it is not clear when he wrote this account, or how it differs from a diary which is mentioned in the preface. The tone suggests that it might have been written around the time of the anti-war books of the late 1920s, for some of the philosophizing clearly owes something to Erich-Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Still, there is no denying that Whiting was in the

right job as a freelance writer, because he can certainly spin a good yarn.

JFV

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Serge M. Durlinger, **Lest We Forget: A History of the Last Post Fund, 1909-1999** (Montreal: Last Post Fund, 2000), \$19.95 paper, 248 pages, ISBN 2-9806532-0-9.

It all started with two men: Arthur Hair, a Boer War veteran and head orderly at Montreal General Hospital; and James Daly, a 21-year veteran of the British Army who died, penniless and indigent, after collapsing on the streets of Montreal. Realizing that Daly's remains would be used for anatomical dissection and then buried in an unmarked pauper's grave, Hair decided that a veteran deserved something better, in the form of an honourable burial. He scraped together enough donations from other hospital workers and veterans to ensure that Daly could be buried with dignity. That small act of kindness led to the eventual formation of the Last Post Fund, which recently marked its ninetieth anniversary of handling the burial arrangements for ex-soldiers in financial need.

Relying heavily on the LPF's own records, Durlinger sensitively tells the story of an organization which has fought for indigent veterans, often with limited financial resources and usually outside of the limelight enjoyed by groups like the Royal Canadian Legion. Initially dependent upon private charity, it eventually succeeded in securing government funding, although the funding often failed to keep pace with expenses, to such a degree that presidents of the LPF occasionally had to make up shortfalls from their own pockets. But the organization survived, and continues its work with a renewed and amended mandate from Veterans Affairs Canada. It is perhaps best known for its creation and stewardship of the Field of Honour in Pointe Claire, Quebec, which serves as the final resting place for thousands of soldiers of all ranks, including

Arthur Hair and many other former executives of the LPF. It is a fitting tribute, not only to the soldiers themselves, but to the vision of Arthur Hair.

AF

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J. Gordon Mumford, **The Black Pit...And Beyond** (Burnstown, ON: General Store Publishing, 2000), \$19.95 paper, 138 pages, ISBN 1-894263-19-7.

The title of this very interesting memoir refers to that area in the North Atlantic in which Allied convoys were out of range of covering aircraft, at least for part of the war. Mumford, an English teenager who joined the Merchant Navy and became a radio operator, had the misfortune to be crossing the black pit before Allied air cover was extended. On Boxing Day 1942, his ship, the *Scottish Heather*, was torpedoed and most of the crew took to the lifeboats. They drifted for a full 24 hours before they were rescued by their own ship, which had been saved from sinking by a skeleton crew.

But this was not Mumford's only adventure. He later had an eventful tour of duty in the Mediterranean, and was then posted to a merchant ship operating in and out of the Scheldt estuary in late 1944. On Christmas Eve (Christmas seems to have been a season of misfortune for Mumford), his new ship *Empire Path* struck a mine off the Scheldt estuary and sank. This time, rescue vessels were near by and the survivors of the *Empire Path* barely got their feet wet.

Mumford's memoir is an excellent contribution to the literature of the naval war. He seems to have been naturally introspective rather than gregarious (a characteristic that might be traced to his brutal mistreatment at the hands of nuns and brothers in Catholic schools), and spent much of his free time exploring various ports on his own. His description of the supply operation into the Scheldt estuary also adds an interesting dimension to the history of that campaign.

The Black Pit ends with Mumford receiving a posting as chief radio officer on a small tanker bound for operations under South-East Asia Command at Trincomalee. It is hoped that this will be the subject of the next volume of memoirs.

CT

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L. James Dempsey, **Warriors of the King: Prairie Indians in World War I** (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1999), \$19.95 paper, 123 pages, ISBN 0-88977-101-4.

In this fascinating study, James Dempsey traces the experiences of roughly 400 aboriginals from western Canada who enlisted for service during the First World War. After discussing the government's efforts to stamp out aboriginal cultural practices before the war, he examines the decisions of Indians to join up and concludes that they were motivated by three factors: a desire to recapture the warrior spirit, which had been suppressed for so long; a feeling of loyalty towards the British crown; and the possibility of escaping the monotony and confinement of life in residential schools and on reserves. Once in the army, the experiences of these soldiers were not so very different from those of other members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force: they fought, they were wounded, they died, they survived. But when they returned, they found that white Canadians paid little heed to their service and willingly consigned them back into the subordinate positions into which they had been forced before the war.

Warriors of the King draws heavily on government documents and the few contemporary accounts which exist. A few errors have crept into the text (for example, Major-General Willoughby Gwatkin's surname is incorrectly rendered as Watkin) and there are places where the reader might wish for more detail; it would be interesting to learn more about the pressure to create an infantry battalion made up entirely of aboriginal soldiers. But

generally speaking the book provides a fine account of the experiences of gallant soldiers like the legendary sniper Henry Norwest and the hundreds of other "warriors of the king" whose names are listed in the appendix.

JFV

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Rosemary Norwalk, **Dearest Ones: A True World War II Love Story** (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), \$24.95 paper, 275 pages, ISBN 0-471-37946-8.

Interesting light is shed on the work of the auxiliary services during the Second World War by this collection of letters written by Rosemary Norwalk, who served with the American Red Cross in England and Europe. She was in charge of a number of Clubmobiles, or canteen trucks that served coffee, doughnuts, conversation, and good cheer to American soldiers embarking at Southampton for the front in France. In her long letters home (she was an exceptionally prolific correspondent), Norwalk shared with her family a host of fascinating details. She wrote vividly of taking cover from V-1 attacks, and was on hand to witness the ceremonies honouring the one millionth and two millionth American servicemen to embark in England for north-west Europe (the one millionth was killed in action some six weeks after embarkation). She also describes serving refreshments to a penal battalion of American soldiers who had volunteered for immediate front-line service as an alternative to lengthy prison sentences.

The letters continue into 1946, when Norwalk and her American Red Cross companions were serving refreshments to occupation troops in Germany. She was stationed near Dachau, in a building that had once been an SS guards' quarters; not surprisingly, she found the experience disturbing, and hated having to use a bathtub that had once been used by the SS. It was April 1946 before she returned to the United States, to

marry an American serviceman, like so many of her American Red Cross colleagues.

The letters comprise a valuable social history record of a little known aspect of the war: the selfless work of humanitarian organizations which provided so much aid and comfort to the fighting forces.

SL

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Hamilton McWhorter III with Jay A. Stout, **The First Hellcat Ace** (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Military History, 2000), \$29.95 US, 213 pages, ISBN 0-935553-49-5.

The title of this book says it all: McWhorter (who picked up the nickname "One Slug" because of his knack for shooting down enemy aircraft while expending the minimum amount of ammunition) was the first pilot to achieve ace status while flying the Grumman Hellcat, and was also the first to achieve double ace status in the same aircraft. He accomplished the first feat in November 1943 off Tarawa Atoll, and the second in early 1944 over Truk. He was disappointed, however, by his inability to add significantly to his score. After a stint as an instructor in the United States, McWhorter returned to carrier operations in 1945 and flew missions against the Japanese home islands late in the war, but found that he had lost the luck of finding enemy aircraft to shoot down. As he writes, "it was frustrating. If there were enemy airplanes around, it was almost a certainty that I would be nowhere nearby." He flew in the Pacific until June 1945, but only added another two kills, to bring his total to twelve.

McWhorter's recollections will be of considerable interest to anyone interested in carrier operations and the unusual character of air warfare in the Pacific during the Second World War. For instance, he was involved in some of the first napalm bombings of the war, but found that the chemical frequently did not ignite when it was supposed to. On the other hand, the drop fuel

tanks of the Hellcats frequently did ignite, particularly when a pilot forgot to jettison the tank before an emergency landing and the full tank went skidding through the propeller blades! McWhorter also recalls the unusual technique of a carrier captain who found himself stuck in an atoll that was too small to turn around in. He simply lined the aircraft up on the edge of the flight deck, ordered them to fire up the engines, and waited while the action of the propellers slowly rotated the big ship into the proper position. Finally, it's always interesting to read the comments of a pilot who was one of the first to take a new aircraft into action. McWhorter and his squadron had to learn the Hellcat's quirks while they fought; that they had such success is a credit to their skill.

LF

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James McWilliams and R. James Steel, **Amiens: Dawn of Victory** (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2001), \$22.99 paper, 317 pages, ISBN 1-55002-342-X.

For a battle that was such a smashing success (Ludendorff famously called it "the black day of the German army"), Amiens has been curiously neglected by historians. It resulted in gains of as much as eight miles and broke the back of the Kaiser's army in the west, but until the publication of this book, had not been the subject of a full-length study.

McWilliams and Steel remedy that shortcoming with this carefully researched and appealingly written study. It adopts a somewhat mechanistic style, with the activities of each of the attacking divisions on successive days being examined in turn, and fleshes out the narrative with the recollections of soldiers who were involved. These make for the best moments in the book; the authors began interviewing veterans of Amiens in 1978, and their memories are used fully and effectively in the narrative.

The authors succeed in explicating not only the success of the

Amiens offensive, but its failings as well. For, as remarkable as the advance was, it could have been even greater. After the first day, the opportunity did exist to make much more significant breakthroughs in a number of sectors, but the old bug-bears of trench warfare re-asserted themselves: poor communications, ineffective artillery barrages, a certain disorganization, particularly among some of the British units, poor intelligence about enemy strength, and a marked reluctance to accept risk by pressing the offensive as far as possible. It must be said, though, that the offensive was not pushed beyond a certain point; once German resistance stiffened, Allied casualties began to mount, and gains began to diminish, many of the senior commanders (Currie among them) wisely concluded that it was time to call a halt and try elsewhere.

In the final consideration, the end of the Amiens offensive was a tale of missed opportunity and failures to exploit, in stark contrast to the promise of the first day. In bringing this important battle to light, McWilliams and Steel also do us the great service of providing a reminder that there are many other battles of Canada's Great War that await their historian.

JFV

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Harry D. George and Harry D. George, Jr., **Giorgio Italiano: An American Pilot's Unlikely Tuscan Adventure** (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2000), \$27.50 paper, 233 pages, ISBN 1-552125-38-6.

Frank Farnsley, **Prisoner of War: Der Luftwaffe** (Raleigh, NC: Pentland Press, 1997), \$11.95 US paper, 74 pp, ISBN 1-57197-031-2.

For years after the war, Harry George relived the events of 22 June 1944, when his B-25 medium bomber was shot down in flames over Italy. He experienced violent nightmares from which he could not be awakened; each night, he went through the destruction of his air-

craft and the death of three crewmates. But it was years before he was able to speak of the experience to his family. Once he had done so, his son undertook the task of making a record of George's wartime experiences, beginning with his training, going through his operational career (George was a pilot, although he was flying as co-pilot on his final mission), and concluding with his nearly three months as an evader in Italy, when he was aided by local farmers, who hid him in a cave and kept him supplied with food and drink.

Frank Farnsley was not quite as lucky as Harry George when his B-24, nicknamed "The American Maid," was shot down over Hungary just four days after George's final flight. His nose gunner went down with the aircraft, the bombardier was lynched by Hungarian civilians after he came down by parachute, and the rest of the crew fell into German captivity. In what amounts to an extended essay (there are no chapters or even text breaks, which speaks of the need for some editorial assistance), Farnsley describes his crew's experiences in enemy hands, during a period when the German prison camp system was slowly collapsing. That meant that they lived through some very difficult times, particularly the forced marches of 1945, when the Germans were trying to prevent their POWs from being captured.

Farnsley's short book is in the traditional memoir style, while George's is written as a first-person narrative, as if the father were relating the tale to his son. Supplementing this are the letters George wrote to his wife, both from training and from his squadron's base in Corsica. Interestingly, it was the same base that Joseph Heller wrote about in his war novel *Catch-22*, and George has a few choice things to say about Heller's version of events. The book ends with the George family being reunited with the people who helped Lieutenant George evade capture. It is a touching finish to a fascinating memoir.

CA

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Mary F. Gaudet, ed., **From a Stretcher Handle: The World War I Journal and Poems of Pte. Frank Walker** (Charlottetown: Institute of Island Studies, 2000), \$15.95 paper, 144 pages, ISBN 0-919013-40-6.

Like many young Canadians, twenty-year-old Frank Walker could not wait to go to war. On 8 August 1914, he began his diary by noting that he had been on pins and needles: "Will they take me?" The Prince Edward Islander feared being left behind "to drudge my life out in this sordid old machine-shop" in Charlottetown. On that day, he joined the Army Medical Corps. With seven friends he served in No.1 Canadian Field Ambulance, which arrived in France on 11 February 1915. Walker loved army life in Britain, and immersed himself in the nation's history. He soon found himself at the front, rescuing the wounded at Ypres, Vimy Ridge, and Passchendaele.

Walker served at many places on the Western Front, including Givenchy, about which he writes: "Having at last personally come through a real battle, I find ideas of it very confused. I cannot distinguish between what I saw and what I only imagined seeing." In trenches near Ploegsteert, he writes: "It is hard to think of this being a battle-front with only the occasional pop of field guns and cracks of rifles shattering the silence." The writer clearly had an eye for telling detail: "Kitchener's the most regal-looking man I've ever seen. He walks with the stride of an Emperor. The King, alongside him, looks like a lackey."

The early euphoria of the "Great Adventure" slowly faded away. Resting in billets at Fosse 9, near Barlin, on 22 July 1917, Walker wrote, "I grew tired of making notes on every trivial occasion." His journal ends here, with the question: "Where are all the merry, carefree crew, that made the old training days a brilliant piece of romance?" Walker spent the last months of the war serving on hospital ships that trans-

ported the wounded between Britain and Canada.

Frank Walker published a book in Folkestone, England, in 1918. His poems, interspersed with diary entries, owe more to Kipling than to Keats. "Packing Out: A Ballad of the Stretcher Bearers" is a very fine one that sums up how front-line soldiers saw these men out of the line – and in battle.

This exceptional book about one stretcher-bearer's war has been handsomely produced. An essay by Boyde Beck describes what these men did, and what a "carry" – taking a wounded soldier to safety – involved; Walker mentions one trip that took two hours to cover a mile. His daughter, Mary Gaudet, tells how the book came into being and, in an epilogue, describes her father's life after the war. Walker became a well-respected reporter and editor in Charlottetown, dying in 1977.

JL

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David French, **Raising Churchill's Army: The British Army in the War against Germany, 1919-1945** (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2000), \$60.00, 319 pages, ISBN 0-19-820641-0.

For decades, Churchill's army has not enjoyed a great reputation. Critics have contrasted the extraordinary operational expertise of the German army with the supposed ineptitude of the British, who, it is charged, blundered to victory in North Africa, Italy, and in North-west Europe only by virtue of what John Ellis calls "brute force."

With considerable verve French takes up the thankless task of defending the army's performance. While agreeing that the army suffered throughout the war from an autocratic, top-down command structure which severely constrained the initiative of officers at the tactical level, French argues persuasively that by late 1942 the British Army had attained a very high level of tactical and operational skill.

French's analysis of the doctrinal debates of the interwar period

is a refreshing and at times startling revision of the standard account. Most scholars have blamed the army's defeat in 1940 on the post-1918 General Staff, usually portrayed as a gaggle of Neros who fiddled while Germany mechanized. But French argues that the General Staff, far from eschewing mechanized forces, embraced technological solutions to the dilemma of trench warfare in the interwar years. Interwar doctrine was organized on the principle that the army must never again suffer casualties as great as it had in the First World War. Mechanization offered a means of increasing the army's effectiveness while reducing casualties. In French's view, the failure to produce a modern army by 1940 was the consequence of a lack of finances owing to the army's low priority in the rearmament plan, not because the doctrine of mechanized warfare was rejected by the General Staff.

Surprisingly, Gifford Martel, J.F.C. Fuller, and B.H. Liddell-Hart, the usual suspects in discussions of interwar tank theory, are absent in French's account. This suggests that their influence was not so great as some historians have claimed – a view which R.L. DiNardo, in a recent essay on German tank warfare doctrine, also advances.

This study follows several others that have revisited the question of Allied military effectiveness. In recent works, David Glantz and Michael Doubler have argued that the tactical proficiency of the Soviet and U.S. Armies was much higher than their critics have often claimed. But *Churchill's Army* also suffers from the central flaw of those earlier works. With so many variables afoot, it is difficult to assess an army's effectiveness in combat, and quantitative analyses seem somehow unconvincing. French is therefore never entirely convincing in his assessment of the army's combat performance. His analysis of interwar planning and rearmament, however, is a badly needed reassessment of the standard account. GB

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Dennis C. Jett, **Why Peacekeeping Fails** (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), \$75.95, 236 pages, ISBN 0-312-22698-5.

Like bookends to glory days, Dennis C. Jett identifies 11 December 1988 (the day the United Nations was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its peacekeeping efforts) and 3 October 1993 (the day 18 American soldiers were killed while on peacekeeping duty in Somalia) as the most significant dates in peacekeeping history and the days that mark the parameters of peacekeeping's "expansion period." This was the period immediately following the end of the Cold War that saw increased cooperation in international affairs (and on the United Nations Security Council) and an increase in the number of conflicts worldwide that required international attention. This period also saw a growth in the number and types of activities that were thought to fall in the domain of peacekeeper's capabilities, for example ending civil wars, disarmament, confidence-building measures, law and order assistance, and naval peacekeeping, to name a few. This period saw a sharp rise in the number of peacekeeping operations initiated, not all of which ended in success, as his end date for the expansion period suggests.

Jett's stated objective is to examine why some peacekeeping operations fail. The book argues that while the factors that have led to failures in the past can be identified, increasing the chances for success in future missions is made more difficult by the way peacekeeping operations are initiated and carried out and by the way the UN operates as an organization. The peacekeeping missions in Angola and Mozambique, both former Portuguese colonies, are used as case studies due to their similarities and the different outcome of their peacekeeping missions – Mozambique has been judged a success, while the UN mission in Angola may have actually worsened the situation.

Jett's highly systematic study is carried out with significant scholarly rigour, yet his hyper-organization and categorization is sometimes allowed to take the place of thorough argumentation. He has divided peacekeeping history into seven periods (it is currently stalled in the "contraction period" which started immediately on the heels of the death of the American soldiers), and he believes that a better understanding of why some peacekeeping missions fail is a step towards ending the contraction period. He divides peacekeeping missions into three stages (pre-deployment, in-theater, and post-deployment), and examines specific factors that come into play while peacekeepers are deployed (these include factors the UN can control; external factors beyond the UN's control; and humanitarian action). Jett also examines factors that can doom a mission to failure before it has begun, including the UN's mission planning (or lack thereof), the choice of personnel, and the conditions on the ground. His use of Angola and Mozambique as case studies, while pulling in examples from other peacekeeping missions for additional illustration, is a good device for providing coherence to his many categories of examination. The pitfall of his organization is, however, that it results in a book that is not likely to be picked up by the casual reader. Only an interested party would dig in to this small but dense volume.

Jett goes to great length to define what he means by "peacekeeping operation" (PKO), and this is a welcome change from literature that uses phrases like "peace support operation," "peacekeeping," "peacemaking," and "peace-building" with an interchangeability that is confusing and frustrating.

It is clear that the golden age of peacekeeping, if such a thing ever existed, is over. The failure of specific peacekeeping missions has had a profound effect on the use of peacekeeping as a suitable response to crises. One of the main difficulties Jett encounters is in defining

peacekeeping success. He debates whether success is achieved when fighting stops due to a third-party intervention, or if it is only achieved when long-term stability has been maintained, possibly with the help of the international community. In the final chapter, pessimistically titled "Inconclusion - Why Real Reform Might Not Be Possible," Jett remains hopeful that solutions can be found to peacekeeping problems, but decides that there are some questions posed to the international community that are too large and complex for easy answers. His well-thought out arguments unravel mainly because, in the unpredictable world of peacekeeping, there may be no sure-fire recipes for success. Jett poses some excellent questions, but fails to provide equally competent answers. In the *ad hoc* world of international peacekeeping, however, asking the right questions is half the battle.

TG

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Ralph L. Peterson, **Fly a Big Tin Bird** (Victoria, BC: Trafford, 2000), \$29.16 paper, 175 pages, ISBN 1-55212-507-6.

More a collection of short anecdotes than a coherent memoir, *Fly a Big Tin Bird* relates episodes from the author's service career, particularly as a pilot flying (for most of his missions) "Gravel Gerty," a B-17 Flying Fortress with the 379th Bombardment Group. He flew thirty-two missions, his last being just days before the end of the war, and came through it all unscathed, although there were some fairly hairy situations along the way. On one of his last missions, a nine-hour raid into central Germany, he reached Britain "flying on fumes," as he put it, and was faced with the daunting task of landing a B-17 with only one engine running. On another occasion, he brought "Gravel Gerty" back from Berlin on two engines with no hydraulics, no brakes, and 373 holes of various sizes in the airframe. Needless to say, it was the last flight of "Gravel Gerty."

Historians of the strategic bombing offensive may be disappointed by the lack of specifics in the book; there are few dates given, and it would be difficult to link Peterson's recollections with specific missions. However, he is clearly more interested in giving an impression of what it was like to be a part of a bomber squadron, rather than conveying his own experiences in detail. As a result, there are as many battle episodes as there are amusing anecdotes of off-duty experiences of men whom the British famously referred to as "overpaid, over-sexed, and over here."

CT

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Noel Cruz, **The Cocos Islands Mutiny** (Fremantle, Australia: Fremantle Arts Centre Press [distributed in North America by International Specialized Book Services], 2001), \$26.95 US paper, 248 pages, ISBN 1-86368-310-0.

Only three Commonwealth soldiers were executed for mutiny during the Second World War, all for their involvement in a little known but potentially significant disturbance on Cocos (Keeling) Islands, north-west of Australia, in May 1942. The men in question were members of the Ceylon Garrison Artillery, a unit that had been despatched to the Cocos to defend a vital link in the Allied communications chain that linked Britain, India, and Australia. The Japanese had already taken Christmas Island, to the east, and the loss of the Cocos could have had a potentially disastrous impact, not only on communications, but on the strategic situation in the Indian Ocean. This was precisely what the mutineers had in mind. Motivated by old antipathies, boredom, and a desire to help the Japanese create "Asia for the Asians" (they seem to have been particularly impressed by Japan's much vaunted Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere), they planned to despatch their officers and inform the nearest Japanese garrison that the Cocos Islands were theirs for the taking. Need-

less to say, the mutiny eventually amounted to very little. Members of the CGA were all too happy to discuss mutiny, but not very many of them were actually interested in taking part when it actually began. There was some desultory gunfire (which killed one loyal member of the CGA), but there was never any real chance that the mutiny would succeed.

In this absorbing if somewhat disjointed book, Cruz attempts to understand the complex motivations of the mutineers, and to sort out the facts from the many conflicting accounts which have since emerged about the events. He does a particularly good job of analysing the court martial which, despite the fact that the guilt of the accused was manifest, was nevertheless a miscarriage of justice (two of the three presiding officers had been targets of the mutiny, and one had even been wounded in the exchange of gunfire, likely by an old schoolmate who seems to have had a score to settle). Fortunately for Cruz, he began the research when many of the survivors were still alive, and so was able to compare a variety of different interpretations of the events.

It is unlikely that the Cocos Islands mutiny will ever feature significantly in the general histories of the period, but it is nonetheless a fascinating episode that sheds light on one of the most powerful forces of the Pacific War: race.

DR

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William Shawcross, **Deliver Us From Evil: Peacekeepers, Warlords and a World of Endless Conflict** (Toronto: Simon & Schuster, 2000), \$40.00, 447 pages, ISBN 0-684-83233-X.

Recent peacekeeping literature has driven home the fact that peacekeeping has become a particularly dangerous and difficult task in the post-Cold War world. William Shawcross uses the recent peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia and a number of other countries (Cambodia, Soma-

lia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda) to shed light on a major player, and often saboteur, in peacekeeping; the warlords and thugs who complicate modern peace support operations in their quest for power and wealth. Local actors are as important to the success of a peacekeeping operation as the international parties who sponsor and mount it, and this is especially true for the intra-state conflicts that have cropped up across the globe since the demise of the Soviet Union. National and local leaders often hold sway over a population through intimidation and fear, and it becomes the peacekeepers' task to overcome this fear and convince a community (and sometimes an entire country) that the peacekeeping operation is in their best interest. Shawcross discusses some themes that are commonplace in the peacekeeping literature of the last fifteen years, such as the "CNN effect" or the role of the media in donor support and international attention; the role of the state parties in agreeing to a peace accord and cooperating with a peacekeeping mission; and the dichotomy between the international community's declaration that "something must be done" about humanitarian crises, and their unwillingness to be the ones to do anything.

The ever-present factor of political will, which Shawcross links to the labyrinthine negotiations and self-interested wrangling at the "political prison" that is the United Nations, is discussed to show that, no matter how clear-cut a situation may seem, the will of political actors can often rob a situation of its transparency and turn a simple peacekeeping operation into a morass of bureaucracy and ineptitude. Of course other factors can have the same effect. The competency of the peacekeeping troops, local conditions, the wealth and location of the country concerned, non-governmental organizations in theatre, and of course the local power structures can contribute to the success of a peacekeeping mission or work to sabotage it. Of all these factors, Shawcross sees warlords intent on

maintaining their local fiefdoms as the major spoiler of late-twentieth century peacekeeping.

Shawcross discusses the UN's attempts to monitor arms limitation and disposal agreements in Iraq through the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM), set up in 1991 to punish Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait and to prevent it from threatening its neighbours or the world again. He clearly sees Saddam Hussein as another warlord, and sees UNSCOM's limited success as being brought about as much by the UN member states' in-fighting over the political make-up of UNSCOM's verification teams, and the Security Council's lack of will to take a truly hard line against Hussein, as Hussein's efforts to camouflage Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and flout UNSCOM and the UN's authority at every opportunity.

Standing as the antithesis of these warlords and thugs is the shining knight of the United Nations, the Secretary-General. Shawcross draws an insightful character study of Kofi Annan, current Secretary-General and former head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, that is well-supported by personal interviews and extensive documentation. The old joke goes that the Secretary-General can be a secretary or a general, but never both. Annan, as portrayed by Shawcross, comes across as a Christian warrior, questing to restore right in the world, and plagued by doubts that he will be insufficient to the task. By examining Annan's position in the United Nations, how he deals with foreign leaders, both cooperative and not, and how he has attempted to resolve the many disputes that have erupted throughout the world in the 1990s, Shawcross portrays Annan as a competent bureaucrat who is well aware of the shortcomings of his position, but who commands respect and influence through sheer force of personality.

The political organization of the UN is clarified by the explanation that the Secretary-General is not the "head" of the organization as is commonly understood, but the top bu-

reaucrat of the Secretariat, who can merely bring the world's problems to the attention of the Security Council, the body that can act to resolve these problems. The main point of this detailed, anecdotal and readable account is that the United Nations is not a remote international body. It is not only composed of its member states; it *is* its member states. Responsibility for the UN's missteps must be borne by the member states that form its decision-making organs, and not simply laid at the feet of the civil servants of the Secretariat, whose duty it is to carry out these decisions. The United Nations is its member states, nothing more, and nothing less. TG

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J. David Perkins, **The Canadian Submarine Service in Review** (St. Catharines, ON: Vanwell Publishing, 2000), \$39.95, 250 pages, ISBN 1-55125-031-4.

Submarines have been much in the news in recent years, but not for the right reasons. The loss of the *Kursk*, the collision of an American submarine with a Japanese tour boat, images on the nightly news of decommissioned subs decaying at anchor – things like this have not given the general public a particularly favourable view of the service. Perkins restores some of the lustre to the submarine service with this comprehensive and well illustrated history of Canada's undersea warriors.

Canada acquired its first submarines on the first day of the Great War, in a rather covert operation that only just avoided breaking American neutrality laws. Since then, Canada has both operated its own submarines, and sent naval officers and ratings to serve on British submarines. Perkins (himself a retired submariner) covers both sides of the story, and also provides an excellent summary of the history of submarine warfare and some very useful reflections on the future of Canada's submarine service. Many fine illustrations (including a good number from the

author's own collection) and well presented technical information on a variety of vessels round out this impressive volume. DG

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Jenny Gregory, ed., **On the Homefront: Western Australia and World War II** (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press [distributed in North America by International Specialized Book Services], 2000), \$39.95 US paper, 364 pages, ISBN 1-875560-90-4.

This fascinating collection of essays covers all aspects of the Second World War in Western Australia, and will be of interest to historians of the home front in other countries. The essays cover all of the subjects that one would expect, such as the impact of American servicemen on local society, the role of aborigines in wartime, the churches, women's responses to war work and demobilization, internment policies, and newspapers and the press, but there are also many more unusual topics covered. Michael Bosworth provides a fascinating survey of diet and nutrition during the war, and Sue Graham-Taylor complements it with an essay on health among the civilian population. There is an interesting study of the problem of tuberculosis among returning ex-servicemen, and a section of essays on postwar reconstruction survey such matters as the War Service Homes Scheme, the Displaced Persons Scheme, and the erection of war memorials in Western Australia in the postwar years.

Enlivening the book are some wonderful and evocative photographs – the pupils of St. Hilda's Anglican School for Girls digging slit trenches, the decor of a trim and tidy home in a veterans housing estate, treating "victims" of a mock air raid. There are also many reproductions of advertisements from wartime newspapers and magazines, many of which will be recognizable, if not for the specific products then certainly for the tone and images, to people familiar with Canadian wartime advertising.

Clearly, Western Australia was in some respects in a unique position, but this volume reveals the degree to which all of the Dominions shared a common experience on the home front during the Second World War. SL

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Les D. Brown, **There It Is: A Canadian in the Vietnam War** (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001), \$22.99 paper, 232 pages, ISBN 0-7710-1694-8.

In 1969, Les Brown found himself in a tight spot: a Canadian resident in Los Angeles, he had been drafted into the US Army for service in Vietnam. He toyed with the idea of coming back to Canada to escape the draft but eventually decided that it wasn't quite right to avoid service. He presented himself at the induction centre, and began a two-year odyssey that would take him lower than he ever imagined he could go. Brown served the customary twelve-month tour in Vietnam, first with a Ranger battalion and then with the 101st Airborne, which had long since lost its elite aura; most of the men were no longer airborne qualified, and the unit, once known as the Screaming Eagles, was often referred to as the Puking Buzzards. Brown's family never expected to see him alive again once he left California, but he returned home in May 1971. He came home from the Vietnam war, but the war never left him.

This powerful book is fascinating on a number of levels. The interaction between the "grunts" is at once timeless (soldiers from any century would recognize the mixture of fear, arrogance, bravado, and confusion) and uniquely late twentieth century (particularly in the rampant drug use, even involving soldiers who had never used drugs before they arrived in southeast Asia). There are also some interesting reflections on the relations between draftees and career soldiers. Also noteworthy is the absence of any real tactical theory in the operations in which Brown took part. Rotating grunts into exposed

firebases and pushing search-and-destroy teams into the jungle is not really a tactic, but rather the absence of a tactic. Perhaps one should expect nothing else from a war in which the strategic and political goals were so muddled.

In the end, perhaps the single biggest legacy of Vietnam for Brown was guilt – at having allowed himself to be co-opted by the US government, at taking part in an unjust war, at leaving his comrades when his tour of duty expired, at surviving when so many of his buddies didn't. It is a burden that he and thousands of other Vietnam veterans have had to bear for thirty years. DR

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Thomas J. Bates and Eric Lummis, **Normandy: The Search for Sidney** (Berkeley, CA: Bates Book, 2000), \$40.00, 201 pages, ISBN 0-945992-03-3.

On the 6th of August 1944, during the battle for Sourdevalle in Normandy, Corporal Sidney Bates of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Norfolk Regiment was mortally wounded while almost single-handedly trying to stop his unit from being overrun by elements of the 10th SS Panzer Division. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. Forty years later, Tom Bates (no relation to Sidney) and two of Sidney's comrades, Ernie Seaman and Bill Holden, returned to France in an effort to locate the precise location of Bates' last stand. Their attempt was complicated by the fact that contemporary reports were contradictory and various names had been applied to the same place, but eventually the trio was able to determine precisely where Bates had been fatally wounded.

But the tale of their quest, and of the experiences of the 1st Battalion, RNR in the weeks after D-Day, make up only a part of this book. There is also a very interesting story about the civilian population of Colleville-sur-Orne, a hamlet which in September 1944 formally petitioned to have the name "Montgomery" added to the name

of their village, as a mark of gratitude to their liberator. The book concludes with an excellent account, written by Eric Lummis, of the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment on D-Day. Finally, it is worth noting that the text is rendered in both English and French, a fitting tribute to the subjects of the book.

DG

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Albert Palazzo, **Seeking Victory on the Western Front: The British Army and Chemical Warfare in World War I** (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), \$50.00 US, 239 pgs, ISBN 0-8032-3725-1.

In *No Place to Run: The Canadian Corps and Gas Warfare in the First World War* (1999), Tim Cook argued that the Canadian Corps embraced the tactical possibilities created by the advent of gas on the battlefield, and eventually became expert practitioners of the art of chemical warfare. Albert Palazzo reaches similar conclusions in this carefully researched study of British experiments with gas. He joins the growing list of historians seeking to rehabilitate the reputation of British generals of the Great War by demonstrating that Haig and his cohorts, far from being resistant to new weapons, embraced the revolutionary technology of gas warfare and were enthusiastic about using it to break the deadlock on the Western Front.

He contends that the British Army had three distinct goals to wrest from the defender the ability to control the outcome of battle: to attack enemy morale; to employ manoeuvre; and to pursue technological superiority in the application of firepower. In each of these areas, British generals recognized early in the war the potential of gas to give them the edge, and only the slow start of the British chemical industry prevented them from exploiting the new weapon earlier. Once the industry had geared up and could supply virtually limitless quantities of gas, British units developed great skill in using gas to its best advantage, not only in kill-

ing the enemy but in reducing their efficiency and making it impossible for them to resist attacks.

In sum, Palazzo dismisses historians who have argued that the German army adapted better to the realities of trench warfare. On the contrary, he makes a strong case that, in this context at least, German generals failed to grasp the necessity of innovating. It was Britain's generals, the much-maligned donkeys, which adopted the new technology, adapted their tactics to put it to use, and put in place all of the conditions necessary for victory in 1918.

JFV

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Gerald Astor, **The Greatest War: Americans in Combat, 1941-1945** (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1999), \$39.95 US, 1056 pages, ISBN 0-89141-695-1.

The Greatest War: Americans in Combat, 1941-1945 surpasses all oral histories of the American combat experience in the Second World War by virtue of its immense scope. Astor has compiled hundreds of personal narratives from soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, beginning at Pearl Harbor, spanning the campaigns in the Pacific, North Africa, the Mediterranean, and north-west Europe, and ending with the atomic bombing of Japan.

Despite the wide-ranging scope the work, Astor does not claim to have crafted a comprehensive history of the American fighting man during the Second World War. Supporting text is accordingly kept to a minimum and readers less familiar with the battles covered may do well to keep a military atlas and more general history of the war at hand. Instead, Astor allows his contributors tell the story themselves, with the negative and positive ramifications that such an approach entails.

Human memory is of course not infallible and many of the accounts may indeed contain errors caused by the passage of time or by the inherently limited nature of an individual's participation in an ac-

tion. However, the vivid nature of the personal narratives brings the experience of battle to the reader in ways that secondary sources, although scholarly in nature and perhaps based upon more corroborative evidence, cannot. The generation that fought the Second World War is rapidly diminishing; by giving the average combatant a lasting voice, *The Greatest War* makes an invaluable contribution to posterity.

BD

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Larry Milberry, **Canada's Air Force at War and Peace**, vol. 1 (Toronto: CANAV Books, 2000), \$69.50, 296 pages, ISBN 0-921022-11-5.

Larry Milberry, **Canada's Air Force at War and Peace**, vol. 2 (Toronto: CANAV Books, 2000), \$69.50, 256 pages, ISBN 0-921022-12-3.

For the aviation enthusiast, these books by Larry Milberry are well worth having. They are the first two books of a new three (and possibly four) volume series dealing with the history of the Canadian Air Force. Volume 1 deals with the First World War, the interwar years as well as war on the home-front and day fighters in the Second World War. Volume 2 mostly covers multi-engine aircraft in the Second World War – night fighters, Bomber Command, medium bombers, Coastal Command and Air Transport – along with chapters on awards and decorations and war artists. Volumes 3 and 4 will cover the Canadian Air Force in the post-war years.

These books are filled with photographs (650-700 in each). Many you will recognize, but a significant number have been culled from non-official sources and private collections and have never before been published. The format for these books is similar to Milberry's previous book, *The Royal Canadian Air Force at War, 1939-1945* but the scale is much greater. In each chapter, Milberry has pulled together a wonderful collection of in-

formation based on personal recollections, historical research, and official reports that provide a glimpse of the Canadian Air Force not seen before.

These volumes belong in the collection of anybody interested in the men, machines, and history of Canada's air forces. MB

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Lieutenant-Colonel Bernd Horn and Stephen Harris, eds., **Warrior Chiefs: Perspectives on Senior Canadian Military Leaders** (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2001), \$25.99 paper, 365 pages, ISBN 1-55002-351-9.

This collection, and a companion volume entitled *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral*, are intended, in the editors' words, to "form part of the process of rededication to and reform of the longstanding values of the Canadian military profession." It presents studies of seventeen senior Canadian commanders by some of the country's most prominent military historians: Sam Hughes (Ronald Haycock), Arthur Currie (A.M.J. Hyatt), Raymond Brutinel (Yves Tremblay), Andrew McNaughton (Bill Rawling), Harry Crerar (Dean Oliver), Guy Simonds (Roman Jarymowycz), E.L.M. Burns (Bernd Horn and Michel Wyczynski), L.W. Murray (Roger Sarty), Harold Grant (Wilfred Lund), Charles Foulkes (Sean Maloney), Wilfred Curtis (Jeff Noakes), Roy Slemmon (Sandy Babcock), Jean Allard (Serge Bernier), Jacques Dextraze (Sean Maloney), Lewis MacKenzie (Carol Off), Romeo Dallaire (Carol Off), and John de Chastelain, who offers a personal perspective on command. The authors make some interesting observations about the demands of command in wartime and peacetime. Guy Simonds, Jarymowycz argues, was an excellent battlefield commander, but his style of leadership was not quite what postwar governments were looking for. In contrast, Sean Maloney portrays Charles Foulkes as an excellent peacetime Chief of the General

Staff, possessing skills that served the country well but did little to ensure that his would become a household name.

The essays are short and self-contained, so the book can be read either as a series of biographies of interesting people, or with an eye to the larger theme of command in wartime and peacetime. DG

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David L. Bashow, **Knights of the Air: Canadian Fighter Pilots in the First World War** (Toronto: McArthur and Company, 2000), \$50.00, 210 pages, ISBN 1-55278-162-3.

Ever since stories of Billy Bishop, Roy Brown and the Red Baron first graced the front pages of newspapers during the Great War, people have had an insatiable appetite for tales of air combat over the trenches. Much has been written over the years, but most of it makes for great storytelling, not great history. A new book by David Bashow, *Knights of the Air: Canadian Fighter Pilots in the First World War*, is both.

This book combines the best of the stories, while putting the role of air combat into the overall context of the war effort. Bashow, building on the success of his earlier book on Canadian fighter pilots on the Second World War – *All the Fine Young Eagles* – has woven an intricate narrative that looks at the birth and evolution of air combat in the Canadian context. His chapters look at the war chronologically and chart the peaks and valleys of the air war. This book does not shy away from the controversies of the air war. Rather it challenges them head on. Bashow has included chapters on "The Incomparable Billy Bishop" and "Arthur Roy Brown and Manfred Von Richthofen," which attempt to separate fact from myth. In particular, the chapter on Bishop is perhaps the best, most even-handed treatment of the ace yet written. Bashow spends a great deal of time analysing the mission for which Bishop was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Critics in the past have charged Bishop with falsifying the details of this flight, but Bashow makes good use of all available sources to prove quite convincingly that Bishop did indeed do what he said.

This book will make a fine addition to any library. Along with its authoritative text, the book is very attractively laid out and is filled with photos, sketches and full-colour paintings. The paintings, by artist Stephen Quick, were commissioned specifically for this book and add depth to a war we generally think of in black and white.

There is no question that this book will be the standard against which all writings about Canadian pilots in the First World War will be compared for a long time.

MB

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Joseph A. Springer, **The Black Devil Brigade: The True Story of the First Special Service Force. An Oral History** (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Military History, 2001), \$29.95 US, 297 pages, ISBN 0-935553-50-9.

The First Special Service Force has come to prominence largely on the strength of the film *The Devil's Brigade*, a very loose interpretation of the story of the unit. The reality, as Joseph Springer demonstrates in this fine example of oral history as it should be done, was rather different. The FSSF (known to its members simply as the Force) was not comprised of misfits and hardened criminals, as the film suggests, but of volunteers who were attracted to the unit out of a desire to serve in an elite force which tackled missions that were a little more intense than those handed out to the average infantry battalion. Originally intended to be used for a commando-style operation against hydro-electric facilities in Norway, the FSSF was assembled in Montana in the summer of 1942 as a joint Canadian - American force. The training was rigorous, exceeding the standards required for a normal infantry unit, but the Forcemen were more than up to the challenge

and quickly coalesced into a formidable fighting unit with exceptionally high cohesion and esprit de corps. Political exigencies demanded the cancellation of the Norway operation, and the Force instead had its baptism of fire in the Aleutians, in a confused operation in which all casualties were caused by friendly fire.

But it was in Italy that the Force won lasting fame, in its bloodying south of Cassino, on the push to Rome, and especially at Anzio. There, the Force, with a strength of fewer than 1300 all ranks, held fully one-quarter of the entire beachhead perimeter line. Nevertheless, they immediately took an offensive posture, pushing raids deep into enemy territory and striking fear into the German units that were facing it. The FSSF later fought in the south of France but on 5 December 1944, the task force to which it was attached no longer being required, the Force was disbanded. It had had a gallant war, but a costly one: its elite status brought with it high casualties, and the Force suffered an astonishing 600% turnover rate during the war.

Springer has done a wonderful job compiling the story of the Force, letting the soldiers speak for themselves and interjecting only a few explanatory paragraphs to provide background. The result is a gripping book that captures the unit's esprit de corps and gives insight into why it was so successful. Springer began this research to learn more about his uncle, who was killed in action while serving with the Force. His quest has ended with a fine history of a unique unit.

DR

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Neil Gregor, **Daimler-Benz in the Third Reich** (West Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), \$24.95 US, 288 pages, ISBN 0-300-0724-3-0.

Not likely to warm the hearts of the public relations department at Daimler-Chrysler, this study complements rather than replaces the late Bernard Bellon's *Mercedes in Peace and War 1933-1945*.

Bellon did not enjoy the extent of Gregor's freedom of access to company archives and his study emphasizes the pre-war years. The balance of Gregor's study, by contrast, considers Daimler-Benz's operations during the war itself. It is Gregor's contention that Daimler-Benz, far from being held hostage to the Nazi regime's criminal policies, consistently chose to collaborate in them. The pursuit of commercial self-interest in the peculiarly barbaric circumstances of the Third Reich led Daimler-Benz's management into collusion with Nazi racial policies. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in the firm's brutal exploitation of slave labour drawn from concentration camps.

This study joins the growing number of works that have radically revised our picture of the Third Reich's wartime economy. Gregor sides with Richard Overy, Werner Abelhauser, Eleanor Hancock, and others who have challenged the once bedrock solid theory of "blitzkrieg economics." First proposed by Burton Klein and later elaborated upon by Alan Milward, the theory held that shortfalls in German armaments production until 1943 were the consequence of an intentional Nazi policy favouring civilian over military production on the assumption that the "blitzkrieg" strategy would yield a short war. The problem with the theory is that virtually every economic indicator *except* actual output points to the opposite conclusion – that the Nazi regime tried desperately, though unsuccessfully, to mobilize the Reich for "total war" from 1939 onwards. Overy in particular has shown how polycratic chaos reigned until the Speer Ministry imposed order on the economy and forced the rationalization of inefficient manufacturing practices. Gregor is in substantial agreement with Overy, but his emphasis is on private industrial practices. He demonstrates how Daimler-Benz and other firms were not passive agents in mobilization, but rather influenced its character and at times pursued autonomous strategies that unwittingly hindered it.

While it has long been acknowledged that wars in the modern era are fought on factory floors as well as on battlefields, historians have only just begun to write the economic history of the Second World War. Our understanding of the fighting war is not complete without a clear sense of how war economies functioned. In their comparatively recent one-volume histories of the Second World War, for instance, both John Keegan and Gerhard Weinberg drew conclusions about the fighting war based on an understanding of the Nazi economy that is no longer tenable. What remains to be seen is how economic studies like Gregor's will influence the new generation of military histories of the war. GB

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Robert Crowley, ed., **What If? The World's Foremost Military Historians Imagine What Might Have Been** (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1999), \$19.99 US, 395 pages, ISBN 0-965-44752-0.

Fascinating, fun, and occasionally frightening, *What If?* indulges the taste for counterfactual history that most historians have but few admit to. Editor Robert Cowley argues that counterfactual speculation is more than just an idle pursuit – used judiciously, it can bring actual historical events into sharper focus by illustrating the enormous significance that individual decisions can sometimes have.

Readers who consider counterfactuals frivolous would do well to note the number of first-tier military historians who have made contributions to *What If?*. John Keegan, Theodore Rabb, James McPherson, Stephen Ambrose, and Alistair Horne join many others in speculating about alternate military outcomes from ancient times through to the last years of the Cold War. Among the highlights are Cecelia Holland's "The Death that Saved Europe," which considers how history might have turned out had the third son of Genghis Khan not prematurely died, and Theodore Cook's examination of what the con-

sequences of an American defeat at the Battle of Midway might have been.

There is much here to argue about. Given the seemingly insurmountable logistical difficulties facing them, is it really possible, as John Keegan suggests, that Germany might have won the Second World War by pursuing a Mediterranean strategy in 1941 instead of invading the Soviet Union? If Lee had won at Gettysburg, would Lincoln have really conceded the per-

manent separation of the Union? If Cortez had been killed upon arriving in the New World, would the Aztec empire really have survived?

Having read the book's two-dozen "what-ifs" I cannot resist adding one of my own. What if, in the mid-1930s, Stalin had decreed that the Soviet Union undertake a massive road-building program? He apparently gave the idea much consideration, but rejected it. Modern paved roads would have immeasurably aided the German invaders

in 1941. Would the Germans have advanced quickly enough to overrun the Soviet factories then being frantically relocated to the east? And if they had, what would have been the consequences for the Soviet war effort, and, indeed, for the course of the war as a whole? I do not wish to sound like an advocate of the "great man" theory of history, but it is nonetheless the case that decisions made by great men sometimes make a great difference. GB

Briefly Noted

Michael B. Ballard, **Civil War Mississippi: A Guide** (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi [distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services], 2000), \$23.50 paper, 135 pages, ISBN 1-57806-196-2.

Civil War buffs will be glad to have this book along when driving through Mississippi. The bulk of the text is devoted to a brief sketch of the course of the war in the state, but there is also a very useful section to guide the tourist around the sites of major battles, smaller engagements, and even the war cemeteries of both sides. The maps are not particularly good, but they are certainly sufficient for basic route-planning purposes.

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Douglas L. Bland, ed., **Backbone of the Army: Non-Commissioned Officers in the Future Army** (Kingston: School of Policy Studies / McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), \$22.95 paper, 126 pages, ISBN 0-88911-889-2.

With contributions from Canadian, American, and British academics and serving members of the armed forces, this collection of essays examines the changing role of the NCO as the social gap between the ranks has narrowed and officer/NCO separation based on differences in education has become less distinct. Better educated soldiers and NCOs now expect to be involved

in unit decisions and are less likely to routinely accept the idea that officers always know best. These essays examine the historical role of NCOs, and discuss the implications for education, training, doctrine, and organization.

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Peter Gibbings, **Weep For Me, Comrade** (London: Minerva Press, 1997), £9.99 paper, 160 pages, ISBN 1-86106-437-3.

When the aircraft carrier HMS *Courageous* was sunk by a U-Boat on 17 September 1939, it represented one of the first major naval losses of the war for the Royal Navy. Peter Gibbings lost his father in the sinking and, as he demonstrates in this book, the entire tragedy may have been avoidable. The practice of sending out sub-hunting carrier groups was clearly flawed (and nearly cost the Royal Navy the *Ark Royal* as well), but it was the condition of the *Courageous* herself which really compounded the disaster: many of the crew members were ill-trained reservists or veterans of the First World War who had been recalled from pension; there was no general issue of life jackets; many of the life boats and floats had been painted so many times that they could not be removed from their clamps; and the ship's entire electrical system ran off a single circuit, which was severed when the torpedo first hit and therefore shut off every system on board. Ultimately, this book tells a tale of mariners paying the price for the unpreparedness of the navy.

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John C. Fredriksen, ed., **Surgeon of the Lakes: The Diary of Dr. Usher Parsons, 1812-1814** (Erie, PA: Erie County Historical Society, 2000), \$10.95 US paper, 114 pages, ISBN 1-883658-36-5.

Parsons, a young doctor from Maine, received a surgeon's mate commission in 1812, and served on the Niagara frontier until June 1813, when he joined Oliver Hazard Perry's Erie squadron. In the ensuing Battle of Lake Erie, Parsons was the only surgeon healthy enough to work, and so upon him fell the burden of treating the roughly one hundred American casualties. Remarkably, given the state of medicine at the time and the seriousness of some of the wounds, only three died. His diary, reproduced in its entirety for the first time, is a very valuable source on the medical and naval history of the War of 1812. It is well illustrated and has excellent explanatory footnotes.

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David G. Haglund and S. Neil MacFarlane, eds., **Security, Strategy and the Global Economics of Defence Production** (Kingston, ON: Queen's University School for Policy Studies / McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), \$24.95 paper, 148 pages, ISBN 0-88911-877-9.

This book is a collection of essays drawn from the November 1998 meeting of the Canada - United Kingdom Colloquium, one of a se-

ries of gatherings that brings together politicians, policy makers, academics, and journalists to debate important policy issues. There are ten essays, including "Who Defends the Defence Industry?" (Paul Manson), "Canada - United Kingdom Defence Cooperation" (William Hopkinson), "Globalization Meets the Defence Industry" (Sir Geoffrey Pattie), and "The Politics, Economics and Ethics of Arms Exports" (Philip Gummett), as well as an introduction by the editors and a conclusion by Dennis Stairs.

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Victor Suthren, **To Go Upon Discovery: James Cook and Canada, from 1758 to 1779** (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2000), \$35.99, 224 pages, ISBN 1-55002-327-6.

A neglected part of Captain James Cook's career is chronicled in this book that describes his early experiences in the Royal Navy (he joined in 1755, after forsaking a promising career in the merchant marine), his service at Louisbourg and Quebec, and his posting to Nova Scotia at the end of the war in Canada. It was in Canada, as Suthren reminds us in this evocative and well written book, that Cook developed the techniques and honed the skills that made him one of the world's greatest surveyors and navigators; his first major project was the survey of Newfoundland, done between 1763 and 1767, which was later followed by his more well known voyages to the south Pacific.

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Sandy Antal, **A Wampum Denied: Procter's War of 1812** (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997), \$29.95 paper, 450 pages, ISBN 0-88629-318-9.

This carefully researched and well documented study examines a key part of the War of 1812 – the conflict on the Detroit frontier in 1812-1813 – and details the powerful major players (the Shawnee war chief Tecumseh, British general Sir Isaac Brock, and his senior

commander Henry Procter), their disparate war aims, and the "all or nothing" character of the campaigns they waged. Antal's reconstruction of national and Native aspirations, vested colonial interests, and territorial aggression reveals motives and expedients that were as often mundane as heroic. He casts new light on the much-maligned career of Procter, describes the Canadian/British/Native view of the campaign, and re-examines an allied military strategy that very nearly succeeded, but ultimately failed spectacularly.

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Thanos Veremis, **The Military in Greek Politics: From Independence to Democracy** (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1997), \$24.99 paper, 227 pages, ISBN 1-55164-104-6.

This is an important study of the politics of modern Greece, relevant to an understanding of the evolution of society and polity since independence in 1830. In addition to offering a survey of the origins and evolution of the military over the last 150 years, the author uses personal and state archives, as well as diaries and memoirs, to present a complete narrative of the intervention of the Greek army in politics between 1916 and 1974. It is the story of the struggle between politicians and the monarch for the allegiance and control of modern Greek politics, a conflict which was suspended with the rise of the Metaxas dictatorship in 1936 but which reappeared in a new guise in 1967 in the so-called "Greece of the colonels."

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Stephen V. Ash, **When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press [distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services], 1999), \$27.95 paper, 309 pages, ISBN 0-8078-4795-X.

Southerners whose communities were invaded by the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War en-

dured a profoundly painful ordeal. For most, the coming of the Yankees was a nightmare become real; for some, it was the answer to a prayer. But as Stephen Ash argues, for all, invasion and occupation were essential parts of the experience of defeat that helped shape the southern postwar mentality. He explores a wide range of topics, including guerrilla warfare and other forms of civilian resistance, conflicts between aristocrats and poor whites, and the impact of occupation on families, churches, and local government. Historians of the Second World War will find much material here that can be usefully compared to the experience of European societies living under Nazi occupation.

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A.R. Wichtrich, **MIS-X: Top Secret** (Raleigh, NC: Pentland Press, 1997), \$21.95 US, 114 pages, ISBN 1-57197-067-3.

This is the story of the Air Ground Aid Section, one of those obscure sub-units which proliferated during the Second World War. Many of these units seemed to have little rationale behind them, but the AGAS performed vital work in south-east Asia. It was established in December 1943 to help rescue down American airmen, and eventually grew from a handful of American servicemen and local operatives to 39 stations from Saigon to the Gobi Desert and all points in between. Over the course of the war, it was responsible for the rescue of 898 American airmen in China, Indochina, and Formosa. AGAS commander Wichtrich rightly observed that, had such a unit been in operation during the Vietnam War, a good many of the captured or missing airmen would have been brought out safely.

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Jonathan F. Vance

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