

ARMY HISTORY

THE PROFESSIONAL BULLETIN OF ARMY HISTORY

PB-20-01-2 (No. 52)

Washington, D.C.

Spring 2001

More Than Numbers

Americans and the Revival of French Morale in the Great War

By Robert A. Doughty

Of the contributions made by American forces to the Allied effort in World War I, the most important may have been the Americans' role in reviving French morale. Arriving in June 1917 after the failure of the Nivelle offensive and amid a spate of mutinies within the French Army, the Americans initially did little to reassure French soldiers in the trenches, but their eager entry into battle against the German offensive in March 1918 soon contributed significantly to restoring French morale and assuring Allied victory. Without this assistance, the French Army might have disintegrated and the Germans emerged victorious.

Though historians often note the importance of American troop strength and industrial power, especially in the erosion of German resolve, they rarely give the

Americans much credit for reviving French morale.¹ British historian John Keegan's recent book, *The First World War*, exemplifies this view. While Keegan highlights the appearance of the Americans in the title of his final chapter, "America and Armageddon," he largely discounts their military significance. Keegan emphasizes the Americans' large numbers, but he neglects their contribution to the fighting and the impact of their combat successes on the revival of French determination and hope.² Indeed, he largely dismisses the U.S. Army's contribution by repeatedly mentioning its lack of professionalism and competence and by neglecting its achievements on the battlefield. Instead, using the colorful language that makes his books appealing to so many readers, Keegan merely explains



American soldiers of the 18th Infantry and 6th Field Artillery, both elements of the 1st Division, receive the French Croix de Guerre on 3 March 1918 for their gallantry in a raid conducted two days earlier. French Premier Georges Clemenceau, third from left, attended the ceremony. (Signal Corps photo)

in a general way that the Germans were “confronted with an army whose soldiers sprang, in uncountable numbers, as if from soil sown with dragons’ teeth.”³

Keegan’s line of interpretation, which tends to minimize the importance of the French and Americans in the final phase of the war and to inflate the role of Sir Douglas Haig’s British forces, is one to which British authors have long adhered. The roots of this view go back to the war itself, when the British bridled under the tutelage of the French in the first years of the war and demanded greater credit for Allied successes later for shouldering a larger part of the war’s burden, and its casualties, in the Somme and Passchendaele offensives in 1916 and 1917.⁴ After the war, the complexity and significance of the British effort emerged as important themes in the British official history which Brig. Gen. Sir James Edmonds and his colleagues compiled.⁵ Not immune to pressure from high-ranking officers who had served in the war, Edmonds crafted the volumes in the official history to present a favorable view of senior British commanders and exhibited what Canadian historian Tim Travers has called a “bias in favour of Haig and his GHQ.”⁶ Moreover, Edmonds fired broadsides at the French official history for its alleged failure to give sufficient credit to the British.⁷ Whatever the shortcomings of the British official history, Edmonds’s work provided the foundation for many historians’ understanding of the war and influenced most of them—including Americans—to give the British the lion’s share of credit for Allied success in the latter phase of the war.⁸

In his book on World War I Keegan relies excessively on Edmonds’s work and its derivatives. While making ample use of recent works about the Eastern Front, he uses few French sources and remarks that the French official history, “though detailed, is desiccated in tone.”⁹ He also focuses more on British battles than those fought by the armies of other nations. The reader of his book learns far more, for example, about the British at Neuve-Chapelle than the French in Champagne, even though the battles in Champagne were far larger and more important. The reader thus views the Great War through the prism of the British experience and learns little about either the fragility of the French Army in 1917–1918 or the significance of the American contribution to restoring the will of the French soldier to fight.

Even though American soldiers served more frequently with the French than the British in World War I, American historians have long viewed the Great War primarily through the eyes of British participants and the works of British authors.¹⁰ Many have relied on works published in London to expand their understanding of the war beyond the American experience, and they have rarely used French sources or archives. More comfortable with English- than French-language materials, they often have worked in the Public Records Office in London, but few of them have conducted research in the massive holdings of the Service Historique de l’Armée de Terre at the Château de Vincennes in Paris. Moreover, American historians have rarely used the French official history,

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even though it includes important documents pertaining to the service of American units in the war.¹¹

Of the numerous holdings in French archives that shed light on the American contribution, the most significant may be the reports submitted by the postal service during the war. In brief, the French censored the letters written by soldiers during the war to prevent their revealing secret information—locations of units, plans for upcoming operations, casualties, etc.—in their letters to their loved ones. As the postal officials read the letters, they quickly realized they could obtain valuable information about French soldiers' morale, and they soon began submitting regular reports to senior military leaders. These reports tell us a great deal about French perceptions of the Americans and thus illustrate the effect the Americans had on the French.

When the United States severed diplomatic relations with Germany in early February 1917, French confidence, according to the postal reports, briefly soared. The report of 15 February noted, "The mass [of the soldiers] think that an ally of this importance would not join our side if Germany was not at the end of its rope."¹² Ten days after the United States declared war on 6 April, however, French General Robert Nivelle launched an ill-fated attack against the German lines along the Chemin des Dames north of the Aisne River. The attack cost the French over 134,000 casualties without producing the anticipated breakthrough. Whatever optimism had existed before the attack quickly dissipated.¹³

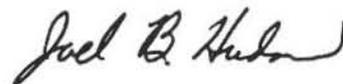
The soldiers' discontent soon boiled over into mutinies, particularly in the units involved in the failed April offensive, and dispirited French soldiers even began to question the benefit their nation would derive from American military support.¹⁴ The postal authorities reported on 1 May, "Many [soldiers] think that the entry of America into the war, while giving us numerous advantages, will prolong the war at least a year and, by the relief of workers [who will be replaced by Americans], send thousands of French to their deaths."¹⁵

According to Guy Pedroncini, who has written the standard work on the subject, the most violent phase of the mutinies occurred between 1–6 June, when for the first time French soldiers shot or beat to death their fellow countrymen, perhaps as many as six. In fact, most of the acts of indiscipline that resulted in court-martial convictions occurred during this brief period.¹⁶

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French morale, both civilian and military, had apparently collapsed, and the French Army seemed on the edge of disintegration. Amid the turmoil of these mutinies, the psychological effect of the Americans' arrival in mid-June could not have been more opportune. When General John J. Pershing debarked at the Gare du Nord in Paris on 13 June, the French Army had just weathered the most violent phase of the mutinies, and the high-ranking civilian and military officials who met him did not know if the soldiers' anger would subside or surge.

Though the effect of Pershing's arrival on French soldiers was not yet apparent, his appearance immediately heartened the citizens of Paris. In his memoirs the American general wrote:

Dense masses of people lined the boulevards and filled the squares. It was said that never before in the history of Paris had there been such an outpouring of people. Men, women, and children absolutely packed every foot of space, even to the windows and housetops. Cheers and tears were mingled together and shouts of enthusiasm fairly rent the air. Women climbed into our automobiles screaming, "Vive l'Amérique," and threw flowers until we were literally buried. Everybody waved flags and banners.¹⁷

When Pershing met General Philippe Pétain on 16 June, the French general-in-chief emphasized the importance of the American presence and said, "I hope it is not too late."¹⁸ Recognizing the fragility of the situation, Pershing told Washington the French could "hold on until spring" but warned that, if the French government failed to support its army, "the latter will lose its morale and disaster [will] follow."¹⁹

To prop up sagging French morale, Pétain personally visited numerous units, including perhaps as many as ninety divisions. During these visits he spoke to groups of soldiers and sought to reassure them by describing the strategic situation and the enormous resources of the United States and by asserting the inevitability of France's victory with the United States as an ally.²⁰ He also issued a pamphlet entitled "Why We Fight"²¹ and distributed a memorandum on the strategic situation that concluded, "France can expect with reasonable confidence a victorious peace that is indispensable to it and that it deserves because of its heavy sacrifices."²² Though the relationship between

Pershing's arrival in Paris on 13 June and the decline that had begun a week earlier in the number and severity of mutinies cannot be precisely measured, Pétain's words and the Americans' arrival must both have contributed to the restoration of discipline in the French Army.

Despite the enthusiastic reception Pershing received in Paris and the end of the mutinies, the promise of American involvement did not fully restore French soldiers' morale immediately. Indeed, hope declined further as German successes on the Eastern Front, combined with the recent revolution in Russia, threatened to permit the Germans to shift more forces to the Western Front, a situation that seriously worried French troops.²³ The French military mission in Russia had provided detailed reports outlining the worsening situation that developed there following the overthrow of the tsar and the establishment of a provisional government in Petrograd in March 1917.²⁴ Though French soldiers initially perceived events in Russia as "democratic" and "anti-German,"²⁵ more realistic and ominous insights came from the French military mission. It reported that General Mikhail Alexeyev, the Russian commander-in-chief, had been obliged to assemble his army group commanders for a meeting with representatives of the provisional government and a committee of workers and soldiers. The military mission also reported that the Germans had sent emissaries to talk to the Russian soldiers about peace.²⁶

Two weeks before Pershing arrived in Paris, another report from Petrograd described the situation there as "calm anarchy" and observed, "The [Russian] officers remain passive, the men do whatever they want."²⁷ On 24 July the French mission, terming the existing situation a "debacle," mentioned some of the efforts by the Russians to reestablish discipline.²⁸ Subsequent reports from Russia described the situation in bleak terms, observing the collapse of morale, the breakup of units, the abandonment of defensive positions, and significant German advances into Russia.²⁹ Although the Bolsheviks did not begin formal peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk until December 1917 and only in April 1918 signed a treaty effecting Russia's withdrawal from the war, the Allies quickly recognized the changing strategic equation. In late July 1917 Allied military leaders met to discuss alternatives if the Russians left the war, and, as Pershing noted in his memoirs, "the opinion prevailed in the conference

that Russia was practically eliminated as a military factor."³⁰

Coupled with the impending loss of Russia as an ally, the outbreak of mutiny left the French Army extremely vulnerable. A postal report in early June emphasized French soldiers' concern about Russia and observed, "Russia inspires great mistrust."³¹ Even though the official bulletin that the French Army circulated as a newspaper among its soldiers said little about the turbulent events in Russia before 6 June,³² the soldiers managed to follow events on the Eastern Front carefully, and some even called for a revolution in France or an immediate end to the war.³³ Recognizing that French soldiers were near their breaking point, the Army's high command identified the Russian revolution as one of the principal external causes of the mutinies.³⁴ Though the mutinies in France waned after the first week of June, the French Army remained the weak link in Allied defenses, as Pétain acknowledged to Pershing when the two met privately in early July. Though not mentioning the mutinies, the French general, who knew his soldiers as well as or better than any other commander in the war, expressed concern about a revolution breaking out in France and observed, "Such an outcome . . . would permit the Germans to dictate the terms of peace instead of the Allies."³⁵

As the Russian Army disintegrated, the arrival of

the first Americans gave the French some reason for hope. French soldiers soon realized, however, that the Americans were not well prepared for high-intensity warfare, leading the French to become more critical, uncertain, and discouraged. The postal report for late November observed, "The Americans are judged intelligent and easy to train, strong and generous; they are criticized for having little discipline, for liking champagne and women too much, [and] for being a bit presumptuous."³⁶ When France's High Commissioner in the United States, André Tardieu, stated publicly that the Americans would not be ready until 1919, the attitude of French soldiers worsened.³⁷ The French high command also had reservations about the Americans and noted in a strategic assessment, "It will be dangerous to hasten the entry of American divisions into the front."³⁸

By mid-December, the French high command noted a "crisis of pessimism" among the soldiers and cited as major factors events in Russia and German propaganda.³⁹ Pétain had painted a bleak picture of the strategic situation at the first meeting of the Comité de Guerre convened by Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau earlier that month.⁴⁰ The situation would, however, become even more daunting, as French intelligence reported in March 1918 that the number of German divisions on the Western Front had increased to 188 from 157 two months earlier.⁴¹ Even



Company D, 165th Infantry, an element of the 42d Division, advances past troops of the French VII Corps, whom they were supporting, near Lunéville, France, on 1 March 1918. (Signal Corps photo)

the arrival of more Americans could not halt the decline of French morale during the winter of 1917–1918. In mid-February 1918 the postal report emphasized the growing doubts among French soldiers about the Americans and their “anxiety” about whether U.S. cooperation would “shorten the war or prolong it.”⁴² The late-February morale report observed, “The depth of weariness [in French soldiers] is obvious.”⁴³

That the Americans could indeed help to shorten the war first became apparent to French soldiers as the Allies struggled to respond to the German spring offensive in March 1918. After Pershing met with Prime Minister Clemenceau and Generals Ferdinand Foch and Pétain on 28 March and announced his willingness to commit all available troops to the fight, the hopes of French soldiers rose as they watched the Americans go into action. Though the format and method of compiling the report on morale changed during this crucial period, comments about the Americans became more and more positive as the weeks passed. The postal report of 6 April stated, “The units that are in contact with the Americans (Second, Eighth, Sixth Armies) have a more and more favorable assessment of our new allies. . . . Rapport between French and Americans is cordial everywhere.”⁴⁴ While the report of 5 May was critical of the performance of the British in the initial phase of the German spring offensive, it emphasized the courage of the Americans under fire and the value of their presence in strengthening the confidence of French soldiers. That report included a statistical analysis of the positive factors influencing French morale, as mentioned in their correspondence, and the “cooperation of the Americans” ranked higher than any other.⁴⁵

The Americans’ presence and participation in the fighting had an even more positive effect in subsequent weeks. While expressing concern about the “fatigue” of French soldiers, the report of 15 May emphasized the “cordial” relationship between the French and Americans. It also praised the soldierly qualities of African American soldiers, observing that “they are considered ‘well trained and well disciplined.’ They establish very good relations with our troops. The units charged with providing training for these new allies are struck by their ‘good will’ and by their desire to do well. . . . They are above all very dedicated.”⁴⁶ A few weeks later even more positive comments appeared, relating this time to American troops in

general: “Our soldiers establish very cordial relationships with these allies; they value the good appearance of their men, their valiant conduct under fire, the audacity of their aviators; they admire the strength and quality of their equipment.”⁴⁷ Adding to the kudos for the Americans, the senior engineer officer in French Second Army emphasized the greater confidence of his troops and observed, “The sight of numerous Americans, their willing participation in operations, sustains this confidence.”⁴⁸

In early June 1918 the Americans’ most visible entry into battle occurred along the Marne River. In his postwar memoirs, Jean de Pierrefeu, a French staff officer who worked at Pétain’s headquarters, painted a vivid picture of the Americans moving toward Belleau Wood, Vaux, and Château Thierry:

Amidst enthusiastic civilians, they passed in interminable columns, tightly packed in trucks, feet in the air, in extraordinary positions, some perched on the tops, nearly all bare-headed and unbuttoned, singing their national songs at the top of their voices. The spectacle of this magnificent youth from across the sea, these youngsters of twenty years with smooth faces, radiating strength and health in their new uniforms, had an immense effect. They offered a striking contrast with our regiments in soiled uniforms, worn by the years of war, with our emaciated soldiers and their somber eyes who were nothing more than bundles of nerves held together by a heroic, sacrificial will. The general impression was that a magical transfusion of blood was taking place. Life was returning in floods to revive the half-dead body of France, which was almost drained of blood after four years of innumerable wounds. No one said anything about these soldiers not being trained, about their having only courage. . . . When one looked at this event in the broadest sense, one perceived the presence of gushing, untiring force that would overcome everything because of its strength.⁴⁹

No one saw the effects of the “magical transfusion of blood” better than French field army commanders. The Second Army commander emphasized in early July the increase in French morale: “Some of our men already have begun to envisage the possibility of a fifth winter in the war, but it should be noted that this eventuality does not seem to depress their morale, for



French officers honor their American comrades-in-arms at a banquet in the Hôtel des Vosges in Lunéville, France, on 18 March 1918. (Signal Corps photo)

they are persuaded that victory will not escape us.”⁵⁰ In mid-July, on the eve of the combined Franco-American offensive between the Marne and Aisne Rivers near Soissons which gave the Allies the initiative and began the series of operations that would result in Germany’s defeat, the Sixth Army commander, who had several U.S. divisions under his command for the operation, stated, “One can see that the military situation will in the near future turn to the benefit of the Allies, thanks to the resources that America has liberally placed in the service of the common cause. The continual arrival of new, robust, combative troops with an abundance of matériel reassures our men and arouses their highest hopes.”⁵¹ Two weeks after the recapture of Soissons, the commander of Seventh Army remarked on the importance of that counteroffensive in changing the attitude of his soldiers from “somber” to “clear enthusiasm.”⁵² At the same time the Second

Army commander reported, “The current morale of the troops is splendid. . . . Their confidence is based on the continued success of the operations under way, the value of the High Command, [and] the cooperation of our allies, the Americans above all. The combative qualities demonstrated every day [by the Americans], their almost inexhaustible reserves, and their prodigious effort sustain all the hopes [of the French soldiers].”⁵³

Even more positive reports came in subsequent weeks. The Second Army commander reported in September: “The continued arrival of American troops, who have already proved their combat value, gives all our soldiers complete confidence in our forces, and at the same time a certitude of result. The soldiers discuss only the date of the decision, which most expect to achieve in the coming spring.” He added, “Confidence in victory remains absolute.”⁵⁴ Also in September the commander of Eighth Army reported, “The uneasiness

which existed several months ago has completely disappeared. Everyone believes that with the powerful cooperation of the Americans the battle against Germany can result only in its defeat.”⁵⁵ A month later, the Eighth Army commander highlighted improved morale and emphasized the boost coming from the Americans’ contribution. He concluded, “The morale of all the units of Eighth Army has never been better.”⁵⁶

As one reads these reports, one cannot help but be struck by the profoundly positive effect the Americans and their military contributions had on the morale of French soldiers. Again and again one reads about the numerous Americans arriving in France and about the great pleasure French soldiers had in watching and helping the Americans prepare for combat. Many of the reports, such as the Eighth Army’s report of 14 October 1918, note the importance of all of France’s allies in the final phases of the war but emphasize the enthusiasm and abilities of the Americans.⁵⁷ Clearly, the reports on morale offer important evidence about the contribution of the Americans to the Allied victory and suggest that their importance came from far more than mere numbers.

Though saying the Americans won the war exaggerates their contribution, it is clear that the fortuitous arrival of the Americans helped Pétain keep his army in the trenches and resume offensive operations. Had the Americans arrived a few months later, or had Pershing not offered all his forces to the Allies on 28 March 1918, the outcome of the war could have been significantly different. The task Pershing faced between 13 June 1917, the date of his arrival in Paris, and 28 March 1918 was an incredibly difficult one given the complexity of organizing, equipping, and training the American army and transporting it to Europe. The success that Pershing’s forces achieved on the battlefield is truly one of the most remarkable military accomplishments of the twentieth century, one that derived not only from the numbers of his forces but also from the quality and aggressiveness of his officers and soldiers. Clearly, the effect the Americans had on the outcome of the war came from far more than their confronting the Germans “with an army whose soldiers sprang, in uncountable numbers, as if from soil sown with dragons’ teeth.” While the doughboys did not win the war for the Allies, France might have collapsed and the Allies lost had the

Americans not entered battle energetically and effectively a year after declaring war.

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At the author’s request, the citation of documents in the notes reflects the orthography used in the originals, even if this is inconsistent. Ed.

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50. II^e Armée, État-major, 2^{ème} Bureau-S.R., Observation du général cdt. l'armée, 12 Jul 1918, carton 16N1491, S.H.A.T.
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52. VII^e Armée, État-major, 2^e Bureau, No. 6133, Compte-rendu sur le moral des troupes, 15 Aug 1918, carton 16N1491, S.H.A.T.
53. II^e Armée, État-major, 2^{ème} Bureau-S.R., Observation du général cdt. l'armée, 12 Aug 1918, carton 16N1491, S.H.A.T.
54. II^e Armée, État-major, 2^{ème} Bureau-S.R., No. 949, Observation du général cdt. l'armée, 12 Sep 1918, carton 16N1491, S.H.A.T.
55. Général Gerard, Commandant la VIII^e Armée, à Monsieur le Général Commandant en Chef, 14 Sep 1918, VIII^e Armée, État-major, 2^{ème} Bureau, carton 16N1491, S.H.A.T.
56. Maj Gen Gerard, Cdr, Eighth Army, à Monsieur le Général, Commandant le G.A.E., 14 Oct 1918, VIII^e Armée, État-major, 2^{ème} Bureau, S.R., carton 16N1491, S.H.A.T.
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THE CHIEF'S CORNER

John Sloan Brown

It is once again my pleasure to report a busy and productive quarter. The pace never seems to slow, but I do not believe that the hard-working folks throughout the Center of Military History (CMH) and the Army Historical Program would want to have it any other way.

On the international scene, Dr. Richard Gorell of CMH led an all-DOD team of historians representing the services and the JCS to Tokyo for the Japanese-hosted U.S.-Japan Military History Exchange (MHX) 2001, held on 19–23 February. CMH hosted this MHX last year. LTG Koyanagi, head of the Japanese National Defense Academy and commandant of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force Staff College, and the college's vice commandant, MG Nakamura, were the official hosts, while COL Kida of that college headed the Japanese delegation. The U.S. delegation included Dr. Ed Marolda, Navy; Dr. Richard Davis, Air Force; Dr. John Greenwood, Office of the Surgeon General of the Army; Dr. Ron Cole, JCS; and Mr. Bill Epley, CMH. The conference theme was "Command and Strategy from Guadalcanal to the Absolute National Defense Zone, 1942–1943." The Japanese also asked the Americans to make a special presentation on air operations in the Gulf War. A total of eighteen Japanese and twelve American scholars participated. The exchange afforded a unique opportunity for intensive academic and military interaction. The next U.S.-Japan MHX will be hosted by CMH in Washington in 2003.

The Korean War Commemoration continues to be an important focus for our efforts. The last two of our five Korean War commemorative pamphlets have been published, along with the final poster in the companion series of five posters. The fourth pamphlet, *The Korean War: Restoring the Balance, 25 January–8 July 1951*, by John J. McGrath, was released in time to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the events it covers. The fifth pamphlet, *The Korean War: Years of Stalemate, July 1951–July 1953*, written by Dr. Andrew Birtle, compresses two years of bloody stalemate from July 1951 to July 1953 into a comparatively few pages—a challenge in itself. All of these pamphlets and posters have been eagerly received by the entire commemorative community. With respect to Korea, CMH also sent historians to assist the inspector general of the Army in completing his report on the politically sensitive No Gun Ri investigation. It is apparent from the released report that the Army's role in this tragic incident was substantially as reported by CMH historians in February 1999. The investigation did develop a great deal of additional detail, however, and served to reacquaint the public with the horrors of that distant war.

Gulf War commemoration also has received due attention as we observed the war's tenth anniversary. CMH has posted a robust array of commemorative materials on its website (www.army.mil/cmh-pg) and has redesigned and reissued its popular poster, *DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM, 7 August 1990–28 February 1991*.

Additional publications initiatives include updating and revising the book *The Sergeants Major of the Army*, which was originally published in 1995. The new edition will incorporate biographies of the three sergeants major of the Army who have served since that time and will bring it up to date. The current SMA, Jack Tilley, is working closely with the Center on this project. A senior, active-duty noncommissioned officer, CSM Dan Elder of the 541st Support Battalion at Fort Riley, Kansas, is working with us to write the new pages. *Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps*, edited by LTC Carolyn M. Feller, AN, USAR (Ret.), and MAJ Debora R. Cox, AN, is another updated publication, which we issued to mark the 100th birthday of the Army Nurse Corps. It was a big hit at the birthday celebrations and Centennial Ball. We have now issued *225 Years of Service: The U.S. Army, 1775–2000*, by David W. Hogan, Jr., in a camouflage-covered "soldiers' edition" and sent it to all addressees within the Army on the *Soldiers* magazine distribution list. Finally, *A Command Post at War: First Army Headquarters in Europe, 1943–1945*, by David W. Hogan, Jr., is a major new Center of Military

History volume. It is particularly timely and important given our determination to sustain an appreciation of the operational level of war during this period of dwindling resources and small-scale contingencies.

With respect to museum activities, we all had a bit of a scare when a serious earthquake hit the Pacific Northwest. Fortunately, the Fort Lewis museum director had decided to review his disaster plan with his staff around the first of March. A few days later the earthquake struck, but the damage was relatively minor, and it was cleaned up within a day of the event. No artifacts suffered permanent damage. No one expected a natural disaster that day, but because the museum staff members were prepared, they knew what to do. Do you? Let us take the Fort Lewis Museum's close call as a warning for everyone—and kudos to the Fort Lewis staff for its professionalism in dealing with potential disaster.

Let me extend my personal appreciation to all of those within the Army Historical Program who have made this quarter so successful and productive. Please keep up all your great work as we continue through the upcoming quarters as well. We always look forward to hearing from you or providing assistance to you, whether directly or through our 3-million-hits-a-month website at www.army.mil/cmh-pg.

Army Historians Win Federal History Prizes

The Society for History in the Federal Government awarded two of its four annual prizes for original writing on the history of the federal government to Army historians in the year 2000. The society bestowed its Henry Adams Prize for the outstanding major publication on the history of the federal government to Dr. Michael D. Pearlman, a historian with the Combat Studies Institute of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Dr. Pearlman was honored for his book *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle over Military Strategy, 1700 to the Present*, Modern War Studies (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999).

The society awarded its Charles Thomson Prize to Dr. Martin Reuss of the Office of History, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for his article "The Art of Scientific Precision: River Research in the United States Army Corps of Engineers to 1945," which appeared in *Technology and Culture: The International Quarterly of the Society for the History of Technology* in April 1999. This prize is awarded for the outstanding essay on an aspect of the history of the federal government written in or for a federal history program.

Former Army Historian Awarded Silver Star

The commanding general of the Military District of Washington, Maj. Gen. James Jackson, presented the Silver Star to Army veteran and retired military historian Robert F. Phillips at a ceremony at Fort McNair, D.C., on 13 February 2001. Phillips began his career as a historian in 1958 when he joined the Organizational History and Honors Branch of the Office of the Chief of Military History. He served briefly there and in the historical offices of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Army Ordnance Department and for a quarter of a century as a historian with the Air Force. He is the author of *To Save Bastogne* (Burke, Va., 1996), a memoir of his service in the Battle of the Bulge as a medical corpsman in the 110th Infantry, an element of the 28th Infantry Division.

Phillips was cited for his gallant actions on 8 September 1950, a week before the Inchon landings, in the vicinity of Kyongju, Korea, north of Pusan, while serving as a private, first class, in the 21st Infantry, an element of the 24th Infantry Division. Aided by a friendly machine gun, Phillips and his platoon leader employed rifle fire and grenades to hold a hill that dominated his company's position when it was attacked by a platoon-size enemy force. Phillips's platoon leader did not survive the firefight. Attendees at the award ceremony included current and former Center historians and friends.

Buffalo Soldiers: Myths and Realities

By Frank N. Schubert

Dr. Schubert presented the following paper at a conference entitled "A Quest for Freedom: The Black Experience in the American West" that was held in February 2001 at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. The conference was organized by the Smithsonian Institution's Program in African American Culture.

There has been a growing popular interest in and knowledge of buffalo soldiers and their role in American history since the 1960s. The evidence of this interest is all around us. The process started during the period of the civil rights revolution with John Ford's 1960 film, "Sergeant Rutledge," and Bill Leckie's 1967 book, *The Buffalo Soldiers*, an engaging campaign narrative that has seen at least twenty printings. This awareness is probably sufficiently pervasive by this point that it is not necessary to explain that the buffalo soldiers were in fact black soldiers who served in the Regular Army during the half-century between the Civil War and World War I. This awareness is also a very good thing and carries the essential message that black people, African Americans, participated in mainstream American processes, that what we are dealing with here is not just black history but American history.

Just how far the buffalo soldier has penetrated the public awareness and the popular culture is easy to demonstrate with some old-fashioned show-and-tell. First—always first, even here at the Museum of American History—is the printed word: Bruce Glasrud's bibliography on blacks in the West lists 334 citations to printed works on buffalo soldiers through 1997.¹ And the books keep coming, including another one from me in 2003, assuming that I can survive another 2.5 years of commuting by bicycle among the friendly motorists of suburban Virginia.

Then there is the "stuff," objects that depict buffalo soldiers and buffalo-soldier themes. They include a wide range of objects—figurines, small and large; refrigerator magnets; and a 29-cent postage stamp issued in 1994, showing a Mort Kunstler painting. There is also a jigsaw puzzle, showing a picture by Don Stivers of Sgt. Emanuel Stance, based on no visual

evidence of what Stance might have actually looked like. Stivers may be the best known of the many who paint buffalo soldiers. Tee shirts abound. One bears the image of the buffalo-soldier monument at Fort Leavenworth, modeled by Eddie Dixon and dedicated by General Colin Powell in the summer of 1992 to national media fanfare. Another shirt features the motto "To the rescue," the refrain of a Quincy Jones tune that mentions buffalo soldiers.

Plainly, the buffalo soldier is lodged firmly in American culture. The image of this trooper is everywhere, and he may even be challenging George Custer as the dominant current image of the frontier army, although he still has a way to go before he takes over this position. Custer, after all, has had more than forty movies made of his career, and there are so far just a handful about the buffalo soldier, although I should



The buffalo soldier statue at the front gate of Fort Huachuca, Arizona (Photo by Jeffrey M. Platt)

note that the Custerites are feeling the heat. The Native Americans have lobbied successfully to change the name of Custer Battlefield to Little Big Horn Battlefield, and the buffalo soldiers are receiving much of the attention once reserved for the “Boy General” and the Seventh Cavalry. One of the most recent books about the fair-haired one, by a collateral descendent, seems part of a rearguard defense. It is called *The Sacrificial Lion George Armstrong Custer, from American Hero to Media Villain*.² There will be more ink spilled before this one is over.

Despite the rise of the buffalo soldiers to national prominence, the notions that they are “forgotten heroes” and that their role in the West represents an “untold story” have taken hold and strongly resist contrary evidence. Examples abound, but two very recent ones should suffice. During African American History Month in Baltimore last year, a church congregation listened raptly as reenactors discussed the troopers. Afterward, a descendent of Ninth Cavalry Medal of Honor recipient Augustus Walley, perhaps failing to recall the 1996 memorial service at Walley’s grave, along with the Medal of Honor tombstone, the press coverage, and the naming of a small Reisterstown street as Augustus Walley Way, said, “They are the forgotten heroes.”³ Moreover, she added, “Almost nothing has been written on the buffalo soldiers,” an

observation that might startle someone who had seen Bruce Glasrud’s bibliography. Reporting on another observance in the same month, the newsletter of the Council on America’s Military Past (CAMP), a national historical group, took the same position, with a lead sentence that claimed that “the stories of unsung heroes who helped tame the Southwest began Black History month activities . . . at the El Paso, Tex., Community College.”⁴ Even the *Smithsonian* magazine could not resist labeling a 1998 article about buffalo soldiers as concerning “unsung heroes of the frontier.” A historian with numerous citations in the Glasrud compilation (picking one at random, let’s say “me,” with nine references) might well wonder whether his effort had been noticed at all.⁵

Reasons for the durability of this perception are not clear. Perhaps the “unsung heroes” myth is an appropriate, even overdue, antidote to the Custer-centric view of the western army, which still remains strong and sometimes includes strange supporting voices, such as the Indians who assert their own ancestors’ prowess by claiming that when they rubbed out Custer they defeated the Army’s best.⁶ The myth of the “forgotten heroes” and the “untold story” may help sustain claims that whites deliberately obscure or trivialize the role of blacks in American history and



The 1994 U.S. Postal Service issue commemorating the buffalo soldier (Courtesy of the author)

thereby reinforce a sense of victimization, the maintenance of which some people might find advantageous or at least comforting. Perhaps invocation of the myth serves merely as a ritualized introduction to discussions of the subject, a convenient attention-getting device for headlines, journalistic lead-ins, or introductory statements. Certainly it can mask personal sloth or ignorance. A person can always claim that his lack of knowledge is based, not on a failure to read and to learn, but on the fact that the story had been hidden from him. Even academicians can—and do—find the myth irresistible. On the first page of a recent book about the Ninth Cavalry, Professor Charles Kenner asserted that the buffalo soldiers' "lives and deeds have largely been overlooked."⁷ Kenner's publisher, the University of Oklahoma Press, incidentally, is also Bill Leckie's publisher and has produced twenty printings of Leckie's book. If anyone should have known better, it was the editors at Oklahoma. Whatever the reason or reasons, the view endures, despite ample evidence that the buffalo soldier story has been widely told.

The other myth, that of the disproportionately large significance of buffalo soldiers in the taming of the West, is more susceptible to dispassionate analysis. This assertion does in fact have some basis in reality. Soldiers and officers alike knew that their units were kept away from centers of populations, served far longer at more remote posts, and generally faced more austerity and greater hardships than other troopers.⁸ Sometimes, as in the period of the bitter wars against the Apaches in 1877–1881 in New Mexico and Arizona, assignment of black units in the most remote areas thrust them into severely trying military campaigns. At other times, their isolation put them in places removed from combat as well as civilization. Lt. John Bigelow of the Tenth Cavalry, for example, considered his regiment's experience during 1869–1872 at Fort Sill in Indian Territory to have been that of "an army of occupation, to hold the country from which the Indians had been expelled and to keep the Indians within the bounds assigned to them."⁹ Likewise, Lt. George Andrews characterized the Twenty-fifth Infantry's ten years in Texas during 1870–1879 as "a continuous series of building and repairing of military posts, roads and telegraph lines; of escort and guard duty of all descriptions; of marchings and counter-marchings from post to post, and of scouting for Indians which resulted in a few unimportant skirmishes."¹⁰

It is possible to count the skirmishes and battles between the Army and the western tribes, determine whether white or black regiments fought in them, and compare the level of participation in these encounters with the percentage of black units in the service.¹¹ Black units made up 20 percent of the cavalry force and 8 percent of the infantry through the frontier period, or about 11.4 percent of the fighting force. Three slightly different compilations of skirmishes and battles of the frontier period—done by the Adjutant General's Office, appended to Francis Heitman's biographical dictionary, and published by the National Indian War Veterans—place participation of black troopers between 11.9 percent and 13.8 percent.¹² So the numbers suggest that buffalo soldiers did not carry a disproportionate burden of the fighting. This is not to say that their contribution was not significant or grindingly hard. But research does provide some data against which to measure claims.

The idea of disproportionate importance also included its own complicating and contradictory duality. On one hand is the claim that the troopers' contributions to the military conquest of the West were greater than their numbers might warrant. This assertion carries an uplifting message of strength, endurance, heroism, and importance. Yet it bears its own counterbalancing admission of guilt because the buffalo soldiers achieved their renown against the native peoples of the West, another oppressed people of color. The conflict between "uplift" and "guilt," to use categories proposed by historian Robert Utley, has been resolved by some by asserting that the soldiers understood and empathized with the plight of the native peoples they helped dispossess, pauperize, and confine to reservations.¹³

Both aspects of this view, that the soldiers were the Army's best and that they uniquely appreciated the tragedy of the Indians, were articulated in the 1997 film "Buffalo Soldiers," directed by the well-known actor Danny Glover. This film, aired by Turner Network Television and meant to be taken seriously, as evidenced by the "Educator's Guide" that was released with it,¹⁴ portrayed the buffalo soldiers as so proficient that they were able to do something no United States soldiers, black or white, ever managed to do: surprise and capture Victorio and his band of Warm Springs Apaches. Then, with the Apaches under their control, the troopers did something no United States soldiers, black or white,

were ever known to do. After sympathetic conversations over coffee, in which soldiers and warriors expressed their mutual understanding of the oppression each experienced at the hands of whites, the troopers let the Apaches go.

This rainbow-coalition fantasy insulted all of the participants. The Apaches, who were among the most expert of trackers, trailers, and scouts, never allowed themselves to be encircled by a patrol of American soldiers, white or black. The buffalo soldiers, had they been adept enough and lucky enough to bag Victorio, would never have let their enemy go. The producers of the film, determined to validate their own notions of race relations, showed an acute disrespect for the strangeness of the past in coming up with a story that might have consoled some but did not reflect reality.¹⁵ They produced an engaging “cinematic fantasy,” to use the phrase with which historian Edmund Morgan described a piece of ahistorical fiction in which the Smithsonian’s own staff had a hand, a film called “The Patriot.”¹⁶

My own experience, while leading a buffalo-soldier tour of the Northern Plains in 1995, made clear on a personal level the intensity of the Indians’ objection to the claim of special ties between black soldiers and warriors. I spent three days trying to explain to a busload of vacationers that the past was strange territory, that history did not always validate current views, and that buffalo soldiers and Indians had not achieved some empathy based on color. I cited the writings of Kenneth Porter, a pioneer in the study of relations between Texan tribes and blacks, and I quoted the buffalo soldiers themselves, who used the same dismissive epithets—“hostile tribes,” “naked savages,” and “redskins”—used by whites. I told them about the racist caricatures in which buffalo soldiers indulged, such as when Private Robinson of Company D, Twenty-fourth Infantry, went to a masquerade ball at Fort Bayard in 1894 dressed as “an idiotic Indian squaw.”¹⁷ I still did not get through to all of the tourists, notably a young black reporter who persisted in the view that soldiers and warriors *must* have seen some commonality in their condition.

The message got through on the fourth day. We were on the Pine Ridge reservation in Shannon County, South Dakota, the poorest county in the United States, heading for Drexel Mission and the site of Ninth Cavalryman William Wilson’s brave dash for reinforcements, for which he received a Medal of



Dr. Schubert (*Photo courtesy of the author*)

Honor. On the way, we stopped at Wounded Knee Creek to see the site of the massacre and visit the cemetery. There, the burial ground on the windswept hill dramatically illustrated the tragedy of Indian life. There was the mass grave, with about 150 victims of the Seventh Cavalry, but there were also the twentieth century graves: those of the children—life expectancy is very short on the Pine Ridge—and those of the soldiers killed on hills in Korea or in paddies in Vietnam, who, like the black troopers of an earlier generation, probably hoped that military service would validate their claim on citizenship.

At the base of the cemetery hill, a Dakota woman stopped her car and asked the young black journalist, who was walking with my wife, what he was doing at Wounded Knee. When he said, a little proudly, that he was on a buffalo soldier tour, she replied: “Buffalo soldiers and the white man killed my people. My ancestors are up there. And I don’t appreciate you being here.” Finally, she said, “Why don’t you go visit Abraham Lincoln’s grave?” The reporter came back

to the bus stunned but with a new appreciation for the strangeness of the past.¹⁸

Once the myths are cleared away, two salient points remain. Of primary importance is the fact that buffalo soldiers took part in major mainstream American processes, the expansion of the United States and its populations and the displacement of native peoples. At the same time, because of white racism and the discrimination that it spawned, they performed their duties and lived the lives of soldiers under conditions that were peculiarly trying. They endured indignities small and large, ranging from the deliberate exploitation of racial hatreds by Wyoming cattlemen in 1892 to the summary dismissal from the service of an entire battalion after a shooting incident in 1906 at Brownsville, Texas.¹⁹

About thirty years ago, when knowledge of the buffalo soldier was beginning to be spread by the pioneering work of Leckie, Arlen Fowler, Marvin Fletcher,²⁰ and others, a song performed by both the Flamingoes and the Persuasions asked, "Buffalo soldier, will you survive in this new land?" The answer seems clear now. The buffalo soldier is thoroughly imbedded in our culture and has become a part of American history, and the reply to the musical question is a resounding "yes."

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NOTES

1. Bruce A. Glasrud, *African Americans in the West: A Bibliography of Secondary Sources* (Alpine, Tex., 1998).
2. Brice C. Custer, *The Sacrificial Lion George Armstrong Custer, from American Hero to Media Villain* (El Segundo, Calif., 1999).
3. *Washington Times*, 14 February 2000.
4. "Black Soldiers Remembered in Texas,"

Headquarters Heliogram, no. 277 (February–March 2000), p. 18.

5. T. J. Stiles, "Buffalo Soldiers," *Smithsonian* 29 (December 1998): 82–94. The quotation is from the magazine's table of contents. *Smithsonian* publishes letters, but not those calling into question its views on buffalo soldiers. Even though my work was at the top of the list of "additional sources," my correspondence on this matter, sent twice, was ignored twice.

6. See, for example, James Welsh with Paul Stekler, *Killing Custer: The Battle of the Little Big Horn and the Fate of the Plains Indians* (New York, 1994), pp. 61, 127, 170. On the many manifestations of Custer's enduring fame, see Brian W. Dippie, *Custer's Last Stand: The Anatomy of an American Myth* (Missoula, Mont., 1976; Lincoln, Nebr., 1994).

7. Charles L. Kenner, *Buffalo Soldiers and Officers of the Ninth Cavalry, 1867–1898: Black and White Together* (Norman, Okla., 1999), p. 3.

8. *Army and Navy Journal*, 17 June 1876, p. 726; *ibid.*, 21 November 1891, p. 219; *ibid.*, 16 January 1882, p. 331.

9. John Bigelow, "Tenth Regiment of Cavalry," *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 8 (March 1892): 221, reprinted in Theophilus F. Rodenbough and William L. Haskin, eds., *The Army of the United States: Historical Sketches of Staff and Line with Portraits of Generals-in-Chief* (New York, 1896), p. 293.

10. George Andrews, "Twenty-fifth Regiment of Infantry," *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 8 (March 1892): 225, reprinted in Rodenbough and Haskin, *Army of the United States*, p. 698.

11. Around 1970 historian Thomas Phillips claimed that between 1866 and 1891 the Army fought 2,704 engagements against Indians, with black troops participating in 141 of these, or just over 5 percent. See Thomas D. Phillips, "The Black Regulars," in Allan G. Bogue, Thomas D. Phillips, and James E. Wright, eds., *The West of the American People*, (Itasca, Ill., 1970), p. 141.

12. War Department, Adjutant General's Office, *Chronological List of Actions, &c., with Indians, from January 1, 1866, to January, 1891* (Washington, D.C., n.d.); Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.,

1903), 2: 426–49; George W. Webb, comp., *Chronological List of Engagements between the Regular Army of the United States and Various Tribes of Hostile Indians Which Occurred during the Years 1790 to 1898, Inclusive* (St. Joseph, Mo., 1939), pp. 25–97.

13. Robert M. Utley, “The Contribution of the Frontier to the American Military Tradition,” in Harry R. Borowski, ed., *The Harmon Memorial Lectures in Military History, 1959–1987*, (Washington, D.C., 1988), p. 527.

14. Karen Needles, “Educator’s Guide,” December 1997, available on the web at <http://turnerlearning.com./tntlearning/buffalo/>.

15. On “the strangeness of the past,” see Simon Schama, “Clio at the Multiplex,” *New Yorker*, 19 January 1998, pp. 38–43.

16. Edmund S. Morgan, “In Love With Guns,” *New York Review of Books* 47 (19 October 2000): 30–32. For a defense of the Smithsonian’s role in this film, see Steven Lubar, “OK, ‘The Patriot’ Is Historical

Fiction. Is That So Bad?” *USA Today*, 12 July 2000, p. 15A.

17. Frank N. Schubert, *Black Valor: Buffalo Soldiers and the Medal of Honor, 1870–1898* (Wilmington, Del., 1997), pp. 128–29.

18. For the reporter’s account of this incident, see M. Dion Thompson, “Visiting the World of Buffalo Soldiers,” *Baltimore Sun*, 21 April 1996, travel section. Also see Schubert, *Black Valor*, p. 168.

19. Frank N. Schubert, “The Suggs Affray: The Black Cavalry in the Johnson County War,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 4 (January 1973): 57–68; Ann J. Lane, *The Brownsville Affair: National Crisis and Black Reaction* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1971); Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528–1990* (New York, 1998), pp. 164–91.

20. Arlen L. Fowler, *The Black Infantry in the West, 1869–1891* (Westport, Conn., 1971); Marvin Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891–1917* (Columbia, Mo., 1974).

Recent Center of Military History Publications

The Center has published a new book by David W. Hogan, Jr., *A Command Post at War: First Army Headquarters in Europe, 1943–1945*. Issued in a paperback edition, the book is CMH Pub 70–60. It may be purchased from the Government Printing Office for \$40 under stock number 008–029–00345–7. A review of this book appears in this issue.

The Center has now issued the fourth and fifth commemorative brochures on the actions of the U.S. Army in the Korean War, completing this series. *Restoring the Balance*, by John J. McGrath, covers the period 25 January–8 July 1951. It is CMH Pub 19–9 and may be purchased under GPO stock number 008–029–00366–0 for \$2.25. *Years of Stalemate*, by Andrew J. Birtle, covers the period July 1951–July 1953. It is CMH Pub 19–10 and is available for purchase under GPO stock number 008–029–00367–8 for \$3. The Center has also completed its series of five corresponding Korean War commemorative poster maps. The final poster, *The Korean War: Phase 5, 9 July 1951–27 July 1953*, is CMH Pub 19–5, carries GPO stock number 008–029–00364–3, and may be purchased for \$6.50.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the military action that ended Iraq’s occupation of Kuwait, the Center has issued a new commemorative poster map, *DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM, 7 August 1990–28 February 1991*. This is CMH Pub 70–74. It may be purchased under GPO stock number 008–029–00368–6 for \$6. Finally, the Center has issued a new, revised edition of *Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps*, edited by Carolyn M. Feller and Debora R. Cox, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the creation of the Army Nurse Corps. This is CMH Pub 85–1. This item is available only to Army publication account holders. Account holders may order any of the items mentioned in this announcement from the Army Publications Distribution Center–St. Louis.

Called to Duty: Army Women during the Korean War Era

By Judith Bellafaire

The following article is a modified version of the paper the author presented at the 2000 Conference of Army Historians in Arlington, Virginia.

When World War II ended in August 1945, the United States celebrated the Allied victory and immediately began a massive demobilization. The armed forces, which had expanded to over 12 million men and women during the war, rapidly reduced its numbers to 3 million by mid-1946 and 1.6 million a year later.¹ Troops scattered around the world wanted nothing more than to return home, and their waiting families wanted Johnny and Jane home from war as quickly as possible so that life could return to normal.

Everyone understood that some men had to remain in the military for defense purposes even during peacetime. The general public, however, expected the services to dismiss all of the roughly 280,000 women who had served in uniform during the war, except for military nurses. After all, the legislation which had authorized the Women's Army Corps, the Women's Reserve of the Navy, the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, and the Women's Reserve of the Coast Guard

specifically stated that the women's elements were to function only for the duration of the war emergency plus six months.²

The American people had seen World War II as an emergency of such desperate scope that extraordinary steps were necessary to enable the country to win this devastating global contest. The employment of women in nontraditional jobs in industry and the enrollment of women in the armed forces were two such adjustments that the country accepted as necessary during the war. Although Americans widely understood that women had performed exceptionally well in traditional male roles during the wartime manpower shortage, once the war was over people expected women to return to their duties and responsibilities in the home.

In the midst of the rapid postwar demobilization, military leaders acknowledged that they did not want to lose all their uniformed women. The U.S. military was charged with fielding armies of occupation in Japan, Germany, and Austria, while maintaining a force capable of defending the nation against the emerging Communist threat. Having skilled and efficient servicewomen working behind desks in military offices



*WACs receive voluntary instruction in shooting a carbine at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, January 1951.
(Signal Corps photo)*

would mean that the nation would not have to recruit or draft quite so many men in the years ahead. And if by any chance another war were to break out, small cadres of women already in uniform would be available to train the larger numbers that would then be needed, substantially reducing the time required for total mobilization. Consequently, the services did not discharge all their servicewomen after the war. In order to justify retaining these women, military leaders ordered their staffs to find ways to enable women to serve in the armed forces on a permanent basis. Army Chief of Staff General Dwight Eisenhower in February 1946 directed his staff to draft legislation to establish a Women's Army Corps in both the Regular Army and the Organized Reserve of the peacetime establishment.³

Service leaders were fully aware that this legislation would be highly controversial. The public was no longer interested in seeing women in nontraditional roles, and most women were no longer interested in filling them. In the booming postwar economy, young men and women were encouraged by example to get married, start families, and create homes. For the first time in thirty years, the average age of a woman at marriage dropped, as did the average age at which a woman gave birth to her first child. Women were so anxious to get married that many elected not to bother with college, and women's educational levels declined relative to those of men.

After the "wartime marriage-mistake phenomenon" worked itself out of the system, divorce rates also declined. Never had so many women defined themselves so exclusively as "wife and mother."⁴

Although jobs were plentiful in the postwar economy, society expected women to work only for a few years at entry-level positions before meeting the "right" man and settling down. Instead of preparing themselves for professional careers, young women prepared for marriage. If they continued to work after marriage, the job would last "only until the children came." After the war, women worked as secretaries, sales clerks, bookkeepers, and waitresses, but a decreasing number became managers, accountants, lawyers, or architects. Men even began edging into professional jobs, where seniority and experience were rewarded, that had been the traditional preserve of women; men became librarians, social workers, and elementary school teachers. It was in the midst of this unfavorable climate for women in the workforce that the armed services began maneuvering to retain women and to provide them the option of a service career.⁵

Subcommittees of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees held hearings on establishing permanent women's military elements in July 1947 and February 1948, respectively. Senior military officials, including Secretary of the Navy and later Secretary of Defense James Forrestal; General Eisenhower and his

Historians Share in Army Superior Unit Award

On 16 January 2001, Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera conferred the Army Superior Unit Award to Headquarters, Department of the Army, and a number of staff agencies and Army organizations that had contributed substantially to the development and implementation of Army transformation initiatives. The Center of Military History was among the staff agencies cited. Also cited were a number of headquarters and elements with historical offices, including Headquarters, Forces Command; Headquarters, Army Materiel Command, and several subordinate commands; Headquarters, Army Training and Doctrine Command, and three of its schools; the Army Armor Center; the Office of the Surgeon General; and the Office of the Chief, National Guard Bureau.

The award honored these units for having "developed and implemented a comprehensive campaign plan to dramatically transform the Army to better fulfill its role in the national security strategy for the 21st century." During the period 1 October 1999 to 1 October 2000 the honored organizations "overcame institutional inertia to begin changing every aspect of manning, organizing, equipping, training and sustaining the Army." Military members of these organizations are authorized to wear individual ribbons on their uniforms and both military and civilian members may purchase and wear lapel pins on civilian clothing to mark the award.

successor as Army chief of staff, General Omar Bradley; and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Chester Nimitz and his successor Admiral Louis Denfeld each expressed the belief that women had provided an invaluable service during the war that the military could not afford to lose. However, other witnesses did not support the incorporation of women into the regular services. Even the initial directors of the Women's Army Corps and the wartime women's naval service organizations—the WAVES, Women Marines, and SPARs—did not support the idea. These directors believed that regardless of what the military's top brass now thought, during the war the acceptance of military women by military policy makers and servicemen alike had been at best marginal and tentative and more often grudging. They worried that servicewomen would find it impossible to overcome this attitude after the war, and that it would be heartbreaking to try.⁶

The debate over the Women's Armed Services Integration Act was lively and contentious, as both the military and Congress were divided on the issue. Although the Senate passed the services' permanent status legislation easily in 1947, many members of the House of Representatives concluded that the women's service groups should be part of the reserve—to be called upon only in the event of a national emergency. The chairman and ranking minority member of the House Armed Services Committee, Walter Andrews of New York and Carl Vinson of Georgia, were the leaders of the reserve-only bloc. They argued that women should not be admitted into the regular forces until their peacetime service in a reserve capacity could be studied and observed.⁷

When debate on the issue reached the House floor in April 1948, Congressman Leroy Johnson of California said that he found it suspicious that only senior military leaders had testified in favor of the bill. What about the “many, many officers of the Army who are not sure that it is the right thing to do to make these women a part of the Regular Establishment,” he asked. Congressman Paul Shafer of Michigan wondered aloud if granting women officers regular status would be fair to men. Over 100,000 male officers, many with combat records, he said, had applied for Regular Army commissions after the war but had not been accepted. Committee chairman Andrews echoed Shafer's argument, asking

whether proponents of the women's corps “will dish out so many Regular commissions to women in the face of the fact that these young men who fought during the war were denied those commissions?” Congressman Edward Rees of Kansas contended that civil service women could do almost all of the jobs performed by military women, so there was little need for women in uniform.⁸

Meanwhile, the steadily worsening international situation during the first four months of 1948 began to affect the thinking of many congressmen. The Soviet Union consolidated its hold on Eastern Europe, gained political control of Czechoslovakia, and blocked Western rail and highway traffic into the city of Berlin. The Army's inability to recruit enough volunteers led President Harry Truman to ask for a peacetime draft. Some politicians reluctant to vote for a draft did not want their constituents to think that they had turned down a potential source of volunteers. Congressman Harry Sheppard of California declaimed on the House floor that Congress should “not take a man away from farm, home, or school to train him to be a telephone operator” in the Army, when women volunteers could be used instead.⁹

The Women's Armed Services Integration Act as finally passed in June 1948 established both regular and reserve women's elements in each of the military services. It also attempted to alleviate many of the concerns expressed by members of Congress during the debate on the legislation. The service secretaries received the prerogative of prescribing “the military authority which female persons . . . may exercise and the kind of military duty to which they may be assigned.” This meant that women need not be given assignments in which they would command men, a prospect that had worried many enlisted men.¹⁰

Furthermore, the act was written to ensure that women would not be subjected to combat. Navy and Air Force women were prohibited from serving aboard ships and aircraft engaged in combat-related missions. Because the Army could not come up with a clear enough definition of combat, the act gave the secretary of the Army the responsibility of deciding how Army women might serve, so long as he took into account the intent of Congress, which evidently opposed giving women combat roles. Finally, the act limited the number of women in each service to no more than 2 percent of its regular establishment and placed strict limitations

on servicewomen's command authority and promotion potential.¹¹

During the two short years between the creation of permanent women's military elements and the start of the Korean War, the few women officers and noncommissioned officers who had remained on active duty after World War II scrambled to organize training programs, plan and develop field programs, and recruit women. By the end of their first two years in operation, the women's organizations had barely established themselves and were just beginning to plan for future growth. They were very far from ready to conduct the rapid mobilization required by a new war.

The reserve programs posed a particular problem to the nascent women's elements. Although all the services began to enroll interested, eligible women veterans into their reserve components, they failed to keep their reserve rosters up to date. As women reservists married, had children, and relocated, their records remained static. Thus by mid-1950, many women on reserve lists were either ineligible for service because they had minor children or else they simply could not be contacted.¹²

When the Korean War started abruptly on 25 June 1950, the armed services were woefully unprepared to fight a war, and the American people were psychologically unready to support the effort. At the start of the conflict the services engaged in a rapid buildup of male and female personnel. The military called up reservists, stepped up recruiting, and conscripted men. When the services began asking women reservists to volunteer to return to active duty, however, they discovered that far fewer women were eligible for active duty than they had anticipated. For example, when the Army appealed to the 4,281 women officers and enlisted women enrolled in its Organized Reserve Corps, it discovered that only 2,524 were eligible for active duty.¹³

The need for women reservists quickly exceeded the number of volunteers. In August and September 1950 the services began involuntarily recalling men and women reservists to serve on active duty. The involuntary recall caused some women considerable distress. Physical therapist and World War II veteran Florence Trask was living with and supporting her aged parents when she received her recall notice from the Army Women's Medical Specialist Corps. Trask asked the Army for a deferment, explaining that both her



Assistant Secretary Rosenberg (Signal Corps photo)

parents were in poor health. The administrator she spoke with told her to put them into a nursing home. Although Trask eventually succeeded in getting her orders revoked, she was forced to take her case all the way to the director of the corps.¹⁴

Enlisted women were not initially affected by the involuntary Army reservist recall, only officers. During the first year of the Korean conflict, the Army recalled to active duty 67 WAC officers and 1,526 enlisted women on a voluntary basis and recalled 175 WAC officers involuntarily.¹⁵

With public support for the war and the draft already fragile—public approval of the war dropped from 75 percent in June 1950 to 50 percent by the end of that year—and the reserve rapidly becoming tapped out, the armed forces decided to step up recruitment. The more men and women they could obtain voluntarily, the fewer they would have to draft.

Recruitment of women had always challenged the services. Even during the patriotic years of World War II, the services had been unable to obtain as many women as they had wanted. The military faced a far more difficult recruiting environment during the Korean War, which was less broadly supported than World War II had been. The public was tired of war and did not believe that the Korean "conflict" was a true

national emergency. Most Americans felt that only a full-fledged emergency could justify the recruitment and utilization by the military services of large numbers of women. Besides, the vast majority of American women of military age had marriage, not military service, on their minds.

Although during the Korean War servicewomen other than nurses were not involuntarily assigned to the combat theater, their presence in the force could free up thousands of men for assignment to Korea. There was an initial flurry of patriotic enlistments by women during the first year of the war. The Women's Army Corps increased from 6,551 enlisted women in June 1950 to 10,883 one year later. Even during the first months of the war, however, there were early warning signs that not enough women were joining up. The nursing corps announced an "acute shortage" in November 1950. According to an article in the *New York Times*, the military services had 7,462 nurses on active duty and anticipated needing at least 5,088 more in the next six months.¹⁶

Regardless of these difficulties, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Personnel Anna M. Rosenberg believed that the growth rates of 40–60 percent exhibited by the women's service elements in the first year of the Korean War showed significant potential for increasing military womanpower. At her suggestion, Secretary of Defense George Marshall formed a committee of fifty prominent civilian women, called the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), to advise and assist in recruiting.¹⁷

The first meeting of the committee was held on 18 September 1951. The committee members learned that the existing strength of the Women's Army Corps was 12,250 and the Army wanted 32,000. The director of the corps told the committee, "Remember, every woman volunteer means one less male draftee." Two months after the first DACOWITS meeting, the Defense Department kicked off its highly publicized recruiting drive to obtain more servicewomen. Within six months, however, it was apparent that the nationwide campaign was becoming a spectacular failure. Why? Women were no more interested in a military career than they were in any other kind of a professional career during the 1950s. The majority of the women who did enlist were interested in one thing: getting married. They had ample opportunities to meet

new men in the service, and as soon as they accomplished their goal they left the service, regardless of whether or not their enlistment period was up. From 1951 forward, attrition was an enormous problem for the Women's Army Corps, so much so that by June 1952 it had fewer women than in June 1951, despite the fact that the Defense Department's recruitment drive remained in full swing.¹⁸

Just What Did Army Women Do during the Korean War?

With very few exceptions, the only military women the Army sent into Korea during the war were nurses. The majority of these Army nurses served in Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) units. These hospitals followed the troops, operating as close as possible to the front lines. They set up in buildings when those were available and under tents when necessary, moving once or twice a week. Capt. Anna Mae McCabe (later Brig. Gen. Anna Mae Hays, Chief of the Army Nurse Corps) remembered how difficult the environmental conditions were in Korea during the first winter. "It was the cold weather . . . that probably affected us more than anything. When an abdomen would be opened, steam would rise from the body. We were operating under very, very difficult circumstances. Water was scarce and to scrub our hands for surgery water would drip, one drop at a time, from a handmade tank. We all had deep cuts in our fingers from scrubbing our hands."¹⁹

Because of the highly mobile character of the first year of the Korean War, with its sudden and rapid advances and retreats, nurses sometimes ended up closer to the enemy than anyone had anticipated. A group of thirteen Army nurses was part of a medical convoy that came under attack, and during the first days of the Chinese intervention in late November 1950 the 64th Field Hospital at P'yongyang was bombed two nights running by enemy forces. Despite these significant dangers, which the women accepted as part of the job, there were only a few nurse casualties. The C-47 carrying Maj. Genevieve Smith from Yokohama, Japan, to her assignment as the chief Army nurse in Korea crashed into the sea in July 1950. Another Army nurse was severely burned when an autoclave used to sterilize instruments exploded. However, no U.S. Army nurse died from enemy fire in Korea.²⁰

The Korean front had stabilized in late 1951, and in 1952 senior commanders in the theater requested that units of the Women's Army Corps and the Women in the Air Force be sent to Korea for duty in administration, communications, and supply work. The Pentagon denied both requests, however, on the basis that with the recruitment of women at an all time low, there simply were not enough servicewomen available. As a result, only seven WACs—six enlisted women and one officer—served in Korea in 1952 and 1953. In December 1952 two stenographers and an interpreter were assigned to Eighth Army headquarters in Seoul. Near the end of the war, Brig. Gen. Richard Whitcomb was assigned as the commander of the Korean Base Section. Whitcomb had worked previously with WAC Capt. Martha Voyles and knew firsthand of her efficiency. He asked her if she would be interested in accepting an assignment in Korea. Voyles was enthusiastic at the prospect and asked the Office of the Director of the Women's Army Corps if such an assignment was feasible. The director approved Voyles's request and, to prevent Voyles from feeling isolated, also arranged for two women noncommissioned officers to be assigned to Whitcomb's command. However, when the three servicewomen's plane arrived in Pusan in August 1953, everyone was allowed to get off except the WACs. Voyles remembered, "We were held on board and not allowed to disembark for several hours. It was extremely hot aboard the plane, and we were wearing our winter uniforms. Finally, they told us what the problem was. It was the United Nations Command. Everyone who came into Korea had to be replacing another individual, and as there were no WACs assigned to our command [the Korean Base Section], we could not be replacing existing individuals. Finally, General Whitcomb arrived and managed to convince the UN Command that he had authorization to allow us into the country."²¹

Voyles and the two WAC sergeants worked for Whitcomb in the control center for U.S. Army operations at Korean ports, recording all the incoming supplies arriving through the port of Pusan. The women were assigned quarters in civilian housing ten miles from headquarters. They took a staff car to work until Whitcomb decided this took too long and ordered them to take a helicopter. During Operation SWITCH, Voyles was involved in maintaining records pertaining to



Lieutenant Voyles and Cpl. Nelma Holm at the Pentagon, February 1951 (Signal Corps photo)

deceased American soldiers being returned home for burial. "We always had a service dockside with the chaplain before the ship sailed," she remembered.²²

WACs served in Japan, Okinawa, Guam, and Europe during the war. Army installations and headquarters throughout the Far East were inundated with casualties. Long hours and overcrowded buildings made for working conditions that were difficult rather than dangerous. Many WACs were assigned to duty at Army hospitals, some as wardmasters, a supervisory role traditionally assigned to male medical noncommissioned officers. Pfc. Muriel Wimmer, who worked at the Tokyo Army Hospital as a medical technician, recalled that patients were placed in beds

in the hallway because there was no space for them in the wards. Lt. Janet Preston spent nineteen months at the Casualty Reporting Office at Far East Command headquarters, rerouting the mail of soldiers who had been reported missing from their units in Korea. Preston emphasized that mail was not returned to the sender until the family had been notified. At times she was required to work seven days a week because of the shortage of personnel.²³

Army women assigned to Europe believed, as did servicemen assigned there and many military strategists and planners, that chances were good that the Soviet Union would attempt to encroach upon Western Europe while the United States was focused on Korea. Thus an assignment to Europe included frequent emergency drills and the development of evacuation plans, and it was often fraught with tension. Jacquelynne Janikowski Meakin was one of about twenty women soldiers assigned to the Army "code room" in Berlin during the Korean War. The women carried special four-power passes at all times. Meakin recalled a time when the women, traveling from Berlin to Heidelberg by train, were "inspected" by a group of Russian soldiers who boarded the train during the middle of the night. "We were forced to stand in our night clothes and bare feet in the freezing hallway, holding our orders, while Russian soldiers tore our belongings apart and cut open things like fluffy slippers. It was most frightening and degrading," Meakin said. "We were not allowed to speak, even to each other. One crying girl had her dogtags lifted off her neck by a Russian bayonet. She was cut in the process and she fainted. The floor was puddles of melting snow, and the Russians just left her lying in the wet. We all expected the worst by that time, but finally we were allowed to proceed. From then on when we had to travel, we flew in and out of Berlin. I was one who had served my three-year term, only to be held over nine more months due to the Korean War."²⁴

Although overseas service was frequently difficult, morale among U.S. military women abroad was usually high, because it was obvious to them that their country needed their service. The vast majority of women who served during the Korean War did so at military posts in the United States, however, where the need for their service often went unacknowledged. The Army assigned most women to jobs in administration, personnel, supply, or communications, and in many

cases, servicewomen found themselves working alongside civilian women who were performing the same jobs. This situation was frequently difficult for the WACs because civilian women had much more personal freedom than did women in the service. Many WACs wondered why the Army had recruited them so ardently if their work could be done by civilians. These servicewomen felt unappreciated and believed that the many small personal sacrifices they were making in the service were not needed in the war effort. Most WACs left the service as soon as their enlistment was up, and many seized the opportunity marriage offered them to leave the service beforehand.

Ironically, in July 1951 the Defense Department made it easier for women to leave the service by reinstating the policy that it had dropped in August 1950 of offering honorable discharges to women upon marriage. The department restored the voluntary discharge upon marriage policy to reduce the number of married women involuntarily discharged from the service due to pregnancy. But as a result, all women who were prepared to marry while in the service were henceforth able to leave before their original obligations were met, and many women decided to do just that. Unfortunately, this policy reinstatement occurred during the second year of the war, when the Army recruited only about half as many women as it had the previous year. Low recruitment coupled with high attrition meant that by the end of the second year of the war, there were fewer women serving in the Army than there had been at the end of the first.²⁵

This trend continued until the end of the war, with the women's organizations remaining far below their authorized strength. The failure of the women's service elements to meet their wartime mobilization goals, and thereby effectively supplement military manpower, hurt their credibility during the latter part of the 1950s. In retrospect, it is easy to see that the U.S. armed forces attempted to permanently incorporate women at what may have been the worst possible time. Given the social values of the American populace during the fifteen years after World War II, the women's service elements were lucky to remain in existence. That the women's services succeeded in surviving during this period says a great deal about the performance, dedication, and abilities of the women who served their country during these years when domestic considerations were paramount.

Dr. Judith Bellafaire is the curator of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation in Arlington, Va. She was a historian at the Center of Military History in 1989–96 and the editor of *The U.S. Army and World War II: Selected Papers from the Army's Commemorative Conferences (CMH, 1998)*.

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8. *Congressional Record*, 94: 4267, 4694, 4706, 4702; Morden, *Women's Army Corps*, p., 53; Lori Fenner, "Ideology and Amnesia: The Public Debate on Women in the American Military, 1940–1973," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1995, p. 259.
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12. Morden, *Women's Army Corps*, pp., 58–61, 90–98.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 94–95; folder, USG–DOD Army #2, Box 22, American Physical Therapy Association Archives, Alexandria, Va.
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16. *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 99–100; *New York Times*, 19 Nov 1951, sec. IV, p. 13.
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22. Interv, author with Voyles, 23 Feb and 1 Mar 2000.
23. Annual reports of Army hospitals in the Far East Theater, 1951–54, U.S. Army Medical Department unit records, boxes 224–41, entry 1001 (UD), Record Group

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Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I read with interest the lead article in your Winter 2001 issue on “The Pentomic Puzzle.”

I was never a “fan” of the Pentomic approach, though I never actually served in a Pentomic unit. Approaching graduation from the National War College in 1959, I was on orders to be a battle group commander—I had requested troop duty—but at the last moment and not at my initiative my orders were changed and I became executive officer to the then-new chief of staff of the Army.

In all the articles about the Army's experience with the Pentomic organization I have never seen one aspect, which I think important, that can be seen in a positive light, although unintended by the Pentomic originators.

Specifically, the average officer in those days had in effect a mental block when it came to analyzing fundamental organizational principles. The prevailing view could be described as limited to just “two up and one back and feed 'em a hot meal!” When the Army went to the Pentomic organization discussions began within the officer corps, and suddenly those who were not enamored of the new organization were required

to think, “Why?”

Initially, most reactions were essentially limited to “It's a change, and I don't think I like it.” But pressed as to why, the stuttering began. Over time, however, the thought processes, the ability to rationally analyze the principles, began to be developed. The appreciation of what was good and bad and *why* began to become apparent.

The bottom line here is it awakened the officer corps to the real requirement to understand, to analyze, to think through tactical and technical aspects of our profession. Today, in my opinion, that is the legacy of our Pentomic experience from which we still profit.

Orwin C. Talbott
Lieutenant General
U.S. Army, Retired

Lt. Gen. Orwin C. Talbott served as executive officer to General Lyman Lemnitzer in 1959–63, as commander of the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam in 1968–69, and as deputy commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command in 1973–75.

Book Reviews

Book Review

by Samuel Watson

*Sword of the Border: Major General
Jacob Jennings Brown, 1775–1828*

by John D. Morris

Kent State University Press, 2000, 348 pp., \$35

Military history commonly takes the form of institutional history or campaign narrative, frequently joined together through unit or individual biography. Sometimes civilian context is thrown in, usually as

adjunct to institutions or preface to war. John Morris has given us all these things, and provided more social and political context than usual, in a biography of many parts. The question is the extent to which *Sword of the Border* transcends the sum of these parts.

Jacob Brown, a politically connected land speculator and developer in northern New York before the War of 1812, rose from command in the militia to become the nation's most capable general of the war. Brown and Andrew Jackson, also a militia officer before the war, were the only two major generals retained in Regular Army service in 1815, and Brown

became the Army's first commanding general after that position was formalized in 1821. Yet Brown has been forgotten by all save Army historians of the period, and this is his first scholarly biography.

Facing a relative paucity of personal papers on which to draw, Morris is to be congratulated for providing a smooth, broad-ranging narrative that connects key campaigns of the War of 1812 with genteel society and politics and the evolution of Army administration after the war. Unfortunately, Morris devotes far fewer pages to Army administration, which has received little attention outside specialist ranks, than to the war, which has been the subject of substantial scholarship in recent years. Yet Brown's story is also the story of Army leadership during the crucial years when the young nation fought to sustain its independence and the Army struggled to secure public acceptance and professionalism. Brown, the aggressive commander in the Army's seminal victories at Chippewa (where the British commander was shocked to face "Regulars, by God!") and Lundy's Lane, later served as a key "harmonizing influence" (p. xv) to help the Army navigate its way through two major reductions in force. Brown also provided important support for reforms on which Army professionalism would be built.

Morris's treatment of the war is first-rate. His account of the raids and skirmishes along the St. Lawrence River, which Brown oversaw as *de facto* theater commander in 1812 and much of 1813, is fuller than those in most general histories, and his descriptions of the British attacks on Sackets Harbor in 1812 and 1813 and the American offensive on the Niagara frontier in 1814 are fully informed by the latest research. Yet, though Morris comes to the now-familiar conclusion that the Niagara campaign provided the basis in victorious tradition and leadership for the postwar Army, his intriguing account of the preceding winter at French Mills, after Maj. Gen. James Wilkinson's botched campaign up the St. Lawrence toward Montreal in the fall of 1813, provides new understanding of that achievement. Morris shows then—Brigadier General Brown and a mere handful of field grade officers struggling to hold the army together, while Wilkinson, whom Brown labeled "totally and utterly unfit for command," (p. 70) went off to the nearest town and spent the winter

in comfort. Since Morris devotes much of his interpretive thrust to undermining junior Brig. Gen. Winfield Scott's claims as the architect of American success in the Niagara campaign, one might go a step further and point to the winter at French Mills as a second Valley Forge, in which the future leaders of the Army were tempered by an experience so mortifying that it spurred a collective cohesion and thirst for reform that inspired Brown's Left Division the following year and, subsequently, the postwar renovation in Army administration undertaken by many of that division's leaders. Doing so, it becomes much more clear how the army of 1814 evolved from the hard-won experience of the preceding year, rather than springing forth wholly new from the Left Division's spring encampment.

In contrast to Wilkinson and Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton, who were the Army's longest-serving generals, Brown possessed all the qualities Americans sought in a commander. He was above all aggressive; he demanded officers equally aggressive and troops sufficiently drilled and disciplined to carry out his offensive plans. Like Jackson and Maj. Gen. William Henry Harrison, but unlike many other senior American commanders, Brown acted energetically, observing that "acquiring a military reputation and . . . promoting the honor and Interest of my Country" (p. 71) depended upon "the noble contest of gallant men, on the field of Battle, struggling for their nation's glory & their own." (p. 109) This ambition for distinction through public service produced a stubbornness in defensive actions and an *élan* in the attack that carried Brown to victory in each of the four major battles he fought, half of the American victories in which more than a battalion-size force of regulars was engaged.

It is worth noting that the strategic and operational blundering that characterized American efforts throughout the war was not matched by a similar share of tactical defeat. The infamous flight of the militia at Bladensburg, outside Washington, D.C., in August 1814 was highly uncharacteristic of American tactical performance that year, not only on the Niagara front, where the U.S. suffered at worst draws, but in the defenses of Forts Bowyer (near Pensacola), Florida, and McHenry, Maryland; Brig. Gen. Alexander Macomb's crucial defense of Plattsburgh,

New York; and Jackson's victories over Creeks, Spaniards, and Britons. Indeed, with the exception of the British raids on Washington and along the Maine coast, U.S. forces consistently turned back British offensives throughout the year. Brown's distinction, as Morris points out, lay in his ability, alone among all American commanders of the war, to attack and defeat British regulars in the open, not just from defensive positions, the result of his stubbornly aggressive leadership, the best-drilled American troops of the war, and relatively equal forces in a year when British expeditions usually outnumbered American defenders.

Brown's leadership skills also enabled him to work well with politicians. His powers of conciliation, unusual in officers of the day and perhaps partially attributable to Brown's experience in the art of persuasion in his business and local political careers, made him the logical as well as the seniority choice for commanding general in 1821. His appointment marked the first time since the early 1790s that the officer corps was not poisoned by rivalries among its top commanders. As commanding general, Brown pursued close civil-military relations and harmony among his officers, sought out the opinion of trusted subordinates on prospective reform measures, and in conjunction with Scott attempted to put an end to the use of illegal punishments against enlisted soldiers. Perhaps most important, Brown was the senior member of the selection boards that recommended officers for retention during the major reductions in force of 1815 and 1821. Although they employed ad hoc evaluation mechanisms, the wisdom of the boards' choices, which were almost uniformly ratified by the president, was at least partially evident in the minimal resignation and dismissal rates of the 1820s, a dramatic contrast to those before and immediately after the war. Though Brown was generally unsuccessful in curbing abuses against enlisted men, and frequent disputes (and sometimes duels) involving officers continued, the officers of the 1820s were noticeably better behaved than their predecessors, and more frequently and effectively sanctioned when they were not.

Morris demonstrates that despite Brown's militia origins, his wartime experiences convinced him that the nation could not rely on the militia for its defense.

Morris also introduces some intriguing archival evidence not referenced in other published works, documenting his account of bands of U.S. and British deserters crossing the Niagara pursued by officers of both nationalities, violations of national sovereignty to which senior officers on both sides turned a blind eye in the pursuit of institutional discipline. Yet, after more than a hundred pages on the Niagara campaign, the reader discovers a mere eighty devoted to the last thirteen years of Brown's life, with but fifteen of these pages dedicated to the seven years Brown served as commanding general (1821–28). These sections make a useful introduction for nonspecialists but do not match the promise of a book devoted to the Army's first commanding general.

In the brevity of these pages the author's quest to reassert Brown's significance often overwhelms his analysis. Whether discussing changes to the staff system, the conduct of selection boards, or Brown's asserted centrality in the creation of the infantry and artillery schools, Morris fails to provide a sufficiently detailed exploration of the processes involved to validate his conclusions. The reader may thus remain unconvinced that Brown established the Army's recruiting system "largely as it still exists." (p. xiv) Moreover, it seems quite a stretch to suggest that the underdeveloped troop training schools of the 1820s, which were disbanded in the mid-1830s and only partially revived two decades later, were in any real sense "the direct predecessors of the service schools established in the 1880s," (p. 239) much less "the precursors of present-day staff and command colleges." (p. xiv) Morris actually minimizes the reader's sense of Brown's significance as a troop trainer and combat soldier by giving so little attention to the general's far more determined effort than those of his successors, Alexander Macomb and Scott, to concentrate the Army in larger units in order to improve discipline, training, and *esprit de corps*. This was indeed Brown's primary objective for the schools.

Yet Morris does say some important new things about the commander and officers of the Army in the 1820s. Particularly significant is his account of Brown's active involvement in the 1824 presidential campaign, though his overall treatment of the campaign itself is blurred by reliance on outdated interpretations. While this election took place amid a

still-flourishing culture of elitist politics that had never excluded military officers, the depth of Brown's engagement and his ultimate preference for "the northern interest" (p. 254) after the defeat of Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, who was generally thought to represent the Army's interests, suggest that political activism on the part of officers, particularly senior ones, was less uncommon and more closely tied to personal and political factionalism than to the Army's needs than is often thought. Indeed, a number of Brown's civil and military friends warned him that he had become too closely engaged in the contest for his own good or for that of the Army.

Historians of both the wartime and postwar Army have recognized Brown's importance; that is why I have looked forward to and welcome this book. Let us hope that the eventual biographer of General Macomb, whoever he or she may be, will write in Jacob Brown's spirit, as a harmonizing influence in the study of the emerging professionalism of the Army that grew from the War of 1812. Indeed, Brown's success as a harmonizer is probably the very reason he has not received the credit he deserves; he was not a glory hound like Scott nor indeed as focused, for it must be said that Brown was devoting a lot of energy to land speculation and politics while Scott was writing the 1821 Army regulations and updating the infantry drill regulations. There is no need to "puff up" Brown at the expense of Scott or anyone else; students of the early Army should instead explore the process of professional innovation more closely in order to illuminate the uneven historical dynamics at work. The epitaph on Brown's grave embodies this soldier's achievements, praising him for "the improved organization and discipline of the army," and encapsulates his motives for service: "for Honor heave the Patriot sigh, / And for his country learn to die." (p. 272)

Dr. Samuel Watson is an assistant professor of history at the Military Academy, where he teaches the history of revolutionary warfare. His Rice University dissertation and a number of his articles address professionalism and civil-military relations in the early- and mid-nineteenth-century officer corps. His essay on the Army of that period will appear in the forthcoming Oxford Atlas of American Military History.

Book Review
by Thomas Goss

The Right Hand of Command: Use and Disuse of Personal Staffs in the Civil War
by R. Steven Jones
Stackpole Books, 2000, 256 pp., \$24.95

So much of Civil War history is dominated by the powerful personalities of famous commanders. Many military studies of the war start with the image of Irwin McDowell conducting a personal reconnaissance before first battle of Bull Run and dwell on such famous scenes as Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee squaring off in the Wilderness. Yet these men did not command by sheer force of will; their staffs enabled the dissemination and execution of their orders. Staff officers played a key role in determining a commander's ability to command, and poor staff work could cripple the most hardened and experienced army. Due to an absence of standardization or regulatory guidance on staff composition and duties, the staffs of Civil War commanders directly reflected their personalities and were only as independent and effective as the commanders allowed. As each staff was bonded to its commander by friendship and loyalty, the personalities involved determined its effectiveness.

The importance of staff work and the varying success of the most prominent commanders of the war in developing an effective staff are the topics of R. Steven Jones' new book, *The Right Hand of Command: Use and Disuse of Personal Staffs in the Civil War*. Looking beyond the familiar faces of the war, Jones details what key staff officers did and how George B. McClellan, Robert E. Lee, William T. Sherman, and Ulysses S. Grant gathered and developed their personal and headquarters staffs. The results are surprising, since the commander with the most staff experience, Lee, made the least use of his staff, while the officer with the least experience, Grant, was the most progressive in developing a professional headquarters staff. Jones concludes that the character and quality of staff work in a Civil War army depended almost entirely on the personality and temperament of its commander.

After looking at the dearth of staff traditions and doctrine in the antebellum Army, Jones describes the initial efforts of commanders to gather trusted officers

around them to lift the burden of bureaucracy and turn plans into action. Observing how the challenges of moving and controlling large armies made clear the need for a trained staff, McClellan pondered forming a modern staff system but achieved little in this regard because of his characteristic hesitancy in executing any action. According to Jones, McClellan's main nemesis also failed to develop a staff capable of pursuing anything more than routine army administrative matters, such as the relaying of orders in the field. The story of Lee's staff during the war shows the limitations of a commander seeking to maneuver and control a mass army with a minimum cadre of trained and talented headquarters personnel. Acting as his own chief of staff and rarely confiding his thoughts to those around him, Lee appears to have been an old-fashioned general who saw those in his headquarters as couriers and clerks rather than talented experts in their fields whose advice he should seek and heed.

Jones devotes most of the book to the two senior Union commanders, to their differing approaches to staff development, and to the divergent results of those approaches. Sherman chose to do much of his own staff work and kept his staff small, relegating them to only routine duties. However, he avoided many of the pitfalls of Lee's and McClellan's headquarters by placing faith in his subordinate commanders and shifting the burdens of administration and the execution of operations onto their talented shoulders. The author's recounting of Sherman's success at waging large-scale campaigns breaks new analytical ground in explaining why Sherman emerged as a great operational-level commander. But the heart of the book is Jones' examination of the evolution of Grant's staff from a group of civilian friends and Army acquaintances into a staff organization that mirrored contemporary Prussian staff doctrine. The author follows Grant on campaign, revealing how the most successful commander of the war evaluated his subordinates' practical responses to complicated command situations and operational challenges to select a staff capable of coordinating the Union offensives that won the war.

Along the way, this book explores some of the more memorable moments of the Civil War, from the shoddy staff work that left Lee's Special Orders 191 in a field in Maryland wrapped around three cigars to the massive logistical undertaking that lay behind the

movements of the Army of the Potomac from the Wilderness to the James River. Thus this book will prove appealing both to Civil War scholars and to those with a limited knowledge of the military aspects of the sectional struggle. While the strength of the book is the story of Grant's supporting cast of staff officers, its weak point is the author's brief conclusion on the legacy of the Civil War staff experience and how the modern staff system traces its roots to that era. This weakness is more than compensated, however, by the historiographical exploration and analysis woven throughout the well-written text. More than a gap-filler, this study adds significantly to the understanding of the generalship of the American Civil War by revealing how the lack of command doctrine and staff heritage heightened the impact of personality and temperament in determining the success or failure of commanders and their armies.

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Book Review by Roger Cunningham

***For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying
Union Chaplains in the Civil War*
by Warren B. Armstrong
University Press of Kansas, 1998, 171 pp., \$24.95**

This thin volume, largely based on the author's doctoral dissertation, tells the story of the 2,300 ministers, priests, and rabbis who ministered to the spiritual needs of the men of the Union Army during the Civil War. In regiments, at posts, and in hospitals, these chaplains "were in a very real sense the morale officers of the army," (p. 121) and they made innumerable contributions to the North's total war effort.

Chaplains had been a part of the American military tradition since the Revolutionary War, but only thirty post chaplains were authorized in the small antebellum Regular Army, and four of these positions were vacant

when the war began. Legislation eventually provided chaplains for the Regular Army's regiments and for permanent hospitals, and as hundreds of state volunteer regiments joined the fray, they were each authorized to have a chaplain chosen by the vote of their field officers and company commanders. This yielded some surprising results. When a woman was selected by the First Wisconsin Heavy Artillery, the War Department refused to commission her.

Initially, each chaplain was supposed to be a "regularly ordained minister of some Christian denomination," but shortages of fully educated clergy caused many denominations to be represented by poorly qualified lay preachers. Some of these men were illiterate and proved to be unsatisfactory, so in July 1862 Congress raised the qualifications for appointment, and the chaplains who entered the service later in the war were generally more competent. At the same time, Congress cleared the way for Jewish rabbis to be commissioned by substituting the term "religious" for "Christian."

Although chaplains wore a distinctive black uniform and lacked command authority, they received the same pay as cavalry captains and enjoyed the privileges of officers. They sometimes fought like soldiers—three were awarded Medals of Honor—and sixty-six of them died like soldiers.¹ One notable example was Chaplain Arthur B. Fuller, a well-known New England Unitarian clergyman who served in the Sixteenth Massachusetts Infantry. In December 1862 Fuller resigned because of poor health a few days

before the battle of Fredericksburg, but realizing that an engagement was nearing, he remained with his regiment to render assistance. When he was subsequently killed in action, he left a pregnant wife and three children, who were not legally entitled to a pension. The governor of Massachusetts helped Fuller's brother petition Congress to enact special legislation correcting this sad state of affairs, and the act was passed two months later.

The chaplains had important pastoral duties to perform when their regiments were not engaged in combat, and most of them seemed to approach these conscientiously. Reporting on his regiment's moral status, Chaplain Lewis Hamilton of the Second Colorado Cavalry stated that although few of his men professed to be Christians, immorality was not a problem. There was some drinking and gambling, constant profanity, and general indifference to the sanctity of the Sabbath, but Hamilton was convinced that preaching the gospel would be productive if only he could induce more men to attend his services. He also reported that distributing literature provided by the Christian Commission was an effective means of reaching his men.

In researching his topic, the author spent innumerable hours sifting through the voluminous records of the War Department at the National Archives, but strangely he failed to consult Herman A. Norton's very useful study, *Struggling for Recognition: The United States Army Chaplaincy, 1791-1865*, which was published by the Office of

Recent Publications Associated with Military History Programs

Stackpole Books has issued *Guardians of the Republic: A History of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps of the U.S. Army* by former Center historian Ernest F. Fisher, Jr., in a new paperback edition. Fischer's study, which was begun at the Center of Military History, was first issued by Ballantine Books in 1994. The Stackpole Books edition contains a new afterword.

An article entitled "U.S. Army Command Historians: What We Are and What We Do," authored by former U.S. Army Special Operations Command historian Stanley Sandler, appeared in the April 2001 issue of the American Historical Association's newsletter, *Perspectives*.

The Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, have published *The Open House Collection: Documents from the Military Archives of Former Warsaw Pact Countries in the Library of Congress*. The volume is a compilation of the keynote address and papers presented at the Conference on Cold War Archives in the Decade of Openness held at the Library of Congress on 28-29 June 2000.

the Chief of Chaplains in 1977. Also, after acknowledging that black chaplains served in the Army, the author discusses only one of them, Samuel Harrison of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Infantry, who had to fight to receive the pay and allowances of an officer—\$100 per month plus two daily rations—rather than those of a ten-dollar-a-month laborer.² This oversight is especially odd because the author devotes more than a fifth of his narrative to discussing the relationship that developed between chaplains and newly freed slaves, or freedmen. In spite of these omissions, however, this very readable book offers many useful insights into the ways in which chaplains bolstered the spirits of the Union Army, thus gaining for themselves “a share in the final triumph.” (p. 125)

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NOTES

1. Two chaplains received Medals of Honor for carrying wounded men to the rear under heavy fire, but the third recipient earned his for fighting outside Atlanta.
2. At least thirteen black chaplains served in eleven regiments and a hospital. See Edwin S. Redkey, “Black Chaplains in the Union Army,” *Civil War History* 33 (December 1987): 331–50.

Book Review

by Frank N. Schubert

Hope & Glory: Essays on the Legacy of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment
Edited by Martin H. Blatt, Thomas J. Brown,
and Donald Yacovone
University of Massachusetts Press, 2001
336 pp., \$34.95.

In the half century after the Civil War, thousands of monuments to Union soldiers were erected and dedicated. The overwhelming majority of these statues, in town squares and parks throughout the country, showed standing, uniformed, armed private soldiers, not mounted officers.¹ Despite the contributions of nearly 200,000 black Americans among the two million men who served in the United States Army that defeated secession,² these memorials depicted only white soldiers. The sole exception was Augustus Saint-Gaudens’s memorial on Boston Common to Col. Robert Gould Shaw and the black infantrymen of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, who achieved renown in July 1863 during the ill-fated storming of Fort Wagner at the entrance to Charleston harbor. “This bronze bas-relief marvel of composition,” as historian Thomas Cripps describes it, (p. 236) was dedicated in 1897.

The memorial is extremely important, as Donald Yacovone, one of the editors of *Hope & Glory: Essays on the Legacy of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment*, notes in his contribution, “The Pay Crisis and the ‘Lincoln Despotism.’” In the context of the pervasive commemoration of white soldiers and the popular post-Civil War acceptance of the view that the conflict was fought over abstract considerations of states rights, “Saint-Gaudens’s work stands as a perpetual reminder of the Civil War and the struggle over slavery.” This memorial alone, Yacovone contends, “has resisted efforts to expunge the African American role in the war from the historical record and fills a place in the nation’s culture occupied by no other piece of art or literature. To borrow from Robert Lowell’s great poem, the Saint-Gaudens monument and the Fifty-fourth’s heroism at Battery Wagner sticks like a fish bone in the nation’s throat and cannot be dislodged.” (p. 35)

Hope and Glory contains fifteen original essays, all written for the centennial of the dedication of the memorial. The essays are organized in three sections. The first part concerns the background and wartime career of the regiment and covers pre-Civil War Boston, New England abolitionism, and Colonel Shaw’s family. The second discusses the commemoration of Shaw and the 54th through 1897, including sculpture, painting, and poetry. The third looks at the regiment in twentieth-century culture—poetry, music, the 1989 film *Glory*, and the growing popularity of Civil War



Memorial to Colonel Shaw by Saint-Gaudens (Photo courtesy of the National Gallery of Art)

reenactment among African Americans. Overall, these essays on numerous aspects of race and remembrance are excellent, with those of Marilyn Richardson and Martin Blatt among the more noteworthy.

Marilyn Richardson's "Taken from Life: Edward M. Bannister, Edmonia Lewis, and the Memorialization of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment" considers the early celebrations of the regiment by two prominent nineteenth-century black artists. Bostonian Edward Bannister painted a portrait of Colonel Shaw that received favorable critical notice and inspired poetry. Edmonia Lewis sculpted a bust of Colonel Shaw and a statue of Sgt. William Carney, who received the Medal of Honor for his bravery at Fort Wagner. The Carney statue was "her first recorded narrative work, her first full-length, though not life-size, figure." Richardson considers the Carney piece "the first known depiction by any sculptor—and therefore all the more significant

because it is from the hand of a black woman—of the singular experience of a specific, named, and in turn nationally recognized individual African American soldier depicted in a free-standing three-dimensional work." (p. 114) Neither Bannister's portrait nor Lewis's statue, both of which were shown at the 1864 Boston Colored Ladies' Sanitary Commission Fair, is known to exist today.

Martin H. Blatt's essay, "*Glory*: Hollywood History, Popular Culture, and the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment," examines the film which publicized the exploits of the regiment for modern audiences. As Blatt notes, the film was not a documentary but a successful "dramatic interpretation of the significant role African Americans played in the Civil War." (p. 215) The most important point made by the film was that blacks fought in the Union Army and played a major role in a central event of the nation's

history. African Americans did not have freedom bestowed on them but earned it on the field of battle.

Richardson and Blatt both note the contrast between the depiction of Shaw, on one hand, and a group of anonymous black soldiers on the other. Richardson observes that Saint-Gaudens's soldiers were "individual and finely delineated [but] not the faces of men who had enlisted in the Fifty-fourth." (p. 109) Moreover, two sons of Frederick Douglass—Lewis Henry Douglass and Charles Remond Douglass, both of whom served in the 54th and are shown in uniform on page 111—came from a family as noteworthy as that of Shaw. Still, in the sculpture, Shaw stood out as unique, an identifiable known individual hero, while the soldiers were types, "a marching chorus of honored symbols." (p. 110) Blatt makes the same point about the movie. The filmmakers worked with a real white officer (Shaw) and archetypal soldiers, "a composite group of fictional characters." (p. 220)

Blatt praises *Glory* while acknowledging its weaknesses. These flaws include conveying the impressions that most soldiers in the regiment were formerly slaves and that the whole regiment was wiped out at Fort Wagner, as well as the denial of a significant role for Frederick Douglass. Nevertheless, Blatt concludes, the film's great strengths "make it a significant contribution to American culture and its ongoing conversation over race." (pp. 222–23)

Overall, there is very little to complain about. Both Richardson and Blatt claim incorrectly that Sergeant Carney was the first black soldier to receive the Medal of Honor (pp. 111, 220). Actually, by the time that Carney received the award in 1900, more than thirty black soldiers had received the medal for service in the Civil War, on the frontier, and even in Cuba. All of the essays are worthwhile, readable, well illustrated, and carefully documented. This is an important contribution to the growing literature on American memory and commemoration.

NOTES

1. On Civil War commemoration, see especially Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton, N.J., 1997).

2. On the number of blacks in the Union Army, see Dudley T. Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861–1865* (Lawrence, Kans., 1987), pp. 287–89.

Book Review by Roger Cunningham

Pennsylvania in the Spanish-American War A Commemorative Look Back

by Richard A. Sauers

Stackpole Books on behalf of the
Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee
1998, 106 pp., \$12.95

This softcover book tells the story of the men from Pennsylvania who volunteered to serve in the War with Spain. Only New York's personnel contributions exceeded those of the Keystone State, which proudly sent more than 17,000 citizen-soldiers to the Volunteer Army in its own units—fifteen infantry regiments, three cavalry troops, and three light artillery batteries—while additional Pennsylvanians served in the regiments of the Regular Army and federal volunteer organizations, as well as in the Navy and Marine Corps. Pennsylvanians in the ranks of the sea services included several of the war's more famous individuals—Charles Gridley, the captain of Admiral George Dewey's flagship, and Marine Sgt. John Quick, who received the Medal of Honor for heroism during the battle of Cuzco Well near Guantánamo Bay in Cuba.

Drawing heavily upon the extensive manuscript and photograph collections of the U.S. Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, the author capably tells the story of the mobilization of Pennsylvania's National Guard units, primarily at Mount Gretna, near Harrisburg; their subsequent training at Camp Thomas, Georgia, and Camp Alger, Virginia; the overseas deployment of some of the units—most of them to Puerto Rico and one regiment to the Philippines—and the demobilization of all the units, primarily at Camp Meade, also near Harrisburg. The lone regiment that was destined for Cuba was stranded in Tampa, Florida, due to a lack of space on transport ships. Thus, the state lost only a dozen men killed in action, all in the Philippines, while 226 more succumbed

to the diseases that proved to be far more deadly than Spanish bullets.

Several maps and appendixes complement the book's text, and it is well illustrated with numerous black-and-white photographs, as well as a fifteen-page section of color photographs of most of the flags (and some other militaria) that once belonged to the state units. Unfortunately, several of the banners are now in terrible condition.

The book has several editorial problems, most notably the mysterious substitution of ten footnotes from chapter four in lieu of the footnotes that should be at the end of chapter one. Also, although the author's coverage is generally quite thorough, there is one topic that deserves fuller treatment—the state's failure to mobilize its lone black company, the Gray Invincibles of Philadelphia. Since the Pennsylvania National Guard was segregated, it was not acceptable to allow this independent unit to be attached to any of the state's white infantry regiments, and attempts to find the company a home in one of the four black volunteer infantry regiments raised by the War Department were unsuccessful.¹ Thus, the Gray Invincibles remained in Philadelphia, while every other Pennsylvania unit, except three naval militia companies, marched off to war. Dismissing their unjust treatment with the simple statement that "None of these units were fated to see action in 1898" is insufficient. That comment should instead have prefaced a concise discussion of the reasons why these Pennsylvanians were left behind.

Nevertheless, for those who are fascinated by the "Splendid Little War," this book is a good buy. In recounting the adventures of the thousands of Pennsylvania citizen-soldiers who elected their officers, shouldered their Springfields, and left their home state, many for the first time, the author reinforces Gerald Linderman's apt observation that "The nation for the last time thought appropriate, and could afford, volunteer informality."²

NOTES

1. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of Pennsylvania for the Year 1898* (Harrisburg, 1900), p. 48.
2. Gerald F. Linderman, *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War* (Ann Arbor, 1974), p. 90.

Book Review

by Vincent J. Cirillo

The Boer War: Historiography and Annotated Bibliography

by Fred R. van Hartesveldt

Greenwood Press, 2000, 255 pp., \$79.50

The enormous literature on the Boer War (1899–1902) can be intimidating. Dr. Fred R. van Hartesveldt's *The Boer War*, part of Greenwood Press's *Bibliographies of Battles and Leaders* series, provides a comprehensive guide to help identify the best sources from the thousands of titles in print. (Researchers in this field should be cautioned that libraries may catalogue the Anglo-Boer conflict as the "South African War.")

An excellent 42-page historiographical essay introduces the 175-page annotated bibliography. In this essay, van Hartesveldt discusses the highlights of the ongoing debates among historians on the significant issues of the war. The author impartially covers the relevant literature, contemporary and modern, in English and in Afrikaans, and he gives the reader both sides of the story. Typical is the historical controversy over concentration camps. Authors sympathetic to the Boers charge that the British deliberately chose poor sites, failed to provide adequate supplies of food and potable water, and neglected sanitation in order to pressure the guerrillas to capitulate on account of their concern for the welfare of their incarcerated families. Indeed, today's scholars agree that concentration camps *were* a factor in the Boers' surrender. On the other hand, pro-British partisans claim that the Army was humane and did its best under difficult circumstances. The Boers themselves were to blame, these writers reason, because their women, accustomed to life on the open frontier, were ignorant of basic sanitary principles that had to be observed in close quarters and were distrustful of British officials who tried to instruct them in sanitation.

The annotated bibliography contains 1,381 citations of books, periodicals, bibliographic aids, pamphlets, and Ph.D. dissertations. Only 11 of the 150 sources in Afrikaans that van Hartesveldt cites have been translated into English. Unfortunately, J. H. Breytenbach's multivolume *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899–1902*

(Pretoria, 1969–1996), the definitive history of the war, and A. W. G. Raath's essential series on the concentration camps have not been translated. Van Hartesveldt recommends Thomas Pakenham's *The Boer War* (New York, 1979) as the best general survey of the conflict and Peter Warwick's *Black People and the South African War, 1899–1902* (New York, 1983), as an unrivaled account of the role of blacks in the war efforts of both sides. On the other hand, van Hartesveldt points out those works that are, in his words, superficial, biased, uncritical, opinionated, fanciful, partisan, self-serving, speculative, histrionic, outdated, or racist. The annotations are clear and to the point, as when van Hartesveldt exposes the weakness of J. F. C. Fuller's campaign narrative *The Last of the Gentlemen's Wars: A Subaltern's Journal of the War in South Africa, 1899–1902* (London, 1937): "Through a combination of assignment and illness, Fuller missed all of the major battles of the war."

The Boer War is not without its faults. The historiographical essay focuses on traditional military topics and, for example, deals only superficially with the impact of disease on the conduct of the war. Van Hartesveldt makes only passing comments on the typhoid epidemics in the concentration camps and in the British Army, hinting that, in the latter case, the epidemic started when command failure led to soldiers' drinking polluted water from the Tugela River. It is known that British military operations were adversely affected by disease. Typhoid fever was a major killer of British troops in South Africa (57,684 cases and 8,022 deaths), and the failure to protect their health became a public scandal back home in England. A royal commission was appointed to investigate the treatment of the country's sick and wounded soldiers.

The *Report of the Royal Commission* (London, 1901) is among the fifty-three references—many quite dated—pertaining to various medical aspects of the war. However, Philip Curtin's *Disease and Empire: The Health of European Troops in the Conquest of Africa* (Cambridge, 1998), which provides a recent interpretation of the typhoid epidemics in the war, is unfortunately not included, perhaps because it appeared too late to meet the author's deadline.

Another drawback is that the citations are listed alphabetically. The bibliography would have been more user friendly if it were arranged by categories; for example, general histories, causes of the war, battles

and campaigns, unit histories, medical aspects, British biographies and memoirs, Boer biographies and memoirs, concentration camps, the correspondents' war, government documents, and reference works. Classifying is critical, since many titles give little indication of their contents and might be missed by researchers. A case in point is George Lynch's *Impressions of a War Correspondent* (London, 1903), which contains significant information on the impact of typhoid fever on the British Army.

Despite these criticisms, *The Boer War* fills a real need. Preparing a bibliography requires a prodigious investment of time and effort to master the literature. Military historians are indebted to Dr. van Hartesveldt for having created what will surely be an invaluable reference tool. The book also reveals areas that have been neglected by historians. Opportunities for doctoral students and scholars to make original and significant contributions to Boer War historiography become apparent. Historians have, for example, only begun to address the racial attitudes of Britons and Boers toward black Africans.

Vincent J. Cirillo, Ph.D. is the author of "'The Patriotic Odor': Sanitation and Typhoid Fever in the National Encampments during the Spanish-American War," which appeared in the Spring 2000 issue of *Army History* (No. 49).

Book Review **by Keir Sterling**

Henry L. Stimson: The First Wise Man
by David F. Schmitz
SR Books, 2000, 222 pp., cloth \$50, paper \$17.95

David F. Schmitz, a professor at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, has written a relatively brief but cogently argued biography of Henry L. Stimson (1867–1950), who was twice secretary of war, under Presidents William Howard Taft, Franklin Roosevelt, and Harry Truman, and secretary of state under President Herbert Hoover. Schmitz argues that, after the two Roosevelts and Woodrow Wilson, the sometimes overlooked Stimson "ranks as the most important American policymaker of the first forty-five years of the twentieth century." (p. 210) Stimson

consistently advocated internationalism and believed that “the United States should be the leader of the world.” (p. 210) However brief, this book is no mere reworking of old arguments based on secondary materials. Schmitz’s judicious use of hitherto untapped materials, principally from the voluminous Stimson papers at Yale University, as well as Stimson’s published writings, does much to justify his thesis.

Born to privilege, Stimson was trained at Andover, Yale, and Harvard Law School. He served as United States attorney for the Southern District of New York and in 1910 ran unsuccessfully for governor of New York as a progressive Republican. As secretary of war in the last years of the Taft administration, Stimson confirmed and extended Elihu Root’s vital Army General Staff reforms. He was an Army lieutenant colonel during World War I and spent sixteen months as civilian governor-general of the Philippines in the late 1920s. He served every president from Theodore Roosevelt to Truman, with the exception of Warren Harding. When not in Washington, Stimson was a successful Wall Street attorney.

Conservative in his politics but nevertheless an activist in foreign policy, Stimson’s paternalistic approach to handling internal problems in Central America and Asia sometimes led him to make mistakes. He did not, for example, believe the Filipinos were ready to govern themselves. His actions as President Calvin Coolidge’s special emissary in Nicaragua ultimately led to the repressive American-backed dictatorship of the Somozas, father and son, which lasted half a century. As secretary of state, Stimson eliminated our invaluable, clandestine, foreign signals intelligence program with the classic comment that “gentlemen do not read other gentlemen’s mail.” (p. 82) On this issue, he reversed himself before and during World War II, recognizing the crucial role played by American and British ability to read MAGIC and ULTRA intercepts of encrypted enemy messages. During World War II Stimson forcefully supported his department’s policy of internment of Japanese-Americans, a misguided effort for which the government has since apologized.

Some historians have been critical of Stimson’s tenure as Hoover’s secretary of state. These critics have suggested, for example, that U.S approval of the London Naval Agreement of 1930 and our policy of mere nonrecognition of Japanese expansion in Asia in

the early 1930s were timid responses to the worldwide growth of totalitarianism. But Stimson strongly advocated American political and economic sanctions against Japan. Hoover, however, would not act, deterred by opposition from within his cabinet, overwhelming isolationist sentiment in Congress, and the difficulties caused by American noninvolvement in the League of Nations. In addition, Britain and other European powers refused to support intervention, due in part to the continuing effects of the Great Depression. Finally, the American public would not at that point have supported a more activist policy. But as Schmitz notes, what is important here is that Stimson was one of the few public officials in the early 1930s who risked their political capital by pressing hard for policies more in line with international realities. Though the Hoover administration’s Latin American policies largely supported strongman governments, that administration did lay the essential groundwork for Franklin Roosevelt’s better-known “Good Neighbor” policy there.

Out of office for seven years (1933–40), Stimson, as Schmitz points out, exemplified the concept of “loyal opposition” by supporting many of FDR’s initiatives in the foreign policy arena. Stimson helped mold public opinion in favor of international cooperation against expansion-oriented dictatorships and strongly advocated lower tariffs on trade.

In 1940 Stimson, by then in his early seventies, was one of two Republicans whom President Roosevelt invited to join his cabinet, the other being his fellow progressive Frank Knox, who became secretary of the Navy. Roosevelt realized that the United States would soon be caught up in World War II, and he needed bipartisan support to prepare the nation for its role in that conflict. Stimson selected strong subordinates, who under his guidance ably ran the War Department on a day-to-day basis for five years. For his part, Stimson, in Schmitz’s words, “provided the initial efforts and general direction” (p. 135) by mobilizing American industry and labor and by developing the nation’s war-making potential. In mid-1941 he was ahead of the president in urging that the United States join Britain in establishing a convoy system to carry lend-lease supplies to that country and in advocating that supplies also be sent to Russia. Concurrently, he pressed for naval action against German submarines in the Atlantic. Following Pearl

Harbor, Stimson personally “concentrated on the larger questions of strategy and oversight of the Manhattan [atomic bomb] project,” (p. 135) which together consumed most of his time and energy. He spearheaded the policy of defeating Germany first and, working with foreign military leaders, helped forge a united front against the Axis Powers.

Early in 1942 Stimson reorganized the War Department. Three commands, each reporting to Chief of Staff General George Marshall, assumed responsibility for ground forces, air forces, and supply, respectively. Stimson gave unstinting personal support to Marshall and other senior Army leaders, including Generals Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower, and Brehon Somervell. After FDR died, Stimson entered into a productive working relationship with President Truman. Stimson certainly anticipated, but tried hard to avoid, postwar friction with the Soviets. In these and other ways Stimson played a major role in bringing World War II to a successful conclusion, while also attempting to provide a framework for postwar cooperation. Schmitz’s book will become the new standard for those seeking a brief but solid account of the life and career of this distinguished public servant.

Dr. Keir B. Sterling has been a civilian historian with the Army since 1983 and command historian for the U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command at Fort Lee, Va., since 1998. He has previously written an article and several reviews for Army History.

Book Review

by Harold Nelson

After D-Day

Operation Cobra and the Normandy Breakout

by James Jay Carafano

Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2000, 295 pp., \$55

Lt. Col. Jim Carafano has written a history of Operation COBRA that should be useful to all readers of these pages. He uses modern doctrinal concepts as part of his framework, and he provides an excellent tactical narrative. He also spends some time contemplating the quality of generalship demonstrated by the U. S. Army’s senior leaders. The combination

is appealing to all who study the history of our Army. Carafano asserts that units and leaders were learning to exploit the full potential of forces available as they solved the tactical problems of the breakout. I agree with that assessment, and I believe he makes the case effectively.

Most students of operations in Normandy devote the bulk of their attention to the drama of D-Day. The subsequent operations that resulted in the liberation of Cherbourg are seldom studied, even though the individual engagements are interesting and the maturation of the forces engaged was dramatic. The U.S. First Army’s subsequent drive through the bocage country and the taking of St. Lô were slow and bloody, but they also gave units involved some valuable opportunities to learn how to fight as teams. Carafano uses that phase of operations as a baseline to analyze U.S. Army forces in terms of their organization, combat power, force protection, and sustainment. At the same time he outlines the capabilities of the German defenders, setting the stage for the situation of mid-July 1944: a near-stalemate, with British and Canadian forces unable to break out into the plains southwest of Caen and the Americans unable to break out into the rolling terrain of Brittany and the Loire valley.

Carafano justifiably begins his detailed story with the planning and conduct of operations designed to break through the hard crust of the German-held terrain while simultaneously driving beyond the difficult area of small, hedgerow-bordered fields and broad impassable marshes. This was Operation COBRA—the concentration of preparatory fires, infantry penetration, and armored exploitation to kill, capture, or displace defenders in a narrow sector, destroy the cohesion of the defense in that sector, and open the possibility of maneuvering against additional enemy forces on the flanks.

While the story of all aspects of planning and execution at the tactical level is excellent, the section devoted to the strategic and operational settings is relatively weak. As an example, Carafano properly gives Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, the First Army commander, tremendous credit for assigning to VII Corps the only division available in the First Army reserve, when the corps commander, Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, complained that his force for the main attack was too weak in infantry. But Carafano fails to note the operational context. As early as 26 June,

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, had released the 28th Infantry Division to First Army from SHAEF reserve. But initially that release was conditional—the 28th had been trained for amphibious operations, and General Eisenhower released the unit with the understanding that it would be used in an amphibious assault.

At SHAEF, Eisenhower had planners trying to develop a concept to use the theater airborne reserve, linking up with a new amphibious landing, to seize St. Malo or some other port in Brittany. Cherbourg had fallen to the Allies on 26 June, but its port facilities were heavily damaged. The storm that wreaked havoc on the MULBERRIES on 19–20 June put the buildup in jeopardy while reminding operational leaders that they would have serious difficulties if they still had inadequate ports when winter storms began to blow. Eisenhower also feared that the deception operation threatening an amphibious operation at the Pas de Calais was wearing thin and that Hitler could soon be building up forces around the Normandy beachhead faster than the Allies could reinforce theirs. Once Eisenhower knew Bradley's plan, he removed the string from the 28th Division, recognizing that a well-orchestrated breakout with forces ashore offered greater odds for success than did a new amphibious assault. Since the "Operational Level of War" wasn't part of the Army's doctrine when Martin Blumenson wrote *Breakout and Pursuit*, I believe that new books written by experienced Army historians should work harder to develop these important dimensions of decision-making above the tactical level.

I was similarly disappointed by the lack of Air Force detail in the story of the preparatory bombardment. Carafano properly chastises Bradley for his lack of candor in deflecting responsibility for some aspects of the flawed bombing effort—both in the casualties it produced among U.S. ground forces and in its shortcomings in destroying the German defenses. But his opening vignette had given an excellent sketch of the execution of a bombing mission, and I had hoped that he would have given us more detail on the planning and execution of the strike from an Air Force perspective. His treatment of the maturation of tactical air-ground operations is quite complete, but I think he would have been justified in expanding coverage of the ways in which the heavy and medium bomber pilots

viewed the operation. Since he is interested in the maturation of forces, he might even have told us more about the ways in which control measures were improved for subsequent "carpet bombing."

At the operational level, General Eisenhower insisted that future requirements for such dramatic diversion of strategic bombardment assets might occur. He was right. When the heavies were used around Metz in early November, air-ground radio communication was much improved, radio marker beacons were emplaced near the front lines, captive balloons were placed 4,000 yards behind the lines at 300-yard intervals, and 90-mm. antiaircraft guns 4,000 yards farther back fired red smoke to burst 2,000 feet below the bombers every 15 seconds. Carafano is right to tell us that Bradley was "disingenuous" (p. 120) when he continued to insist that he had thought the bombers would come in parallel to the front lines for COBRA. Indeed, they continued to come in at right angles in all subsequent applications for the same reasons the air planners had insisted on that approach at COBRA. What changed in the later episodes were the control measures.

But General Bradley comes out of this book looking quite good. General Collins' credit for battlefield brilliance is somewhat diminished, but I think Carafano's interpretations are appropriate in both instances. I also agree with his assertion that the battalion and regimental commanders are the real heroes who took the plan, the available resources, and the situation as it emerged and produced the breakthrough. A few of their actions are pictured clearly in this history, and that is one of its real strengths.

One of this book's annoying weaknesses is its lack of adequate maps. Use the maps from *Breakout and Pursuit* to supplement the sketchy "figures" that accompany Carafano's text, which are a totally unacceptable substitute for maps. Since this book is said to be part of a series called *The Art of War*, one can only hope that this aspect of the series will improve with subsequent volumes. I would hope that authors would be helped by more careful editing as well. Section headings appear on two occasions as the last line on a page. The reader is confused twice on a single page when "east" is substituted for "west" and a division commander is erroneously placed in another division's headquarters. (p. 162) The most damaging lapse comes in the Epilogue, where Carafano writes,

“In the end Cobra proved remarkable both for its contribution to breaking the stalemate on the Western Front and for its demonstration of the U.S. forces’ operational flexibility. The battles of Operation Cobra revealed much about the origins of this illusive and essential skill.” (p. 259) Change illusive to elusive and you have a fine summary of this book’s major contribution.

Retired Brig. Gen. Harold Nelson, a career artillery officer, served as chief of military history in 1989–1994. He is the author of Leon Trotsky and the Art of Insurrection, 1905–1917 (Totowa, N.J., 1988), and coeditor with Jay Luvaas of the U.S. Army War College’s guides to the battles of Antietam, Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg. He holds a Ph.D. degree in history from the University of Michigan. Lt. Col. James Jay Carafano was chief of the Military Studies Branch of CMH in 1996–97. He is now executive editor of Joint Force Quarterly.

Book Review

by Martin Blumenson

A Command Post at War

First Army Headquarters in Europe, 1943–1945

by David W. Hogan, Jr.

U.S. Army Center of Military History

2000, 360 pp., paper, \$40

How did the First U.S. Army headquarters go about its business in World War II? What were its functions? How did the command post carry out its missions? How good was the performance of its commanders and staff?

These questions drive David W. Hogan, Jr.’s splendid study. Very few historians have addressed, described, and judged the multifarious tasks of an army headquarters at war. Certainly no one has looked at and reported on the First Army headquarters as thoroughly, systematically, and brilliantly as Dr. Hogan. He presents not only its inner workings but also how the personalities of its members shaped its style. He maintains a beautiful balance between procedures and persons as well as between the way things were supposed to work and how they actually did. This

exceptionally well-researched, well-written, and nuanced volume is an example of the high quality we have come to expect from the products of the Center of Military History.

Organized in England by Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley in October 1943, the First Army headquarters planned and executed the American sector of the Normandy invasion. Following the painful battle of the hedgerows, it implemented the breakthrough that became a breakout. After 1 August 1944, when Bradley stepped up to the 12th Army Group and Lt. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges succeeded him, the First Army, in concert with the British Second, the Canadian First, and Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr.’s Third U.S. Armies, swept across northern France, Belgium, and part of Holland.

Halted by the theater-wide supply crisis, the First Army then engaged in bitter winter fighting in the Hürtgen Forest, along the Roer River, and elsewhere. It suffered a setback in the German Ardennes counteroffensive, electrified the world by capturing the Remagen Bridge across the Rhine River, and advanced to the Elbe River as the war in Europe came to an end. Shortly thereafter, the headquarters left Europe for the Far East and the conflict against Japan, but the atom bombs aborted the voyage.

Throughout the campaigns, the First Army headquarters directed the operations of the corps under its command, shifted formations, established unit boundaries, committed reserves, responded to the instructions of the army group and other higher echelons, gathered and disseminated intelligence information, handled administration, and cooperated with the Navy and Air Force. It provided logistical support to its combat forces by acting as the link between the Communications Zone and the divisions’ distribution points and assisted those forces in the spheres of communications, engineer work, ordnance service, medical facilities, and the like.

The number of personnel making up the First Army headquarters fluctuated, always tending to increase. In general, the headquarters consisted of slightly more than 300 officers, 25 warrant officers, and 700 enlisted. A cadre of officers who had served with Bradley and the II Corps in Tunisia and Sicily formed the important core that dominated the command post. Like Bradley and Hodges, who were infantrymen, most were of that branch.

Although the commander, of course, had the authority and responsibility for all that the headquarters produced, the decision making, Dr. Hogan says, was complex and diffuse. The involvement of individuals other than the commander blurred the lines of influence. In this respect, Bradley and Hodges had different impacts on the staff. Bradley was generally well regarded and liked. Hodges was somewhat remote, depended on a small group of advisers, and avoided large conferences and gatherings.

What were the deficiencies in the First Army headquarters? According to Hogan, it tended to micromanage, that is, to focus too closely on details more properly left to the lower echelons. It never devised an efficient system of knowing immediately what was happening at the front, a method like Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery's Phantom or Patton's 6th Cavalry Group, known as the Household Cavalry. It had difficulty communicating with lower levels, especially during the invasion and the fast-moving breakout, because of a shortage of wire communications units and manpower. It lacked a long-range planning section that might have avoided the difficulties of fighting in the bocage country and against the Roer River dams. It had several undermanned and overworked sections, and it needed more liaison personnel. It suffered tension between some staff sections, particularly G-2 and G-3 but not limited to them, mainly due to personality conflicts. It was conservative in its concern for flanks, in its piecemeal commitment of armor, and its ability to concentrate available forces. It did not treat all of its corps alike, favoring always the VII, which apparently could do no wrong. Finally, in Hogan's words, "Mobile warfare did not come as naturally to the First Army headquarters" (p. 293) as did its positional warfare in Normandy and along the German frontier.

For me, there were two surprises in Hogan's account. One, the headquarters enjoyed extremely good relations with Montgomery during the Battle of the Bulge when Bradley and Hodges were absent. Montgomery was, Hogan says, genuinely kind, helpful, and supportive, and he provided much needed and much appreciated leadership.

Two, Hodges, from September through February, and particularly during the German attack in December, failed to visit the front. Ill and unable to function fully, he let Maj. Gen. William Kean, his chief of staff, run

the show and keep the headquarters together.

The strengths of the command post? "On balance," Hogan concludes, "the First Army emerges as a solid, competent—if not especially brilliant—headquarters." It was noted for "diligence and conscientious attention to detail." (p. 295)

The superb bibliographical note, one of the appendixes, indicates the range and scope of Hogan's investigation. He has found and digested a wonderful spread of sources. His interviews clarify and add flavor to the events and the relationships that might otherwise be lost.

I have a single question. Why is there no word about a task imposed by Army regulations: How did the First Army headquarters record its wartime history? The efforts of such stalwarts as Forrest Pogue, William Fox, and Ken Hechler, to name but several who gathered historical data within the confines of the First Army area, deserve, I believe, at least brief mention.

Martin Blumenson served as a historical officer with the Third and Seventh Armies in Europe during World War II and commanded a historical detachment in Korea during the Korean War. He was a historian with the Office of the Chief of Military History both as an officer and, from 1957 to 1967, as a civilian. He is the author of many books including Breakout and Pursuit (CMH, 1961), Salerno to Cassino (CMH, 1969), The Patton Papers (2 vols., Boston, 1972-74), and The Battle of the Generals: The Untold Story of the Falaise Pocket (New York, 1993).

Book Review by David Toczek

***The Human Tradition in the Vietnam Era*
Edited by David L. Anderson
Scholarly Resources Incorporated, 2000, 237 pp.,
cloth \$50, paper \$18.95**

In recent years many historians, rather than analyzing the broad political or military ramifications of important historical episodes, have devoted their efforts to recording the reactions and experiences of individuals who were affected by those events. Prof. David L. Anderson of the University of Indianapolis,

the editor of *The Human Tradition in the Vietnam Era*, seeks to place the Vietnam period in context through a collection of twelve biographical sketches. While the sketches are in no way authoritative accounts of the individuals' lives, they do offer a few insightful glimpses of those who lived through this divisive time.

Anderson sets the tone of his anthology by devoting a fair portion of his introduction to an explanation of "the breakdown of what scholars have termed the 'Cold War consensus'" (p. xiv) rather than to a discussion of the actual historical events that transpired from the early 1950s until the 1970s. Building a case for attempting to explain the Vietnam War's true effects by retelling the stories of individuals, the editor argues that "by exploring the very diversity and multiplicity of the individual lives of Americans in the Vietnam era, we can learn much about the tensions and meaning of that entire period of U.S. history." (p. xviii) While acknowledging that "some of the biographies that follow offer generalizations and others do not," Anderson clearly believes that "each has a special story that is worth telling for its own intrinsic worth." (p. xviii) The fifth book in the series *The Human Tradition in America*, this collection follows closely series editor Charles W. Calhoun's "hope . . . that these explorations of the lives of 'real people' will give readers a deeper understanding of the human tradition in America." (p. i)

The Human Tradition in the Vietnam Era's organization supports the editors' intent of providing the reader with a cross-section of experiences. Dividing the work into three separate sections, Anderson uses the first, "Americans Enter the Vietnam Quagmire," to ask, "How did the United States become so deeply engulfed in the tragic quagmire of the Vietnam War? How could that great nation have gone so wrong?" He responds by presenting the sketches of Francis Cardinal Spellman, the Roman Catholic archbishop of New York; U.S. ambassador to Cambodia William C. Trimble; President Johnson's adviser on national security affairs Walt Rostow; and Vietnam scholar Bernard Fall. In the second section, entitled "Americans Become Trapped in the Vietnam Quagmire," the reader will find chapters on Spec. 4 Bill Weber, Lt. William Calley's radio operator; Seawillow Chambers, a soldier's wife; Nancy Randolph, a U.S. Army nurse; and Bill Henry Terry, Jr., an African American soldier killed in action. In the

final section, called "Americans Struggle against the Vietnam Quagmire," the editor presents selections concerning General David Shoup, commandant of the Marine Corps; Otto Feinstein, an academician who played a key role in Senator Eugene McCarthy's presidential nomination; *Pentagon Papers* leaker Daniel Ellsberg; and newsman Peter Arnett.

In organizing his work in this manner, Anderson presents the reader with three separate perspectives of the war: those who influenced American policy in Vietnam, those who were affected directly by that same policy, and those who, in some manner, opposed it. By choosing to include four biographies in each section, he suggests that no one cross-section of experiences is more important than another. While this editing choice does present the reader with a balanced view of all three types of individuals, it also begs the question, "Why these four people and not some other four?" an issue that leads one to question the methodological approach of the collection as a whole. Had Anderson explained his rationale for his particular choices, at least the reader would understand how the editor came to select his subjects. Anderson states, while introducing the second section, that "in many ways . . . [these] are the accounts of 'ordinary' Americans, and in other ways, they are distinctive. Each is a single thread in the tapestry that was the American war in Vietnam." (p. 82) He thus leaves the reader to struggle with how each biography contributes to a deeper understanding of the whole. Questions of organization and methodology aside, Anderson does help the reader through this process by providing a brief introduction for each selection and placing it into context.

While this book has its merits, one must also consider its weaknesses. Most telling, although this work is about the Vietnam War, precious little of its text is devoted to the war itself. The chapter concerning Bill Terry, one of the two U.S. Army soldiers described, devotes all of three paragraphs to his experiences in Vietnam, and only one to the circumstances surrounding his death. The chapter on Bill Weber is not really about him at all; written by his sister, it seems more a justification for her counterculture activities following her brother's death than an insight into his life. Of the four chapters in the second section, only the one concerning Nancy Randolph describes in any detail her daily activities in Vietnam.

Indeed, the quality of the biographical entries is

uneven throughout. Although each chapter has at least one author who holds a doctorate in history, English, or international relations, some of the biographies cannot be considered scholarly in nature. In contrast to the chapters that are carefully documented, two are based almost solely on an oral history project with little or no supporting documentation, one boasts only three endnotes, one possesses no endnotes, and one relies almost completely on the subject's own autobiography for its evidence. Given the intent behind this work, perhaps corroborating evidence is not necessary, but its absence causes the reader in some instances to question the objectivity of the author's treatment of the subject or the validity of his or her assertions.

Although military historians may not agree on the value of using individual biographies as a means of evaluating the Second Indochina War's effects and outcome, most will concede that there is at least some

merit in approaching the topic in this manner. One of the few biographical anthologies that cover this period, *The Human Tradition in the Vietnam Era* adds to the body of literature concerning this era. While a work of social history geared more toward an undergraduate survey course than the military historian, this book offers brief, yet interesting, glimpses into the lives of a number of individuals who were touched by one of the most divisive events in American history. One may hope that historians will one day produce a more scholarly biographical anthology of Americans deeply affected by the Vietnam War.

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