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The Professional Soldier and History

Gen. John A. Wickham, Jr.

Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

In our Army of Excellence, we are emphasizing the study of history more than ever before—in training, in planning, and in analyzing all our professional requirements. Faced with great technological opportunity and unprecedented developments in weapons systems, soldiers might easily underestimate the importance of history and overlook the linkage between the lessons of the past and the challenges of the future. We must insure that this oversight does not occur—professional soldiers must study history so that insights not only will help illuminate the future but also will help develop leadership traits that are time proven.

Future challenges include the problems of strategy and tactics, leadership and morale, and logistics and technology. However, these challenges have been faced before and overcome. The most successful soldiers have looked to the profession's past for clues to the present and future. They have used the study of history—including biography and autobiography—to sharpen their judgment, improve their perception, broaden their perspective and mold their leadership qualities. Martin Blumenson said:

What history can do, if used with caution, is to liberate us, to free us from the time and place in which we are born—not entirely, but to some extent at least—so that every generation does not have to reinvent the wheel.

For today's soldiers, the supporting institutional programs are in place. The Military Academy's Department of History offers a full military history curriculum, as does the Command and General Staff College and its newly organized Advanced Military Studies Department. Recently established faculty positions at the Army War College have enhanced military history instruction there, and the Training and Doctrine Command's branch historians are



bringing greater historical emphasis to the branch schools. In the ROTC program, the study of history has been given new vigor. All this puts military history education in the Army on a sound institutional footing.

However, professional development of officers and NCOs goes beyond institutions. It is, ultimately, a soldier's personal responsibility. Given all other demands, it takes individual initiative—the traditional hallmark of American fighting men—to expend that extra effort to enrich one's professional development. Classroom instruction and guided research provide only part of what the soldier needs. The Center of Military History and this periodical, *The Army Historian*, are moving beyond the institutional programs of instruction to foster a spirit of "historical mindedness" in our professional soldiers. Secretary Marsh and I firmly endorse this effort.

The experience offered by military history is long and enduring compared to that offered by a

soldier's active service. Today, relatively few American soldiers below the ranks of lieutenant colonel and sergeant first class have experienced sustained combat. A good way to fill this gap is to read history and study great military leaders of the past. Secretary Marsh said in the first issue of this publication, "a knowledge of past campaigns and commanders provides vicarious experience otherwise unobtainable." Professional soldiers master one assignment and soon move on to the next, but they can take with them their accumulated knowledge and an increasing sense of history. In the words of General Maxwell Taylor, "they can carry their reading lamps with them."

History does not provide a shopping list of answers. A thoughtful approach is required to discover the meaning of the past and relate it properly to the present. It does provide the soldier with valuable insight into basic factors of the profession of arms—the capabilities and lim-

itations of men and women, how to overcome adversities, and how to seize the initiative and win. Our best professional soldiers have realized this. Advising his West Point cadet son, General George S. Patton, Jr., wrote:

To be a successful soldier you must know history. Read it objectively—dates and even the minute details of tactics are useless. What you must know is how man reacts. Weapons change but man who uses them changes not at all.

The Army's historical community, civilian and uniformed, understands this concept. The most important contribution they can make to the excellence of professional soldiers is to get across the message: Study history!

I urge all soldiers, from private to general, who are serious about the profession of arms and making our Army one of excellence, to read annually at least one book on military history and one book on a great military leader of the past.

Editor's Journal

We round out a year of *The Army Historian* with Number 4, having watched (under the anxious gaze of the Department of the Army's publication people) our circulation rise from 4,000 to 6,000, at which figure we expect to level off for a time. Interested readers have joined our rolls after having seen colleagues' copies, or having read notices on our publication in such periodicals as *Army* and *Infantry* magazines, and in post newspapers.

The long-promised readers' column appears in this issue in the form of "Commentary and Exchange," providing space for comment and dissent, and exchange of experiences and ideas. Our regular mail call of requests for back issues and subscriptions is including more and more substantive correspondence on what we have featured and what readers think we should feature. It is a trend we wish to encourage, and we welcome suggestions and ideas on the directions *The Army Historian* should take. This issue's "Perspective" article is a thoughtful piece on what historians can contribute as staff officers, and in our lead article the Army's Chief of Staff adds his thoughts on the Army's need for history to those of Secretary Marsh featured in our first issue. Our "Professional Reading" section this time includes information on the Command and

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CHIEF'S BULLETIN

Douglas Kinnard

Personnel Resources

The new directions for the Center begun a year ago mandated organizational changes, and we have made those changes. Out of the Center's total authorized strength of 115, a number of professional slots recently vacated will be shifted to fill positions critical to the implementation of the new directions. Three of these positions are especially important. The GS-14 Chief of the new Analysis Branch of the Research and Analysis Division will be responsible for the implementation of the direction concerning increased Center activity in providing analytical historical studies in support of Army staff planning and mission execution. The GS-15 Chief of the Management Support Division's most important task will be overseeing the publication of an increasingly wide array of projects through their many editorial and production phases to maintain levels of quality and output. The GS-15 Director of the National Museum of the U.S. Army will be responsible directly to the Chief of Military History for what will become the Army's most visible and important single museum activity. In addition, a GS-12 automation management officer, not attached to any particular branch, will be responsible for implementing the Center's major computerization effort. All of the positions resulting from these realignments are now on their ways through the various steps toward announcement and recruitment. As other vacancies are created, we will be looking at other slots, including a GS-12 Chief of the Historical Services Division's new Oral History Activity, who will oversee an important aspect of historical research in the Center.

Meanwhile, the Vice Chief of Staff has approved the assignment of five officers to the Analysis Branch. These are an authorized military overstrength capacity for the Center strongly endorsed by Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans Lt. Gen. Fred K. Mahaffey, who sees in the Analysis Branch a function of great benefit to the Army. Ideally, we plan to have three officer historians, one political scientist, and one economist, of captain or major rank with at least master's degrees, each assigned to the Center for a two-year tour. Their assignment will greatly enhance the Analysis Branch's ability to apply the disciplines of historical analysis,

political science, and economics to problem solving and situational analysis for the Army. In a time of personnel resource constraints, we seem to be finding ways to meet the requirements of the new directions we have been assigned.

Research Chair

Vice Chief of Staff Gen. M. R. Thurman has also approved the establishment of a two-year research chair at the Center for a visiting scholar. The chair will allow the Center to tap the special expertise of academic scholars for researching and writing important manuscripts on historical subjects of interest to the Army. The presence of distinguished outside scholars at the Center will also contribute to the efforts of our professional staff, provide an additional yardstick against which to measure our interior work, and help establish a direct working relationship with the larger historical community. The two-year appointment should provide sufficient time for an experienced scholar to conduct research on a book-length project and begin writing. The appointees will agree with the Center to complete the volumes on their return to their educational institutions, and the Center will agree to edit and publish the completed manuscripts. Salary and benefits will be based upon the scholars' academic remunerations, prorated for twelve-month years. Subject to budgetary arrangements, I hope to be able to announce the opening of competition for the 1985-1987 research chair in the fall.

Automation

To streamline operations and increase its capabilities, the Center has undertaken a major computer automation effort. This endeavor grew out of a need to provide a central, computerized catalog of all Army historical properties. Here we are talking mostly about museum artifacts, about 500,000 of them with an estimated value of over half a billion dollars. Most Army museums will eventually have access to this central data base. Beyond the historical properties for which the Center is responsible, our automation will in the future include other functions of the Center, including computerized indexing of historical records for reference purposes. Library systems interface will be provided for, and automation of aspects of the Center's management support and budget functions will

be investigated. Most significant for our primary mission, computer technology will enhance the efficiency of our Publication Program System. Many steps in publication can be automated, eliminating, for example, the galley proof stage of the editorial process.

The mechanisms for the implementation of the new directions program are now largely in place, and we are fast approaching a time when they will be in operation. In the next issue, I plan to discuss future directions we might take to meet the Army's historical needs.

THE COMMANDER AND MILITARY HISTORY

The Battalion Staff Duty Officer Approach

Reading military history takes time, and time in tactical units is a finite resource. A tour as battalion staff duty officer can often be busy, but just as often can provide junior officers an hour or two of uninterrupted reading time for professional development. In the pieces which follow, two officers relate how they set up their battalion reading programs and incorporated the staff duty officer's tour.

When I assumed command of a divisional field artillery battalion, I looked for solutions to two problems facing commanders: how to assess the reading and writing skills of young officers, and how to spark in them an interest in the continued study of the profession. As a military historian, I decided to use military history to solve the problems.

Soon after I joined the battalion, I brought my personal military history library to the office for my officers' use. Realizing that books borrowed are often never returned, I asked our learning center monitor to catalog the books and establish a card file for users. A letter to the battalion's officers encouraging them to use the library and explaining the ground rules for checking out books followed. The first step still did not ensure that the books would be read; voluntary systems in troop units as busy as ours often fall to a very low priority, which in practical terms means "never done." The real problem was time, which with the demands of daily routine in tactical units is a precious commodity.

A conversation with Col. Bill Stofft at the Combat Studies Institute while I was attending classes at Fort Leavenworth helped me solve the time problem. He shared with me an idea with which we have since had great success: that we require the battalion staff duty officer to read professionally and to write a synopsis of what he reads. I thought the idea so good that I had it implemented as soon as I returned to the battalion.

The Combat Studies Institute's Leavenworth Papers provided the readings. They were short

enough to be completed in one sitting and were easily summarized. The initial reaction of junior officers was one of disbelief. Most considered it a burden, one of those unnecessary requirements put on them by an insensitive commander. Several officers did not at first take the program seriously, an attitude which changed after the first counseling session.

In the long term, the benefits have been very positive. Most officers now concede that it is not all that difficult to read an article and prepare a short, handwritten synopsis. The program has helped identify those officers who have difficulty both reading and writing, so that they can be referred to appropriate remedial courses. In fact, after six months an arrangement was made through our education center for a remedial course to be taught once a week in our battalion classroom. We required ten officers to attend the initial course. The result has been a marked improvement in the ability of our junior officers to communicate. My personal library is also being used more often now, an indication that the program has interested them in continued study, as well. Senior NCOs are also availing themselves of the library's books.

The program has not been without its difficulties. I have often fallen behind in grading papers. There has also been some difficulty deciding what an officer should read after he finishes the Leavenworth Papers. The program now uses Russell Gugeler's *Combat Actions in Korea* and Albright, Cash and Sandstrum's *Seven Firefights in Vietnam*, both of which are

directly related to the small unit leadership and conduct in combat of primary interest to junior officers. So far, the response to these changes has been positive.

In summary, the reading program has had a two-sided effect. It has sharpened the communi-

cation skills of our junior officers, and has sparked an increased interest in military history. Its cost in time and resources has been manageable. I strongly recommend similar programs in other units.

R. S. Ballagh

While serving as a tank battalion operations officer, I saw a need to stir in our junior officers an interest in important aspects of our profession often neglected in the fast pace of daily operations and training. I wanted particularly to get platoon leaders to ponder the question of how best psychologically to prepare themselves and their soldiers for battle. I hoped the lieutenants' thinking in this way would lead to their self-development and heightened professionalism.

I discussed my ideas with the battalion commander, and we quickly agreed upon a plan of action. The first step was to assign each of the battalion's lieutenants a book or article on military history. I tried to select accounts of small unit actions which would most likely kindle their interest, such as Robert Crisp's *The Brazen Chariots* and Guy Sajer's *The Forgotten Soldier*, as well as works which dealt with the problem of stress on the battlefield, such as John Keegan's *The Face of Battle* and S. L. A. Marshall's *Men Against Fire*. Books from the personal libraries of the battalion's senior officers supplemented what we could find in the post library. A professional development class followed with discussions of historical examples of small unit actions and what we could expect on future battlefields.

The battalion commander and I were impressed by the results of the readings and the class. For once, at least as a group, all the officers soberly

contemplated the reality of war. Many ideas on introducing stress factors into our training were generated, and we found our lieutenants developing a new sense of immediacy and imagination in training preparation.

To continue our initial success, we decided upon a formal reading program for the battalion's officers. I developed a file of short articles from various professional periodicals, such as *Military Review*, *Soldier's Magazine*, and *Armor*, together with book extracts. Looking for better utilization of available duty time, we settled upon the lieutenants' tours as staff duty officers. I developed an essay question for each of the readings, one of which each staff duty officer would answer in the rear of the duty log. The assistant operations officer kept a list of which officers had read which articles to avoid repetition. Every morning I would review the answer of the previous tour's staff duty officer, jot down some brief comments, and send them on to his company commander.

The battalion reading program gave me insights into the attitudes of our junior officers, enabled me to shape future classes, and provided interested company commanders information on their subordinates' writing ability and interest in professional development. Reading military history got our officers thinking and excited about their profession.

Michael R. Matheny

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Military History and Leadership

Some Generals Speak

Don Rightmyer

I have long pondered the relationship between the military professional and military history. My personal files are full of articles about the utility of military history for the military professional, but many of them seem to lack the credibility of experience and demonstrated usefulness. What, I wondered, had some of the most successful American military leaders to say about the value of history?

The memoirs and published reminiscences of generals provide useful clues. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, for example, gave some idea of his early views on military history in his *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Philadelphia: Eastern Acorn Press, 1981). Eisenhower's first reading love was ancient history, and he became intimately familiar with the battles of Marathon, Cannae, and Salamis. The American Civil War also held great interest for him, and he read of the campaigns of Frederick the Great, Napoleon, and Adolphus. Eisenhower gained an invaluable education during his assignment to Camp Gailard in Panama during the 1920s, describing his tour there as "one of the most interesting and constructive of my life" because of his experiences with General Fox Connor. By that time, Eisenhower had lost his interest in military history because of the dry manner in which it was taught at West Point. General Connor took the young officer under his tutelage and through his personal collection of books fostered in Eisenhower a new appreciation for military history. For that, General Eisenhower said he owed Connor "an incalculable debt."

While a cadet at the Air Force Academy, I decided to go beyond the memoirs and ask generals directly about their opinions on the usefulness of military history. I wrote to and received illuminating replies from Generals James H. Doolittle, Anthony C. McAuliffe, Matthew B. Ridgway, Ira C. Eaker, and Lucius D. Clay.

Lieutenant General Doolittle's response was as revealing of General George S. Patton's involvement with military history as his own. He related

a vignette about that most renowned American military student of history from his experiences with Patton during the North African campaign. Patton had gotten into a protracted debate one evening with Harvard history professor Bruce Hopper on one of Caesar's campaigns. The evening ended with each man still staunchly maintaining his own position. Later, after checking the facts, Professor Hopper had to admit that General Patton had been right all along. For his own part, General Doolittle summarized his response to me by saying that he considered the comprehensive study of military history a must for any military leader.

General McAuliffe is perhaps best known for his "Nuts" reply to the German surrender demand when he was surrounded at Bastogne. He wrote that he had been an avid student of military history for most of his career, and continued to read widely in history during his retirement years. In retrospect, he felt that the good decisions he had made in combat during World War II were largely dictated by certain principles he had learned from reading history and the historical examples he had studied during his student days at the Army's Command and General Staff College. General McAuliffe believed that studying military history "helps mould the minds of future leaders and thus leads them to proper actions in times of crisis."

General Ridgway was the most enthusiastic of the respondents in answering my query. He felt that he could not overstate the importance of reading military history—all history, in fact. His interest began in high school even before he decided upon a military career, and he remembered studying the Russo-Japanese War, which had only just ended while he was a boy. During his West Point years, Ridgway found time in addition to his normal studies to read histories of wars and biographies of great military leaders. Throughout his Army career of forty-two years, General Ridgway wrote, he had read widely and had found "an ever-increasing use—in training

in peace and in combat in war—for the lessons brought out.” He found countless examples of both good and bad leadership in the conduct of military operations.

The most important insight General Ridgway shared with me was the advice he had given young officers throughout his career:

I have at every opportunity stressed to officers of my commands, particularly young officers, the immense value of reading of the experiences of others. An individual's experiences, certainly in his early adult years, are far too limited to provide the guidance which can be obtained from the experiences of others, which reading and talking to those who have had wide experience can provide. Seize upon every such occasion. Analyze what you read and hear. See both the successes and failures. Do your best to avoid the pitfalls into which those who failed fell. Apply the lessons in leadership of those who succeeded, *but* apply them in your own chosen methods of leadership. *Know yourself. Be yourself.* Apply them in ways best suited to your own character and personality.

Lieutenant General Eaker, the first commanding general of the Eighth Air Force during World War II, wrote that the study of military history is vital to successful military leadership. Like Eisenhower's, some of Eaker's most memorable exposure to the subject was during an overseas tour. When ordered to the Philippines in 1919, the only books he took were twelve volumes he had collected on the lives and campaigns of Napoleon and his marshals. He concluded his response to my inquiry by observing that while the weapons and techniques of warfare change with technology, the principles of military employment remain fairly constant.

General Clay's answer provides some excellent concluding thoughts. He responded that he had difficulty thinking of military history as separate

and distinct from general history. “Obviously,” he wrote,

the study of campaigns and battles of the past is essential to the strategists and tacticians of the future. Much, too, can be learned from the lives of great military leaders. However, if war is too important to be left entirely to the generals, it is also too important to be left entirely to military historians.

General Clay therefore felt that the truly educated military leader

must study the past relationship between the Armed Services and government; the relationship of the services to the people and its own members; the causes and effects of past wars; the economic consequences of adequate defense; developments in national training and education; all these and more, too.

If I accepted his expanded concept of military history, General Clay wrote, then he could say that all the military leaders he had known personally devoted much time to the study of it.

Perhaps I had framed my query too narrowly in my implied definition of military history as a record of battles, campaigns, and military personalities. Military history is much more, as General Clay most effectively put it. The message that came across from my three- and four-star correspondents was that successful generals (and those who aspire to be generals) benefit greatly from the patterns of thought engendered by the reading of history. Were these generals successful leaders because they read history? Or did the qualities making for successful generalship lead them to read history? The generals might themselves be hard put to say which it was.

Air Force Captain Rightmyer is an F-111 crewmember at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho.

Invitation to Authors

The Army Historian is seeking articles of from 300 to 1500 words for publication in future issues. Articles on Army historical activities, current research, the uses of military history and its position in the Army, past commanders' use of history, military historiography, programs promoting historical mindedness, and profes-

sional reading are being considered. Accepted submissions are edited for clarity and suitability, but every effort is made to preserve the authors' individual styles. Manuscripts should be double-spaced, in two copies, accompanied by a daytime telephone number and brief description of the writer's current position, and sent to Managing Editor, *The Army Historian*, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20314-0200.

PERSPECTIVE

"On the Wrong Side of the Tapestry"

Roger J. Spiller

The Army Historian continues here its series of guest contributions on the military historical profession. Dr. Spiller is Special Assistant to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Readiness Command.

Not long after I was appointed to an Army command history position, my commanding general asked for a study on an issue that had already been the subject of a considerable amount of staff work. Unsatisfied, the commander wanted yet another view; "A little perspective," he said. In the fullness of time, my appreciation went forward—suitably confined to the historical aspects of the question.

Showing signs of intense reading, the paper was returned promptly. At the end of it, the general had written, "Yes. But what do *you* think?" Just as I was congratulating myself on how scrupulously I had adhered to my professional creed, the general had reminded me that I might have satisfied myself, but not him. The general still wanted an answer.

Of course, I had formed opinions while doing the original paper, but I had taken pains to report only what the record had to say. Now, the opinions I had set aside earlier went into a new paper, which then disappeared somewhere up the chain of command. As I prepared that paper, and for a long time thereafter, I thought about what had happened. Somewhere in the midst of this business, I had crossed the line from historian to staff officer. I feared, as G. K. Chesterton's Father Brown had put it, that I was "on the wrong side of the tapestry."

Applying History

At some point in his career, the military historian will be forced to deal with a philosophical tangle that seldom troubles historians in other specialties: the question of application. Let the question of "using" history be raised at a professional meeting, and see how the advocate of such a practice will be greeted. At all hazards and despite all inducements, history's place, it will be argued, is above the fray, unspoiled by the passions of the moment.

The domination of this stance in the profession over the past two centuries has meant that military historians have been in jeopardy of falling from Clio's grace. In military history, the

connections between thought and action are often quite intimate. There is always the odd chance that the work military historians do might in some way lend itself to advancements in the art of war (a chance, by the way, that has never much bothered most scientists).

As if to overcome its own character, military history has come to contain many cautionary tales about relying too literally upon the past. It is the rare student of military history who has not been lectured on the moral of the German general staff's addiction to the lessons of Cannae. One has difficulty imagining a student of medieval Church history worrying over such things.

Such concerns as these are made manifest where the pressures to demonstrate the utility of military history are greatest—in the official historical operations of the armed forces. In the historical centers, and in the war and staff colleges, historians must spend a good deal of time explaining what their art can do, and what it cannot. For their part, the armed forces care little for historians' professional devotions; in return for resources, the services want to be shown something useful. How, then, may the historian answer these demands and remain in Clio's grace?

Historical-Mindedness

Especially in the Army during the past decade or so, the practice of military history has enjoyed a certain measure of official patronage. Pains have been taken to elaborate upon the value to the Army of historical study. Now, the assumption that the study of military history is integral to the making of a modern, professional Army officer has largely been agreed upon. Particularly at the Command and General Staff College, but also at the Army War College, military history has come to form an important part of higher military education. In the main, these successes have been founded upon the notion of "historical-mindedness."

Older arguments in defense of historical study for military officers depended upon time-honored

generalities: the uplifting effect of knowing one's past; the application of history to the art of prediction; or, even more simply, reference to Santayana's oft-quoted dictum. One can see in these adductions a degree of intransigence, a reluctance to concede in any way to practicality. Historical knowledge, like gold, said the most conservative explanations, possesses intrinsic value and so requires no reference to any standard. However satisfying these explanations might have been to historians, they were commonly lost on those who controlled the budgets.

By contrast, "historical-mindedness" has the advantage of not claiming too much, and in this respect it is a reasonable defense. The term suggests that the value of historical study is not only the collection of a body of discrete facts, to be husbanded until the propitious time to draw them forth for the illumination of a problem. Historical-mindedness emphasizes the process of studying history and the patterns of thought that are encouraged by doing so.

If one imagines a profession as something like a small world with its own customs and language, then the professional's upbringing must shape how he thinks and acts in the world beyond the compass of his work. If we can think of a "scientific" or "legal" habit of mind, the concept of the "historical mind" is not so very exotic. Yet, while historians have had difficulty defining a role for themselves outside the academies, scientists and lawyers obviously have not shared this aversion. Throughout society, these professionals hold positions that have precious little to do with their original training. Clearly, society values those trained in the law for reasons other than an ability to cite obscure cases upon demand or argue points before the bench.

As a rationale, historical-mindedness has not entirely won over skeptics in either the Army or the profession itself. The concept tends to come undone when the vital question, "How does it actually work?" is posed.

I argue that the historian is by virtue of his professional background better suited to reach beyond the practice of history into other pursuits that are either scientists or lawyers. The attributes of historical-mindedness need not be dilated upon here, but they include a catholic range of knowledge, a trained perspective and a sense of discrimination, a certain skill at synthesis, a passing acquaintance with the uses of language, and, indispensably, an educated imagination. What enterprise could fail to capitalize upon such talents?

The Historian's Preparation

From my experience with Army staff officers over the past few years, I came to believe that the most successful among them were those who in some proportion combined the talents of the historian. I reveled in this prejudice; and prejudice it was, for I had not the slightest notion of how this belief could be proved. Then I was asked to set aside the historical work for a while and serve on a general's staff. Once more, I found myself "on the wrong side of the tapestry." My prejudices were about to be tested.

I began rummaging about in the literature for clues on how a historian might best function on a military staff and found little. Despite my prejudices and despite having thought about just this proposition, I suffered a failure of imagination. For all my adventurous views on the application of history, I was concerned still that my habits of mind had somehow disabled me for these new duties.

Eventually, these anxieties proved groundless. As the work came into view, it became clear that there were few differences between the processes of my past and present work. The actual distance between historian and staff officer was not so great as I had feared. There was, I found, more than enough experience in my professional background to draw upon, if only I would consider it in the appropriate fashion. There was still research to be done, albeit on different subjects and for different purposes, and if anything the new work demanded more writing. An interest in defense affairs was wanted, but most military historians are drawn, however unsystematically, to such an interest. An appreciation of the general affairs of the command was necessary as well, but a tour as the command's historian had been an adequate preparation. My shortcomings were my own, beyond the powers of a professional education to overcome, but my profession had done all that it could have done to prepare me. And, most happily, I discovered that no delegation of colleagues would appear to defrock me as a historian. I learned that, regardless of my duties, I was still and forevermore a student of history.

Historians tend to see themselves as solitary creatures, and indeed the practice of history—professional study, research, and writing—is not the most social of pursuits. It is no wonder, then, that historians are reluctant to take up other roles. The professional identity by which the historian lives is too narrowly defined. Dur-

ing the normal course of professional development, the historian acquires a great many more talents than only those associated with pure scholarship. In many cases these talents can be applied directly to roles for which historians ordinarily consider themselves ill-suited.

Staff Operations

Staff operations in a busy command today, for instance, resemble nothing so much as a continuous seminar. Issues are raised and analyzed. Papers are researched and written to identify, explain or elaborate upon various points of contention. Meetings, formal and informal, are convened to haggle over positions which, eventually reconciled or not, are presented to some authority for judgment. In the subtle arts encompassed by this process, historians are exceedingly well-schooled, but because it is above all an intensely social and political process, historians discount the contributions that—by their very habit of mind—they can make.

Too, there will inevitably come a time when a staff officer, once made responsible for a project of some dimension, must orchestrate the work of others. Thinking only in terms of their scholarly persona, historians might say that they are ill-prepared to “manage” the project. Historians usually have taught at some point in their careers, however, and one vital aspect of teaching has to do with the organization of knowledge and management of labor. Anyone who has faced a lecture hall full of freshmen should have no reluctance to manage staff operations.

Historians may reasonably argue that theirs is a contemplative art that has no place in the feverish action and constant deadlines that typify the staff officer's day. What historians might regard as a proper time for researching and writing a study would be anathema to a staff officer, for whom time is an enemy to be defeated daily. Historians forget, perhaps understandably, the days when they were forced as graduate students to research and write four or five seminar papers during the course of a semester. Few actions in a military staff are this intense or require this pace of work, and yet even before they have finished their apprenticeships, historians are habituated to long-term and unrelenting pressures to produce on demand. Compared to the pace of graduate work, the speed of staff operations is glacial.

Nothing so strikes at the heart of the professional historian as the suggestion that he should finish a project prematurely. Whatever the sub-

ject at hand, the historian is obliged to strive for comprehensiveness. To embark upon a judgment before mastering all that the sources have to offer is a professional risk for the historian; for the staff officer, it is an absolute necessity. Like objectivity itself, however, perfection eludes even the greatest diligence. At some point, the scholar must *decide*. In staff work, that point of decision arrives much earlier. Moreover, it is the rare staff action that is so framed as to pose a historical question, *per se*. If by some chance the historian serving as a staff officer encounters such a question, there is no bar to his donning the traditional historian's mantle.

The consequences of staff work are often rather immediate, concrete, and of some importance. An action having to do with what appears to be a minor aspect of force design, for instance, may eventually result in vast expenditures and fix the organization of a military unit for several years hence. The possibility, however remote, that such units may be sent into battle puts an edge on such considerations that does not worry historians in their traditional pose. At the same time, there is no reason to suppose that historians are more reluctant to face such responsibilities than anyone else. In fact, knowing both the value and limitations of experience, historians as a class may be more receptive to its teachings.

All of which leads to what might be regarded as the historian's greatest asset: the trained imagination. Historians are drilled to project themselves into other times and places without surrendering their objectivity, and in the privacy of their studies may commune with the greatest figures and consider the most complex issues of the past. This should mean that few mysteries or surprises are left to startle the well-schooled professional. In the normal course of staff operations, rarely are questions raised that measure up to those the historian has considered during his reveries.

Thus, to my mind, historians in the Army have embraced a view of their role that is entirely too literal and consequently limits the contribution that they could make in broader pursuits. The classical role of the official historian in the Army is never likely to be forsaken, nor should it be. But it is time for Army historians to move beyond the cloisters. The historian need only demonstrate a willingness to step beyond his traditional role, to take up the problems of his command as any other officer might do, and make a case for his usefulness. By these means, the profession can begin to repay in practical coin the Army's patronage over the years.

Auf Wiedersehen to German War Art

Marylou Gjernes

The historical record of World War II is rich in artwork from the viewpoint of each of the combatant nations. Hauptmann Luitpold Adam, a World War I combat artist, was appointed by Adolf Hitler to supervise a war art program that included easel painters and newspaper artists at the Propaganda Replacement Center in Potsdam. The works of this group and the subsequent Artists Division of the German High Command, also under Adam's direction, form the bulk of the German War Art Collection now in the custody of the Center of Military History and the U.S. Air Force Art and Museum Branch.

The artwork ranges in type from oil paintings to pencil sketches and in technique from mediocre to brilliant. Nearly all are realistic. The works show in their artistry, color, and mood the spirit of combat and the desolation, destruction, and tragedy of war. There are illustrations of the despair and boredom of troops, general war scenes, portraits of ordinary soldiers as well as of military and political leaders, and many views with no apparent political or military connection. Some of the most interesting scenes are from areas where American soldiers fought, such as North Africa, France, and Italy.

A small part of the collection, perhaps less than 200 pieces, can be clearly defined as propaganda or "Nazi Art." This part includes such well-known pieces as Lanzinger's "Hitler in Armor" and Taust's "Hitler and God." The paintings in the collection that have received the most public attention are four small watercolors signed "A. Hitler." It is the signature that generates the notoriety, not the paintings.

At the close of World War II and in accordance with international agreements, an American military government directive called for the seizure of all art relating to or dedicated to the perpetuation of the National Socialist movement or German militarism. U.S. Air Force Capt. Gordon Gilkey, a combat intelligence officer attached to the Army and a professional artist before the war, was given the task of collecting the German war art.

The nearly two-year search for the art took on the characteristics of a massive treasure hunt. The paintings and sketches had been scattered during the last chaotic days of the Third Reich and lay hidden in several widely dispersed and

unlikely repositories. In 1946, a group of the works was exhibited by the U.S. Army Historical Division in the Staedel Museum in Frankfurt-on-Main. The works were shipped in 1947 to the Historical Properties Section, Office of the Army Headquarters Commandant, at the Pentagon. Over the years and through various organizational changes, the German art became the responsibility of the Center of Military History's Army Art Activity.

The German War Art Collection has been exhibited extensively throughout the United States since it was first received in Washington. Many of the pieces have been displayed in offices, reception areas, and conference rooms in the Pentagon and at Army installations across the country. The widest display of the original paintings has been through the traveling exhibit program.

In March 1982 President Reagan signed Public Law 97-155 permitting the Secretary of the Army to transfer to the Federal Republic of Germany art seized from the German government by the United States Army after World War II. The law excluded any works of art determined to be inappropriate for transfer under a provision of the proceedings of the Potsdam Conference.

In September 1982 the Secretary of the Army appointed a committee including Department of



*Infantry Attack with Armored Car, by Gris Friedel.
U.S. Army Art Collection.*

Defense and Department of State representatives, a designee of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, and a National Gallery of Art staff member to screen the collection and help determine which paintings should be considered inappropriate for return. Works depicting Nazi party emblems, leaders of the Nazi hierarchy and convicted war criminals, works whose overall impressions were to glorify Nazism, paintings attributed to Hitler, and works the U.S. Army and Air Force found useful for educational and historical purposes would not be returned. The

remaining 6,000 have been prepared for shipment to Germany.

The approximately 400 artworks which remain in Army custody will continue to be exhibited in Army and civilian museums. They will also continue to serve the stated mission of the Center of Military History's Army Art Activity: to "further understanding and appreciation of military history among military personnel and the general public."

Marylou Gjernes is Chief of the Center's Army Art Activity.

Resources of the George C. Marshall Research Foundation

The archives of the Marshall Library had their origin in General George C. Marshall's decision to set aside his personal papers for scholarly research. Despite the significance of his contributions to winning World War II and constructing the postwar peace, he refused all offers for his memoirs. He strongly believed that a description of his role was best left to future historians.

Before his death in 1959, General Marshall made arrangements to leave his personal papers to the Marshall Foundation, with the understanding that they should be open to researchers at a library located at Lexington, Virginia, near his alma mater, the Virginia Military Institute. Meanwhile, two actions were undertaken that helped shape the Marshall archives. Careful efforts were made to identify his personal papers in order that they might form the nucleus of the library's archival collection. At the same time, Dr. Forrest C. Pogue was invited, with full understanding of scholarly independence, to begin collecting additional papers and interviews with a view toward writing a full biography of General Marshall. This undertaking, *George C. Marshall* (New York: Viking, 1963-), is nearing completion, with the fourth and final volume now at the publisher.

An important part of the original research project was the identification, copying, and indexing of key documents relating to General Marshall in the millions of papers in the National Archives. This program has given the Foundation valuable additional documents and a unique index to General Marshall's official papers.

While the Marshall papers remain the heart of the archives, a score or more other collections have been added, dealing primarily with World War II and its aftermath. Such personal assistants to the General as Frank McCarthy, William T. Sexton, and C. J. George have deposited records at the library, as have such contemporaries as Lucius D. Clay, Walter W. Butterworth, William F. Friedman, Paul Robinett, C. Tyler Wood, and members of the Marshall family.

The work of assembling successive collections in Lexington, of organizing, identifying, and declassifying documents for the use of researchers, has taken more than two decades. The Marshall papers are now available to researchers, and the collateral collections, with a few exceptions still being processed, are also open to the public.

Fred L. Hadsel

Dr. Hadsel is director of the George C. Marshall Research Foundation, Lexington, Virginia.

Journal, From p. 2

General Staff College's historical reading program and thoughts on the use of Army bookstores. Space will allow for the return of Bruce Hardcastle's "Ten Important Books" series next time.

We continue to look at articles appropriate for publication. Remember, *The Army Historian* features material on military history, its study and use, and not historical articles, *per se*.

As we move into our second year of publication, we are looking at the continued usefulness of the periodical's general arrangement into "The Commander and Military History," "Perspective," "Practicing the Historian's Craft," and "Professional Reading" sections. We invite readers' comments on this method of organization or alternatives.

PROFESSIONAL READING

The Command and General Staff College's Professional Reading Program

The Professional Reading Program at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College is a formal academic program required of all resident students. Academic Counselors/Evaluators, members of the college staff and faculty, administer the students' reading and analysis of scholarly books covering a variety of topics relevant to the military profession. Each counselor supervises the reading program for a staff group of fourteen to sixteen students.

The selections offered in the reading program reinforce the college's core and individual development courses, and give the students an opportunity to master the theory of the profession of arms. The directors of the academic departments select books that require the study of diverse and complex ideas, themes, facts, assumptions, and hypotheses about war, especially American war.

This academic year's primary list of required readings includes selections dealing with military leadership, command and control in battle, tactical and strategic decision making, logistics operations, the human element in combat, and American warfare. There is a heavy emphasis on military history. The "top five" chosen are: *Makers of Modern Strategy*, edited by Edward M. Earle; John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*; Michael Shaara's *The Killer Angels* (actually a historical novel, but extremely well-researched); Martin van Creveld's *Supplying War*; and Russell F. Weigley's *The American Way of War*. A second group of five books is chosen from a more

extensive list. Students who have read any of these mandatory books before enrolling select titles from a supplementary reading list to satisfy the ten-book requirement.

At the beginning of the academic year and with a counselor's approval, each student selects books to read during each school term, chooses the format for reporting on each book, and schedules the reading requirements evenly throughout the school year. As a rule, students read one book per month during the ten months of the college course. (Allied and reserve component officers are required to read only four books.)

The students use a combination of written and oral formats to analyze and evaluate the books they read. To support the college's instruction in oral communications and staff writing, each student must present at least one information briefing, one journal review, and one information paper. The student presents the remaining seven reports in any oral or written format agreed upon by the counselor, who grades the reports and advises the student on content and style.

The Professional Reading Program is a vital part of the Command and General Staff College experience. It encourages students to read critically, to think historically and analytically, and to communicate lucidly about their profession.

Phillip W. Childress

Lieutenant Colonel Childress is a former teaching fellow at the Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

On the Use of Army Bookstores

The Army Service Schools once ran their own bookstores. Books and other learning materials were then the central focus. Bookstores, after all, sold books. Such is not always the case today. Army bookstores are now run by the Army and Air Force Exchange System, and the focus of each bookstore depends upon local priorities and the relationship between schools and the Post Exchange.

Recently, one disgruntled officer student shopping in a bookstore was heard to mutter,

"If I wanted steel belted radial tires or buck knives, I could get them, but they're out of books." Pity. At a time when battle experience is waning rapidly in the officer corps (with some recent exceptions), the demand for the thoughtful, progressive, and systematic study of the history of the military profession increases. So, too, does the demand for learning materials.

There is no better way than the study of military history to shorten the intellectual gap between training and battle. There is no time in

combat to pause, reflect, and ruminate. It must be done before the shooting starts.

For service schools, the military history education program provides subjects and hours for students in residence at basic and advanced officer courses. This is also true at the Combined Arms and Services Staff School, the Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College. The foundations are laid with undergraduates at West Point and in the ROTC program. But the key to continuous and progressive study lies in nurturing the attitudes and abilities indispensable to reading and thinking about, analyzing and discussing the military profession. This is professional development and the responsibility of every Army leader.

The aids to learning have never been more plentiful. They include television, films, microforms, photos, periodic literature, tapes, war games, models, and mock-ups. Training aid workshops and media support centers have been limited only by our imagination and initiative. The literature on the profession of arms and its history abounds. Where we have generally been short-sighted is with the use of our Army bookstores to enrich our programs, to encourage

individual study and the development of personal libraries.

Yet utilizing the bookstores should not be difficult. Paperback books on our profession are plentiful and reasonably priced. They cover leadership, tactics, strategy, logistics, intelligence, planning, administration, indeed, all aspects of the profession.

To ensure that books supportive of its program are made available, all a post or school need do is:

1. Determine what books officers and NCOs should read.
2. See that the books are in the library where they can be made available over the long haul.
3. Direct the bookstore to order the books and display them well.
4. Encourage their purchase and use within and outside the training base.

The bookstores hold a real key for us. Perhaps they can be incorporated more effectively into our history programs.

William Stofft

Colonel Stofft is Director of the Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

AT THE CENTER

Research Associate Named

Maj. Andrew J. Bacevich has been named the first Center of Military History research associate. Major Bacevich, a 1982 Princeton Ph.D., will be in Washington from August 1984 to July 1985 on an International Affairs Fellowship, sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations. His principal interest is in changes in U.S. Army doctrine since Vietnam.

Field Program Panel

In July, the Center convened a Command and Field Historians' Panel to examine critically the Army's field history program. Special attention was given to the role the Center should play in the program. The panel will report its findings to the Chief of Military History in August.

Job Referrals

As a service to the Army historical community, the Center maintains a nationwide name and address list of prospective candidates for history-

related Army positions. Vacancy announcements issued by personnel offices are often only open for two weeks or less. In order that they have the broadest possible selection of qualified applicants from which to choose, hiring officials should therefore call the Center's position referral coordinator, Bruce D. Hardcastle, AUTOVON 285-1278 or commercial (202) 272-1278, as soon as they are able prior to or upon issuance of the vacancy announcements. He will then issue a position referral alert to the prospective candidates on the list. Once the vacancy announcements are issued, copies should be sent as soon as possible to B. D. Hardcastle, ZDA, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20314-0200. Persons interested in being added to the position referral list should send their names and mailing information to the same address, and indicate whether they are now in federal service. Please do not send resumés or SF 171s to the Center. Referral to names on the list does not indicate Center endorsement of a candidate's qualifications.

COMMENTARY AND EXCHANGE

To the editors:

The announcement of your intended publication of *The Army Historian* was met with complete adulation. However, your first three issues have been a total disappointment.

Few people desiring or subscribing to such a magazine are hardly in need of an explanation of the necessity of military history. In fact such people already recognize its essential value to the profession of arms. Hence your first three publications are merely "preaching to the choir."

To be more specific, your first issue dealt with who the military historians are; the second with what they do; the third with why they do it. It is a shameful waste of manpower and materiel to devote a magazine of such potential value to the mere justification of another self-serving bureaucracy. A magazine that would deign to call itself *The Army Historian* should include perhaps one article on Army history. The historical coverage of one campaign or one battle of any war would do more to justify the need for such a magazine than 15 pages of "what the Army historian does" could ever accomplish.

Your center and I agree on two key points which are: the importance of military history to the profession of arms and the need for military history training. We differ on how to accomplish those goals. Your magazine seems more interested in stressing why military history is needed rather than providing some instructive aspect of military history. It is therefore my recommendation that you, from time to time, give a historical accounting of some instructive battle or campaign (e.g. the annihilation at Cannae, the valiant stand at Thermopylae, surprise at Inchon, etc.)

CAPT. DOUGLAS W. DUPREE
Fort Monmouth, New Jersey

The editors reply:

You rather miss the point of our publication. Our early issues have indeed been heavy in self-explanation, natural to a new publication, although in the case of at least one reader it seems we have not elaborated on our purposes enough. We do not now print historical articles on battles. That is a function performed admirably by such journals as *Military Affairs*, *Military Review*, and *Parameters*, and service journals such as *Infantry* and *Armor* regularly feature historical pieces. In their historical articles these

journals do not, of course, limit themselves to battles. Today's military historical profession goes far beyond that. Ours, however, is a periodical on military history and its study and use in the Army, not a historical journal. Besides the military historical community, its readership includes general officers and sergeants, battalion commanders interested in professional development for their commands, retirees and reservists, and lay readers who have no connection with the Army. A number of these readership categories do need to know the importance of history to the Army, and especially how the Army is using and can use history. Certainly bibliographical essays on aspects of military history, articles on reading programs, staff rides, and other school programs, and major pieces on the state of the art go a bit beyond preaching to the choir. If you knew, incidentally, how little in the way of manpower resources are devoted to the production of this periodical, you could not fairly regard it as wasteful. Please keep reading us. You may find something worthwhile. You may even, given time, come to regard *The Army Historian* with something more than "total disappointment," though something less than "complete adulation." We'll settle for something in between.

To the editors:

In your recent Issue Number 3 there were a number of articles of considerable interest to those of us toiling in the vineyards of the field program. Not least of these was Raymond Callahan's piece on the three faces of military history. In general, I agreed with—indeed applauded—his viewpoint.

One minor item begs to be rebutted, however—the allegation that "official historians" have "untrammelled" time for research and writing and are free of pressure to publish. Let me cite some actual statistics as to how one official historian—the undersigned—spends his time, based on a log kept for purposes of a pending manpower survey.

In a recent month 30% of my time went to administrative/managerial tasks, to include personnel actions, filing of reports, and correspondence. The next largest block of time, 25%, went to reviewing and writing critiques of annual historical reviews prepared by subordinate commands (grading papers? clamorous undergraduates?). Historical research got 18%, and a grand total of 5% went to writing. Attendance at staff

meetings (faculty committees?) used up 8% that month, and 8% also went into research and drafting correspondence in response to requests for historical information. Preparation of a letter to provide policy guidance to subordinate commands required 2.5%, and 2.5% went to reviewing files of another office to determine whether they should be destroyed or sent to an archive. Finally, 1% was devoted to a question concerning the disposal of historical property. In summary, less than 25 percent of my time went to the actual *doing* of history.

As for publishers' Christmas deadlines, we are obligated to research and write an annual historical review each year for submission to the Center of Military History within 12 months of the end of the reporting period. My command's last AHR ran to 466 printed pages and was produced by a staff of three historians.

Apropos pressure: One Friday afternoon my office was tasked to come up with a historical example of an outnumbered defender using offensive tactics to win a battle—the response to be ready by Tuesday morning.

There are some out here who think that those in academia live in heaven, or at least a close-in suburb.

The grass is always greener . . .

BRUCE H. SIEMON
Chief, Military History Office
U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army
Heidelberg, West Germany

P.S. While it is true that I am a chief historian, and thus more involved with management and administration than the rest of my staff, the two historians in my office also have large amounts of non-productive time. In the period from 1 January through the end of May this year, neither of them was able to spend more than

65 percent of his time on historical research and writing—which is their supposed *raison d'être*.

Dr. Callahan replies:

I found Dr. Siemon's thoughtful letter illuminating and I learned a great deal from it. I have only a few comments.

Dr. Siemon seems to be in a position roughly analogous to that of a department chairman. This is a job I have never held, and devoutly hope never to have visited upon me. I do know that all department chairs in my experience found "doing history" virtually impossible during their terms of office and would have regarded even 25% of their time available for it as a miracle of good organization.

I can perhaps compare my experience with that of the two historians on his staff mentioned in Dr. Siemon's postscript—rank and file faculty as it were. As a full professor whose "productivity" is considered worth supporting by his chairman and dean, I still find, looking over my Academic Activity Reports, that 35% of my time is the maximum I can get for research and writing. This figure includes the summer and on a term time only basis would be much lower. This figure of course is quite a bit lower than that of Dr. Siemon's staff.

What all this says to me is that, while proportions of time available for certain things vary, we all, whether in government service or academia, *do* have, as I said in my essay, more in common than we sometimes realize.

Readers are invited to express their opinions on this publication and its featured articles, as well as to share their experiences on topics relating to the study, use, and teaching of military history. Correspondence should be addressed to the Editors, The Army Historian, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20314-0200.

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