

1998

Book Review Supplement Spring 1998

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/cmh>



Part of the [Military History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

"Book Review Supplement Spring 1998." Canadian Military History 7, 2 (1998)

This Book Review Supplement is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Canadian Military History by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

BOOK REVIEW

SUPPLEMENT

Spring 1998

Issue 7



Donald C. Richter, ed., **Lionel Sotheby's Great War: Diaries and Letters from the Western Front** (Athens, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1997), \$27.95 US, 148 pages, ISBN 0-8214-1178-0.

When one ponders the Lost Generation of the Great War, Lionel Sotheby is exactly the sort of person who comes to mind. Descended from a long line of naval heroes, he was educated at Eton and spent the immediate prewar years frequenting the tonier clubs of London and making a start at a career in business. He enlisted in August 1914 as an officer (like so many others of the Lost Generation, he had taken officer's training while at school) in the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, although his time at the front was spent with the Black Watch. Again like so many of the Lost Generation, that time was short for Lionel was killed at Loos in September 1915. He was only 21 years old, but in his portrait he looks barely a teenager.

Sotheby's papers are held in the superb Liddle Collection at the

University of Leeds, and Donald Richter (author of *Chemical Soldiers: British Gas Warfare in World War I*) has done an excellent job of preparing them for publication. They are poignant, arresting, and bathed in pathos – everything one expects Lost Generation writing to be. They exhibit a wry sense of humour, but even more significantly, are strikingly graphic in their description of life at the front. In one passage, Sotheby describes a quest for souvenirs on the battlefield: "The helmet I found contained a head, to which was affixed the body. The endeavour to procure helmet resulted in head leaving body with helmet. Great difficulty in getting rid of head. Eventually successful." There are many similar passages describing the gruesome demises of comrades, and Lionel clearly had no thought for sparing the feelings of his relatives. Nor did such sights appear to have dampened his spirits or sapped his faith in the cause. As he wrote in a letter to be read after his death, "To die for

one's school is an honour...To die for one's country is an honour. But to die for right and fidelity is a greater honour than these. And so I feel it now."

- JFV

* * * * *

Peter Simpson, **The Independent Highland Companies, 1603-1760** (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1996), £15.00 paper, 235 pages, ISBN 0-85976-432-X.

The Independent Highland Companies were first raised at the beginning of the 17th century to maintain order in northern Scotland. They were mustered periodically over the next 150 years until their final calling in 1760, to keep the peace during another period of instability in the Highlands. The companies' influence, however, long outlasted them, for their effectiveness was a significant factor in the English government's decision to raise the six principal Highland regiments: Black Watch (1740), Gordon

Highlanders (1759), Highland Light Infantry (1777), Seaforth Highlanders (1778), Cameron Highlanders (1793), and Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders (1794).

Simpson's book is in two parts. The first sets the stage by describing the nature of the Highlands and their people in the 17th century. Particularly interesting is his discussion of the reputation of Scottish mercenaries on the continent (they were known, not only for their pluck, but also for their ability to endure hunger and privation while on campaign) and of the notorious lawlessness of the Highlands (where the largest single occupational category seems to have been cattle thief). The bulk of the book is devoted to the companies themselves. It is a fascinating story, and one that might be called an early example of military aid to the civil power. There were a few pitched battles, mainly connected with the Highland Rebellions (although the Independent Companies were kept in reserve at Culloden), but the main role of the companies was pacification – maintaining order, restraining lawlessness, and fighting the ever-present cattle-lifting.

Most of the original Scottish regiments have disappeared now, victims of government economy drives, leaving only the Black Watch and the Argylls in the regular army. Simpson has made an important contribution to our understanding of those regiments by documenting the history of their precursors.

- DR

* * * * *

Brian Dyde, **The Empty Sleeve: The Story of the West Indies Regiments of the British Army** (St. Johns, Antigua: Hansa Caribbean, 1997), £11.95 paper, 284 pages, ISBN 0-9768163-05-4.

The title of this book is inspired by a poem by Derek Walcott about a veteran black soldier who

lost an arm in service. An apt example, as this work concerns the tens of thousands of blacks who served, from 1795, in the British Army's regular West Indies regiments. Amazingly, and in spite of an incredibly rich history in military as well as in social terms, this is the first book to cover all regiments from the time they were raised in the late 18th century to 1926, when the last battalion was disbanded. There has previously been only a couple of regimental histories published at the end of the 19th century, a more recent effort by Dr. Buckley on pre-1815 *Slaves in Red Coats*, and a handful of short articles in specialized journals. Considering the importance of the subject to each of the British West Indies islands, as well as Guyana, Belize, Sierra Leone, and Gambia, the paucity of serious studies on this topic is remarkable.

Certainly, as Dyde shows with much skill, to follow these black soldiers through time makes quite a story. It takes the reader to the impact of the French Revolution on the then incredibly prosperous West Indies of two centuries ago, the enormous losses in European white soldiers to fevers, and the raising of black units which could better cope with the deadly tropical diseases. This takes the reader in turn to the slave stations of the West African coast, for many of the early "recruits" were simply bought from slave merchants. The West Indies regiments eventually formed the bulk of the garrisons in the British colonies in West Africa during the 19th century and a sizeable portion of the book recounts, in a lively text, their exploits there as well as in America. Some of these were really quite extraordinary, yet are practically unknown. The heroic resistance of the 1st West India Regiment at Orange Walk in Honduras (1-4 September 1872) comes close to the incredible resistance of a British detachment at Rorke's Drift in 1879. But it was little noted at the time, probably because the soldiers were black.

Anyone writing about black troops has a double challenge. Not only must the services of the units be recounted with skill and tact but, to be complete, racism must be dealt with fairly. Dyde shows a well-pondered sensitivity toward the countless petty hassles a black soldier had to endure, always putting events in the perspective of the time, yet without using the arguments of times past to excuse wrongs committed (and, one can add, without also falling into the pitfalls of so-called "political correctness"). Officers of these regiments were always Europeans, as no blacks could be commissioned. There were blatantly racist officers in the West India regiments but there were also, more often than not, humane and thinking commanders in these units. The black men too were not always sterling examples of virtue but, all in all, they really made excellent and dedicated soldiers, as this book shows.

Due attention is given to material culture and the arms and uniforms are discussed not only as to their patterns but also as to their significance. In that context, the adoption of a Zouave type of uniform is revealing of the mentality of the time. The 19 black and white illustrations reproduce period prints and plates. The colour covers show, in front, a fine plate by Don Cribbs of the Zouave-style uniform in the 1870s, and on the back a photo of the band of the Barbados Defence Force in 1995 which preserves the heritage of the 2nd West India Regiment by wearing its dress uniform. Although this book is not footnoted, the author's manuscript was, and copies of it are deposited at the National Army Museum in London and at the West India Reference Library in Kingston, Jamaica, for consultation. Although useful to know, this is awkward compared to a footnoted book and the publisher could make an effort in that direction in a second edition of what should become a classic

reference in military history as well as in Caribbean studies. It is otherwise a very well-crafted book and certainly much recommended.

- RC

* * * * *

Edwin Olmstead, Wayne E. Stark, and Spencer C. Tucker, **The Big Guns: Civil War Siege, Seacoast, and Naval Cannon** (Alexandria Bay, NY: Museum Restoration Service, 1997), \$80.00 US, 360 pages, ISBN 0-88855-012-X.

With some books, there is no use beating around the bush. This book on the "Big Guns" of the American Civil War is one of them. It is a great book and it shows from cover to cover. The three authors, each of whom is a paramount authority on the respective aspects of the study of ordnance, have put in a tremendous amount of information in these pages. But it was done with tact and intelligence. The highly technical and statistical data has been put into a truly impressive set of appendices which form over half of the book. These, by themselves, are the result of lifetimes of painstaking research and countless trips to historic sites in search of cannons and cannon data, the cannon makers, the orders, inspections and locations of surviving guns, arsenal lists, and markings. By themselves, these appendices which form the second part of the book should satisfy the most demanding in the community of ordnance buffs.

However, in many ways, the first 160 pages are the real treat. In ten tight, highly informed and well written chapters, the authors go through the evolution and the various types of Big Guns existing at the time of the Civil War. Both the Union and Confederate guns are covered, as are the large British guns, all of which had their part to play in the struggle. These chapters are profusely illustrated with photos and plans of pertinent pieces, which adds greatly to the comprehension of a highly technical

topic. For instance, all this data shows in matchless clarity the near-genius of someone like Thomas J. Rodman, whose clean and clever designs (like a 20 inch gun with a weight of 58 tons, cast in 1861) will bring an appreciation for the impressive design and industrial prowess of that age. It is the same with Dahlgren, Parrot, and other inventive designers of a period which saw enormous progress in the ordnance sciences.

In closing, this reviewer was obviously much impressed by this book. It is a well-crafted production by a publisher that is committed to ordnance studies, and this also adds to the overall quality of this erudite and classic work.

- RC

* * * * *

Claire E. Swedberg, **Work Commando 311/I: American Paratroopers Become Forced Laborers for the Nazis** (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1995), \$22.95 US, 204 pages, ISBN 0-8117-1908-1.

There is little unusual about the story Swedberg tells. Hundreds of thousands of Allied prisoners of war were forced to labour in Nazi Germany (the employment of POWs was, after all, permitted under the Geneva Convention), often in conditions more appalling than those endured by the men of AK 311/I. Their labour (repairing railway tracks near Rostock), while strenuous, was not especially dangerous, nor were their rations or treatment (beatings and harassment were more plentiful than food) particularly bad. What is notable about the story is the group dynamics among the prisoners. Initially they got along very badly, the privations of prison camp bringing out the worst in them; indeed, there is much here to support the often discussed notions that, all in all, American soldiers performed rather badly in captivity. However, the paratroopers eventually found comradeship and

realized that survival demanded cooperation and that the real enemy was not each other, but Germany.

This is Swedberg's first book, and it starts slowly. The narrative is choppy, and the profusion of short chapters (not to mention the frequent alternation between characters) makes the book rather hard to follow. But it soon sorts itself out and becomes a most interesting, if not remarkable, tale.

- JFV

* * * * *

John Bickersteth, ed., **The Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918** (London: Leo Cooper [distributed in Canada by Vanwell], 1996), £11.95 paper, 332 pages, ISBN 0-85052-546-2.

During the First World War, the Bickersteth family kept an immense diary which eventually ran to eleven volumes and 7000 pages; this book is a very condensed version of that record. Although there were six Bickersteth brothers, the diary focuses on three: Morris, killed in action on the Somme in 1916; Julian, a chaplain with the 56th Division; and Burgon, a cavalryman, machine gunner, and staff officer. Their experiences are related through the letters they wrote (some of which were dozens of pages long), comments by their mother, who carefully assembled the diary, press clippings, and other accounts.

The most fascinating thread in the diary is the changing attitudes of Burgon and Julian to the war. Since both were officers, they could write home without fear of censorship, and their letters are surprisingly frank. Burgon was transformed, in a very short period, from a man who couldn't wait to get into the fight, to a man who desperately wanted the war to end; his later letters are full of ruminations on the prospects for peace and laments that the whole tragedy might one day be repeated. Julian, on the other hand, had much more erratic mood swings.

He alternated between joy and despair, yet never lost the certitude that the Allies were engaged in a great crusade against the German anti-Christ. As late as September 1918, he could still ponder the martyrs of his division and the "cheerful sacrifice of their young bodies".

The editing of the diaries could have been stronger. The narrative is sometimes confused and there are many short snippets which add little to the story. However, it is a remarkable document, and future historians will be grateful that the Bickersteths were not ashamed to put their innermost feelings on paper to share with their loved ones.

- JFV

* * * * *

Samuel Honig, **From Poland to Russia and Back, 1939-1946** (Windsor, ON: Black Moss Press, 1996), \$15.95 paper, 259 pages, ISBN 88753-293-4.

There seems to be no end to the memoirs which emerge from the Holocaust; the passage of years and the fact that even the youngest survivors are now well into their senior years have not slowed the flow of accounts. Of course, the quality is uneven. Honig's book, for example, is not especially well written, and also suffers from low production values (an apparent absence of proofreading plagues the text). Nevertheless, it makes for compelling reading and reminds one that, regardless of how many stories come out of the Holocaust, there is always room for more.

Honig's family was separated soon after the German invasion of Poland; he and his father headed east while his mother and sister remained in Krakow, where they had lived as part of the city's Jewish community. The family hoped to be reunited once the situation in Poland normalized, but it was not to be. Honig's mother and sister, along with most of his extended family, perished in

Auschwitz. Honig and his father passed through a succession of Soviet labour camps, an existence which was trying but, as the author readily admits, not dissimilar to the lives of millions of the Soviet Union's own citizens. Honig and his father finally returned to Krakow in 1946 to find it a changed city. Indeed, the description of their homecoming to a city which was no longer home to them is heart-rending. They didn't stay long in the new Poland; Samuel came to Canada in 1948, and his father to the US in 1949. There, they attempted to rebuild their lives. Given the events described in this book, they did a remarkably good job.

- SL

* * * * *

Barry D. Rowland, **Herbie and Friends: Cartoons in Wartime** (Toronto: Natural Heritage / Natural History, 1990), \$14.95 paper, 102 pages, ISBN 0-920474-52-7.

Virtually everyone who served in Canada's armed forces during the Second World War will be familiar with Herbie, the meek and chinless private who had a positive gift for getting into trouble. He first appeared in *The Maple Leaf* in February 1944, when the paper was being printed in Naples, and went on to become one of its most popular features. Herbie was so loved that his creator, Bing Coughlin, was voted Canada's Man of the Year for 1944 by Canadian troops overseas.

There are over 100 cartoons reproduced in the book, capturing Herbie in every conceivable situation. It is not clear if the cartoons appear in the order in which they were originally published (the inclusion of dates for each cartoon, where applicable, would have been helpful). But that does not make them any less enjoyable, and veterans will get a chuckle when they see their favourite Herbie cartoon. There's no doubt that Bing ranks with the

best military cartoonists, like Bill Maudlin (Willie and Joe) and Bruce Bairnsfather (Old Bill).

- AS

* * * * *

Jay Winter and Blaine Baggett, **The Great War and the Shaping of the Twentieth Century** (Toronto: Penguin, 1996), \$49.99, 432 pages, ISBN 0-670-87119-2.

Carrying on the tradition which Ken Burns made so profitable, PBS launched a big-budget multi-part documentary on the First World War that brought together the best historians from around the world. Like Burns' documentaries, this one was accompanied by a lavishly illustrated companion volume to the series. The book follows the series quite closely, even down to repeating some of the narration, and makes the same admirable attempt to cover both the well known (the Battle of Verdun) and the little known (the much neglected Armenian genocide) aspects of the war. Of course, it is easy to find flaws with the book's balance. The United States receives a lot of coverage, despite staying out of the war until it was almost three years old, a fact that owes more to the project's funding and audience than anything else. The air war is virtually ignored, as is Allenby's campaign in the Levant. But this is carping, for it is impossible to cover everything in a single survey. Winter and Blaggett have chosen their topics judiciously and have succeeded remarkably well in covering the breadth of the war.

A greater weakness is the fact that the book is infused with the modernist interpretation that Paul Fussell began with his wonderful *The Great War and Modern Memory*. "Those who had seen war for what it was knew that older romantic illusions about war were inadequate, absurd or obscene," write the authors in a tone that marks much of the book. In this regard, they pay little heed to new research in various countries which

suggests that the war was much less of a modernist revolution than previously assumed. They claim in the introduction that they will jettison outworn distinctions between “high” and “popular” culture, but the book shows little evidence of this. In the first ten pages, we meet the artists Ludwig Meidner and Vassily Kandinsky, the novelist Jean Giono, the poets Isaac Rosenberg, Wilfred Owen, Georg Heym and Jakob van Hoddis, the Futurist Boccioni, the composer Igor Stravinsky, and the inimitable Jean Cocteau, but virtually no one outside the intelligentsia. Similarly, the book closes with novelist Boris Pasternak, the poets Osip Mandelstam and Vladimir Mayakovsky, and Albert Camus. In between there are a few references to popular culture – postcards, trench journals, film, and the like – and some wonderful snippets from the diaries and letters of common people, but the intellectual response to the war overshadows everything else.

So, what they claim to be part of “a new cultural history of the war” seems to be not very new at all. It is impressively packaged and wonderfully illustrated, but there is very little in the way of new interpretation here.

- JFV

* * * * *

Stacy Schiff, **Saint-Exupéry: A Biography** (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), \$18.95 US paper, 559 pages, ISBN 0-306-80740-8.

Perhaps the greatest of all aviation writers, Saint-Exupéry was a man whose life was filled with disappointment and despair. The author of such classics as *Flight to Arras*, *Wind, Sand and Stars*, and *The Little Prince* was perpetually on the verge of bankruptcy, endured a bizarre marriage, battled the physical effects of some serious crashes, and was hurt by an unwise political choice (he backed Giraud rather than de Gaulle) during the Second World War. He was

emphatically not a military man (he washed out of the French naval academy at the end of the Great War) and yet was bound and determined to give his life for France in the Second World War. He clawed his way into a reconnaissance squadron, despite the fact that he was too old, too big, and too unwell to fly the unit’s P-38s safely, and disappeared on a reconnaissance flight over the French Riviera in July 1944. The wreckage of his aircraft was never found.

Schiff’s biography, a Pulitzer Prize finalist, is superb. To reconstruct Saint-Exupéry’s life, she has searched out many of his friends and associates and has tracked down his voluminous correspondence, much of which is held by the many women in his life. The result is an intimate and compassionate portrait which captures the essence of Saint-Exupéry in wonderful texture. He emerges as a tortured soul, a man of immense literary ability who was never able to learn how to live happily; he invested such energy and time into perfecting his prose that there was little left for improving his personal life. Indeed, Schiff suggests that Saint-Exupéry shared many commonalities with his most well known creation, the Little Prince, not the least of which was that they both vanished into thin air.

- JFV

* * * * *

Wayne Ralph, **Barker VC: William Barker, Canada’s Most Decorated War Hero** (Toronto: Doubleday, 1997), \$34.95, 308 pages, ISBN 0-385-25682.

Sheila Reid, **Wings of a Hero: Canadian Pioneer Flying Ace Wilfrid Wop May** (St Catharines, ON: Vanwell Publishing, 1997), \$19.95 paper, 102 pages, ISBN 1-55125-034-9.

Ross Smyth, **The Lindbergh of Canada: The Errol Boyd Story**

(Burnstown, ON: General Store Publishing, 1997), \$19.95 paper, 170 pages, ISBN 1-896182-61-5.

In the 1990s, the names Will Barker, “Wop” May, and Errol Boyd rarely stir a flicker of recognition. May is familiar to devotees of Stompin’ Tom Connors, who wrote a song about the intrepid pilot, but Barker and Boyd are largely unknown beyond the small circle of early aviation buffs. But in the 1920s and 1930s, they were giants of public life. The Toronto funeral of Barker, Canada’s most decorated soldier of the First World War, was the largest in the city’s history, drawing upwards of 50,000 people to witness the passing of a national hero. May’s exploits flying the wilds of northern Canada made front-page headlines in newspapers across the country. Even the less heralded Errol Boyd was well known for a number of aviation firsts: first Canadian to fly across the North Atlantic, first person to fly from New York to Bermuda, and first to fly from New York to Haiti.

Of the three books, only Ralph’s can be considered a full-scale biography, and it is a fine one at that. Barker was a complex character: a very egotistical man whose piloting skills exceeded even his own high opinion of them; charming and attractive, but a man who turned to the bottle when his war wounds and the disappointments of the peacetime era got the better of him; criticized by some former fliers as a grandstander, but idolized by others; a kind and generous man who nevertheless treated his parents and siblings shabbily; loved by many, but often not entirely likeable. In short, Barker is a challenge for any biographer, but Ralph has more than risen to the occasion. He has delved deeply into the character of his subject, and is not afraid to tell what he discovered. He treats some of Barker’s claims with the skepticism they deserve, and is frank about his postwar battles with the Canadian Air Force and his progressive

estrangement from his family. At the same time, he has revealed that spark in Barker which made him a superb leader and a gifted aerial fighter, and which gained him a legion of adoring fans who were genuinely devastated by his death. Ralph writes sensitively and with compassion, and his own background in aviation allows him to discuss the technical aspects of Barker's career in admirable detail.

In contrast, Reid's well illustrated (but not especially well written) book is really more of a thumbnail sketch of May's life. Some of his more famous exploits, like the legendary air combat in which von Richthofen was shot down, May's mercy flight to Fort Vermilion in 1929, and his work in helping to catch the Mad Trapper in 1932, are well detailed but other aspects are given short shrift. May amassed more than a dozen kills as a fighter pilot on the Western Front and was instrumental in the establishment and operation of #2 Air Observer School in Edmonton during the Second World War. Each of these aspects of his life deserves to be told, and would surely have yielded some interesting tales.

Smyth's book is part tribute, part biography. After his pioneering flights, Boyd was an organizer of the Aviation Scouts of Canada (of which the author was a member) and was also instrumental in the work of the Knight Committee, which recruited Americans to join the RCAF during the Second World War. For these reasons alone, Boyd's biography deserved to be written. But the author had another, more personal reason. As a young member of the Aviation Scouts, Smyth won a contest in 1938 and was escorted by Boyd on a tour of American aviation hot spots. It was an experience he never forgot, and this biography is something of an expression of his gratitude. This fact explains the whiff of hagiography which surrounds the book, a not uncommon characteristic of aviation biographies. But Smyth never lets it get out of rein. He candidly

recounts Boyd's financial woes, and the difficulty he had in parlaying his aviation success into financial success (again, a not uncommon characteristic of pioneering pilots). Nor does he mince words in describing some of the shadier figures involved in aviation in the interwar years. Smyth has had the assistance of the Boyd family in writing this biography, and he has amply repaid their kindness.

Each of these aviators deserved to be rescued from obscurity and have their stories told to a new generation of Canadians. Ralph's is certainly the definitive biography of Barker, but there may well be room for fuller accounts of the contributions of Wop May and Errol Boyd to Canadian aviation.

- JFV

* * * * *

Gavin K. Watt, **The Burning of the Valleys: Daring Raids from Canada Against the New York Frontier in the Fall of 1780** (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), \$19.99 paper, 392 pages, ISBN 1-55002-271-7

With this book, Watt sheds light on one of the little known episodes of the American Revolution, a series of raids by British soldiers, loyalists, and natives against the Mohawk River region in what is now New York State. It is essentially a work of microhistory. Watt (with research assistance from James F. Morrison) has dug out a wealth of information about the raids, which enables him to describe them in exhaustive detail. This is no mean feat, as anyone who has worked with these documents knows; simply trying to sort out the different spellings on someone's name is an exercise in frustration. But Watt is up to the task, for his descriptions of the raids are clear, concise, and easy to follow. What emerges from them is the combination of luck, wilderness skills, and expert leadership which characterized the raids. Not only was the Canadian

Department able to send large bodies of troops into New York undetected, but the raiding parties were able to execute some intricate manoeuvres, such as splitting attacking forces into small columns and then reuniting them after their objectives were achieved. Indeed, Watt is right to suggest that the leadership of Major Christopher Carleton and Sir John Johnson has not received the credit it deserves.

As a work of microhistory, the book is at its weakest when it considers the big picture. The strategic purpose of the raids, to devastate the "grainbowl" of Washington's armies with scorched-earth tactics, deserves more attention, as does the relationship between that devastation and the mutinies of the Pennsylvania regiments in 1781. Watt discusses these matters briefly but, with all the impressive evidence he has uncovered, there is considerably more scope for analysis. This criticism is not meant to detract from the book's importance, however. It has given us what will probably be the definitive accounts of these most interesting operations.

- DR

* * * * *

Eric Hammel, **Aces at War: The American Aces Speak, vol. 4** (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Press, 1997), \$29.95 US, 263 pages, ISBN 0-935552-24-X.

Now in its fourth volume, this series continues to bring short, fast-paced accounts of aerial combat but with a broader coverage. The first three books dealt with air aces in the European and Pacific theatres, while the 38 accounts collected here include the reminiscences of seven pilots who flew in the Korean War, one who flew with the Israeli Air Force in 1948, a pilot shot down over Hanoi in 1966, and a graduate of the Civilian Air Training Program. The rest are divided evenly between the European and Pacific theatres. Of

particular interest to Canadian readers will be the accounts by Flying Officer Holly Hills, who flew with 414 Squadron RCAF over Dieppe, and Flight Lieutenant Clarence Jasper, who flew Mosquito intruder operations with 418 Squadron RCAF.

The one drawback with the book is that it is not entirely clear which of the accounts have been published before. Some are cited as excerpts from published memoirs, but others may well be appearing here for the first time. Historians might find this lack of attribution troubling, but the general reader can just enjoy the accounts for what they are: exciting, interesting vignettes of aerial combat.

- SL

* * * * *

Robert C. Doyle, **Voices from Captivity: Interpreting the American POW Narrative** (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), \$35.00 US, 370 pages, ISBN 7006-0663-7.

The American POW story is a three hundred-year-old genre that Doyle believes began with *Memoirs of Odd Adventures and Strange Deliverances, etc in the Captivity of John Gyles*, published in 1736 and recounting the experiences of a young boy who was captured in a raid on Albany in 1689. Since then, literally hundreds of accounts have appeared. They deal with every war, every variety of experience, and come from every conceivable perspective. More recently, the POW experience has been translated to films like *Stalag 17* and *Hanoi Hilton*, and has imprinted itself on American popular culture. However, despite this tremendous variety in perspective and subject matter, they all share certain common themes. Doyle is the first person to attempt an in-depth analysis of these accounts as narratives, and to try to understand why they have been so popular and

enduring. He dismisses the argument that they pandered to postwar xenophobia and prejudices by demonizing the enemy, arguing instead that the narratives have a timelessness and that "the permanent qualities of human suffering remain thematically powerful." Survival, resistance, assimilation, and escape were the themes which characterized 18th Century captivity narratives, and they are the same themes which characterize narratives from the Vietnam War and subsequent conflicts. The settings may have changed, but the values at work have not.

Doyle has focused only on American narratives, but one wonders in these same values characterize other nation's captivity narratives. An examination of prison accounts from other countries might reveal that the captivity narrative not only shares timeless values, but universal values as well.

- DR

* * * * *

Hank Rubin, **Spain's Cause Was Mine: A Memoir of an American Medic in the Spanish Civil War** (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997), \$29.95 US, 161 pages, ISBN 0-8093-2159-9.

"Sure." With that one word, Hank Rubin made the decision to leave the security of UCLA and join the International Brigade in Spain. He had been approached about enlisting by a man he describes as "the campus Red." and admits that he surprised even himself by agreeing. His 18-month odyssey began in secrecy, unable to tell his friends or even his family about his decision. When he left Los Angeles on the first leg of his journey, it was ostensibly to take a job in New York City. Nor could he be open about his plans on the boat to France or on the journey south to Spain; he and his fellow volunteers had to keep up the fiction that they were simply young

men on holiday. Reaching Spain, he was assigned to a machine-gun unit of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion but a bout of jaundice sent him to a rear-area hospital, where his medical skills resulted in him being reassigned as a medic and lab technician. He remained in that role until December 1938, when he left Spain with the rest of the International Brigades.

Rubin's book is rather less a memoir than the subtitle suggests, for he has interwoven a good deal of background information with his recollections. Though the context is certainly necessary, especially for readers who are not well informed about the Spanish Civil War, it may have been more effective to separate this material into a single chapter. As it is, Rubin's recollections are broken up by pages of background, robbing them of a certain amount of coherence. Still, they offer a valuable perspective from a thoughtful man who was younger and better educated than most American volunteers. He describes the profound impact of having to play God, by deciding which wounded soldier would benefit from surgery and which was too far gone to save, or by deciding to end the life of a mortally wounded Republican whose pain increased as he slid towards death. Underlying all of these reminiscences is the author's realization that his time in Spain, despite the horrors and privations, was a very maturing experience.

- JFV

* * * * *

Bob Porter, **The Long Return** (privately published, [available from the author at #2603-4288 Grange St., Burnaby, BC, V5H 1P2], 1997), \$19.95 paper, 274 pages, ISBN 0-9681953-0-X.

The advent of desk-top publishing has allowed for a return to the interwar days when commercial publishing was very inexpensive. Just as in the 1920s and 1930s, it is now very easy for

people to produce their memoirs. On balance, the drawbacks of this fact (the appearance of many books which have not benefitted from professional editing) are outweighed by the positive factors (the recording of reminiscences which might otherwise have been lost).

Bob Porter's book is a case in point. The writing is a bit dodgy and it would have been improved immensely by a good editor, but it is nevertheless a fascinating tale. Porter was only 16 when the war began and joined the RCAF in September 1941, immediately after his eighteenth birthday. On 16 June 1944, on his ninth operation, Porter's Lancaster was downed on the way home from the Ruhr; only Porter, the bomb-aimer, and the engineer survived. The latter was captured immediately but Porter went on the run and eventually located the Dutch resistance. On 2 January 1945 he was finally captured while being led across the front lines to safety; a number of his group got away, including Roger Schelderup (see *Canadian Military History* autumn 1996). He spent the rest of the war languishing in various concentration and prison camps.

The most interesting part of the memoir relates to Porter's time spent hiding in Holland. He was shuttled between various safe houses (each of which had a secret room or hidey-hole to be used if the Gestapo came calling) and became quite close to the civilians who sheltered him. The patriarch of one such family was a policeman, who used his position to allow him to move about freely on resistance errands. By a tragic irony, the man was killed shortly after the war when he was involved in a traffic accident with a Canadian Army vehicle. With reminiscences and characters like that, it is easy to overlook the structural problems with the book and enjoy a very good story.

- JFV

* * * * *

Russel Bouchard, **The Fusil de Tulle in New France, 1691-1741** (Bloomfield, ON: Museum Restoration Service, 1997), \$6.95 paper, 48 pages, ISBN 0-919316-36-0.

For anyone interested in firearms used by soldiers, militiamen, Indians, or sailors in New France, this is an essential title. This ground-breaking study first appeared in 1980 as a limited edition of 500 copies, in French, in Chicoutimi, Quebec. Very few arms buffs in the rest of North America's English-speaking community have ever seen it. Now, thanks to Major R.L. Fournier of the Royal 22e Régiment, the work has been translated most skillfully, making this fine study available to a much wider audience.

What makes this study exceptionally fine is the extraordinary research from the French archives that went into it. The muskets made at the manufactory in the French town of Tulle, from the 1690s to the 1740s, were the weapons bought and used by the troops of the Ministry of the Navy. And for New France (including Louisiana), Tulle also made the so-called hunting muskets, which were commonly used by the settlers for hunting, fighting and trade with the Indians, as well as the more ornamental Chief's muskets. The specifications are taken from the original surviving contracts passed between the Navy and the factory at Tulle, the changes in style, length, etc., being chronicled with each new contract for all types of musket (military, trade, buccaneer, etc.) and pistols. Because of this archival data, the musket models are identified by the actual year the model was contracted. These are compared with photos of actual surviving weapons and gun parts. Furthermore, there are good line drawings by the author which reconstruct all types of firearms made in Tulle (since some types are no longer extant). Perhaps some will come forth as a result of this fine

study, which is most reasonably priced and obligatory for anyone with an interest in the French and Indian Wars or the Fur Trade.

- RC

* * * * *

Gerard Oram, **Death Sentences Passed by Military Courts of the British Army, 1914-1924** (London: Francis Boutle Publishers, 1998), £12.50 paper, 128 pages, ISBN 0-9532388-0-6.

More than 3,300 people were sentenced to death by British Army courts martial between 1914 and 1924; the majority of them were servicemen (including 222 Canadians), but over 200 prisoners of war and civilians were condemned as well. Of these a total of 438 people were eventually executed. This book is the first full register of those convictions. Oram has combed the records of the Judge Advocate-General to compile the lists (one alphabetical and one chronological), and has also provided some statistical analysis to make sense of the lists. We find, for example, that nearly two-thirds of the sentences were for desertion, with sleeping at post, cowardice, and disobedience accounting for another 800 condemnations. Death sentences were also passed for crimes like housebreaking, losing army property, pillaging, and attempted assassination.

Like many similar registers, this book is both frustrating and fascinating. Frustrating because, by its very nature, it can only convey so much information. Short endnotes flesh out some of the details, but by and large the entries are confined to the barest essentials and one has to look to other books (like Julian Putkowski's fine *Shot at Dawn*) for greater detail. It is fascinating, though, because of the stories which must lie behind each brief entry. What were the circumstances which led to 17 members of the 19th Durham Light Infantry being sentenced to death for cowardice in December 1916?

What was the tragic story of the Nicholson family of Middlesborough in Yorkshire? On 27 October 1917, Private C.B. Nicholson was executed for desertion, less than ten days after his brother was killed as Passchendaele – were the two deaths related? Does the cluster of desertions by Russian-born Canadian soldiers in the late summer of 1917 have anything to do with events in Russia? Such snippets, ultimately, provide the fascination behind a book like this – it could provide a lifetime of tales for any historian or story-teller.

- JFV

* * * * *

Chris Weicht, **Jericho Beach and the West Coast Flying Stations** (privately published [available from the author, P.O. Box 85, Chemainus, BC, VOR 1K0], \$43.95 paper, 288 pages, ISBN 0-96811158-0-2.

In the summer of 1920, construction began on a flying boat station at Jericho Beach in Vancouver. In subsequent decades, the base was expanded and, beginning in 1939, further flying boat stations and other air force installations were added elsewhere on the west coast. As a teenaged RCAF reservist, Weicht spent much time at Jericho Beach and, later, at the remains of RCAF Bella Bella while working for a commercial airline. His curiosity at discovering the remnants of the flying boat station motivated him to write this book.

It is actually much more than the title suggests. It does provide detailed histories of Jericho Beach and the five other flying boat stations on the west coast (Ucluelet, Alliford Bay, Prince Rupert, Coal Harbour, and Bella Bella), but it also covers #9 Construction Maintenance Unit, the RCAF Marine Squadron, the Radio Detachments and Coast Watch Units of the Aircraft Detection Corps, and defenses against Japanese

submarine and balloon attacks. Each section is profusely illustrated with many rare and unusual photographs, and a detailed appendix describes every aircraft flown by the west coast stations. It is an impressive research accomplishment that will be of interest to aviation historian and air force buff alike.

In the 1960s, the writing was already on the wall for Jericho Beach as the city of Vancouver expressed an interest in acquiring the land for recreational use. That desire, combined with budget cuts by the Department of National Defence, resulted in a gradual reduction of Jericho Beach which would eventually erase most evidence of the military presence there. The Chief of Staff of the BC District hopes that one day a monument will be raised to Jericho Beach, so that park-goers will be aware of the history of the area. As Weicht proves so capably in this book, it is a long and proud history that deserves to be remembered.

- AS

* * * * *

Irene Tomaszewski, ed., **I Am First a Human Being: The Prison Letters of Krystyna Wituska** (Montreal: Véhicule Press, 1997), \$16.95 paper, 217 pages, ISBN 1-55065-095-5

This is admittedly a very difficult collection of letters to read. Wituska was a young Polish woman who collected information on German army and air force movements around Warsaw for the Polish underground. She was arrested in June 1942, and the following April was condemned to death for her activities. She spent over a year on the equivalent of Death Row in Berlin before the sentence was carried out on 26 June 1944. During her imprisonment, she wrote letters to her parents in Warsaw and also smuggled correspondence to the daughter of a guard who had

befriended her and her fellow inmates. Those letters make very compelling, if painful, reading.

It is difficult to say how Wituska coped with the sentence hanging over her, but her letters suggest a remarkable ability to keep her spirits up. She stoically bore the executions of friends, endured the lengthy but ultimately unsuccessful appeal process, and did her very best to prevent her parents from despairing over her fate. She even retained a precocious sense of humour; a caricature of one particularly odious guard, known only as "Acetate Slime," is priceless. Through it all, Wituska never lost the conviction that she had done the right thing, both for herself and her country. She occasionally contemplated suicide, but rejected it because of a determination that her blood be on the Nazis' hands rather than her own. When she went to her death, she did so with the realization that her last obligation to Poland and to her family was to die bravely.

- SL

* * * * *

Paul M. Edwards, **The Korean War: An Annotated Bibliography** (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), \$79.50 US, 360 pages, ISBN 0-313-30317-7.

Reference books are definitely in vogue at the moment, with encyclopedias, dictionaries, and annotated bibliographies being published to cover every imaginable topic. As director of the Center for the Study of the Korean War in Independence, Missouri, Edwards is well qualified to compile this volume, and he has made it very user friendly. The 2,205 entries are arranged thematically, and can be searched using either the author or subject index. A wide variety of different types of accounts are included, from official histories and scholarly studies (monographs, articles, and theses) to unit yearbooks, novels, and propaganda

tracts, and the annotations are brief and to-the-point. In addition, there is a short historical sketch of the Korean War, a statistical summary, and a chronology.

The great drawback to works such as this is the speed with which they become incomplete. Already there are half a dozen additions which could be made to the Canadian section. For this reason, people will suggest that such books should be published on-line, where they can be updated regularly. Doubtless this would be more efficient but part of the pleasure of this book is not to look up specific subjects, but to flip through the pages and see what catches your interest.

- DR

* * * * *

James Hale, **Branching Out: The Story of the Royal Canadian Legion** (Ottawa: Royal Canadian Legion, 1995), 300 pages, ISBN 0-9699510-0-0.

In 1960, the Legion published Clifford Bowering's *Service*, a history of the organization from 1925, when it was formed by the amalgamation of Canada's largest veterans' groups. With this book, Hale has gone back to those early days and brought the story right up to the present. It is a corporate history in every sense of the notion, and rightfully focuses on all the good work the Legion has done, not only for veterans but for school children (through things like the track and field programme and the youth pilgrimages), the elderly (through the gerontology fellowships), and national unity. Nevertheless, Hale doesn't shy away from the more painful aspects of recent Legion history: the now notorious headgear debate; the sometimes bitter debates over the extension of associate memberships; the less than successful Diamond Jubilee celebrations; and the controversies over "The Kid Who Couldn't Miss" and "The Valour and the Horror,"

which earned veterans' organizations few fans in the cultural community.

Each of these episodes is sketched out only in limited detail, and it is clear that much more could be written on them. Indeed, the Legion as a political and social entity deserves a full-scale scholarly study, for few organizations have been involved in so many major issues in Canadian life over such a long period of time.

- JFV

* * * * *

Norman Franks and Alan Bennett, **The Red Baron's Last Flight: A Mystery Investigated** (St. Catharines, ON: Vanwell Publishing, 1997), \$29.95, 143 pages, ISBN 1-55068-046-3.

We are not accustomed to books which combine murder mystery and historical study, but this is essentially a whodunit centred around one of the great unanswered questions of aviation history: who exactly fired the shots which killed the Red Baron? The list of suspects begins with Canadian Roy Brown, who for decades was accepted as the victor in this legendary combat. Claims were also lodged by Australian anti-aircraft gunners Robert Buie, "Snowy" Evans, Vincent Emery, and Cedric Popkin, and by a platoon of Australian infantry. The stakes were obviously very high – did Brown bring down the war's highest-scoring ace, or did von Richthofen remain unvanquished in the air, finally brought down by ground fire?

It would be unfair to spoil the surprise by revealing the authors' conclusion. Suffice it to say that they have presented a highly convincing case, by considering every possible variable. Three-dimensional topographical maps chart the flight paths of the aircraft involved in the final battle. Diagrams trace the probable course of the bullet as it passed through von Richthofen's body, including its

impact on bone and tissue. Analyses are provided of the distances between the various participants, and the speed at which the sounds of different machine guns would have traveled in the prevailing weather conditions. All available eye-witness accounts, from 1918 and those written subsequently, are compared, as are the results of the three medical examinations done on von Richthofen's body. In short, it is a carefully constructed detective story that seems to establish, beyond a reasonable doubt, exactly what happened on that April morning eighty years ago.

- CT

* * * * *

Sheila Penney, **A Century of Caring: The History of the Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada, 1897-1997** (Ottawa: VON, 1996), \$29.95, paper, 148 pages, ISBN 0-9681111-0-6.

Few Canadians have not been touched at one time or another in their lives by the care given by a visiting VON nurse, be it for themselves, for the family's new infant child, or at a parent's twilight of life. This centennial history chronicles the trials, the triumphs, and the challenges of the Order, started in Canada by Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Governor-General, with encouragement from Florence Nightingale, and the remarkable Canadian women who actually got the Order going. They certainly had their opponents, starting with, of all people, Canadian doctors! But they were a determined group and this history is certainly a tribute to their prevailing sense of purpose. While the VON is not a military corps, it was organized along military lines with an administrative command system complete with badges and distinctive uniforms (apart from those required for medical care). And it often acted in conjunction with the military. Among the first VON "missions" was the

dispatching in 1898 of four of its nurses with Canadian soldiers to the Klondike, where they earned the praise of Lieutenant-Colonel Sam Steele of the North-West Mounted Police. Medical nursing services had peculiar challenges during both world wars due to large numbers of medical personnel called overseas. For instance, one-sixth of the VON's nurses joined the services from 1914. Yet the VON still gave signal service following the disastrous Halifax explosion in 1917. The Second World War found the Order training nurses to meet the demand and seeing to the health of workers in war industries. This is an important study for women's history in Canada, as well as for the history of military and wartime medical care. And, one can add, skillfully written with well chosen and evocative photos.

- RC

* * * * *

Carl Benn, **Historic Fort York, 1793-1993** (Toronto: Natural Heritage / Natural History, 1993), \$29.95 paper, 191 pages, ISBN 0-920474-79-9.

Long before the Skydome and the CN Tower dominated Toronto's skyline, the inner harbour was dominated by Fort York, a low, earthen-bermed structure built after 1793 to protect the newly established capital of Upper Canada and British-Canadian shipping on the Great Lakes from American invaders. Despite serving as the seat of the provincial government, the Fort was not recognized by the British as an official military post, and its construction was a low priority. During the War of 1812, York was captured twice and destroyed by US troops, events that in hindsight supported the British policy of reinforcing Kingston and fortifications along the St. Lawrence River (which, out of fear or miscalculation, were never attacked), allowing supply lines into Upper Canada to remain open.

Benn's in-depth narrative of the development of the Fort is but one layer of his analysis. The strength of the book is its description of the players and events surrounding York during and after the War. This establishment was essential as the first hub of York's military, social, and often political scene, as it (in various guises) served as the headquarters for British garrisons and, later, Canadian troops. By the 1880s, rifled cannon, steamships, and railways rendered Fort York obsolete.

If the fort's first century was one of military importance, its second was one of heritage preservation. In 1903 the city of Toronto purchased the Fort from the Canadian military, and sections of it were dismantled to allow the continued expansion of industry. When the city decided to raze many of the remaining 1812-era buildings in order to run a streetcar line, Torontonians formed the Old Fort York Protective Association in 1907. With the support of the Ontario Historical Society, the dilapidated structures were saved. It was not until the 1930s and the coming of Toronto's centennial that the fort was rebuilt. Its battles, however, were far from over. In 1958, Toronto City Council proposed to run the Gardiner Expressway through the middle of the fort. Again, the public and press came to its defence, and the thoroughfare was built over and around the site. In 1985, under the Ontario Heritage Act, the old fort and its out-sites were designated the Fort York Heritage Conservation District.

The story of Fort York is of benefit to both academic and interested alike. Benn draws on a vast range of primary documents and nearly 100 plates and maps (many of them in colour) in a simply written narrative that brings the story of the Fort, its people, and their community to life.

- SS

* * * * *

Jake MacDonald and Shirley Sandrel, with photographs by Tom Thomson, **Faces of the Flood: Manitoba's Courageous Battle Against the Red River** (Toronto: Stoddart, 1997), \$39.95, 120 pages, ISBN 0-7737-3055-9

TTrue to its title, this book emphasizes the human reaction to and ultimate triumph over Nature's devastating ravages in Manitoba in April and May 1997; the faces of despair, hope and solidarity in the photos of Tom Thomson give this book focus. As a counterpoint, we have faces of the Red River: swollen, unrelenting, finally beaten.

Part 1, entitled "You have no idea what's coming," relates the story of the Flood of the Century as the Red River, having virtually destroyed the city of Grand Forks, North Dakota, in mid-April, flowed inexorably northward to merge with melting snow from a huge blizzard earlier that month. The words of the American farmer quoted in the title were ominously true. The authors detail the work of the Manitoba Emergency Management Organization to alert and evacuate populations; the arrival of the Armed Forces and their professional contribution to fighting the flood; the critical and controversial decision to save the city of Winnipeg by building the Brunkild dyke. Against this background of factual information the authors give private stories of beleaguered victims, and the compassionate reaction of the media.

In Part 2, "Definition of a Hero and a Flood Fighter," the perspective resembles that of cinéma-vérité. We see the towns, the farms, the faces of a dozen or more individuals; we learn the meaning of a sign on a local highway that "To help is human, to sandbag, divine." Volunteers participated by the hundreds and Canadians contributed relief support in the millions of dollars. Co-ordinating this Operation Assistance were 8,500 servicemen and women,

representing every branch of the Armed Forces. The book is strong in praise of the professionalism, courtesy, and sensitivity of these men and women.

The text of this book, with its somewhat folksy approach, leaves the reader with the impression of having participated in this awful event. The excellent aerial photographs stun the reader with images of Mother Nature's ferocity, while the close-up and candid photos capture the faces of strain, perseverance and finally, victory.

- JK

* * * * *

A.D. St. Clair, **The Endless War, or 1000 Days in the Bag** (privately published [available from the author at 17 Bramley St. N., Port Hope, Ont., L1A 3A7]), \$20.00, 271 pages, ISBN 0-919899-40-4.

The *Endless War* begins on 18 April 1945, the last day of the author's captivity, then moves to 20-21 June 1942, to describe the Battle of Tobruk, in which St. Clair was captured. The author wrote this book to put on record his time as a prisoner of war, and to answer the question he kept being asked: "How did they treat you?" The book captures the excitement of battle and the boredom of life behind barbed wire in the author's inimitably breezy style. On the first morning of his captivity, St. Clair saw the Cameron Highlanders surrender. In full battle order, with bayonets fixed and swords drawn, the men marched with their colonel and pipers past General Rommel.

St. Clair has a wonderful knack for describing scenes like this, and for capturing the language of men in combat. As a lieutenant in the Royal Artillery, he commanded a troop of three guns at Tobruk. He had no illusions about how his 25-pounders would perform against German Mark III and Mark IV tanks. Serving his gun with its two remaining gunners, St. Clair took on 45 advancing tanks, knocking out three of them in less

than a minute. Then a shell hit the gun, killing his sergeant – "most of him splattered all over me" – and wounding St. Clair and the other man. After a spell in a prison hospital at Caserta, St. Clair began his "endless war" at a camp near Pescara, to which he was moved when he recovered from his wounds. He gives vivid accounts of life in the camp and of his companions, including John Terry, whose sketches illustrate the book. St. Clair's stories of how men behave in battle, and out of it, have a ring of authenticity lacking in too many official wartime accounts.

After a failed attempt at escape, St. Clair and two companions avoided being shot as spies by laughing as they lined up before the execution squad: "I was sure that ordinary soldiers...could not, in cold blood, shoot three innocent Prisoners of War – so long as they were laughing." When Italy signed an armistice with the Allies in September 1943, the Germans moved the prisoners out of the country. They escaped when their train was bombed en route, only to be rounded up later. After spells in two other camps, St. Clair ended his war in Oflag 79 in Brunswick – which was also bombed on 24 August 1944.

After a long, desperate, endless winter, the camp was liberated by "four young Americans who did not even know we were there!" When the promised food did not arrive, St. Clair and comrades "borrowed" a German car, rounded up food from farms, and brought it back to the camp. In battle and the camps, St. Clair developed a philosophy that stood him in good stead in his postwar business and volunteer work: "an individual can affect group situations by taking personal initiatives." *The Endless War* offers remarkable testimony to the resilience of the disciplines human spirit in the worst conditions humans can experience.

- JL

* * * * *

Chaz Bowyer, **Royal Air Force Calshot, 1913-1961** (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Frank Smith Maritime Aviation Books, 1997), \$13.15 US paper, 20 pages, ISBN 0-9531023-00.

For 48 years, until its closure in 1961, Calshot served as an important base for Royal Air Force flying boat operations. This book is a revised version of the souvenir volume that was privately published on the occasion of the base's closure. It provides a brief history of the station from its opening in March 1913 through the First World War (when squadrons based there were involved in anti-submarine work, convoy protection, and aircrew training), the interwar years (when the station hosted the RAF High Speed Flight, which trained for the Schneider Trophy races), and the Second World War (when it trained marine fitters and provided flying boat repair services) to the postwar years (when flying boats from Calshot took part in the Berlin Airlift). The book's real appeal lies in the photographs – dozens of very high quality illustrations from all periods of the station's life, including some excellent aerial shots from 1917.

- CT

* * * * *

Joanne Karetzky, **The Mustering of Support for World War I by The Ladies' Home Journal** (Queenston, ON: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), \$69.95 US, 145 pages, ISBN 0-7734-2250-1.

A study of this sort has tremendous potential to uncover the pressures exerted upon women to ensure their continuing support of the war. *Ladies' Home Journal*, and other magazines like it, were very influential in molding opinion, and we know all too little about the strategies they adopted to do so. For a number of reasons, however, this book falls short of expectations. In the first place, by

limiting her coverage only to the years in which the United States was directly involved in the war, Karetzky avoids any discussion of the position taken by the *Journal* on American neutrality. How did the magazine react to the beginning of the war? What position did it take with respect to the sinking of the *Lusitania* and the adoption of unrestricted submarine warfare? Did it urge women to urge their men to push for America's entry into the war? These are tantalizing questions, and would have made a useful addition to Karetzky's discussion of the war years.

Even that discussion is rather superficial. The obvious points are raised – the campaign for thrift, charity work of various kinds, the language and imagery of war – but little in-depth analysis is provided. The competing pressures on women are mentioned but not engaged in any systematic fashion – how were women affected when they were told, on the one hand, to sew their own clothes and use the money they saved to buy War Bonds, and on the other, to buy new clothes and use the time they saved for charity work? Given the common interpretation of the Great War as an emancipating experience for women, it is surprising that this dimension is also missing. In short, the book's approach is admirable, but the execution is wanting.

- JFV

Alan Galloway, ed., **Colonial Wars of North America: An Encyclopedia** (New York: Garland, 1996), \$95.00 US, 868 pages, ISBN 0-8240-7208-1.

In his introduction, Galloway laments the fact that recent generations have turned away from the study of warfare, "believing that its study brought about the glorification and romanticization they despised." While he may be overstating the point to say that, for many people in colonial North America, warfare was the most

important factor in their lives, it certainly was inseparable from the social fabric of the community and, as such, merits continuing attention. This book aims to provide a reference tool for that attention. It does everything that a book of this sort should. It provides brief explanatory essays on every aspect of warfare from the period, from campaigns to individuals to fortresses to themes. Although the quality is uneven, as it is with any edited volume, the essays are generally well written and readable. Notably, there are entries written by some of the foremost experts working in the field, like Ian Steele, Cornelius Jaenen, James Leamon, and Dale Miquelon. Short source lists are provided for each entry, and a large and exhaustive index makes it easy to locate specific details. Experts of the period may find the entries to be too brief to be of much use, but for all others it is an invaluable reference tool.

- DR

William Gray, **Soldiers of the King: The Upper Canadian Militia, 1812-1815** (Erin, ON: Boston Mills Press, 1995), \$40.00, 288 pages, ISBN 1-55046-1427.

Forty years ago Charles Stacey took aim at the militia myth of 1812, maintaining that it was professional soldiers, not the militia, who saved Upper Canada. William Gray does not quibble with Stacey's basic premise, but his extensive and detailed research into the Upper Canadian militia hints at a more complicated picture. But Gray can only hint. This work is not a history, so it provides few insights into just what role the Upper Canadian Militia could have played.

This work has two parts. The first offers a general guide to the exhaustive personnel lists to follow. Also included is a brief overview of the war, and of the various Militia Acts that dictated the terms of service for all Upper Canadian

males aged 16 to 60. Given the low rates of pay, the province's vulnerability, and general uncertainty about the war, Gray argues how surprising it is that so many names appear on the militia rolls.

The militia lists take up the bulk of the book, over 220 pages. They are organized into eight chapters, and include the names and short entries for 11,000 men. A final, but all too brief, bibliographic note answers some questions about Gray's research, but it raises others. The incomplete record in the National Archives made the work difficult, so he notes: "This work must be viewed as an invitation for further research, not as the definitive work on the men and corps of 1812-1815" (285).

It is not an inviting invitation, for after five years of extensive research he emerged from the archives with not a single footnote. This work may have become the foundation for some exciting quantitative studies of rank, settlement patterns, wounds, and terms of service. As it is, we are left with a long series of lists – and no way to verify them. Indeed, after Gray's reference to the Battle of Chrysler's Farm (it should be Crysler), we might have some spell checking to do.

- GH

Douglas H. Tobler, **The Special Forces Club** (Gun Creek, BC: Gun Creek Publishing, 1997), 87 pages, ISBN 0-9692006-7-6.

The Special Operations Executive [SOE] was established in July 1940 to engage in subversion and sabotage against the enemy overseas. The underground war waged by the SOE in Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and south-east Asia has been documented in many books, but less well known is the fate of the survivors. In 1946, a number of them (along with

veterans of the Special Air Service and the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, which had supplied about 2,000 women to work with the SOE) came together to form the Special Forces Club "to keep alive internationally the spirit of resistance." In 1996, the Club marked its 50th anniversary with a dinner at the Imperial War Museum and the unveiling of a memorial plaque in Westminster Abbey. Of particular interest in this book is the Honour Roll of the SOE. Tobler admits that the roll is incomplete, but it is certainly a start at listing the gallant members of the SOE (including 13 Canadians) who lost their lives during the Second World War.

- DR

* * * * *

Lubomyr Y. Luciuk and Borys Sydoruk, **In My Charge: The Canadian Internment Camp Photographs of Sergeant William Buck** (Kingston, ON: Kashtan Press, 1997), \$14.95 paper, 41 pages, ISBN 1-896354-14-9.

The English-born Buck emigrated to Canada before the First World War, and in 1914 joined the 103rd Regiment (Calgary Rifles). Well past the age limit for overseas service, Buck instead found himself assigned as a guard at the Castle Mountain camp in Alberta, which held Ukrainians who had been arrested and ordered imprisoned on the dubious grounds that they were citizens of an enemy state (the Austro-Hungarian empire). Among the internees were some naturalized British subjects and their Canadian-born children. The authors admit that they know little more than that about Buck's life, or about his feelings towards the internees; they conclude that he probably had "a certain empathy for his charges and awareness of the hardships which they and their guards faced together."

What Buck has left to posterity, however, is a remarkable collection of photographs taken in Castle

Mountain camp and in the internees' winter quarters, the Cave and Basin camp. Buck's own very brief captions have been retained, and the photographs themselves are of a very high standard. They document many aspects of camp life, including work, recreation (there are two lovely shots of a snowball fight between internees and guards), funerals, camp scenery, and inspections. Because there are no known survivors of the camps to which Buck was posted, these wonderful photographs constitute one of the few records available of this little known aspect of Canadian history.

- JFV

* * * * *

Kirk Savage, **Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America** (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), \$35 US, 270 pages, ISBN 0-691-01616-X.

The world's first broad, sustained campaign of memorial-building occurred in the wake of the American Civil War, when citizens' committees across the United States sponsored the erection of monuments to commemorate heroic generals and fallen soldiers. Savage sees those monuments as emblems of post-bellum American society, and reads in them the struggles between competing interests as they sought to refashion the United States in the aftermath of its great national crisis. He discusses monuments to the emancipation of slaves (dominated by the figure of Abraham Lincoln), to Robert E. Lee, to Colonel Robert Gould Shaw (immortalized in the film "Glory"), and to the common soldiers of both the Union and the Confederacy. Savage tries to draw a link between the slave and the soldier, using letters from soldiers which suggest that they perceived their military service as a form of slavery, although the attempt is not entirely successful. The sampling is

insufficient for generalizations, and we have no way of knowing whether these comments were anything but the grumblings of a few discontented infantrymen. The rest of the book, however, is both fascinating and convincing. Given the current interest in monuments and the ways in which they convey meaning, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves* should become standard reading for anyone studying commemoration in any context.

- CT

* * * * *

Jonathan F. Vance, **A Gallant Company: The Men of the Great Escape** (Waterloo, ON: Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, 1998), \$20.00 paper, 331 pages, ISBN 0-9697955-8-0.

Made famous by Paul Brickhill's 1951 bestseller and John Houston's wonderful 1963 film, the story of the Great Escape of March 1944 has more recently been told in a deplorable made-for-TV movie (with Christopher Reeve) and a television documentary done with the assistance of former POWs. With this book, Vance adds a new dimension to the tale. It is essentially a collective biography which focuses on the individuals who were involved in the escape. The full story of the Royal Air Force's battle in captivity, a battle which culminated in the escape of 76 airmen (including nine Canadians) from Stalag Luft 3 in eastern Germany in March 1944, is built around the life stories of the men who waged that battle. We learn of their prewar lives, their decisions to enlist, their training and service careers, and ultimately their role in the escaping war. The effect of this biographical approach might have been to overwhelm the reader with detail, but it does not. Instead, the details put human faces on what have been little more than names in previous accounts.

The book adds considerably to our knowledge of the escaping game, and is full of previously unpublished photographs and anecdotes. Particularly interesting is the story of two pilots, an Englishman and a Czech, who criss-crossed Czechoslovakia for two full weeks before they were finally arrested on their fifteenth day at large. These two men were among the lucky ones. Fifty of the recaptured escapers (including six Canadians) were executed by the Gestapo in the weeks after the break-out.

In researching the book, Vance interviewed most of the survivors of the escape and was also assisted by the families of more than half of the murdered escapers. He wrote the book in part as a tribute to their fortitude, so that the passage of time and the imagination of film-makers would not obscure the exploits of these gallant individuals.

- MB

* * * * *

Remembrances: Interviews with Métis Veterans (Regina, SK: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 1997), \$21.95 paper, 130 pages, ISBN 0-920915-36-1.

This very useful resource was put together through interviews under the auspices of the Gabriel Dumont Institute, a Métis educational organisation, and provides a much needed window into the experiences of Métis men and women in Canada's armed forces during this century. The book is a collection of personal stories from 33 veterans of the Korean War, the Second World War, and remarkably even a few from the First World War, in one accessible publication. It forms a poignant tribute to these brave men and women, as well as to the many others who's stories have been lost or remain untold. In this sense it is fitting that the words of the veterans' words are allowed to speak for themselves, without analysis or interpretation.

The experiences were as varied as the people themselves. Some are highly detailed in their reminiscences, while others gloss over what were clearly painful and difficult episodes in their lives. For some such as Joseph Fayant, who enlisted in 1943, the Army promised a regular pay cheque, clothing and three meals a day, for others like Edith Merrifield, military service promised adventure and travel. Almost all mention the comradeship they found in the forces, as well as the skills and confidence they would put to use in their later lives as leaders in their communities. The discrimination so common in peacetime Canada seemed to disappear once these men and women joined the forces; there people earned respect based on their merits rather than their heritage. Among the most extraordinary experiences was that of Second World War sniper, Joe McGillivray, who in 1945 captured the infamous SS commander Kurt Meyer, a man wanted by Canada for war crimes which included murdering Canadian prisoners during the Normandy campaign.

Remembrances is a welcome addition to our understanding of the war experiences of a people who too often fall through the historical cracks. Canadian military history is a growing and thriving field, and the military experiences of Canadians are well studied. Even the corporate military experience can be reconstructed, however incompletely, for Status Indians through the records of the Indian Affairs Branch. However, the military experience of Métis men and women differed from that of both other Canadians as well as the First Nations. Oral history is perhaps the only way we can preserve and gain understanding of what it meant to be Métis and serving in Canada's armed forces during the First World War, the Second World War or the Korean War. It is for this reason that *Remembrances* is such an important work. One can only hope that its success will encourage other

similar projects to rescue and nurture the experiences of our veterans for future generations.

- RSS

* * * * *

Howard G. Brown. **War, Revolution, and the Bureaucratic State: Politics and Army Administration in France 1791-1799** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), \$108, 361 pages, ISBN 0-19-820542-2.

The outbreak of the Revolutionary Wars in April 1792 eventually brought into being a vastly enlarged French army, inspired by democratic and nationalist ideals, that imposed French hegemony on Europe. Military historians have already examined the structure, composition and tactics of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic army. Brown's book takes another tack, looking not at the army itself, but rather at the War Ministry – the bureaucracy that shaped and ran one of the most successful military machines in European history. Brown sets out "to explain...how power struggles between legislators, ministers, generals, and army contractors determined the nature, timing, and scope of changes to army control and administration" (3).

Some readers may turn away from the many pages allotted to a discussion of theoretical approaches to the process of bureaucratization and the growth of state power, but the bulk of this book, based on extensive archival research, is more empirical. Brown's description of the evolving army bureaucracy is never boring, despite the sometimes overwhelming detail necessary to tell a complicated story. Brown skilfully and painstakingly charts the play of forces that shaped the ministerial bureaucracy: networks of patronage, favouritism and nepotism within the War Ministry; personal rivalries at all levels among its staff; political conflict

between independent-minded generals and a centralizing Ministry anxious to exercise authority over the army in the field; clashes between opposing political factions in the revolutionary assemblies fearful that their enemies would infiltrate and manage to dominate the army bureaucracy. Brown demonstrates that political conflict – the struggle for power among members of the state élite – was more influential than the on-going war itself in the process of rationalization and bureaucratization of the administration.

According to Brown it was a “crisis in army management” that brought down the last Revolutionary regime and opened the way to Napoleon. As it lost popular support and legitimacy, the Directory (1795-99) tightened control over the state bureaucracy, fostering resentment and confusion among the army officers and administration at a crucial moment when France needed a strong fighting army. Napoleon’s *coup d’état* (November 1799) and subsequent reorganization of the War Ministry provided the stability that “allowed [the military bureaucracy] to keep growing, albeit slowly, towards a more formally rational maturity” (289).

War, Revolution, and the Bureaucratic State is proof that a study of politicians and bureaucrats can still make for excellent military history.

- MS

Gerry Embleton and John Howe, **The Medieval Soldier: 15th Century Campaign Life Recreated in Colour Photographs** (London: Windrow & Greene, 1994), 144 pages, over 200 colour photos, ISBN 1 85915-036-5.

The Medieval period is somewhat less known and in fashion than the Napoleonic era or the Second World War to students of military history. It often seems a dark, grey, remote time, filled with

pestilence and dungeons. This book certainly presents a very different, topical and colourful view of the people who made up the various armies of the Medieval period. The work is divided into eight chapters starting with a fine presentation of the 15th century and going on to the raising of armies, the armour, the weapons, castles and sieges, the armies of several powers of the time, campaign daily life and the experience of battle.

The wealth of excellent quality colour photos showing every aspect of a soldiers’ life, in battle as well as in everyday life, brings a new understanding to what a Medieval army must have been like. The superlative museum quality of the costumes, arms and other implements that are worn by real people are more than just convincing; they bring a link that creates a far better understanding of this period. The work is not footnoted and, indeed, not academic in style but has a vast amount of information with ample quotations identified in the text to various chroniclers, which betray an enormous amount of research into contemporary sources by its authors.

It should be added that, although this work is set in Europe, a great deal of what is presented is applicable to the soldiers of the first explorations in America from the end of the 15th century. All in all, a difficult period presented in a most attractive manner in this much recommended work.

- RC

Martin Windrow, **The Algerian War 1954-1962** (London, 1997, Osprey MAA 312, 48 pages, 8 colour plates by Mike Chappell, about 45 B&W ill. ISBN 1-85532-658-2.

The trial of French collaborator Maurice Papon and senseless massacres in Algeria, blared on the medias at the time this review was written, brought home the fact that, in some ways, the Dirty War the

French waged in Algeria still has its terrible sequels. In this work, Martin Windrow has an outstanding summary of various events which should be required reading to anyone delving into this most complicated subject. It is worth the book just by itself. His deep understanding of political and military issues and his skilful pen helps the reader make some sense of the whole mess. For it was just that, a mess. And not just in Algeria for metropolitan France was tremendously shaken and transformed also. The events are detailed with all the various operational data and which units were involved in what. Mike Chappell’s plates have just the right touch with an excellent feel for the period, the types of forces involved, and some of the personalities.

- RC

Michael Jerchel and Uwe Schnellbacher, **Leopard 2 Main Battle Tank 1979 – 1998**. No 24 in Osprey Military Publications, New Vanguard Series, 1998. 48 pages with B&W photos and colour plates.

Osprey have made an art of combining high quality photographs and colour plates with straightforward text to produce a vast array of small booklet publications focusing on almost every aspect of warfare. The New Vanguard series highlights armoured fighting vehicles and includes profiles on the King Tiger, T-34, Sherman, Merkava and Challenger to name a few.

The latest release takes an in depth look at the German-built Leopard 2. The authors of the book have not contented themselves with merely reciting statistics of the tank but have probed deeper, offering an interesting view of some of the procurement and development challenges that arose during the Leopard’s creation. Also included are photographs of specialized variants of the tank such as the

recovery vehicle with the turret being replaced by a larger superstructure and brief accounts of other nations that use the Leopard 2.

Without doubt the New Vanguard series provides the reader with a quick reference that is surprisingly detailed and complex for a reasonable price. With the ever increasing cost of large, hardcover books this smaller format is an excellent alternative and highly recommended.

- CE

* * * * *

Robert S. Raymond, **A Yank in Bomber Command** (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Press, 1998), \$24.95 US, 256 pages, ISBN 0-935553-27-4.

Much has been written of the experiences of American airmen in the famous Eagle Squadrons of the Royal Air Force's Fighter Command, but little on the few Americans who served in other roles in the RAF. This fact alone makes Raymond's memoirs (built around letters he wrote to a distant cousin whom he eventually married) welcome.

Raymond left Kansas City early in the war to join the American Volunteer Ambulance Corps, but was quickly caught up in the confusion as France fell. Finding himself in Lisbon with a number of other Americans, Raymond elected to travel to England in the hopes of fighting against the Nazis in some other way. He soon joined the RAF as a trainee pilot, completing initial training in England before being posted to the Service Flying Training School at Carberry, Manitoba, in the summer of 1941. He flew his first operation in October 1942 and completed a tour of duty with 44 Squadron, eventually transferring to the American forces in 1943. Raymond spent the last two years of the war as an instructor in the United States.

The quality of these letters is unusually high. Raymond wrote

forceful and compelling accounts of his operations, and also wrote frankly about his experiences while on the ground. His comments on the English people and England in wartime are interesting, as they are coloured by a fairly typical American view of the world, and his reflections on the difficulties of leading a bomber crew are also revealing. It took him some time to come to terms with the demands of leading the crew, a role he found especially difficult since he held the rank of Sergeant Pilot; Raymond fully admits that he came close to losing the crew before he did some soul-searching and changed his leadership style. In the end, it is this sort of honesty which makes these letters such a treat to read.

- LF

* * * * *

Bob Moore and Kent Fedorowich, eds., **Prisoners of War and their Captors in World War II** (Dulles, VA: Berg [distributed in North America by New York University Press], 1996), 312 pages, ISBN 1-85973-152-X.

This collection of essays attempts to uncover new aspects of the captivity experience in the Second World War, an experience that the authors note may have involved as many as 35 million soldiers, sailors, and airmen. The intention is not to provide an exhaustive account of captivity during the war, but rather to offer a series of vignettes which highlight specific subjects. So, there are three essays on German and Italian prisoners in Allied hands, a number which examine the bureaucratic aspects of maintaining prisoners, an interesting essay on captor-captive relations on the Death Railway, and David Killingley's excellent article on the treatment of Africans and African-Americans by German and Japanese soldiers. Attempting a broader analysis are Joan Beaumont (with a very useful survey of developments in the

protection of POWs since 1939) and Ikuhiko Hata (with a good examination of the evolution of Japanese attitudes towards captivity). The volume also includes two contributions by Canadian scholars: Charles Roland's discussion of vivisection as practices by the Japanese against Allied POWs, and Jonathan Vance's examination of Canadian policy regarding the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of war. The essays, though disparate in their subject matter, do touch on a number of common themes, including the role of race and ideology in determining the conditions of captivity, and the fact that political considerations often outweighed all others.

- WE

* * * * *

Barbara B. Barrett, Eileen Dicks, Isobel Brown, Hilda Chaulk Murray and Helen Fogwill Porter, eds., **We Came From Over the Sea: British War Brides in Newfoundland** (Portugal Cove, NF: ESPress, 1996), \$11.95 paper, 131 pages, ISBN 0-9681156-0-8.

Compiled by the British War Brides Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, this little book is a collection of brief reminiscences of 76 women who followed their husbands to a far-off land at the end of the Second World War. Some of the women were serving in the British forces when they married, but most were civilians; their new husbands came from all branches of the services, especially the Newfoundland forestry and artillery units. Their reminiscences focus, not so much on their courtship and marriage, but on their arrival in Newfoundland and the subsequent adventures in trying to adjust to an environment that was very different from the Scottish or English cities where they had lived before.

There are some wonderful comments included amongst the vignettes. Helen O'Leary arrived in

St. John's and, with the high snow drifts and the absence of cars, wondered if she was going to the North Pole. In contrast, Doris Griffin arrived in Grand Falls in November 1945 and felt "as if I had stepped back in time, much like walking into Brigadoon!" Indeed, the first sight of Newfoundland seems to have made quite an impression on these women. The comments of Maura Martin are perhaps representative of the culture shock that they experienced, as well as their strength to adjust: "My heart sank when I saw the Southside Hills - not a tree, not a house, absolute desolation. I just stood and had a silent weep. 'Oh, my God, what have I done, and I have no money to go back home!' Now in 1995 I'm still here so it could not have been so bad after all."

- RD

* * * * *

Charles Patrick Weiland, **Above and Beyond** (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Press, 1997), \$29.95 US, 245 pages, ISBN 0-935553-22-3.

If you can get beyond the purple prose on the dust-jacket ("Turning a ragamuffin horde of feisty but underskilled second lieutenants into a smoothly functioning combat squadron was the perfect calling for combat veteran of Major Pat Weiland's enormous combat and training experience"), *Above and Beyond* is actually quite a good read. It is the memoir of a South Dakota farm boy who joined the Marines in 1940 to see the world, and ended up seeing such hot spots as Guadalcanal and New Georgia. After nearly a year in the front lines, Weiland was posted back to the United States, where he was eventually given command of VMF-452, then in training at the Marine Corps Air Station at Mojave, California. The squadron was training for land-based duties, but in late 1944 was converted to aircraft carrier duties, which necessitated a change in the

training regime. In 1945, VMF-452 was posted to the carrier USS Franklin, from which they operated until the ship was badly damaged off southern Japan on 19 March 1945.

The book is all that you would expect the autobiography of a Marine Corps pilot to be: equal parts bravado, blood and guts, and technical talk, with good measures of introspection and reflection mixed in to leaven the mix. As the commanding officer of VMF-452, Weiland was in a perfect position to observe and comment on many aspects of strategy, tactics, and squadron relations, and he does not disappoint.

- WS

* * * * *

Donald E. Graves, **South Albertas: A Canadian Regiment at War** (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1998), \$59.95, 408 pages, ISBN 1-896941-06-0

Unit histories are often a mixed bag of excerpts from the war diary coupled with the recollections of veterans sometimes decades after the events they are recalling. While they are received warmly by the men who served in them for the reader not associated with the unit the history can often seem remote and difficult to decipher. The most recent book in this arena is the history of the South Alberta Regiment and happily it does not fall prey to such pitfalls.

Created shortly after the start of the Second World War, the South Albertas, as the name suggests, came from Western Canada although later they would receive reinforcements from other parts of the country as well. Formed as an armoured regiment the South Albertas would serve in the 4th Canadian Armoured Division landing in Normandy in July 1944 and serving with distinction throughout the remainder of the war as one of Canada's and the Allies' top rate formations. Their reputation as such was forever

assured by their actions during the last days of August 1944 in the closing of the Falaise Pocket which resulted in the commander of "C" Squadron, Major David Currie, being awarded the Victoria Cross. There is perhaps no more famous Canadian photograph of the Second World War than the one of Currie at St. Lambert-sur-Dives on 19 August overseeing the surrender of German soldiers. It is thought that this photograph is the closest one was ever taken to the action that a soldier was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Unlike many unit histories *South Albertas* makes extensive use of not just the unit war diary but many other sources as well creating a highly detailed account that is informative, engaging and often entertaining. In this way Donald Graves has written not just a singular account of the war but instead created a broader, well balanced work that satisfies both the former member of the SAR and the general reader/historian as well.

Included in the history is a colour section of photographs and paintings that add immensely to the book. Well known for his superb box art military paintings for scale replicas, Canadian artist Ron Volstad contributes a painting along with the precise technical drawings of Chris Johnson and George Bradford. There is also the added bonus to this history of the absolute wealth of previously unpublished or rarely seen photographs of a Canadian armoured unit at war. One particularly good example is a series of four photographs on pages 292 and 293 showing a Firefly crew in front of their damaged tank. Exuding confidence despite the strain of combat the crew evoke feelings in the viewer of elite professionals who will get the job done no matter what.

Without a doubt the *South Albertas* is one of the finest unit histories ever published and in fact transcends that genre to rate as a truly great history of Canada at war.

- CE

PUBLICATIONS

available from The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies

A Canadian's Guide to the Battlefields of Normandy
by Terry Copp (ISBN 0-9697955-0-5) \$22.95 \$18.00

A Canadian's Guide to the Battlefields of Northwest Europe
by Terry Copp (ISBN 0-9697955-3-X) \$22.95 \$18.00

Or, take both Battlefield Guides for \$30
(plus GST and shipping)

**Operational Research in 21 Army Group: The Reports of
No.2 Operational Research Section**
forthcoming Summer '98 - \$89 Pre-publication price \$60

A Gallant Company - The Men of the Great Escape
by Jonathan F. Vance (ISBN 0-9697955-8-0) \$20.00

**The Brigade: The Fifth Canadian Infantry Brigade, 1939-
1945**
by Terry Copp (ISBN 0-919195-16-4) \$25.00

**Canada at War, 1939-1945: A Survey of the Archival
Holdings of the Second World War at the National Archives
of Canada**
by Timothy Dube (ISBN 0-9697955-6-4) \$6.00

1943: The Beginning of the End
by Paul D. Dickson (ISBN 0-9697955-4-8) \$15.00

Loyola, The Wars: In Remembrance of "Men for Others"
by Dr. Gil Drolet (ISBN 0-9697955-5-6) \$19.00

**International, Military and Intelligence History: Archival
Sources in Southern Ontario**
by George Urbaniak (ISBN 0-9697955-2-1) \$15.00

To Order: Contact Mike Bechthold, Communications Director,
Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies,
Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON, CANADA; Phone (519)
884-0710 ext.4594; Fax (519) 886-5057; Email
mbechtho@wlu.ca; Visa and Mastercard accepted.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I note that you reviewed Dr. Bill Waiser's book *Park Prisoners: The Untold Story of Western Canada's National Parks, 1915-1946* (Book Review Supplement #6 - autumn 1997). Regrettably, the book failed to mention that there is a statue and trilingual plaque at the site of Castle Mountain internment camp (Banff National Park) commemorating the First World War internees, and another three trilingual plaques at Cave and Basin. There is also a trilingual plaque in Jasper National Park. The statue and plaques were placed there before Dr. Waiser's book was published, as he may have known, but he did not present those details, perhaps in order to be able to end his book with a dramatic flourish. This oversight deserves to be corrected, so that the work of the many volunteers involved in raising the plaques does not go unrecognized.

More information about these plaques can be found on the WWW by checking the Infoukes site under "Internment of Ukrainians in Canada."

<<http://www.infoukes.com/history/internment/>>

Yours truly,

Lubomyr Luciuk, PhD
Royal Military College of Canada

General

A Century of Caring: The History of the Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada, 1897-1997
by Sheila Penney 10

Branching Out: The Story of the Royal Canadian Legion
by James Hale 10

The Empty Sleeve: The Story of the West Indies Regiments of the British Army by Brian Dyde 2

Historic Fort York, 1793-1993
by Carl Benn 11

Jericho Beach and the West Coast Flying Stations by Chris Weicht 9

Remembrances: Interviews with Métis Veterans 15

Royal Air Force Calshot, 1913-1961
by Chaz Bowyer 12

Saint-Exupéry: A Biography
by Stacy Schiff 5

Pre-1914

The Big Guns: Civil War Siege, Seacoast, and Naval Cannon
by Edwin Olmstead, Wayne E. Stark, and Spencer C. Tucker 3

The Burning of the Valleys: Daring Raids from Canada Against the New York Frontier in the Fall of 1780 by Gavin K. Watt 6

Colonial Wars of North America: An Encyclopedia by Alan Gallay, ed. 13

The Fusil de Tulle in New France, 1691-1741 by Russel Bouchard 8

The Independent Highland Companies, 1603-1760 by Peter Simpson 1

The Medieval Soldier: 15th Century Campaign Life Recreated in Colour Photographs by Gerry Embleton and John Howe 16

Soldiers of the King: The Upper Canadian Militia, 1812-1815
by William Gray 13

Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America
by Kirk Savage 14

War, Revolution, and the Bureaucratic State: Politics and Army Administration in France 1791-1799 by Howard G. Brown 15

1914-1939

Barker VC: William Barker, Canada's Most Decorated War Hero
by Wayne Ralph 5

The Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918
by John Bickersteth, ed. 3

Death Sentences Passed by Military Courts of the British Army, 1914-1924 by Gerard Oram 8

The Great War and the Shaping of the Twentieth Century by Jay Winter and Blaine Baggett 4

The Lindbergh of Canada: The Errol Boyd Story
by Ross Smyth 5

Lionel Sotheby's Great War: Diaries and Letters from the Western Front
by Donald C. Richter, ed. 1

The Mustering of Support for World War I by *The Ladies' Home Journal*
by Joanne Karetzky 12

The Red Baron's Last Flight: A Mystery Investigated
by Norman Franks & Alan Bennett .. 10

Spain's Cause Was Mine: A Memoir of an American Medic in the Spanish Civil War
by Hank Rubin 7

Wings of a Hero: Canadian Pioneer Flying Ace Wilfrid Wop May
by Sheila Reid 5

1939-1945

Above and Beyond by Charles Patrick Weiland 18

Aces at War: The American Aces Speak, vol. 4
by Eric Hammel 6

The Endless War, or 1000 Days in the Bag by A.D. St. Clair 12

From Poland to Russia and Back, 1939-1946 by Samuel Honig 4

A Gallant Company: The Men of the Great Escape
by Jonathan F. Vance 14

Herbie and Friends: Cartoons in Wartime
by Barry D. Rowland 4

I Am First a Human Being: The Prison Letters of Krystyna Wituska
by Irene Tomaszewski, ed. 9

In My Charge: The Canadian Internment Camp Photographs of Sergeant William Buck by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk and Borys Sydoruk 14

The Long Return by Bob Porter 7

Prisoners of War and their Captors in World War II by Bob Moore and Kent Fedorowich, eds. 17

South Albertas: A Canadian Regiment at War
by Donald E. Graves 18

The Special Forces Club
by Douglas H. Tobler 13

Voices from Captivity: Interpreting the American POW Narrative
by Robert C. Doyle 7

We Came From Over the Sea: British War Brides in Newfoundland
by Barbara B. Barrett, Eileen Dicks, Isobel Brown, Hilda Chaulk Murray and Helen Fogwill Porter, eds. 17

Work Commando 311/I: American Paratroopers Become Forced Laborers for the Nazis
by Claire E. Swedberg 3

A Yank in Bomber Command
by Robert S. Raymond 17

Post-1945

The Algerian War, 1954-1962 by Martin Windrow 16

Faces of the Flood: Manitoba's Courageous Battle Against the Red River by Jake MacDonald and Shirley Sandrel, with photographs by Tom Thomson 11

The Korean War: An Annotated Bibliography by Paul M. Edwards 9

Leopard 2 Main Battle Tank, 1979-1998
by Michael Jerchel and Uwe Schnellbacher 16

Book Review Supplement Editor

Jonathan F. Vance

Contributing Reviewers

Mike Bechthold
René Chartrand
Ron Dennis
Will Ellis
Christopher Evans
Laura Freniere
Geoff Hayes
Joan Kilgour
Susan Lee
Jim Lotz
David Rozanski
Andrew Sharpe
R. Scott Sheffield
Michael Sibalis
Sean Stoyles
Walter Szabo
Cathy Tersch
Jonathan F. Vance