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CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

BOOK REVIEW SUPPLEMENT

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Christopher J. Gallagher, **The Cellars of Marcelcave: A Yank Doctor in the BEF** (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1998), $24.95 US, 268 pages, ISBN 1-57249-110-8.

The title of this book refers to an episode during the German offensive of March 1918, when Ben Gallagher, a young doctor from Minnesota, found himself caring for dozens of badly wounded soldiers in the cellars of a small town that had been overrun by the advancing Germans. Gallagher was one of the lucky survivors; he emerged from the cellars to spend the rest of the war in captivity, but many of his patients succumbed to their wounds.

This is a most interesting memoir, in large part because it has been all but forgotten that more than 1500 American doctors were seconded to the British Expeditionary Force to fill the depleted ranks of medical officers. Gallagher himself went to a battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment of the 61st Division, reaching the unit in December 1917. He was quickly initiated into the horrors of battlefield surgery, and then witnessed first hand the disintegration of the Fifth Army as the German offensive steam-rolled across France. It is a detailed account, particularly in its discussion of the treatment of the wounded. We read, for instance, of the trauma of triage, or the process of determining who would be treated and in what order; Gallagher had to decide, often within a few seconds, which soldiers would be admitted into the aid post (those who had some hope of recovery) and which would remain outside (those who were past hope). Not only was this hard on the doctors and patients, but it was also heard on the stretcher-bearers, who heard all too often that the fellow they had spent hours bringing to the aid post could not be saved.

Gallagher apparently wrote this memoir in 1919, after he returned from Europe, and it lay forgotten until his family re-discovered it after his death (in part due to the effects of a gassing he received in 1918) in 1962. They are to be commended for bringing this story to light nearly eighty years after it was written.

JFV

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Peter Layton Cottingham, **Once Upon a Wartime: A Canadian Who Survived the Devil's Brigade** (Neepawa, MB: privately published [available from the author at P.O. Box 596, Neepawa, MB, ROJ 1HO], 1998), $14.95 paper, 196 pages, ISBN 0-9680969-1-3.

Peter Cottingham is blunt about why he volunteered for special parachute training that eventually led to a posting to the First Special Service Force: he was bored of sitting around England, and believed that his survival odds were better as a paratrooper than an infantryman wading ashore on the beaches of France. That decision indeed changed Cottingham's war. Instead of fighting through Normandy with the Regina Rifles, he underwent further training in Britain and the US (including at Fort Benning, Georgia, which in

1942 housed some quarter of a million soldiers) before going into action. First was the invasion of Kiska in the Aleutians; the landing was unopposed but friendly fire caused more than a few casualties. Then it was on to Anzio, where the unit took part in the breakout from the beachhead and the pursuit to Rome. Finally, Cottingham served in the south of France until late 1944, when the FSSF was broken up and its members dispersed.

This is a very interesting memoir enlivened by some fascinating details. One is struck, for example, by the number of casualties that were in no way due to enemy action. It is also notable that Cottingham often didn't know whether a member of his unit was Canadian or American, a sure sign of a truly effective integration of men. The FSSF was a unique unit (graduate students looking for dissertation topics take note!), and *Once Upon a Wartime* succeeds admirably in giving us Cottingham's perspective on its history.

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Robert Malcomson, **Lords of the Lake: The Naval War on Lake Ontario, 1812-1814** (Toronto: Robin Bass Studio, 1998), $34.95, 432 pages, ISBN 1-806941-08-7.

This well-illustrated history of naval operations on Lake Ontario during the War of 1812 fills a void in the literature and is a companion piece, in a way, to David Curtis Skaggs and Gerard T. Altoff's *A Signal Victory; The Lake Erie Campaign, 1812-1813* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997) and to the reviewer's forthcoming work on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. At one time an historian might consider writing a comprehensive history of all of the Great Lakes (including Champlain) but, as Malcomson so well knows, the richness of detail compels more specific study. Each lake has a history of its own, as well -- though they all are interrelated and form one grander scheme for the Anglo-American war in the continental heartland.

Lake Ontario was the broad common, to use Mahan's terminology, and competing naval forces crossed and re-crossed almost at will. Its shore saw the rise of respective shipbuilding infrastructures. Amphibious operations here were numerous and various. As the author says of all the struggles along the border between Canada and the United States, that which lasted the longest was the battle for control of Lake Ontario. In the end, though domination passed back and forth, the contest was not decisively won by either side. Any book dealing with Lake Ontario is, by necessity, obliged to deal with the respective commanders, the American Chauncey and the British Yeo. The latter never had sufficient forces, as the documents reveal, and he may never have properly used those he did have. Certainly he starved the British fleet on Lake Erie in 1813. He seems to have placed overly great emphasis on his 104-gun ship-of-the-line *St. Lawrence*, which lay rotting at Kingston until 1832 and disappeared fromhistory. As for Chauncey, he never took up the opportunities afforded him, and was the subject of derision by Winfield Scott, the American commander who said of Chauncey and of Yeo: "The two naval *heroes of defeat* [emphasis in original] held each other a little more than at arm's length — neither being willing to risk a battle without a decided superiority in guns and men" (326). Malcomson says that Scott's condemnation was unfair, and it is the author's view, and I quote, that "throughout most of the war, the commodores fulfilled their responsibilities with dedication and competence, sacrificing their own predilections for the common good; only in the third year did they falter in this regard — Chauncey more so than Yeo — having lost faith in their military colleagues."

We are left with a better understanding of the complexities of command; we are also left with a firmer grasp of the separate actions, and how they all interrelate. This book is well referenced, illustrated and indexed, and is a valuable contribution to the history of this war.

BMG

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Tim J. and Terry S. Todish, **Alamo Sourcebook 1836: A Comprehensive Guide to the Alamo and the Texas Revolution** (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1998), $21.95 US, 216 pages, ISBN 1-57168-152-3.

It must be stated at the outset that this reviewer has no pretension to have expertise on the Texan forces at the Alamo and during the revolution. This review therefore only deals with certain aspects the Mexican forces, a subject upon which the reviewer has done some primary source research. As a general comment, one can say there is a great deal of seemingly useful data in this book, such as a chronology, a list of the defenders of the Alamo, short biographies of many individuals, a most interesting account of the structural evolution of the Alamo, and many more features. This should be a great source book but, sadly, the sources are sometimes given in the narrative but, most often, are not cited at all. The exception is the fine chapter 13 which extracts quotations from various period sources. The worst is chapter 15 on uniforms and arms, which has very scant support for its many surprising statements. The bibliography seems extensive but concerns mostly current publications, current correspondence, and current unpublished papers. The fact that there are no period Mexican sources cited, not even the published legislation and army registers of the 1820s to the 1850s, is a most serious omission.

When it comes to the Mexican army, one is presented with a rather curious assemblage of

secondary sources seasoned by some hypotheses which are seemingly unsupported by any sources. The most disturbing occurs on page 167 when we are told that the Mexican regular cavalry was clothed in dark blue coats with red facings and white metal buttons, and that an "earlier version" of scarlet faced green was "probably not worn in Texas." A most surprising statement as this reviewer's examination of Mexican army general regulations from 1821 to 1839 and Joseph Hefter's landmark study on the Mexican soldier does not mention anything like this. On the contrary, the inference is that the scarlet faced green uniform, introduced in 1824, was worn until 1839 when the regular line cavalry was ordered into various regimental uniforms. We might add that, according to Reuben M. Potter's recollections of the Texas campaign, the Mexican "dragoons wore short red coats, blue cloth trousers and high black leather helmets, decorated with horsehair or bearskin."

On the next page, it is stated that since the militia cavalry had reversed colors, its uniform would be red faced with blue. But these militia cavalry units were specifically ordered to wear green faced red from 1824. We are further told that the light cavalry raised in 1835 wore dark blue when it was medium blue. Fortunately, the frontier presidial companies are correctly given the dark blue jackets they actually had but, again, even this is flawed by adding that a unit "number" could have been at the collar. It would have been a unit initial letter as the presidial companies went by their Presidio's name and were not numbered. Other inconsistencies occur, for instance, with the Mexican artillery uniform described on page 168 as a blue jacket with red collar and turnbacks with a rather surprising blue cuff with red cuff flap, quite different than the uniform illustrated on page 22.

Among other fascinating but unsupported statements are issues of British Baker rifles to specific units or that cavalry had British Paget carbines. Mexico did indeed buy 2000 Baker rifles in the 1820s but Mexican army primary data regarding issues in 1835-1836 to specific units seems elusive so far and is not given in this volume. One can also wonder about Paget carbines as the universal arm, as some Spanish-style cavalry carbines were still used in the Mexican-American War ten years later.

There many more inconsistencies in this sourcebook. The illustrations by Ted Spring lack a certain finesse and are often too caricatured.. All were done in colour but are reproduced in black and white, resulting in blotches which often obscure detail. This results in a certain instinctive doubt as to the accuracy of what is illustrated. Simple line drawings, with scales for objects, maps, and structures, would have been a wiser choice and would have better conveyedthe information to the reader. And there are no photos of artifacts or portraits, which would have made a fine primary source.

All in all, this volume packs a lot of interesting data on the Alamo, but it mixes and matches many things, resulting (as shown in the few examples above) in flawed or incorrect statements. A pity as this fascinating subject could have benefited considerably from a more rigorous study supported by good illustrations and photos. Such as it is, it forms a "sourcebook" with a regrettable lack of sources.

RC

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Hans-Georg Neumann, **A Man Worth Knowing** (Toronto: Natural Heritage / Natural History, 1996), $19.95 paper, 192 pages, ISBN 1-896219-04-7.

Hans-Georg Neumann might be best known to readers for his postwar activities; as a food importer, he was responsible for bringing Knorr soups to Canada. As a younger man, however, Neumann had been a signals officer in the German army, serving under Erwin Rommel in North Africa before being taken prisoner at Bardia in November 1941. He spent a few months in a camp in South Africa, was moved to Canada in 1942, and sat out the rest of the war in the prison camp at Gravenhurst, Ontario. In 1946, Neumann left Gravenhurst to be repatriated to Germany, only to return to Canada with his new bride in 1951. From his experiences as a POW, Neumann had decided "that in Canada - if one worked as hard as one had to in Germany just to make a living ... - it was possible to get ahead."

There is much of interest in these memoirs. Neumann was reasonably close to Rommel in the early campaigns in North Africa, and has many interesting comments about the legendary general's leadership and command style (not to mention some rather unflattering assessments of their Italian allies). He was also a keen observer of the group dynamics among his fellow POWs, and sheds light on how various types of German prisoners adapted to captivity. One does wish, however, that Neumann had been more frank in his opinions about the regime for which he fought; it is always vaguely disturbing to hear the old line, "I was a soldier - what did I know about politics?". Still, it is hard to disagree with the title of the book; this fine memoir does indeed bear out the claim that Neumann was a man worth knowing.

JFV

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John Phillip Langellier and Daniel B. Rosen, **El Presidio de San Francisco: A History under Spain and Mexico, 1776-1846** (Spokane: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1996), $35.50 US, 230 pages, ISBN 0-87062-239-0.

This work is the military history of San Francisco in its first 70 years as a "presidio," as the Spanish called their frontier fortified

outposts. Although the Mexicans were more or less in charge of California from 1821 to 1846, most of this book deals with the Spanish period which saw the construction and settlement of the community. It was, at least initially, a largely military community with the hard-riding Cuera cavalry and also Catalonian Volunteers colonial troops. For a short while, there was even a Nootka connection, as San Francisco was a relay to that Spanish post which is now in present-day British Columbia.

The study, based on extensive documentation from US, Mexican, and Spanish sources,examines all important subjects in considerable detail with excellent references. And the community as a whole is examined, not just the garrison, although the emphasis is naturally on the military aspect. The construction of fortifications and various structures are also discussed, within the limits of the available documentation. One should point out that the material culture of the troops is very well and ably covered with excellent descriptions taken from various accounts. A superb study of one of the earliest and most important garrisons in the early history of the West Coast.

RC

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John L. Munschauer, **World War II Cavalcade: An Offer I Couldn't Refuse** (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1996), $18.95 US paper, 200 pages, ISBN 0-89745-194-5.

As the title suggests, Munschauer was something of a reluctant warrior. He was drafted into the US Army in April 1941 and, although he had sufficient education to secure a commission, opted to serve in the ranks, on the strength of the American government's promise that drafted rankers would only have to serve for one year. After Pearl Harbor, when it became clear that the one-year rule was no longer in force, he opted for a change and eventually rose through the ranks to serve as a Medical Administrative Officer. Then, Munschauer volunteered for infantry duty; "why would anyone do anything so stupid?", he writes, before going on to discuss the mixture of feelings, including romanticism and a determination not to miss the fighting, that motivated his decision. He was duly trained as an infantry platoon leader and shipped out to join the 63rd Infantry in Luzon, the Philippines, where his unit was engaged in flushing out the remaining Japanese defenders. When the war ended, Munschauer was in hospital recovering from hepatitis, but he regained his health in time to serve with the American occupation forces in Korea.

The memoir is a valuable glimpse at the campaign in Luzon, a bitter battle in which the huge Japanese garrison was whittled down to a few hundred survivors by the time the war ended. Munschauer's unit worked its way up a dirt road north of Manila, clearing caves and pits of Japanese soldiers as they went. It was hard, slogging fighting, and *World War II Cavalcade* describes it well.

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Helen McCorry, **The Thistle at War** (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland [distributed in Canada by UBC Press], 1997), $18.95 paper, 128 pages, ISBN 0-948636-91-2.

This book is a compilation of extracts from various letters, memoirs, and publications which describes the military experiences of Scots during the last four centuries. One might expect many battle accounts of Scots wielding claymores, and there are some, but the selection is remarkably balanced. It makes one realize that the Scottish soldiers served in the four corners of the earth, in peace and in war, with great sensitivity for the people and the places they saw. And they also made some wise observations about their lives as soldiers and about the army. There is substantial military social history in the extracts. Replete with valuable extracts from often rare accounts, this volume is also exceptionally well illustrated with numerous pictures which ably support the text.

RC

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Eric Hammel, **Aces in Combat: The American Aces Speak**, vol. 5 (Pacifica, CA: Pacifica Press, 1998), $29.95 US, 296 pages, ISBN 0-935553-28-2.

The latest volume in this excellent series brings together the experiences of 39 pilots, including some unusually interesting vignettes. Jack Ilfrey relates the story of a flight from England to Gibraltar that was broken by an unplanned stop in Lisbon when he ran out of fuel. Facing internment in neutral Portugal, he watched his captors refuel his P-38 so he could test-fly it, then took advantage of a diversion to hop in the fighter and roar off to Gibraltar. His flight from neutral territory reached the ears of Eisenhower, and nearly caused an international incident. Charlie Sullivan writes of being shot down over New Guinea and falling into the clutches of not-so-friendly natives. He narrowly escaped being the guest of honour at a ritual execution by blasting his way out of a bamboo hut with his service pistol and taking to the hills alone, eventually meeting up with some Australian coast-watchers who guided him to safety. For those readers interested in technical aspects, the volume provides interesting insights into the flying characteristics of the P-38 Lightning; some pilots loved it, while others found it a challenging and even frightening aircraft to fly.

Presumably Eric Hammel will run through all of the American aces

some day. Until then, keep these volumes coming!

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Robert L. O'Connell, **Ride of the Second Horseman: The Birth and Death of War** (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997), $25.95 paper, 320 pages, ISBN 0-19-511920-7.

It is often said that war is an inseparable part of the human condition: that the urge to make war is inherent in humans, and has been present ever since we first walked upright on this planet. Robert O'Connell takes issue with that conventional wisdom in this fascinating book. He first distinguishes warfare (characterized by premeditation, some form of governmental direction, concern for societal rather than personal issues, the willing participation of combatants, and the intent to achieve lasting results) from blood feuds and revenge killings, and then makes a persuasive case that it emerged around 5500 BC as result of a number of highly specific circumstances. The two most significant of these were the adoption of sedentary agriculture (including the domestication of plants and animals) by humans, which tied them to territory, thereby ending the nomadism which had served as the escape route from warfare in the past; and the rise of pastoralism, including the development of horse-riding skills and the tendency of pastoral tribes to look scornfully upon tribes which were tied to the land. Warfare began with brutal raids by horsemen, whose equestrian skills gave them the ability to take what they wanted from settled tribes, and brought in its train the progressive fortification of settlements, growing urbanization and all of the attendant social changes, the rise of military elites, the development of new and better weapons, and the rise of states, like Assyria, which seemed to exist only to make war. O'Connell ranges widely over the centuries, visiting the Minoans, Sumerians, Aztecs, Chinese, and a host of other peoples, carefully testing his hypothesis in these very different societies. The very nature of the subject matter means that much of his argument is based on speculation, but it is nonetheless utterly convincing. Even his reconstructions of episodes in theearly history of warfare (which begin each chapter) have a resounding ring of authenticity.

Just as warfare emerged because of very specific circumstances, O'Connell reasons that it will disappear once those circumstances no longer exist. Indeed, he argues that war is growing increasingly irrelevant as the conditions which gave it birth are slowly changing. Lest anyone scoff at his optimism, however, it is well to recall that the birth of war occurred over many millennia, and the death of war is likely to take as long. For in the great scheme of things, the history of warfare may well be quite brief. Human history spans millions of years; warfare has only been with us for some 7500 years and, if O'Connell is correct, might only have a few centuries of life left.

WS

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Spencer Dunmore, **Wings for Victory: The Remarkable Story of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan in Canada** (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1994), $29.99, 400 pages, ISBN 0-7710-2972-6.

The story of the BCATP has been told many times, but Spencer Dunmore gives it new life in this comprehensive account of the plan. He deals with both its administrative aspects (the long debates between the governments of Canada and Britain over establishing the training program) and its social aspects (the consequences of bringing young men from around the world to small Canadian towns) to produce a detailed but still very readable book. Full of entertaining and moving anecdotes, it describes the training routines (both for pilots and other trades), the life of the instructor, the dynamics of life on training stations, and surveys the amazing output of the plan: over 130,000 aircrew training, including 50,000 pilots, 30,000 navigators/observers, and 15,000 air gunners. By any yardstick, this contribution to the winning of the war was immense. Working in the plan may not have been glamorous, but it was as essential to victory as any task in the front lines.

Spencer Dunmore has written many aviation novels, and also co-wrote the history of the Canadian 6 Group of Bomber Command. He has won his author's wings again with this fascinating book.

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L.V. Scott, **Conscription and the Attlee Governments: The Politics and Policy of National Service, 1945-1951** (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), $108.00, 304 pages, ISBN 0-19-82042103.

Conscription in Britain lasted until 1957 yet, as Scott argues, it was the immediate postwar period which saw the most contentious debates. A complex web of factors affected the decision of Clement Attlee's Labour government. The belief of some party members that conscription was fascistic had to be balanced against the belief that military service could legitimately be expected of citizens, given the benefits they were receiving from the welfare state. Demands for military manpower (for home defence, occupation forces, garrisons in the Middle East and India, and strategic reserves) were considerably greater than the severely weakened British treasury

could bear. Many people were reluctant to make decisions on conscription until Britain's postwar foreign policy was formulated, yet that process would take time while a decision onconscription simply could not be delayed. In the end, Attlee's government opted to continue conscription in the postwar era in the sincere hope that it would be merely a temporary measure until Britain's military commitments could be reduced to the point where they could be fulfilled by volunteer regular forces. The hope proved vain; new commitments were added to the old, and before long the army and the RAF were dependent on conscription to meet their ongoing obligations.

The book is a revised version of the author's doctoral thesis, and is an exhaustive and closely argued account. It focuses strictly on the political and administrative aspects of the subject, leaving the social history of postwar conscription to other historians. Scott does an excellent job of explaining the irony of a Labour government opting to retain conscription in peacetime; perhaps next he will turn his pen to the related irony, of a Conservative government opting to abolish it.

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Gwladys M. Rees Aikens, **Nurses in Battledress: The World War II Story of a Member of the Q.A. Reserves** (Halifax: privately published [available from the author at 604-6369 Coburg Rd., Halifax, NS, B3H 4J7], 1998), $15.00 paper, 157 pages, ISBN 0-9683950-0-7.

First-hand accounts of women at war are rare. And this book by Gwladys Aikens on her service with the Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service / Reserve (the QA Reserve) in North Africa, Italy, and Britain is a fine addition to military literature. The QAs have no war memorial, and Aikens wrote her book to provide one for her old comrades. She has done them proud in this well written narrative that takes the author from her enlistment in 1941 to her discharge on 22 January 1946. She came to Canada with her late husband, Major Robert Aikens of the RCAMC, who hailed from Stellarton, Nova Scotia.

Nurses in Battledress adds a lot of interesting footnotes and insights to the story of the Second World War. It mentions a small paperback called *Dachau* which circulated in a hospital in Sheffield in 1940, horrifying the staff. Caught in the blitz in that city, the author and a friend decided not to duck into an air-raid shelter in the basement of a department store, learning later that it had been hit, killing everyone in it. Aikens survived the sinking of the troopship *Strathallan* in the Mediterranean on 21 December 1942, and gives an excellent account of the nightmarish feel of that event. She was in Bari, Italy, when German bombers sank 16 ships in the harbour on 2 December 1943. One ship carried mustard gas that drifted over the harbour - something the Allies strove to keep secret. Aikens writes graphically of the suffering of the men rescued from the sunken ships, covered in oil and gas. The author is reticent about what she saw in the hospitals, but her compassion emerges as she tells the stories of some of the wounded.

Nurses in Battledress catches the ambiguity of military life. Aikens was posted home when her mother fell ill - and court-martialled for being four days late returning from her honeymoon. The recall telegram went to the wrong address. Another story illustrates the author's courage and dedication. A door locked behind her on a hospital train, so she edged her way around the side of the carriage to get back to her patients.

The book contains clear maps showing the author's movements, and photographs are well integrated into the text. It ends with a newspaper account of a QA Reservist who did not survive the war. *Nurses in Battledress* is more than just a war story. It tells of the kinds of values - courage, dedication, compassion, service - that marked the work of the QAs, and how one of itsmember expressed them in action.

JL

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Raymond Campbell Paterson, **A Land Afflicted: Scotland and the Covenanter Wars, 1638-1690** (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1998), £12.95 paper, 308 pages, ISBN 0-85976-486-9.

The Wars of the Covenant began when the Scottish people, led by a young woman, rejected the new Anglican prayer book. That event snowballed into a rejection of Anglicanism, which in turn brought war with England. That series of wars, which became tangled with the English Revolution, lasted until 1690, when the Presbyterian system of church government was enshrined into law for Scotland.

The wars were punctuated by some of the bitterest engagements ever fought on British soil. The Battle of Marston Moor, in 1644, involved over 44,000 soldiers and changed the course of both the English Revolution and the Covenanter Wars. The Battle of Dunbar, in 1650, pitted some 20,000 Scots against 11,000 men of Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army; the Scots were crushed and 10,000 became prisoners, a capture bag that rivals many seen in modern conflicts. The wars also saw some important changes in the military arts. Before 1638, England and Scotland had enjoyed a century of peace, during which time innovation had changed the face of war. In the interval, many Scots fought in the Thirty Years' War under the man most responsible for those changes, King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, and the impact of new tactics and weapons made themselves felt in the Wars of the Covenant.

This is the third volume in Paterson's history of early Scottish wars, and it is fully up to the standard of the first two. The battles are described clearly and carefully, and the political and religious background is recounted with equal adeptness. This is likely to be the last word on the Wars of the Covenant for some time.

WS

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Ronald C. Weyman, **In Love and War: A Memoir** (Toronto: Simon & Pierre, 1995), $17.99 paper, 111 pages, ISBN 0-88924-268-2.

Ronald Weyman had a long and varied career in the RCNVR. He served on a trawler out of Scapa Flow (with a crew that was not above salvaging beached vessels to sell the spoils), was aboard the destroyer HMS *Achates* when it was hit by a mine on the way to Murmansk, did convoy duty on the HMCS *St. Croix*, commanded an LST converted into a radar ship during the Normandy invasion, and captained an LST from Quebec to the Pacific to convey Indian troops to Malaya and Burma to mop up after the Japanese surrender.

All of this varied experience makes the reader wish the author had written at greater length. Some of his postings are covered in a few short pages; even in the longest sections, one is left craving more description, more anecdotes, and more texture. Weyman is more known as an artist and film-maker than a writer but this memoir proves he can write, and write well. It's just unfortunate that he didn't write more.

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David F. Burg and L. Edward Purcell, **Almanac of World War I** (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky [distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services], 1998), $36.95, 320 pages, ISBN 0-8131-2072-1.

This valuable reference book provides a day-by-day account of the First World War, with each entry divided geographically. For example, "20 June 1917: Russia - The offensive of the Seventh and Eleventh Armies ends as the troops refuse to continue fighting. Trentino - Italian airplanes bomb Austrian positions, but even though Cadorna has 145 airplanes against the Austrians' 26, his offensive shows signs of faltering. London - Haig receives unexpected support before the War Cabinet from Admiral Jellicoe, who asserts that shipping losses are so great that, unless the British can seize the ports at Zeebrugge and Ostend from the Germans, the war cannot continue. 'There is no good discussing plans for next spring - we cannot go on,' declares the first sea lord."

Highlighted text boxes covering themes like trench warfare and poison gas are scattered throughout the text, as are many good photos (although they are drawn almost entirely from American sources and so favour American views). The maps are from C.R.M.F. Cruttwell's *A History of the Great War, 1914-1918*, and not all are as clear as they might be; newer, better drawn maps would have been a worthwhile investment. The volume ends with useful biographies of the major figures, and a bibliography which is short and somewhat dated. In sum, this is a good, serviceable work for the general reader but not likely to be of much use to the specialist.

JFV

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David F. Marley, **Wars of the Americas: A Chronology of Armed Conflict in the New World, 1492 to the Present** (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1998), $99.00 US, 736 pages, ISBN 0-87436-837-5.

To write a chronology of battles and campaigns that encompasses the whole of the American continent is a daunting challenge. North American and Western European readers are used to seeing much literature on the conflicts in the United States, the American Revolution and Civil War in particular, and in Canada, especially on the eighteenth-century French and Indian Wars. These in fact form an important part of this book and would be by themselves a good reason to have it on one's reference shelves. But it contains a great deal more. The New World is correctly defined from the southern tip of South America to the Canadian Arctic for the purposes of this book. This means that engagements which occurred in Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, and all of South America are also covered. Marley, who obviously has a commanding knowledge of these conflicts, delivers a truly extraordinary chronology which starts with the European record of America by Christopher Columbus from 1492. And this work deals with naval battles as well as actions on land which makes it all the more complete and valuable.

This mass of data, outstanding and not found under one cover in any other publication in any language, is organized clearly and with intelligence. The organization of the chronology does not take the reader in confusing jumps from one country to another with each date change. It respects the integrity of each general conflict. For instance, the American Civil War is discussed on its own, followed by the French intervention in Mexico, although both eventsoccurred at about the same time. Each of these sections is introduced by a short and really fine text summarizing the conflict and its results. Battle chronologers usually shrink when it comes to such data as it requires a good deal of research, especially for the lesser known conflicts. Yet this type of information is an enormous help to many historians, archeologists, curators, and persons involved in living history. Whenever possible, outside the better known battles for which this information is easily available, the author has named the

units or the ships involved in the engagements. This is almost a Godsend as this type of information can be extremely hard to obtain for the more obscure or distant battles.

The maps are clear and easily understood and there are many illustrations with the text which are quite interesting by themselves. Most of them are not often reproduced and seen *ad nauseam* in many books, so that the originality of this work is also evident from that aspect. Chronologies do not come with footnotes but this one comes with a good bibliography organized according to each section for easy reference. Finally, a good index rounds out this truly excellent and hefty reference work.

RC

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Harry Fisher, **Comrades: Tales of a Brigadista in the Spanish Civil War** (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), $35.00 US, 197 pages, ISBN 0-8032-2006-5.

Like the veterans of many wars, the former *Brigadistas* are a dwindling lot. That very fact probably had a lot to do with the recent resurgence of scholarly interest in the Spanish Civil War, a resurgence which has produced some very fine memoirs from former members of the International Brigades. A number of these have been reviewed in previous editions of the Book Review Supplement, and *Comrades* is in the best tradition of these reflections. Harry Fisher was entirely typical of the foreigners who went to fight for the Loyalists in Spain. Trade unionist, social activist, member of the Young Communist League, Fisher had a deep ideological commitment to the battle against fascism in Europe. He had as much disdain for the Franco forces as he did for the western governments which did their best to guarantee a fascist victory by cutting off all aid to the Loyalists. But Fisher is not blinded by his ideology; he knows that not all *Brigadistas* were saints, and not all fascists were devils. What emerges from this realization is a very human account of men in war.

Fisher spent eighteen months in Spain, fought as an infantryman at the Battle of Jarama, and spent the rest of the war as a communications specialist, maintaining telephone contact between elements of the International Brigades. Casualty rates in the American Abraham Lincoln Brigade (and in the International Brigades generally) were frighteningly high, and Fisher outlived a good number of his friends (some of whom he had known from his experiences in labour activism in the 1930s). Many of the survivors were deeply scarred, not only by what they saw in Spain, but by their stigmatization by the American government which continued well into the 1950s and beyond. Yet there are few traces of bitterness in Fisher's recollections, and no sign that the horrors of Spain caused him to doubt his ideals. He enlisted to fight fascism again in the Second World War and is clearly still committed to the values he fought to defend in 1937. He thought about writing these memoirs for many years but they do not suffer for having gestated for so long. Even though they were written nearly sixty years after the event, they retain a power and immediacy that is striking.

JFV

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Bill Bunbury, **Rabbits and Spaghetti: Captives and Comrades. Australians, Italians and the War** (South Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press [distributed in North America by International Specialized Book Services], 1995), $19.95 US paper, 215 pages, ISBN 1-86368-122-1.

At first glance, it might seem that this book has little relevance to the Canadian context. It is an oral history collection which deals with the experiences of three groups: Italian-Australians who were interned by the Australian government in the Second World War, Italian prisoners of war who were transported to Australia to serve as an agricultural labour force, and Australian soldiers who were captured in the Western Desert and imprisoned it Italy.

In fact, the book has considerable interest for a Canadian reader, because of the striking similarities between the situations in Australia and Canada. Italian-Australians found themselves in precisely the same position as Japanese-Canadians: they were subject to a variety of sanctions, including the seizure of their fishing boats, which were eventually sold at fire-sale prices. Males of military age were interned, despite their protestations of loyalty, for the duration of the war. By the same token, Italian POWs must have found their life in Australia quite similar to the lives of German POWs held in Canada; they were generally well treated, and even developed close personal relationships with some of the civilians they encountered. In this regard, the book offers an Australian version of theme raised in J.L. Granatstein et al's *Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War*. Australian civilians treated Italian POWs well in part because they hoped that Italian civilians would reciprocate in the treatment of Australians in Italy; interestingly, the latter report that Italian civilians made precisely the same point to them. As this very interesting book makes clear, other nations detained what were essentially mutual hostages during the Second World War.

DR

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Lubomyr Y. Luciuk and Ron Sorobey, **Konowal** (Kingston: Kashtan Press, 1996), $15.00 paper, 18 pages, ISBN 1-896354-12-2.

In 1996, *Canadian Military History* published an article on the sad postwar life of Ukrainian-

Canadian Victoria Cross winner Filip Konowal. In many ways, this souvenir booklet complements that article. It does not dwell on the unfortunate circumstances which led to Konowal's committal after having been charged in the death of a Hull, Quebec, man in 1919, but instead offers a thumbnail sketch of his life, focussing on the battle for Hill 70 in August 1917, during which he won the Victoria Cross. A postscript describes the effort to commemorate Konowal by erecting plaques in his honour in Ottawa, Toronto, and New Westminster, British Columbia. Simple yet informative, an added attraction of this trilingual (English, French, and Ukrainian) is that it is very nicely designed and beautifully produced.

WM

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Leon C. Standifer, **Not In Vain: A Rifleman Remembers World War II** (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), $16.95 US paper, 277 pages, ISBN 0-8071-2338-2.

As a teenaged high school graduate from Mississippi, Standifer enlisted in the Army Specialized Training Program, for the simple reason that he believed it would keep him out of the firing line. When the program was cancelled, he was shocked to discover that he would be trained as a rifleman, yet he soon came to respect and even love his life as a member of what he fondly calls the Queen of Battle. He was nineteen when he went overseas, and he eventually found himself with the 94th Division, on what was a relatively easy duty: laying siege to the German defenders of Lorient in Brittany. Standifer was a first scout, the point man whenever his platoon went into action, and it was a job he relished. Despite his tender years, he was confident of his abilities and liked nothing better than earning the respect of his comrades by expert scouting. Standifer was wounded by a machine gun in October 1944 but missed the company of his pals and went AWOL to return to his unit, despite the fact that he was not fully recovered. In January 1945, he was involved in another action, at Nennig in western Germany, but illness and exhaustion caught up with him and he was sent to the rear area again. He did not return to the firing line, but his recollections of service with the occupation forces can be found in an earlier memoir.

The greatest strength of this fine book is its introspection. Standifer was very young when he went into battle, but he has spent the last five decades pondering his experiences. Particularly disturbing to him was the fact that he, a devout young man from a deeply religious town, could slit the throat of an enemy soldier almost as a reflex action. This episode leads him in this memoir to consider the age-old question, why men fight - is it for patriotism and one's country, or is it for personal honour and the men in one's platoon? Given the revival of interest in the American infantryman of the Second World War, what we might call the "Private Ryan Syndrome," his answers are poignant and revealing.

DR

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H.S. Yoder, Jr., **Planned Invasion of Japan, 1945: The Siberian Weather Advantage** (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997), $25.00 US, 161 pages, ISBN 0-87169-223-6.

One of the many considerations involved in the planning for the invasion of Japan was weather. The experience of the Normandy invasion had proven how much damage a major storm could do to a fleet, a lesson which was impressed on commanders in the Pacific on 18 December 1944, when a typhoon struck Admiral Halsey's fleet off Luzon and sank three destroyers with a loss of nearly 800 men. The US and Soviet governments had been exchanging weather information since September 1941, but in-depth planning for the invasion of Japan made it essential that these arrangements be expanded. Japan's weather comes primarily from Siberia, and in July 1945 agreement was finally reached to place 2 US Navy weather stations in Siberia. Japan's surrender did not alter these plans, for it was clear that accurate weather information was still essential for the safety of mine-sweeping operations, the transport of occupation troops and supplies, and the relocation of the Pacific fleet. The stations at Kharbarovsk and Petropavlovsk remained operational until December 1945, when the personnel and equipment were returned to the US.

Yoder served as a meteorologist with the Siberian expedition (code-named MOKO) and has written a most interesting account of an all but forgotten aspect of the Pacific war. Quite apart from the details of the stations' operations, he provides fascinating anecdotes of life in the Soviet Union. The Russians and Americans got on very well together in private, but theatmosphere cooled dramatically whenever anyone might be watching. This, combined with the reluctance of anyone to make a decision lest it irritate superiors in Moscow, make the MOKO expedition more than a little challenging. Yoder does not venture into a discussion of the need for an invasion in the first place, or whether or not the atomic bombing was necessary to avoid a costly invasion (he believes it was). Fortunately, such a discussion is not missed, for the story of the MOKO expedition is interesting enough to stand on its own.

WE

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John Sloan Brown, **Draftee Division: The 88th Infantry Division in World War II** (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1998 [1986]), $15.95 US paper, 225 pages, ISBN 0-89141-666-8.

Brown begin this book with the statement "Americans are an unmilitary people" (which is enough to raise the eyebrows of many readers), and then goes on to observe that its subtitle might be "How We Created a Division Out of Raw Draftees and Led Them to Victory Over the Most Highly Touted Army of Modern Times." When we learn that both Brown's father and grandfather served in the division, we might be prepared for an uncritical exercise in hagiography and Whig history. Instead, this is a solid, objective unit history which detail both the strengths and shortcomings of the Blue Devils. General training was excellent, but cooperation with tanks and tactical support aircraft was under-emphasized. There were more than enough trucks to provide logistical support, but not enough spare parts or trained mechanics. Identified as deployable in August 1943, it was not until March 1944 that the division took over a sector of the line on the Italian front. There, the division acquitted itself well. In its first major action, Operation Diadem in May 1944, the Blue Devils successfully breached a section of the Gustav Line, and in the pursuit to Rome it again proved its mettle, and validated the faith that many Americans had placed in the draftee divisions.

The book's one weakness is that it is too short. The fighting from Rome to the Alps is covered in one short chapter, and generally Brown has neglected the experiences of the average soldier: we learn what the draftee division did, but we hear far too little about what individuals draftees experienced. Even with this shortcoming, the book is an impressive achievement, both as a history of the 88th Division and as a general study of the problems faced in readying draftees for battle.

JFV

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Ken Tingley, ed., **The Path of Duty: The Wartime Letters of Alwyn Bramley-Moore, 1914-1916** (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 1998), $19.95, 140 pages, ISBN 1-55056-567-2.

It is a real treat to come across a collection of letters that are out of the ordinary, as these are. Bramley-Moore was an unusual soldier in many respects. He was older than most; he left five children behind in Alberta when he enlisted, and was 37 years old when he died of wounds in 1916. He was also a public figure of note, having served as a member of the Alberta legislature; an outspoken Alberta separatist, he published a polemic in 1911 which advocated home rule for Alberta. Finally, in contrast to the image of the typical soldier who was motivated by Christian idealism, Bramley-Moore was a free-thinker and an atheist who had nothing but disdain for organized religion.

His unconventional spirit comes out in nearly 100 letters, the vast majority of which were written to his children. In between the fatherly advice one would expect in such letters, Bramley-Moore mused about the war in a surprisingly frank way. He had a low opinion of the people who ran the Allied war effort ("if brains are going to win the war, then I think the Germans will win as I can't see any heavy brainwork on our side"), and also had no time for the xenophobes in Canada who joined groups like the Anti-German League. Particularly poignant are his comments on the generational aspect of the war: "It wouldn't matter so much, would it, if the old people chose to kill one another, but the old people stay behind and send the young ones to fight because the old ones managed affairs so badly that all the fighting is necessary."

It is difficult to read these letters without an overwhelming feeling of sadness, not so much for Bramley-Moore himself (who, because of his beliefs, remained sanguine about his situation) but for his children, who were left to mature without a father. Nevertheless, all five prospered after their father's death in 1916, so they must have heeded the advice he sent from France. Alwyn Bramley-Moore would have been proud of them.

JFV

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Donald Nijboer and Dan Patterson, **Cockpit: An Illustrated History of World War II Aircraft Interiors** (Erin, ON: Boston Mills Press, 1998), $45.00, 176 pages, ISBN 1-55046-253-9.

For those of us who have always wondered what it would be like to sit in the cockpit of a B-29 Superfortress, a Gloster Gladiator, or a Messerschmitt 163, this sumptuously illustrated book might be as close as we are ever likely to get. It takes us into the "office" of 37 different British, American, Japanese, Russian and German aircraft, including the Typhoon, Blenheim, Marauder, Dauntless, Dinah, Yak-3, and Stuka. Each section contains a brief capsule history of the aircraft, a full-colour, full-page photograph of the cockpit (with a separate photograph identifying all of the controls), and an evaluation of the cockpit by a pilot who flew the machine. Some of the airplanes, like the Douglas A-20 Havoc, look modern and sophisticated; others, like the Me-163, look primitive and positively frightening. Equally interesting are the pilots' comments on the flight characteristics of the aircraft. D.H. Clarke writes that the Stuka "was like a flying brick," while Stephen Grey observes that the Thunderbolt was equipped with "the grand ballroom" of cockpits. To anyone interested in aerial warfare, these remarks, and the photographs which accompany them, will add a new dimension to their understanding of what it was like to be a pilot during the Second World War.

DR

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Ian Malcolm Brown, **British Logistics on the Western Front, 1914-1919** (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), $65.00 US, 280 pages, ISBN 0-275-95894-9.

Taking as his point of departure the traditional view of the British General Headquarters in France, and the preoccupation with Haig's tactical, operational and strategic abilities, Brown sets out to view the British Expeditionary Force in a different light, by focussing on its supply arrangements. In a comprehensive study that is based on the full range of primary documents, Brown concludes that the performance of the BEF needs to be examined in light of the gradual improvement in its logistical capabilities. Until 1916, he argues, the BEF was impeded by itslogistical shortcomings. In 1915, for example, British offensives were crippled by the inability to get enough artillery shells to the front, a state of affairs that could have been improved by more foresight and prewar planning. By the time of the Somme offensive of 1916, the shortage of artillery ammunition had been solved, but then the transportation system all but collapsed under the immense pressures of the campaign. Not until 1917 were British logistics sufficiently developed that Haig was free to plan campaigns without worrying about supply; in 1918, what Brown calls the "material-heavy offensives" made possible by improvements in logistics paved the way for victory.

Brown's very logical conclusions do not absolve Haig and GHQ entirely. Nevertheless, they add one more piece to the puzzle that will eventually produce a more nuanced picture of the efforts of the BEF in France.

WS

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Marshall J. Thixton, George E. Moffat and John J. O'Neil, **Bombs Away by the Pathfinders of the Eighth Air Force** (Trumbull, CT: FNP Military Division, 1998), $25.00 US, 182 pages, ISBN 0-917678-39-7.

This book is a real team effort: the authors served together in the 482nd Bomb Group, and Thixton began the task of recording his experiences for posterity. He later brought in Moffat and O'Neil, but it was left to O'Neil to complete the project when his two crewmates died. Thixton and Moffat flew their first mission together (O'Neil joined the crew in December 1943 as a replacement gunner) in October 1943 against Bremen, and on 4 March 1944 they were in the first American bomber to strike Berlin. Shortly thereafter, the 482nd was tasked with training navigators and bombardiers in radar techniques, and the crew split up to assume different duties.

The great strength of *Bombs Away* is that we get three different perspectives on each mission: from Thixton, the bomb-aimer; O'Neil, the tail gunner, and Moffat, the ball turret gunner. In a sense, we get to see what was happening in all parts of the B-17 Flying Fortress. This makes for an interesting approach, as the accounts complement each other well. The book also contains excellent maps and many photographs, and is therefore a first-class record of an American pathfinder crew.

LF

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Donald F. Crosby, **Battlefield Chaplains: Catholic Priests in World War II** (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), $27.50 US, 301 pages, ISBN 0-7006-0662-9.

Before Donald Crosby's work, very little had been written about the contribution of US Army chaplains to the overall success of men in battle. Based on the words of some 280 former Catholics Priests who served overseas, this interesting account seeks to admonish religious bodies for their failure to supply the armed forces with the number of clerics needed to keep the morale and spirituality of the men high.

In this first volume of what Crosby declares will be a three book set about US Catholic chaplains during the Second World War, the author focusses upon the friendship and shared suffering between the combatants and the clerics. Tracing American involvement in both the Pacific and European campaigns, Crosby reveals that not only were chaplains at the sharp end,but that many paid the supreme sacrifice. They did what they had to do; for some, this meant carrying a side-arm, even though they were officially forbidden to do so. Surprisingly perhaps, from today's standpoint, a great majority of chaplains supported the use of the atomic bombs that ended the war. As one of the chaplains is quoted as saying, "there are no atheists in foxholes."

The strength of this work is its discussion of as many chaplains in as many different battlefield situations as possible. Crosby even goes so far as to study African-American Catholic chaplains, a topic largely taboo or forgotten in previous histories. The chaplains did their duty, with little complaint: of 5200 chaplains in 1943, only 23 asked to be relieved of duty. Indeed, it might be said that *Battlefield Chaplains* over-glorifies particular men. Father William A. Macquire on the *California* at Pearl Harbor, and Father Joseph O'Callahan were undeniably remarkable leaders, yet Crosby's credibility is undermined by such phrases as "none [of the wounded men under their care] would complain." Nonetheless, this groundbreaking work makes a strong case for the need and success of battlefield chaplains, and leaves one wondering why the Catholic Church never filled its quota of chaplains throughout the war.

SPS

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Sebastian Faulks, **Birdsong** (London: Vintage, 1993), $15.95 paper, 503 pages, ISBN 0-09-938791-3.

The supplement does not customarily review works of fiction, but an exception must be made in the case of this remarkable novel. Pat Barker's *Regeneration* has been much praised as one the finest recent books about the First World War; two decades ago it was Timothy Findlay's *The Wars* which drew many plaudits. *Birdsong* has them both beat, and by a wide margin.

It is the story of Stephen Wraysford, who at the beginning of the novel has arrived in Amiens in 1910 to observe the workings of the French cloth industry for his English employer. The scene soon shifts to France in 1916, and Wraysford is now an infantry officer working with a company of miners engaged in tunnelling under the German trenches. His painful journey towards self-discovery at the front is broken by occasional scene shifts to the 1970s, and the journey of his grand-daughter to an understanding of her own.

This bald plot summary, however, does not do justice to an extraordinary novel. Wraysford's character is complex, fascinating, and utterly convincing, and the men under his command are equally finely drawn. Faulks is also a master of the battle vignette. He writes of the attacks on the Somme and at Messines with skill and sensitivity, and triumphs with his descriptions of the war underground; the scenes set in the tunnels are so realistic and rivetting that they will be a challenge for anyone who is inclined towards claustrophobia. This is what makes *Birdsong* almost unique in recent fiction about the First World War: its feeling of authenticity is unmatched.

JFV

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John R. Elting, **Swords Around a Throne: Napoleon's Grand Armée** (New York: Da Capo, 1997 [1988], $26.95 paper, 769 pages, ISBN 0-306-80757-2.

"Never judge a book by its cover" is an age old cliché that is proven true by John Elting's impressive study of Napoleon's army. Although nearly 800 pages in length, Elting's work isaccessible to both academic and interested amateur alike; while precisely detailing all facets of each branch of the French military, the book provides little in the way of overly dense theory or explanation.

Swords Around a Throne begins with a prologue discussing the pre-revolutionary royal army, and its eventual demise in the early days of the Revolution as a result of poor recruiting, little respect between officers and rankers, and a lack of patriotism. Eventually, the white coats were enveloped into the blue-coated permanent demi-brigades of the Revolutionary Army, a force often victorious through the sheer blundering tactics of the massed citizen "soldiers" that bewildered the professionals who faced them on the fields of battle.

The real strength of the book is its detail. Beginning in chapter 4, Elting turns to Napoleon's forces between 1804 and the Battle of Waterloo. He reveals everything from the fact that the Emperor's mobile command station travelled with a library of some 3000 books, through to the introduction of the Imperial "Cuckoos" (Eagles), and finally to the abolition of the Imperial Guard in August 1815. The book is organized "from the top down," with analysis of each of France's marshals, each branch of the cavalry, artillery, navy, and infantry, and a discussion of all aspects of the logistics that made the Army of Napoleon so successful for so long. In the end, the green troops and hardened veterans fighting with diminishing support from the overtaxed French system could not defeat the combined strength of Britain, Prussia, and their allies. What is most impressive about the book are the direct and indirect comparisons between the Grande Armée and the US Military. In Napoleon's forces are found many of the innovations in strategy, tactics, and logistics that have since become the norm in military formations throughout the western world: patriotic indoctrination, the supremacy of artillery, specialists, and mobility. For those seeking to discover the inner workings of an army, John Elting's *Swords Around a Throne* strips away the uniforms and accoutrements to reveal the men who fought in them.

SPS

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Paul Lashmar, **Spy Flights of the Cold War** (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, [distributed in Canada by Vanwell], 1996), $41.95, 244 pages, ISBN 1-55750-837-2.

Between 1946 and 1983, more than 50 aircraft were shot down by Soviet or Chinese forces. Some were civilian air liners which had strayed off course, like the Korean Airlines flight KAL-007, destroyed over Kamchatka by a Soviet Sukhoi fighter in 1983, on orders from ground control. Most, however, were casualties of a little examined aspect of the Cold War - the attempts by the United States and its allies to bolster their intelligence-gathering capabilities by the old-fashioned (for the twentieth century) methods of aerial reconnaissance.

Paul Lashmar, a British journalist and television producer, has produced a capable and illuminating account of the clandestine war above communist skies and highlights the extremely dangerous nature of western overflights of hostile territory - dangerous not only to the pilots involved but also dangerous in geopolitical terms. Western leaders consistently underestimated the amount of anger that aerial intrusions provoked in the Soviet political and military leadership,

while remaining fully aware that the overflights, however necessary to intelligence-gathering, were a continuing provocation to Soviet reaction - and nobody knew just what form that reaction might take.

Lashmar's contention that the destruction of a U2 spyplane over Sverdlovsk on May Day1960 introduced a new set of dynamics to the Cold War may be arguable - Nikita Khrushchev, after all, may have wanted peaceful co-existence, but not at any price - but the Soviets' suspicions of western intentions were starkly confirmed, as was their determination to match western military competence.

Every plot needs a villain and here, too, Lashmar may be overstating the case for General Curtis LeMay, Chief of Strategic Air Command, as a kind of Dr. Strangelove to President Eisenhower's Merkin Muffley. As President, the former soldier was hardly the indecisive babe-in-the-woods his political enemies liked to think.

These reservations aside, *Spy Flights of the Cold War* is a good introduction to the field, although those interested in spy flights as a flashpoint in the Cold War would be well rewarded by reading Michael R. Beschloss's account of the 1960 U2 incident, *Mayday*.

GDK

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Jane Snailham, **Eyewitnesses to Peace: Letters from Canadian Peacekeepers** (Cornwallis, NS: Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1998), $19.95 paper, 177 pages, ISBN 1-896551-16-5.

James T. Hewitt, **Desert Sailor: A War of Mine** (Cornwallis, NS: Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1998), $24.95 paper, 192 pages, ISBN 1-896551-17-3.

In the spring of 1992, Jane Snailham of Halifax watched a television report on Canadian peacekeepers in Yugoslavia. As she puts it, "I saw a Nova Scotian and immediately decided to write to him, to encourage and support him, to tell him the pride I had for him and all the others in this thankless task." This initial impulse led to more letters to peacekeepers, and some of the replies received by Snailham have been collected in *Eyewitnesses to Peac*e. This book offers a valuable counter to the ill-informed Canadian media coverage of our country's peacekeeping efforts.

The eyewitnesses include 35 men and women serving in the former Yugoslavia, a naval observer in Cambodia, eight men and women in Rwanda, and four men and women in Haiti. Officers and Other Ranks are represented, but none is named. Retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie's short foreword notes that "these are the thoughts and opinions of our front line ambassadors in uniform."

The troops welcomed Snailham's letters, read and circulated them, and sent her back some perceptive comments on their life and activities in tense situations. Their letters highlight comradeship ("we lost two more of our guys…it's as if a part of every one of us over here has died"), tenacity ("but we are Canadians and we will overcome"), fatalism ("God chooses the ones he wants"), making the best of difficult situations ("this place is seriously screwed up"), compassion ("we can only hope the future holds something promising for these poor people who have to endure so much"), and personal fulfillment ("we wouldn't trade this mission for anything in the world. It's exactly the kind of fulfilling, personally rewarding mission we dream of"). One writer provides a long, engaging account of dealing with the media in Yugoslavia, describing his job as "trying to turn chicken shit into chicken salad" and noting the "pathetic" Canadian media presence in his area. Another long, matter-of-fact narrative from the Kihebo refugee camp in Rwanda catches the horror of the situation there. From somewhere in Rwanda, a correspondent sums up what peacekeeping is all about: "The system is not working well - we are meant to make it better. It should be relatively easy to make it better as it is so bad. I do notthink it will be possible to get it right." The book could have been improved by better proof-reading, and by placing the introductory sections to the letters, which describe peacekeeping missions in each country, into appendices. But overall, this worthy book says more about the perils and rewards of peacekeeping than any number of official tomes. As one writer put it, "I just know that we did our best while we were there, and we made a difference."

Desert Sailor is a less satisfactory account of the work of Canadian forces overseas. In diary form, Lieutenant-Commander James Hewitt describes his time as a mine specialist during the Gulf War. He writes well, in a breezy, open style, telling of life on shore and at sea in the Persian Gulf and the problems of discovering where mines lie and what to do about them when they are found: "By the end of the first day, exactly 100 drifting mines were reported…Three were real mines, 96 were garbage, and one was the body of an Iraqi soldier." The diary format fragments the narrative and some entries should have been eliminated to move the story forward in a more dramatic fashion. Some of the entries are direct, and catch the hazards of the mine catcher's trade in vivid prose. A book better in its parts than in its whole, *Desert Sailor* tells of a part of the work that Canadians did during the Gulf War, aimed at saving lives, that has escaped media attention.

Both of these books have the singular value of being records of people who have been on the front lines in peace and war and who tell about their personal experiences. Publishing such accounts should be encouraged by everyone concerned with the role of Canada's armed forces in the world today.

JL

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Elizabeth Kier, **Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine Between the Wars** (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), $39.95 US, 288 pages, ISBN 0-691-01191-5.

In a book written from a non-traditional historical standpoint, Elizabeth Kier argues that "the interaction between constraints set in the domestic political arena and a military's organizational culture determines choices between offensive and defensive military doctrines" (5). This cultural analysis is the application to France and Britain of Hans-Ulrich Wehler's discussion (and that of other scholars; George Mosse's *Fallen Soldiers* comes to mind) of Germany's *Sonderweg*, and the rise of the Nazis: the link between reflecting the domestic situation and establishing stability through military doctrine.

Kier shows that the French Army did not mindlessly embrace the "trench war" mentality of the Great War in the Maginot Line, but rather reacted to a culture that would condone only one-year conscripts and therefore, as the military believed, allowed too little time to train for and launch an effective offensive. The legacy of the heavy losses of the French, and their geographic position with respect to Germany, made the cultural constraints upon an offensive doctrine for the French Army much more significant than for the British. In Britain a defensive strategy was adopted because of a military stratified in a blind metaphor of war as sport, an officer class based on title rather than skill, and a public that kept its fingers on the purse-strings and refused to allow the armed forces the financial resources necessary to build offensive formations. Only the RAF showed signs of offensive designs, but really only in a role to defend the British Isles.

In the end, Kier suggests that a middle-ground approach between the traditional state "balance of power" analysis and a cultural study of the domestic and military relationship is the most accurate way of analyzing military strategic policy. Despite some autonomy, governmentand military do not operate in a vacuum, but are instead reflections of external and internal forces and, ultimately, of the culture from which they are drawn.

SPS

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David F. Trask, **The AEF and Coalition Warmaking, 1917-1918** (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), $29.95 US, 235 pages, ISBN 0-7006-0619-X.

Jehuda L. Wallach, **Uneasy Coalition: The Entente Experience in World War I** (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), $55.00 US, 192 pages, ISBN 0-313-28879-8.

David R. Woodward, **Trial by Friendship: Anglo-American Relations, 1917-1918** (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 276 pages, ISBN 0-8131-1833-6.

Wallach begins his book with a comment attributed to French general M.P.E. Sarrail on the pitfalls of coalition warfare: "Napoleon was not a great general. He only fought a coalition." Each of these books examines a different aspect of the problems of fighting in an alliance.

In his study, David Trask is severely critical of US president Woodrow Wilson and American commander General John J. Pershing, arguing that their determination to field an independent army rather than cooperating more fully with the senior coalition partners, Britain and France, undermined both the American Expeditionary Force and the Allied war effort. Instead of allowing widespread amalgamation, or the detachment of American units for service with British and French formations, Pershing and Wilson insisted that they retain their independence and conduct separate operations; with this, they condemned the American army to unpreparedness, for it would take them until the spring of 1919 to be entirely ready for battle. The emergency that followed the German spring offensive of 1918 threw this plan off the rails, and meant that American units had to be committed to action before they were ready. The creation of the First American Army, just three months before the Armistice, proved the folly of Pershing's position, for the units which had previously been amalgamated with British or French formations performed much better than those which had not. This, of course, is what Marshal Foch had tried to argue all along, and Trask has much praise for the French supreme commander, particularly for his ability to deal with "the timorous Pétain, the unimaginative Haig, and the stubborn Pershing" (177).

Woodward directs his attention towards the political masters of the Allies, focusing on the stormy relationship between Wilson and British prime minister David Lloyd George. Yet he, too, tackles the thorny issue of American military performance in the last stages of the war. Wilson and Pershing were at odds in October and November 1918, the president wanting a moderate armistice and his commander hoping to prolong the war so that American troops could play a greater role in the defeat of Germany. This explains Pershing's demand for an unconditional surrender: if the war could continue until 1919, the AEF would be the largest and most important military force in Europe, Pershing would become generalissimo, and the US could dictate the shape of postwar Europe. Of greater interest to Woodward is the failure of the Anglo-American partnership after 1918. The strategic and political interests of the powers ran parallel, but they were unable to overcome their differences to provide a powerful stabilizing influence in the 1920s and 1930s. This, he argues, was more significant in the drift

towards the Second World War than the impotence of the League of Nations.

The failure to achieve amalgamation is just one of the pieces of the puzzle assembled by Wallach. While admitting that permanent amalgamation of American with British or French units was politically impossible, he argues that temporary amalgamation was not only possible but advisable, in order to meet immediate dangers and to provide American troops with much-needed combat experience in the company of battle-hardened veterans. But this is only one of the weaknesses of coalition warfare that Wallach touches upon. He ranges from high-level matters such as divergences in war aims and problems with unified command, to more practical things like logistical coordination and language barriers between allies in outlining the difficulties faced by coalitions at war. In a concluding chapter, he applies his typology of coalitions to later wars, drawing comparisons between Foch and Eisenhower and postulating on the effectiveness of coalitions in Korea and the Persian Gulf.

Wallach's conclusions demonstrate that, despite predictions to the contrary, the military coalition is not a thing of the past. Recent operations in Yugoslavia will undoubtedly force further consideration of the very same matters addressed by these three authors.

SL

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Michael J. Neufeld, **The Rocket and the Reich: Peenemünde and the Coming of the Ballistic Missile Era** (New York: The Free Press [distributed in Canada by Distican], 1995), $33.95, 381 pages, ISBN 0-02-922895-6.

Michael Neufeld provides a readable history of the German army liquid-fuel rocket, from its origins as a scientific "hobby" in the late 1920s and early 1930s, to its evolution into a full-scale branch of the German Army. Neufeld explains that the rocket was a premise flawed from the start, an ill-advised legacy of the First World War. The inter-war German military brass, particularly Lieutenant-Colonel Karl Becker and fellow Heads of Ordnance, put an undue faith in the success of the great "Paris Gun," a technological behemoth that provided the Germans with a great morale boost but really did little damage to the French. The liquid-fuel rocket weapon delivery system was merely an updated "Paris Gun," flawed from the beginning.

Nevertheless, the V-2 programme was, from a technological standpoint, a remarkable achievement. In less than a decade, German engineers were able to master a fuel-filled rocket engine, supersonic aerodynamics, and guidance control. This technology, and many of the engineers who created it, were instrumental in the Mercury Rocket series in the United States following the war. From a financial and societal standpoint however, the A-4 (V-2) programme was an utter failure. Not only did more people die making the rockets (nearly 10,000, primarily forced labourers) than were killed by their operational use (approximately 5000), but Neufeld also points out that the Germans could have built 24,000 fighter aircraft with the money that was channelled to Peenemünde. The V-2 was "a perfect symbol of the Nazis' pursuit of irrational goals with rational technocratic means." The Germans predicted that the rocket would shorten the war. Indeed it did, but in favour of the Allies.

SPS

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Callum MacDonald, **The Killing of Reinhard Heydrich: The SS "Butcher of Prague"** (New York: Da Capo, 1998 [1989]), $14.95 US paper, 239 pages, ISBN 0-306-80860-9.

As described so expertly by the late Callum MacDonald, the violent life of Reinhard Heydrich was almost a parable for the Nazi era. The son of a second-rate composer and avowed anti-Semite, his early success in the German navy went for nought thanks to his insatiable sexual appetite: drummed out of the service when a woman accused him of breach of promise, he faced unemployment until he was hired by Himmler to start up the SS intelligence service. From that point, his rise was relatively meteoric. Ruthlessly power-hungry and coldly amoral, he had no compunction about doing whatever was necessary to achieve his goals. By 1942, he had been elevated to the exalted status of "protector" of Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia, a reign of terror that earned him the nickname used in the book's subtitle. Enter a small group of Czech patriots, trained in Britain and parachuted back into Czechoslovakia for the express purpose of assassinating Heydrich. On 27 May 1942 they launched their attack against the protector's limousine as it passed through a Prague suburb. At first it seemed as if they had failed: a machine gun refused to fire, a bomb was thrown short. But Heydrich's wounds were more serious than they appeared, and on 4 June he died. His death was followed by a brutal wave of reprisals, including the destruction of the village of Lidice.

MacDonald's book is a fascinating account, both of the careful planning of the operation and of the rise of Heydrich. It is particularly good at sketching the character (or perhaps lack of character would be a better phrase) of Heydrich, a man who seems to have exceeded most of his fellow Nazis in amorality. "Truth and

goodness had no intrinsic meaning for him," recalled one of his subordinates. "To debate whether any action was of itself right appeared so stupid to him that it was certainly a question he never asked himself."

WS

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Martin Samuels, **Command or Control?: Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918** (London: Frank Cass [distributed in North America by International Specialized Book Services] 1995), $45.00 US, 339 pages, ISBN 0-7146-4570-2.

Martin Samuels has written what might be a rather controversial text. In his view, the British Army – really a non-professional army, lacking, until 1906, a General Staff – was not as effective a battlefield force as the German Army. The Germans held the advantage of a long-established, highly competitive staff college, staff officers who had experience commanding small formations, and lower-level commanders who were expected to assess the battlefield situation and make tactical adjustments in response. German commanders at all levels concentrated on the *Schwerpunkt* (focus of energy, in his translation). Above all, the Germans understood war as chaos. Clausewitz was their philosopher, and they studied and learned his lessons. It was the Germans who invented modern war.

Samuels argues that the British, never really a professional army, borrowed the German battlefield mechanics without understanding the philosophy behind it. Despite an initially rigid grand strategy in the German Army (the Schlieffen Plan is the prime example), the British were much more inflexible at all levels of command. While the Germans trained for chaos, the British trained for a multi-staged, orderly, set-piece battle.

During the First World War, the Germans focussed on maximizing the firepower of the infantry while the British, despite the "mad minute" of intense rifle fire, trained for the traditional bayonet charge until towards the end of the conflict. As Allied artillery improved, the Germans countered with elastic defence – at least three pockets or lines of defence that prevented abreakthrough, a technique that the British Jeudwine Committee copied in 1918. But because the British did not entirely understand the defensive tactics, they were ill-prepared for counter-attacks. As late as the Battle of St. Quentin on 21 March 1918, German battlefield tactics were successful. The British were aware that an attack was coming, yet were unable to defend against it properly. It was only tanks, artillery, and an exhausted German Army that allowed for the subsequent Allied advance into open warfare in the summer of 1918. The Germans could break through, but could not break out. They applied these lessons well in the *blitzkrieg* early in the Second World War, when they were able to set and control the tempo of battle.

Along the way, Samuels maintains a running firefight with traditional British analysis of their tactical prowess. He calls the official history of the British Army "propaganda," and peppers John Terraine over his insistence that the Germans lacked strategic objectives. Samuels sees the lack of ability to achieve a breakout as the Achilles heel of the German Army. It seems a wonder that the British Army was victorious in the Great War: only artillery, tanks, and reserves saved the day.

SPS

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Trevor N. Dupuy, David L. Bongard and Richard C. Anderson, Jr., **Hitler's Last Gamble: The Battle of the Bulge, December 1944 - January 1945** (Scarborough: Harper Collins, 1994), $42.00, 565 pages, ISBN 0-06-016627-4.

Dupuy, Bongard and Anderson have produced one of the most comprehensive accounts of the Battle of the Bulge - the desperate German offensive designed to split the Western Front in late 1944 and early 1945 - in recent years. The book, which originated as a computer analysis developed for the US Army to accurately model combat conditions based upon historical data, is painstakingly researched. Daily information for over 100 American, German, and British units was incorporated into the programme and forms the basis of the authors' examination.

Hitler's Last Gamble is arranged in a logical, straightforward manner. Each chapter examines the fighting in various sectors of the front throughout each stage of the battle. Although the authors periodically examine operations from a strategic perspective to establish the broader context of the campaign, their narrative largely centres on the action at the regimental, battalion, and even company level. Unlike a great deal of American scholarship on the Battle of the Bulge, *Hitler's Last Gamble* devotes considerable attention to the German side of the campaign. The book includes several excellent appendices that provide more detailed information on the German and Allied armies. An appendix also gives the most up-to-date information on the Malmédy massacre, when members of SS Kampfgruppe Peiper brutally murdered American POWs in one of the darkest episodes of the battle.

The volume is noteworthy for its challenge to one of the longest standing assumptions regarding the US Army in World War II: that the average American soldier was generally outmatched by his

German counterpart in discipline, fighting spirit, and ability. Dupuy's groundbreaking statistical analysis of US combat operations ironically formed the basis for Martin Van Creveld's *Fighting Power*, one of the keystone studies in the school espousing American inferiority. However, Dupuy and his co-authors argue that the Ardennes Campaign disproves Van Creveld's thesis. Although several units, most notably of the green 99th and 106th Infantry Divisions, were indeed savaged in the initial German onslaught, most US combat units tenaciously defended their positions and counter-attacked with zeal and ferocity when the timecame. The defense of Skyline Ridge, the delaying action around St. Vith, and the siege of Bastogne all demonstrated the skillful leadership of American commanders and the resilience, toughness, and competence of the average GI in the face of overwhelming odds. In short, the US rifleman proved to be the equal of the soldiers of the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS who faced him.

Hitler's Last Gamble offers something to both the seasoned military historian and to the casual reader merely interested in a general account of the battle. It should stand as one of the definitive narratives of the Battle of the Bulge.

BJD

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Charles F. Marshall, **A Ramble Through My War: Anzio and Other Joys** (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), $29.95 US, 300 pages, ISBN 0-8071-2282-3.

The author of an investigation into the death of Irwin Rommel, Marshall now turns his hand to the writing of memoirs. He was an intelligence officer whose duties included examining captured documents and maps and interrogating prisoners, all to collect information on the German Order of Battle, and the weaponry and equipment facing Allied troops in the advance up Italy, the invasion of southern France, and the drive into Germany. Towards the end of the war, Marshall's job became considerably more interesting as he had the opportunity to interrogate a number of high-ranking German generals, all of whom seemed much humbled in defeat. Field Marshal von Leeb, who commanded Army Group C in the invasion of France in 1940, looked "like a meek, harassed, retired grocer" and appeared very concerned that he receive royalty payments for English-language editions of his book on defensive warfare. Field Marshal List, long-time head of the Wehrmacht training section, hosted Marshall in his villa and gave him his collection of guns before being driven into captivity. Field Marshal von Weichs, whose last command was to head German troops in the Balkans, came across as "a charming mixture of a rural Bavarian and a cosmopolite."

The book is a mixture of short excerpts from Marshall's diary, fleshed out by commentaries written later. As such, it combines immediacy with reflection to produce a most interesting and effective memoir.

DR

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Gary W. Gallagher, ed., **The First Day at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership** (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1992), $14.00 US paper, 184 pages, ISBN 0-87338-457-1.

No battle in American history has been analyzed in such exhaustive detail as Gettysburg. The decisions of the Union and Confederate commanders during the battle have come under particularly intense scrutiny. From these analyses, a general consensus has seemingly emerged regarding the culpability of certain leaders for the more significant strategic and operational errors committed during the fight. The essays compiled by Gallagher take umbrage with many of these claims by re-examining four instances (three Southern and one Northern) of supposedly poor leadership that occurred on 1 July 1863, the first day of the battle.

The most notable Confederate errors that occurred on that day included the absence of intelligence regarding the Army of the Potomac's positions (for which J.E.B. Stuart was forevervilified), A.P. Hill's piecemeal assault on the Union forces arrayed on Seminary Ridge and Oak Ridge, and the failure of Richard S. Ewell's II Corps to take Cemetery Hill. The virtual apotheosis that Confederate general Robert E. Lee underwent after the war, largely at the hands of Southern historians, ensured that the general remained fairly unscathed when it came time to lay blame for the Confederacy's defeat at the battle. However, Allan T. Nolan's essay, the volume's first, demonstrates that Lee must bear a much greater degree of responsibility. The author states, for example, that Lee's initial decision to cross the Potomac may have been the greatest strategic error committed on either side of the Gettysburg campaign. Furthermore, Nolan finds fault with Lee for issuing at times ambiguous orders that contributed both to the inadequate reconnaissance performed by Stuart's cavalry, and to the confused and disjointed nature of the Rebel attacks on the first day. In the second essay, Gary Gallagher strives to absolve Hill and Ewell of responsibility for the failures of their respective corps. He argues that Lee's orders were at best vague regarding II and III Corps' objectives and that Hill and Ewell, both leading a corps in action for the first time, did their best to interpret their commander's directives. Certainly neither had the experience, aggressiveness, or ability of Stonewall Jackson and thus, Gallagher asserts, Lee should

have provided greater guidance for these two generals. Finally, Robert K. Krick's article looks at the three bloody and unsuccessful Confederate assaults on Oak Ridge in the late morning of 1 July and concludes that poor leadership at the brigade level was primarily responsible for the Southern disasters. Brigadier-Generals Joseph R. Davis and Alfred Iverson, and Colonel Edward A. O'Neal all made serious tactical errors that saw their brigades repulsed by the Union I Corps with such heavy losses that their units were hors de combat for most of the remainder of the battle.

The one essay devoted to the Union side, written by A. Wilson Greene, seeks to rehabilitate General O.O. Howard and his much-maligned XI Corps. Most histories of Gettysburg rightly identify the retreat of Howard's Corps from its position on the Union's northwest flank as the catalyst for the collapse of the entire Federal line in the late afternoon. However, Greene claims that XI Corps' divisions, which were heavily outnumbered by Ewell's Confederate II Corps, were never intended to provide anything more than a screening force. No judgment can therefore be accurately passed upon the performance of Howard and XI Corps without fully understanding their mission. Rather than having retreated in ignominy, Greene has shown that Howard and his men fought a successful delaying action and do not deserve the negative reputation Civil War historians throughout the years have given them.

The First Day at Gettysburg manages to accomplish a very difficult task. Its contributing authors have sifted through the massive body of research available on the topic and provided fresh insight into this bloodiest of American battles.

BJD

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George Hicks, **Japan's War Memories: Amnesia or Concealment?** (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 1998), $38.95 US paper,142 pages, ISBN 1-84014-164-6.

In a fascinating exposé of a controversial subject, Hicks focuses his study of Japanese reluctance to come to terms with its wartime past on a single theme: the coverage of the Second World War, and Japanese history generally, in Japanese school textbooks. Ienaga Soburo was a teacher and textbook author who launched a number of lawsuits against the Japanese education ministry which claimed that the practice of screening texts was an illegal exercise of power. Among thecorrections at issue were amendments that appeared to minimize the scope of the Rape of Nanking and an order to delete references to Unit 731 (which conducted biological warfare experiments against human victims in China) on the spurious grounds that the existence of the unit had not yet been reliably established.

The lion's share of the book deals with the textbook debate, but there are other interesting aspects as well. Hicks writes that, in the 1970s, it became fashionable to mine the war years for lessons that could be applied to the business world. This produced bizarre publications like *Financiers' Pacific War Records* and a series of articles which suggested that Admiral Yamamoto and the Battle of Midway could be fruitfully studied by the businessman in search of ideas of management techniques. He also discusses the continuing debate over the role of the Emperor in the war, and Japan's reluctance to admit wrongdoing in the abuse of forced prostitutes, or comfort women. Hicks uses the textbook episode as a jumping-off point to discuss how Japan has dealt with the crimes it committed during its long war in south-east Asia. Nazi Germany has its apologists and Holocaust deniers, and Japan too has those who seek to minimize and over-contextualize the enormity of Japanese atrocities. He presents the arguments of these right-wing revisionists carefully and dispassionately, admitting when events are open to question but coming down hard when revisionists have distorted events. And he is careful to point out that amnesia was not just promoted by certain Japanese. The US military was willing to overlook the crimes of Unit 731 to gain access to its research results, and the US government abetted distortion and revisionism so that Japan could be a strong bulwark against communism in Asia. All of this serves to confirm a truism: all too often, history is interpreted more with an eye to the present and future than the past.

BP

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Stuart L. Manson, **To Repel the Wicked: The Home Guard of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry, 1837-1843** (Cornwall, ON: Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Historical Society [available from PO Box 773, Cornwall, ON, K6H 5T5], 1999), $7.00, 30 pages, no ISBN.

Studies, large or small, on the military aspects of the 1837-1838 rebellions are woefully rare so this short study of the volunteer militia of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry is most welcome. This study is well researched from primary source documents and has interesting period illustrations not before seen. There is also a good drawing reconstructing from fragments the colours of the 5th Battalion of Embodied Militia. The book's four chapters outline the organization and social impact of the volunteers on this part of what is now eastern Ontario. The origins, services, and equipments of each volunteer corps raised in the area is given, along with an account of some of the personalities in their ranks. Some of them were certainly

colourful fellow as revealed in the sections dealing with the volunteers' relations with their community. We could use more military studies like this of pre-1867 Canada.

RC

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James R. Davis, **The Sharp End: A Canadian Soldier's Story** (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1997), $19.95 paper, 270 pages, ISBN 1-55054-588-4.

Beginning with his service with the Royal Canadian Regiment to the now disbanded Airborne Regiment, James Davis offers civilians and military types alike a glimpse of life at the sharp end - from a Canadian soldier's point of view. The reader gains insight into Canadian military and United Nations involvement in such places as Germany, the former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda. Yet, *The Sharp End* offers much more. Indeed, it is a record of the transformation of "a rebellious wayward youth into a wizened old soldier." Davis' experience, then, illustrates how an individual can change and grow through military service. To brand this "tale" as a simple coming of age story does not do it justice, however. Davis has some serious criticism for military leadership, the media, and the Canadian government. His disillusionment with decisions at the top culminates with the disbandment of the Airborne Regiment in 1996. It is no accident that the soldier on the cover staring at the reader is none other than Davis, sporting the distinctive maroon beret of the Airborne Regiment. The last word - Airborne! The lighthearted narrative is interspersed by scattered addresses to the politically correct elements of society. Indeed, it is an unfortunate sign of the times that Davis has to defend his role and love of soldiering on behalf of Canada. *The Sharp End* should be required reading for non-military enthusiasts.

AVL

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Belton Y. Cooper, **Death Traps: The Survival of an American Armored Division in World War II** (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1998), $28.95 US, 324 pages, ISBN 0-89141-670-6.

This book will be of great interest to any student of armoured warfare during the Second World War. Cooper was an ordnance lieutenant with the 3rd Armored Division, and was responsible for scouring the battlefields to assist in the recovery and repair of damaged tanks. According to Cooper, the secret to American success in north-west Europe was not an unending supply of brand-new tanks from American factories, but rather the ability to repair tanks and return them to battle. Where the Germans simply abandoned damaged tanks, the Americans fixed them, for, despite dire shortages of spare parts, many tanks could be repaired. A direct hit where the turret met the hull rendered a tank irreparable, and a fierce fire inside weakened the metal to the point where the tank had to be scrapped, but most other hits could be repaired. Even where an explosion inside had killed the crew, mechanics would sluice out the human remains, replace damaged pieces, slap on a fresh coat of paint, and reassign it to a different unit (tankers were understandably superstitious about manning a tank in which their comrades had been killed). This explains the startling manpower statistics presented by Cooper: of the 17,000 men in the 3rd Armored Division, fully 10,400 (or 61%) were involved either directly or indirectly in maintenance. That this many men were necessary for maintenance duties is in turn explained by the equally startling casualty statistics. The 3rd entered combat with 232 Shermans. During the European campaign, it had 648 Shermans completely destroyed, and another 700 knocked out, repaired, and returned to action. This translated into a loss rate of 580%.

Cooper is scathing in his critique of the American tank programme, and has much to say about the Sherman's inferiority, from the weakness of its armour to the unsuitability of its main armament to the poor design of its treads. He is a man with great technical knowledge of his tanks, a knowledge that makes *Death Traps* a must for anyone interested in the notion of brute force in the campaign in north-west Europe.

DR

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Robert Hepenstall, **Find the Dragon: The Canadian Army in Korea, 1950-1953** (Edmonton: Four Winds Publishing, 1995), $26.95 paper, 380 pages, ISBN 0-9680-414-0-X.

Robert Hepenstall, a veteran of the Second World War and the Korean War, tells the story of Canada's forgotten war "from the bottom looking up." To do this, Hepenstall conducted hundreds of interviews with lower-ranking Korea veterans for this oral history of the Canadian Army in Korea. General questions, such as "What was it like to serve in the Canadian army during the Korean War?" and "Who were the people that went to fight and why did they go?" are some of those probed by the author. To answer these and other questions, Hepenstall uses a chronological approach by subject, employing the reminiscences of veterans from the three regular force units which served in Korea. While veterans of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry figure prominently in this book, veterans from the Royal 22nd Regiment (the Van Doos) and

especially the Royal Canadian Regiment receive less mention. Although Hepenstall's commentary is limited and the book is not tied together with a conclusion, the accounts of Korea veterans in their own words is a valuable addition to the literature on Canada's participation in the Korean War.

AVL

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John McDonnell, **Spanish John, being a narrative of the early life of Colonel John M'Donell of Scottos** (Cornwall, ON: Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Historical Society [available from PO Box 773, Cornwall, ON, K6H 5T5], 1993), $12.00 paper, 75 pages, no ISBN.

The early memoirs of John McDonnell, who was an officer in the Spanish army's Irish Brigade, fought the Austrians in Italy, then detached to Scotland in 1746, have been reissued. First published in 1826, this edition follows the 1931 edition, except for an extra footnotes and added sketches by Anthea Craigmyle. This quite lively account gives an idea of the life of a young expatriate Scottish officer in foreign brigades in the mid-18th century. His time in Scotland was spent in hiding, as he got there just at the time the Scots were dispersed at Culloden. "Spanish John" later came to Canada and was Colonel of the 1st Battalion, Royal Canadian Volunteers from 1794 to 1802. The c.1800 portrait in frontispiece shows him in that uniform, although this is not stated. He was also a leading figure in the early settlement and militia of eastern Ontario.

RC

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Robert Hedin, ed., **The Zeppelin Reader: Stories, Poems, and Songs from the Age of Airships** (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998), 290 pages, ISBN 0-87745-629-1.

In many ways, the Zeppelin was the Stealth bomber of the First World War. Widely regarded as the pinnacle of technological achievement, it was regarded by some as having almost magical qualities. In certain weather conditions it could be neither seen nor heard by people on the ground, and the bursts of its bombs were the first clue that it was overhead. This gave the Zeppelin an air of mystery that moved observers to descriptive excesses that are rarely used on contraptions of metal and fabric. The fascination continued into the postwar period, and not until the destruction of the *Hindenburg* in 1937 (the last in a long line of airship disasters) were people finally convinced that the rigid, lighter-than-air dirigible was not a viable means of masstransportation.

Hedin has assembled a fascinating collection of reflections on the airship age, from accounts of the first clumsy experiments with dirigibles to descriptions of the opulence of the *Hindenburg* and the *Graf Zeppelin*. Not only are there prose accounts, but there is also some fine poetry, excellent photographs, and even some musical arrangements. Particularly interesting is the essay by August Seim, a rigger who served in the Zeppelin fleet in the First World War. Bundled up against temperatures which often reached 35 degrees below zero, he was responsible for climbing up into the structure of the airship to repair bullet and shrapnel holes in the gas bags. When the flight was uneventful, his job was scarcely less unpleasant: he spent up to 30 hours confined in a small lookout position, with no contact with other crew members beyond a few words through a speaking tube. Another wonderful excerpt concerns the loss of the USS *Macon*, the US Navy's last dirigible, which went down in a storm off California in 1935. Written by one of the pilots assigned to the *Macon*, it describes in detail the consequences when one of the airship's massive tail fins collapsed under heavy winds.

Reading such accounts transports one back to the glories and tragedies of the airship age. Looking back, it is hard to imagine why governments poured so much money into the development of rigid airships, either for civilian or military purposes. Will future generations wonder the same thing about the Stealth?

JFV

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Seamus Dunn and T.G. Fraser, eds., **Europe and Ethnicity: World War I and Contemporary Ethnic Conflict** (New York: Routledge, 1996), $37.99 paper, 218 pages, ISBN 0-415-11996-0.

The current conflict in Kosovo, the ongoing troubles in Northern Ireland, the continuing crisis in the Middle East, and the recent division of Czechoslovakia are all placed into a new context with this collection of essays. Taking as its starting point the wave of ethnic tension sweeping Europe in the 1990s, the contributing authors go beyond the traditional explanation for the resurgence of those tensions (the fall of communism and the collapse of the Soviet bloc) and look for its roots in the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles. Aside from the most well known hot spots, the essays cover the Tyrol / Trento region of southern Austria and northern Italy, Hungary, the Ukraine, and the Baltic states. There are also very useful survey chapters on ethnic nationalism and the historical legacy of Versailles which provide a broader perspective in which to place events. The current re-ordering of Europe all too often seems confusing and

insoluble. This fine collection of essays helps those matters make sense.

BP

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Jackson J. Speilvogel, **Hitler and Nazi Germany: A History** (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 1998), 319 pages, ISBN 0-13-192469-9.

Readers looking for a compact, serviceable history of the Nazi era could do worse than choose Spielvogel's. It covers all of the essential aspects of the Third Reich, including its roots in the Weimar era, the personality and role of Hitler, the Nazi state before 1939, culture and society in the Third Reich, the war at home and on the front lines, and the Holocaust. The maps are simple but clear, there are plenty of good quotations from primary-source documents, and a goodbibliography follows each chapter. Primarily intended as a university-level text, *Hitler and Nazi Germany* provides excellent background for anyone interested in the Second World War.

WM

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Douglas L. Bland, ed., **Canada's National Defence**, volume 2, **Defence Organization** (Kingston: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 1998), $24.95 paper, 509 pages, ISBN 0-88911-797-7.

As Bland notes in his preface, it can be difficult to obtain complete copies of government statements on defence policy and internal studies and reports prepared by senior military officers, defence officials, and consultants. And yet it is essential that these documents be readily available, for they have shaped the current role and profile of the Canadian Forces in every respect. To address this, Bland's collection begins with Colonel Pope's memorandum on a Canadian organization for the higher direction of national defence (1937), and ends with the Little / Hunter study on the functions and organization of National Defence Headquarters in emergencies and war (1989). Each document includes a short essay that puts it into context and a bibliography of other sources for those who wish to delve more deeply into the documents' ramifications. Compact, accessible, and reasonably priced, this collection will save any student of civil-military relations countless trips to the government documents section of their local library.

LK

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Gary W. Gallagher, ed., **The Spotsylvania Campaign** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press [distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services], 1998), $47.95, 272 pages, ISBN 0-8078-2402-X.

University of North Carolina Press continues to add to its fine series "Military Campaigns of the Civil War" with this volume, which completes a four-volume cycle covering major battles in and around Fredericksburg, Virginia. Over a two-week period in May of 1864, a number of bitter engagements were fought around Spotsylvania as Lee and Grant each tried to gain the strategic and tactical upper hand. In the end, the two armies suffered some 30,000 total casualties, though no clear victor emerged in a tactical sense.

As with previous volumes, this one provides, not a complete narrative of the battles, but rather a number of interwoven perspectives on aspects of two weeks of fighting. The first two essays examine the opposing high commands, Gallagher arguing that Lee's leadership skills were far better than has been credited and William D. Matter concluding that the Union leadership was plagued by confusion, poor decisions, and lost opportunities. Gordon C. Rhea paints a dismal picture of Union general G.K. Warren, a hero of Gettysburg whose character faults showed in full bloom at Spotsylvania. Robert E.L. Krick handles another hero, Confederate general Jeb Stuart, maintaining that Stuart's death early in the battle was a blow to Lee but certainly not an irretrievable disaster. Carol Reardon contributes a provocative essay which gauges how continuous operations affected both armies, and two concluding articles by Peter S. Carmichael and William A. Blair discuss the historical memory of Spotsylvania and the war in general.

Having concluded the study of battles around Fredericksburg, the series will now move farther afield to examine other campaigns of the American Civil War.

WE

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Robert C. Doyle, **A Prisoner's Duty: Great Escapes in U.S. Military History** (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press [distributed in Canada by Vanwell], 1997), $34.95 US, 372 pages, ISBN 1-55750-180-7.

It is often written that American POWs have been compliant in captivity, blithely accepting their lot while prisoners from the British Commonwealth and European nations attempted escape at every possible opportunity. While admitting that the British Empire has long cultivated a strong escape ethos, Doyle convincingly demolishes the conventional wisdom in a comprehensive and well written survey. He has combed a wealth of sources, well known and obscure, to produce a study which works on two levels. It is in the main a straightforward narrative of American escapes from the earliest European presence in North America to the conflicts of the 1990s. Many of these escapes, particularly those from the Second World War, will be familiar to readers who are well versed in the

literature; others, like those from under-researched conflicts such as the Mexican-American War, have been culled from old periodicals and long-lost memoirs, and will be new to most readers.

On another, more interesting level, the book is an attempt to arrive at what amounts to a psychological profile of the escaper: who he was (the vast majority of escapers have been male), what motivated him, and what set him apart from his fellow prisoners who elected to remain in captivity. He concludes that escapers "stand at the pinnacle of the prisoner hierarchy ... as the ultimate heroes and role models," but reminds us that they were, at root, ordinary people.

SL

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Donald R. Morris, **The Washing of the Spears: The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Nation** (New York: Da Capo, 1998 [1965]), $27.95 paper, 655 pages, ISBN 0-306-80866-8.

Students of imperial history will be delighted with this re-issue of Donald Morris' classic account of the Zulu empire, which for decades fielded the most powerful and effective fighting forces in Africa. Under their brutally efficient leader Shaka (1787-1828), they quickly came to dominate the surrounding nations, and reigned supreme over southern Africa until their eventual defeat in the Zulu War of 1879. The book is equally effective as history and literature. Morris writes with real panache; the book is a pleasure to read, and he has a particular gift for characterization and description. In many places, it seems more like a novel than a historical monograph. But the scholarship is also very sound. He has used all of the manuscript and printed sources which were available at the time of writing (an excellent bibliographical essay describes the sources), and little has come to light since then which would drastically alter his interpretation. Indeed, as a romance (the word is used advisedly) of imperial history, it ranks with the best accounts, like Thomas Pakenham's *The Boer War*.

CA

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Howard Margolian, **Conduct Unbecoming: The Story of the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Normandy** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), $34.95, 279 pages, ISBN 0-8020-4213-9.

The frontispiece to Margolian's book is a long list of names: the 156 Canadian soldiers (ten of whom were never identified) who were murdered by elements of the 12th SS Panzer Division "Hitler Youth" in Normandy between 7 and 17 June 1944. It is important to the author to list these names at the outset because the book is ultimately about them; it is a tribute to their gallantry, and a pledge that their deaths will not be forgotten. They died in obscurity, but Margolian wants to ensure that their identities are not lost to time.

With that in mind, he begins the book with a reconstruction of just one of the crimes: the murder of Private Lorne Brown of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders near Authie on 7 June. He then describes the opposing sides, including excellent background material on regimental (later divisional) commander Kurt Meyer that attempts to understand the culture of wanton violence that surrounded his unit. Reconstructions of other crimes follow, all of which are painful to read. The book then changes focus as Margolian begins to examine the attempts to track down those responsible for the murders. If it was painful to read about the murders themselves, it is frustrating to read about the investigation and trial of the perpetrators. There were many promising leads to follow up, and there were capable investigators available (including Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce Macdonald, one-time commander of the Essex Scottish), but there was little will to see that justice was done. Meyer was tried and convicted (Margolian handles the commutation of his death sentence effectively, arguing that it was right given the evidence brought at his trial) but others could and should have been brought to book. That they were not is a sad chapter in the history of Canadian military justice. That failure perhaps supplied part of the author's motivation: the victims were neglected by their government, so it is left to the historian to remedy that situation.

DG

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Donald E. Graves, **Where Right and Glory Lead!: The Battle of Lundy's Lane, 1814** (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1997), $18.95 paper, 332 pages, ISBN 1-896941-03-6.

After the Battle of New Orleans, Lundy's Lane was the bloodiest engagement fought during the War of 1812; both sides suffered heavily, and both sides claimed victory. It later entered Loyalist mythology (some called it "the Gettysburg of Canada") as a symbol of the resistance of Canadian settlers to incursions by the wicked Americans. As Graves points out in this fast-paced and well written book (a revised and updated version of a book which was originally published in 1993), there are many problems with the conventional wisdom that surrounds the battle. In the first place, most of the fighting and most of the dying on the British side was done by British regular troops, not loyal Canadian settlers in a kind of levée en masse. Secondly, there were Canadians fighting on both sides, a fact that later Loyalist historians and propagandists conveniently forgot. Graves also looks at the vexed question of which army was in possession of the British artillery at the end of the

battle, an important matter given the symbolic significance of artillery pieces in 19th-century warfare, and attempts to sort out the various conflicting accounts of the number of American casualties, also a significant matter for 19th-century historians of the battle. With the revisions that take into account recent scholarship, *Where Right and Glory Lead!* Is now more than ever the definitive account of the Battle of Lundy's Lane.

DG

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Ian Gooderson, **Air Power at the Battlefront: Allied Close Air Support in Europe 1943 - 45** (London: Frank Cass, 1998), $27.50USD paper, 282 pages, ISBN 0-7146-4211-8.

Published as the sixth book in the Studies in Air Power series, edited by Sebastian Cox, Head of the British Air Historical Branch, *Air Power at the Battlefront* marks the first serious attempt in book form to both analyze and quantify the effects and effectiveness of allied close air support in western Europe during the Second World War.

The book is derived from Gooderson's PhD dissertation and does not hide its academic beginnings. Gooderson has made good use of the ample Operational Research material available that records, often in the minutest of details, the use of tactical air power as applied to the battlefield. The resulting book is a statistically laden examination of the various aspects of tactical air power that covers the Anglo-Canadian and American experience from Sicily-Italy, through Normandy and northwest Europe. Encompassing as it does a full two years of warfare, multiple and diverse theatres of operation, comparisons between fighters, medium and heavy bombers and how the different allies approached their operational use marks this as a truly ambitious attempt.

While highly recommended for its plethora of statistics and extensive use of primary documents the book attempts too much. As a result the need to prove and disprove specific arguments using examples drawn from such a wide span of time and differing theatres of operations weakens rather than strengthens this offering. At the same time in focusing so specifically on close air support Gooderson has largely ignored what was the greatest single contribution made by Allied aircraft at the battlefront, the provision of air cover. In choosing to focus on close air support he creates a straw man all too easy to knock down. That said, Gooderson is still to be commended for bringing to the fore a greater historical understanding of the capabilities and limits of air power applied to the battlefield. That is especially relevant today as Allied aircraft once again attack ground targets in Europe.

C.E.

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