

# ARMY HISTORY

Summer 2015

PB 20-15-3 (No. 96) Washington, D.C.

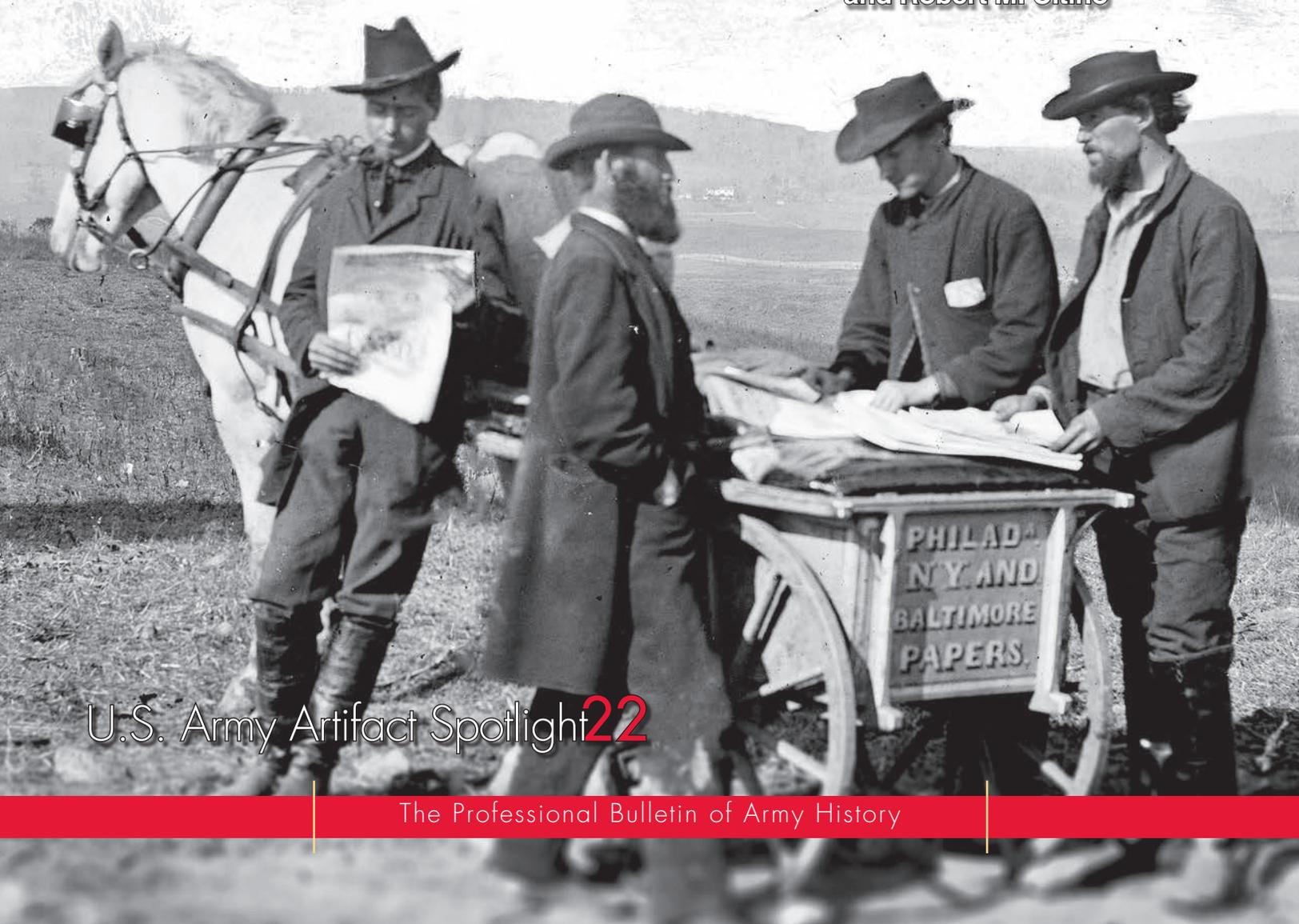
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The Professional Bulletin of Army History



# ARMY HISTORY

The Professional Bulletin of Army History

## By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

RAYMOND T. ODIERNO  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

### Official:

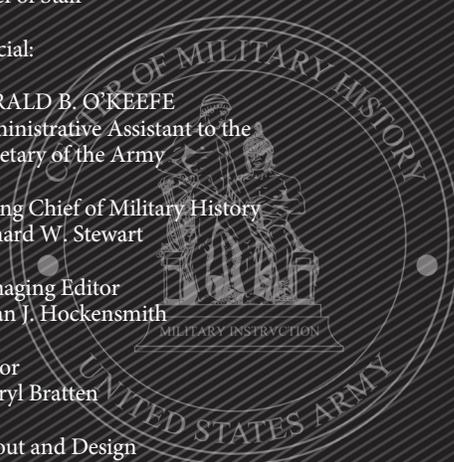
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The U.S. Army Center of Military History publishes *Army History* (ISSN 1546-5330) quarterly for the professional development of Army historians and as Army educational and training literature. The bulletin is available at no cost to interested Army officers, noncommissioned officers, soldiers, and civilian employees, as well as to individuals and offices that directly support Army historical work or Army educational and training programs.

Correspondence, including requests to be added to the distribution of free copies or to submit articles, should be addressed to Managing Editor, Army History, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 102 Fourth Ave., Fort Lesley J. McNair, DC 20319-5060, or sent by e-mail to [usarmy.mcnair.cmh.mbx.army-history@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.mcnair.cmh.mbx.army-history@mail.mil).

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**Cover:** A newspaper vendor and his cart in an unidentified Union camp in Virginia, November 1863/Library of Congress

## EDITOR'S JOURNAL

The Summer 2015 issue of *Army History* presents two interesting pieces for our readers. The first, by Clay Mountcastle, takes a look at the relationship between the military and the press during the nineteenth century. It is generally accepted that the tensions that arose between the armed forces and the media during the Vietnam War were unprecedented. Mountcastle argues that this view is incorrect. Highlighting various episodes of strain between these two institutions, from the Mexican War to the Indian Wars, the author makes his case that the tumultuous relationship was nothing new.

The second article is a white paper originally published by the Society for Military History. The authors, Tami Davis Biddle of the U.S. Army War College and Robert M. Citino of the University of North Texas, examine the apparent resurgence of military history over the last forty years and looks closely at its position within American institutions of higher learning. The paper is intended to provoke debate and encourage dialogue about the important role the study of military history plays in the educational process. This piece is reprinted here, in the pages of *Army History*, in the hope that it will reach a wider and more diverse audience and garner the kind of attention it deserves.

The Artifact Spotlight for this issue examines one of the most famous weapons of World War II, the *Sturmgewehr* 44 (StG44). Widely regarded as the first true assault rifle, the StG44 entered the war far too late to have any major impact on the fighting.

In his Chief's Corner, Dr. Richard Stewart provides an update on the progress of Career Program 61 as well as a few thoughts on the various intern programs and professional development opportunities available throughout the Army History Program.

The Center of Military History also recently launched an online survey intended to obtain feedback about the quality of *Army History*. I hope our readers will take the time to share with us their thoughts on this journal. The survey Web site can be found here: [https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=c&ard&s=1246&sp=134931&dep=\\*DoD](https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=c&ard&s=1246&sp=134931&dep=*DoD).

Bryan J. Hockensmith  
Managing Editor



Summer 2015



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# THE CHIEF'S CORNER

DR. RICHARD W. STEWART

## History and Museum Interns and Professional Development

The Army History Program has taken great strides in the past two years in making professional development assignments and training opportunities more available thanks to our Career Program (CP) 61. In case you have been living in a cave these past years (or, worse, have not been reading my columns as Chief Historian) CP 61 allows, for the first time, centrally funded training, professional development, and developmental assignments for the Army's historians, archivists, and museum professionals. Last year, the first year of full operations for CP 61, some 20 percent of the professionals in the Army History Program took advantage of these opportunities to come to the Center of Military History for the CP 61 Orientation Course, the Basic or Advanced Museum Training Course, or attending training and development opportunities at a variety of other venues. In addition, several historians and museum professionals have already started the process of obtaining approval for funding to take courses of study at civilian universities that will lead to master's or even Ph.D. degrees. I hope that we can provide many such opportunities to another 20 percent of the CP 61 workforce this year so that, in time, everyone in the Army History Program will have an opportunity for some form of career training or professional development. Our specialists will do their job better, return from such training with new ideas, and lay a foundation for their own career advancement. It's a classic win-win!

One aspect of our CP is the implementation, for the first time, of a fully funded career intern program. This career intern program is not to be confused with the Pathways-Internship program, which replaced the various ways to hire in-school students into temporary positions (the Student Career Experience Program [SCEP] and Student Temporary Employment Program [STEP]). The Pathways-Internship program calls their student hires interns, but the career intern program, sometimes called the Army Civilian Training, Education, and Development System (ACTEDS) intern program, is different. Career interns are hired using various Pathway's hiring authorities (mostly in our case we have used the Recent Graduates Program), but they are meant to fill permanent positions after two years

of training and experience. In the case of museum curator (job series 1015) positions, we advertise for interns and then select from a list of candidates, many of whom have already finished their master's degrees in museum studies or museum education. We hire them and bring them to the Museum Support Center as GS-7s to undergo a two-year training program. One of the benefits of the intern program is also that we do not have to have a vacant position to hire them. They are placed on a centrally managed Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) in the Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Intern office so that they do not occupy any of our current positions. They spend their probationary year undergoing a series of training courses and tasks outlined in the ACTEDS plan and then, if they perform well, they are promoted to GS-9. After another year of training they are promoted to GS-11. At that point, the intern is ready for placement anywhere there is a GS-1015-11 vacancy in the Army museum system. (Career interns sign mobility agreements when they are hired so placement is literally anywhere.)

The history career field (job series 0170) intern program works much the same way as the museum career intern program with one difference. Because so many (not all, but many) of the potentially available history positions are best suited for holders of an advanced degree (i.e., the Ph.D.), we have determined that the most suitable pool of candidates for such positions often can be found in the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) program. Each year hundreds of successful applicants to the rigorous and selective PMF program are posted on a list and made available to government hiring authorities. Many of these candidates already have advanced degrees. If the candidates' credentials meet the Army History Program's needs, we can offer them a two-year internship starting as GS-9 instead of GS-7. (For some positions we still will advertise in the Pathways-Recent Graduates program for history interns, but that hiring authority only allows them to start no higher than GS-7.) As with the other career intern programs, these individuals undergo a two-year training regimen (the first year in a probationary status) with continuing progression to the grade

of GS-12 after two years with successful performance. Upon completion of the training period, interns will be eligible for permanent placement anywhere in the Army where there is a vacant GS-0170-12 position. If no assignments are available, they are kept "on the books" at HQDA in an overstrength status until a spot opens up.

The benefit to the Army History Program is clear. The entire community is enriched by finding talented candidates for our history and museum positions and putting those candidates through two years of structured and highly scrutinized professional training before placement throughout the Army. The goal of CP 61 is to increase the professional qualifications and standards of our historians and museum personnel, as we state in our ACTEDS plan, and the career intern program is one of the key tools at our disposal.

There is a potential downside to this program, as I have heard from a number of individuals already working in the Army History Program. They are concerned that career interns who are moved rapidly from GS-7 to GS-11 (or GS-9 to GS-12) will "take" open positions and the opportunity for promotion from career employees who may feel they are more qualified for a promotion due to their length of tenure. And there is a measure of truth to this concern. Successful interns will be placed anywhere there is an appropriate vacancy. However, I believe that the Army deserves the most skilled, trained, and educated professionals possible to fill its history and museum positions. And no one in the Army History Program should believe that length of tenure alone should be the main reason to gain a promotion. All placement of career interns will, to the extent possible, be coordinated with the gaining commands and highly skilled and equally qualified internal candidates

will always be considered as competitive for a position. In rare instances, that might not be enough if HQDA and the Career Program decide they must place an intern immediately. But for the most part, the more that internal candidates can do to make themselves competitive for positions (getting that advanced degree, taking those professional development courses, moving to gain experience in new positions, climbing the Civilian Education System ladder, going to training events and seminars, etc.) the increased likelihood they will be selected for promotion. Professional development will further your career better than any misplaced belief in the power of entitlement based on tenure.

The career intern program is small, only two interns will be assessed each year, and thus I believe that the Army History Program will be able to absorb this new talent without unduly frustrating or denying the career advancement hopes of any competitive, highly qualified, internal candidates. The interns will not only be new talent, but will bring to the table diverse experiences, varied educational backgrounds, and a wide selection of skills. Career interns will enrich and increase the professionalism of the Army History Program, and I think that all of us want that. A goal for each of us, especially for those who have been in the Army History Program for many years, is to find and locate the talent necessary to leave the program better than we found it. The career intern program for CP 61 does just that.

As always, I can be reached at [richard.w.stewart2.civ@mail.mil](mailto:richard.w.stewart2.civ@mail.mil).



## ARMYHISTORY

# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

*Army History* welcomes articles, essays, and commentaries of between 2,000 and 12,000 words on any topic relating to the history of the U.S. Army or to wars and conflicts in which the U.S. Army participated or by which it was substantially influenced. The Army's history extends to the present day, and *Army History* seeks accounts of the Army's actions in ongoing conflicts as well as those of earlier years. The bulletin particularly seeks writing that presents new approaches to historical issues. It encourages readers to submit responses to essays or commentaries that have appeared in its pages and to present cogent arguments on any question (controversial or otherwise) relating to the history of the Army. Such contributions need not be lengthy. Essays and commentaries should be annotated with endnotes, preferably embedded, to indicate the sources relied on to support factual assertions. Preferably, a manuscript should be submitted as an attachment to an e-mail sent to the managing editor at [usarmy.mcnair.cmh.mbx.army-history@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.mcnair.cmh.mbx.army-history@mail.mil).

*Army History* encourages authors to recommend or provide illustrations to accompany submissions. If authors wish to supply photographs, they may provide them in a digital format with a minimum resolution of 300 dots per inch or as photo prints sent by mail. Authors should provide captions and credits with all images. When furnishing photographs that they did not take or any photos of art, authors must identify the owners of the photographs and artworks to enable *Army History* to obtain permission to reproduce the images.

Although contributions by e-mail are preferred, authors may submit articles, essays, commentaries, and images by mail to Bryan Hockensmith, Managing Editor, *Army History*, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 102 Fourth Avenue, Fort Lesley J. McNair, D.C. 20319-5060.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Dr. Clay Mountcastle** is a retired Army lieutenant colonel now serving as an assistant professor of military history at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He holds a Ph.D. in history from Duke University and is the author of *Punitive War: Confederate Guerrillas and Union Reprisals* (Lawrence, Kans., 2009.) His other teaching assignments include positions at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and the U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.



A cartoon by Thomas Nast portraying Horace Greeley and Ulysses S. Grant

# Early Acrimony

VOLUME VIII—NO.96

THE MILITARY AND THE PRESS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

PRICE 2 CENTS

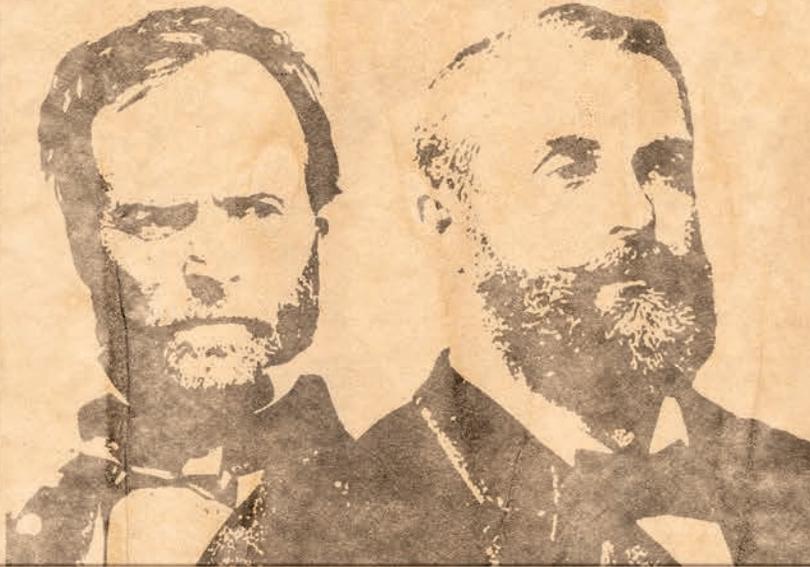
## HOW THEY ARE TAKEN

"Do you know the prisoner?"  
This question put to detective officers is a very familiar one to those who frequent the criminal courts on any great occasion. Generally the detected prisoner is taken and he talks about his record in such a way as to lead the uninitiated to believe that he has almost remarkable memory for names, facts and faces.

And there are many detectives who have excellent memories but they do not trust to their ability to recognize criminals. They like to get the Rogers' Gallery or, which through much is said very few have had the opportunity to see.

The collection of photographs of crooks, as the police call offenders against the law, stored by the police, dates from at least the year 1854 and there are several hundred pictures altogether in connection with them is a reference book.

There are pictures of criminals who escaped ascending the scaffold, William Watson, a Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Reading Railroad who was hanged in Philadelphia, Pa. was sentenced July 2, 1872 to twelve years imprisonment in the Eastern Penitentiary. Charles Nelson was murdered Charles King served a six years sentence and died June 29, 1887. Two men defied the execution. One was Edward Parr who was hanged in 1850. The other was



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By CLAY MOUNTCASTLE

The general was angry. He was incensed and he shared the reason for his indignation in a letter to his friend and counterpart. "There is a power in our land, irresponsible, corrupt and malicious—the press," he wrote, "which must be curbed and brought within the limits of reason and law, before we can have peace in America." Thus explained Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman to Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in the summer of 1862 when the American Civil War was less than two years old. For Sherman, it was a familiar grievance. After all, it was Sherman who, in a letter to his wife two months earlier, railed against the "mean, contemptible, slanderous, and false" reporters from the northern newspapers and claimed, "It would afford me a real pleasure to hang one or two."<sup>1</sup> Clearly, he was no fan of the press, but he was not alone. Sherman's rancor reflected a traditional friction, one deeply engrained in American history.

There has always been a complex relationship between those who fight America's wars and those who report on them. The nature of war and the freedom of the press have made, at times, strange and uncooperative bedfellows. Of course, the American experience in Vietnam and the impact it had on the relationship between the media and the military remains the most prominent pothole in a long, often rocky road, and it continues to dominate the historical discussion of the subject. In his noteworthy book, *Reporting Vietnam: Media and the Military at War*, William Hammond argued that the period of 1965–1971 witnessed a turning point in the media-military relationship that marked the end of a mood of "relative harmony" established during World War Two. In *Paper Soldiers: The American Press and the Vietnam War*, Clarence Wyatt claimed that the "cult of secrecy" that developed within the U.S. government and military during

the Cold War resulted in the irreparable rift with the media that would endure well beyond the American involvement in Southeast Asia.<sup>2</sup> Not content to start with Vietnam, a number of scholars have looked further back in American history to determine the origins of the media-military enmity. In his recent book, *The Military and the Press: An Uneasy Truce*, professor of journalism Michael S. Sweeney argued that the working relationship between the military and the press soured at the turn of the twentieth century. Once open and engaging, the dynamic between the two institutions "changed dramatically and permanently" as the result of press control and censorship by the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, he claimed.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, the majority of scholarly attention paid to the friction between the military and media has focused on the last one hundred (or so) years. The story, however, extends much further

back. The relationship between the military and the Fourth Estate has been filled with tensions, adversity, and censorship since the founding of the American Republic. From the colonial press' exco-riation of the Continental Army's feeble performance at the Battle of Long Island in 1776 and the arrest of reporters during the Civil War, to the editorial claims of American atrocities in the Philippines in 1902–1903, American war fighters and people of the press have often shared periods of mutual dislike and distrust. And while the Vietnam era may have produced a level of animosity between the military and the press that made their relationship during WWII and the Korean War seem downright cordial, the bad blood that Vietnam produced was hardly a new phenomenon. In fact, it was traditionally American. The media and the military, two ambitious entities, have always shared a mutually dependent relationship marked by conflict and distain, and at times, cooperation and even camaraderie. Not surprisingly, the dynamics of this relationship have seen their greatest salience in times of war, when the American public's thirst for information on all things military has been most acute.

In an effort to provide some historical context for the antipathy between the military and the press during Vietnam and since, this article examines the tension that existed between the two during American conflicts in the latter half of the nineteenth century. For we can hardly claim to understand the nuanced interface between the press and the U.S. military without knowing its extended history. It is not enough to simply understand that friction existed, but we should seek to understand why it existed and how it influenced the news that Americans received. In addition, it is indeed necessary to understand that these two opposing entities, at times, displayed the ability to coexist and operate in relative harmony. Despite the "inherent distrust of each other," described by one historian, the military and the media have, at times, been willing to support each other's objective.<sup>4</sup> While perhaps less prevalent, and certainly less captivating, these examples of cooperation are just as much a part

of the military-press history than the more renowned episodes of conflict. They too are examined in an attempt to dispel the notion that the relationship between the American military and the press was ever completely adversarial or completely accommodating. Ultimately, what we find is that what occurred between the media and the military in the twentieth century, and especially during Vietnam, was really nothing new.

While frustrating to those involved, the pattern of conflict in the media-military relationship also underscores the magnificent complexity inherent with a society that embraces the notion of a free press but also expects—indeed, demands—victory in wartime. The fact that this friction, this animosity, has been present throughout American history to some degree in both victory and defeat suggests that it will remain as such for the foreseeable future and this is, perhaps, not a bad thing. For all the scholarly emphasis placed on the suppression of dissent or the hindrance of free speech in wartime, very little has been said about the fact that the animosity between soldiers and reporters over the years has more often developed from other factors.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, it is a (wonderfully) complicated issue with a great amount of nuance, and one with chronological roots that clearly predate the twentieth century.

For the full account of America's media-military adversity, it is possible to begin with the birth of the nation and the first American printing press. During every war in the latter portion of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries, the American press, heavily driven by its political ties, provided news, commentary, and opinion to a young population hungry for information. But the conflicts during this time period lacked a vital component of the media-military relationship—the specialized war correspondent. This agent of the news provided the human link between the editor and the soldier, between the newspaper and the frontline. It was with the advent of the war correspondent that the complex rapport between the military and press truly began.

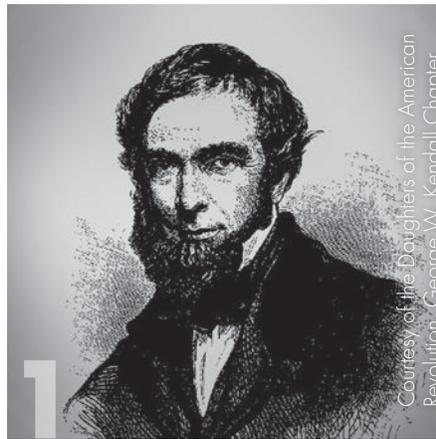
## THE MEXICAN WAR

Although the Crimean War, fought between 1853 and 1856, is commonly considered to have witnessed the birth of the modern war correspondent, the American war with Mexico in 1846–1848 saw its fair share of involvement from newspaper reporters who braved the harsh and dangerous environment in order to cover the war. Correspondents from all over the United States made their way down into Mexico, although those from the New Orleans newspapers, such as the *Daily Picayune*, dominated the war coverage, primarily due to the city's proximity to the fighting. This allowed for a more rapid transfer of news from the front lines, and newspapers in the northeast often found themselves having to reprint stories from the New Orleans papers in order to keep up. A good number of correspondents in Mexico had ties to the military, either as veterans or actively serving in some capacity. As historian Joseph Mathews noted, "Writing men fought and a number of fighting men wrote" in Mexico, and they did so with almost no constraints or limitations.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the close association that developed between the correspondents and soldiers, which at times resembled more of a partnership than anything else, resulted in slanted reporting undeniably in favor of the U.S. war effort.

Criticism of military performance or decisions did come, however, and were usually directed at the terms of surrender given to the Mexican Army. George Wilkins Kendall of the *Daily Picayune*, perhaps the most accomplished of all Mexican War correspondents, complained about the generous terms granted to the Mexican Army after its defeat at Monterrey at the hands of Maj. Gen. Zachary Taylor.<sup>7</sup> The overwhelming majority of criticism, however, was aimed squarely at the war itself, and President James K. Polk. Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune* decried Polk as the "Father of Lies" and lambasted him for carrying on a war in which American soldiers would send "red-hot cannonballs into towns swarming with [Mexican] wives and children."<sup>8</sup> One of the leading

voices in American journalism in the nineteenth century, Greeley never shied away from the matter of ethics, especially when the issue was war, slavery, or politics. Sometimes opposition to the Mexican War manifested itself in rhetoric that was undeniably antimilitary, the most vitriolic of such coming from the radical abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. Claiming that “Every lover of freedom and humanity” should hope for “the most triumphant success” for the Mexican Army in defeating the U.S. invasion, Garrison proclaimed, “We only hope that, if blood has had to flow, it has been that of the American, and that the next news we shall hear will be that General Scott and his Army are in the hands of the Mexicans.” And while the target of Garrison’s condemnation was the war and its perceived immorality, this would have been little consolation to any soldier fighting in Mexico who saw Garrison’s call for his “utter defeat and disgrace.”<sup>9</sup> Such words were enough to evoke substantial bitterness and resentment.

As with all conflicts before and after, American soldiers of all ranks often took defeatist language quite personally, believing that there was little difference, if any, between rhetoric that was antiwar and that which was antimilitary. When the newspapers criticized the war effort or printed inaccuracies about actions on the ground, military officials and soldiers were quick to retort. This was apparent even before the outbreak of hostilities. In late September 1845, 1st Lt. Napoleon J. T. Dana warned his family members, “Believe none of those idle, foolish rumors which are continuously going the rounds of newspapers.”<sup>10</sup> And there were indeed rumors and inaccuracies printed in the papers as editors rushed to piece together news reports. Even when the stories tended to overstate the accomplishments of the U.S. Army, as did the *New York Herald’s* report of American victory at Saltillo in March 1847, it did little to win the trust of those in uniform. False reporting, according to one historian of the war, “demonstrated only the editors’ ability to engage in imaginative flights of fancy.”<sup>11</sup> The

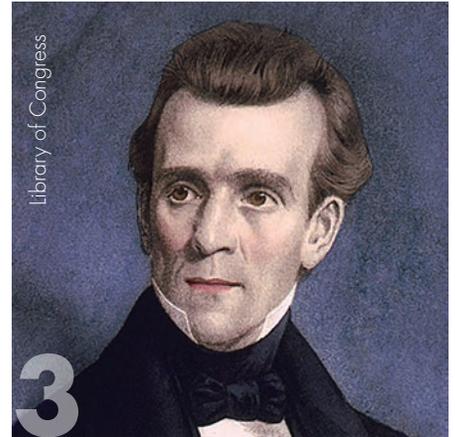


Courtesy of the Daughters of the American Revolution, George W. Kendall Chapter



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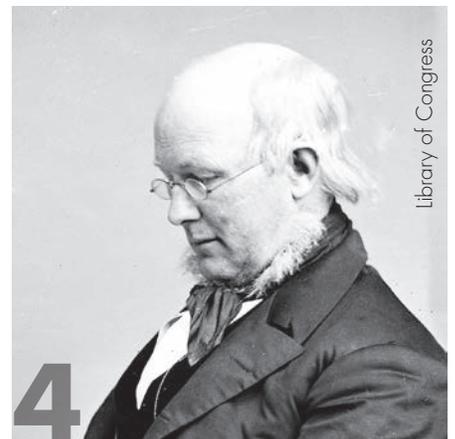
1. George W. Kendall
2. General Taylor
3. President Polk
4. Horace Greeley
5. William Lloyd Garrison
6. Napoleon J. T. Dana, shown here as a brigadier general, c. 1862



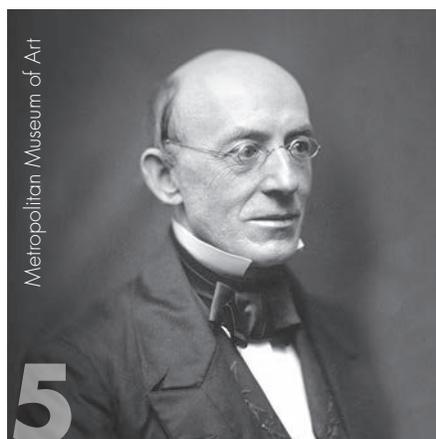
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fact that American soldiers coveted the hard-to-obtain newspapers, almost as much as personal mail from home, did not necessarily guarantee their approval of what they read or whom it was written by.

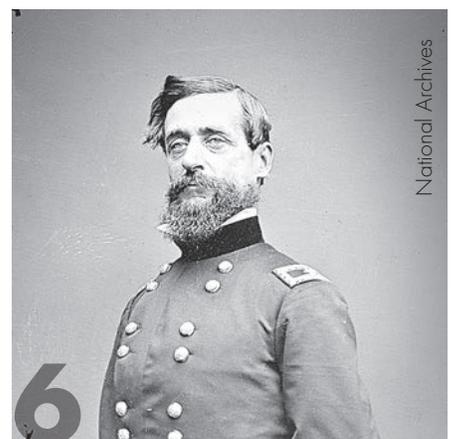
And yet, the antiwar voices of Greeley, Garrison, and others were not echoed by the war correspondents on the ground. Discrepancies in reporting, actual or merely perceived, were greatly overshadowed by the pro-military, pro-war message generated by the handful



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of journalists reporting from Mexico. Adding to the prejudice interlaced into reporting from the field was the manner with which the journalists viewed the Mexicans as an inferior people, something they shared with the American soldiers. Although a number of military officials (as well as reporters) expressed periodic respect and admiration for their Mexican adversary, more often than not they viewed them as an uncultured and immoral people incapable of self-governance. This line of thinking was clearly expressed by Kendall in May 1847 when he mused about the fate of a conquered Mexico left to its own devices:

As a nation Mexico is blotted out of the list—the candle of her independence is burnt down to the socket. If left to herself she would in a few months, from her utter inability to govern herself, be torn and divided by intestine commotions. . . . What then is she to do? Too utterly helpless to be left to herself. . . a better plan would be to take her at once under our protection.<sup>12</sup>

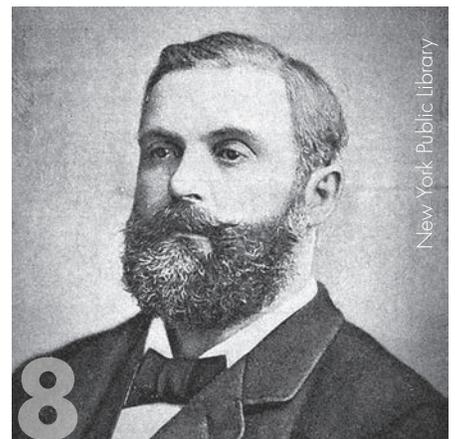
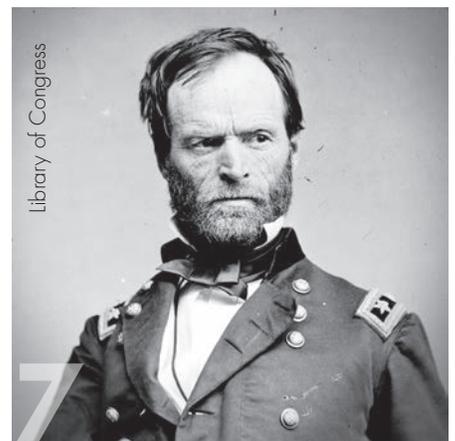
While some of the more radical editors in America continued to savage President Polk and his policies in the papers, the generals and troops on the ground were bolstered by the proclamations made by reporters on the excellence of their performance and the nobility of their cause. Even following the capture of Mexico City, when incidents of indiscipline within the occupying American army became increasingly frequent, the correspondents maintained that any fault must lie with the politicians in Washington and not with the military officials trying to figure out how to subdue their own unruly soldiers and the Mexicans.<sup>13</sup> In the end, this continued support from the press led many in the military to assume that such would be the case in future conflicts. Despite the few points of contention during the war, and the limited but loud antiwar editors, most of those in uniform generally believed that the newspapers were on their side and had no reason to expect that to change.

When the Army withdrew from Mexico, however, few could predict

the impending domestic crisis. From the founding of the American press up until the firing on Fort Sumter in April 1861, the press and the military had enjoyed relative harmony and cooperation, with some scattered patches of discord. Much of this grew from the fact that the partisan press had a vested interest in the success of the military cause, especially during the Revolution. Still very much tools of the political realm, newspapers in the antebellum period did not place objectivity ahead of all else. The reporters themselves were willing to offer criticisms of military officials if they deemed necessary, with some offering more than others. However, these early war correspondents also very much self-identified with the soldiers they covered. Veterans of the Mexican War, many of whom would emerge as the Civil War's most influential leaders, were largely unaccustomed to criticism from the newspapers. They were due for a rather abrupt introduction to it. Very little would remain the same in America once the nation descended into conflict in 1861. As the Civil War brought traumatic changes to American society and its traditions, the relationship between the military and the press underwent a similar upheaval. Both soldier and civilian were ill prepared for what lay ahead.

## THE CIVIL WAR

To be sure, the Civil War constituted the most inflammatory chapter in military-press relations prior to the Vietnam era. As a political, military, and social crisis, the conflict easily eclipsed all other American wars of the nineteenth century. A partisan press establishment combined with a domestic conflict to create a level of tension and distrust between soldier and reporter not previously seen in America. It was what one historian labeled, “an adversary culture,” that showcased a lack of deference on the part of the press toward the military and the government.<sup>14</sup> The single most important technological development in communications in the nineteenth century, the telegraph, ensured that Americans did not have



7. General Sherman  
8. Thomas W. Knox

to wait for weeks or even days to receive news from the front. In addition, the high commands in Washington and Richmond were able to send and receive information rapidly over the wire directing troop movements and operations. As such, telegraph lines were heavily targeted by both sides during the war in an attempt to limit the adversary's ability to communicate and command their forces in the field. When telegraph lines were cut, those in Washington relied almost exclusively on the reports from newspaper correspondents to learn the outcomes of battles. And while the advent of the telegraph ensured that news could travel faster from the battlefield to the front page, it did nothing to increase the validity of what was reported. In many ways, this newfound technology served only to increase tensions between military leaders and the press.



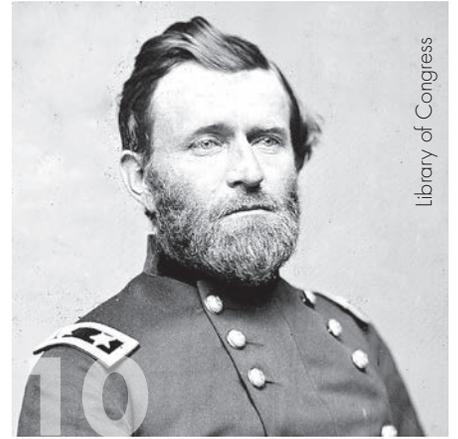
## 9. General Schofield 10. General Grant

those newspaper reporters” covering the Union positions near Nashville. During Sherman’s famous campaign across Georgia in late 1864, a staff officer recalled how Sherman’s frustration with reporters led the general to declare, “It’s impossible to carry on a war with a free press.”<sup>17</sup> Clearly, Sherman expressed little interest in the constitutional necessity of a free press during wartime.

Discussions of military-press relations in the Civil War usually begin and end with a single Union general. A great amount, perhaps too much, has been written about General Sherman’s well-known detestation of newspaper reporters during the war. This is perhaps more the result of Sherman’s brilliantly caustic language rather than his actual actions toward correspondents. One of his more robust indictments of the “dirty newspaper scribblers” accused them of possessing the “impudence of Satan,” and described how they would “poke among the lazy shirks and pick up their rumors and publish them as facts.”<sup>15</sup> Sherman did indeed make a habit of threatening reporters and editors with arrest, imprisonment, and in a couple of cases, execution. He backed up some of this talk with action, frequently expelling correspondents from Union lines. He oversaw the arrest of a number of reporters, and in the case of Thomas W. Knox of the *New York Herald*, Sherman had him arrested, tried for conspiracy, and confined.<sup>16</sup> Sherman’s personal quarrel with the press began early in the war when a number of newspapers criticized his troop demands for the defense of Kentucky. Then, in December of 1861, while Sherman returned to Ohio for a directed furlough, the *Cincinnati Daily Commercial* proclaimed that he had gone insane. Reacting to the report, an embittered Sherman wrote, “These newspapers have us in their power and can destroy us as they please.” Nearly three years later, Sherman was still at it, instructing Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield to “try and get rid of

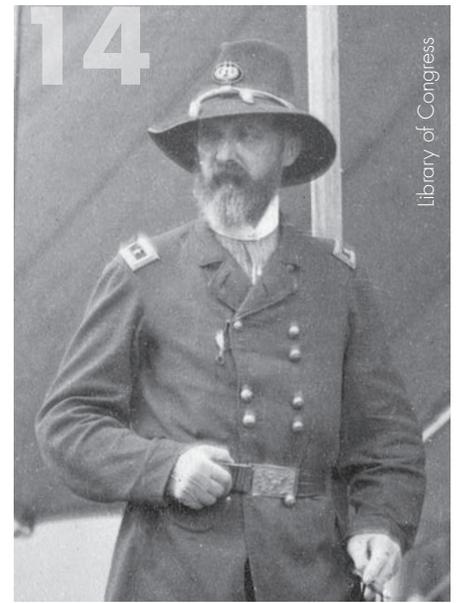
Ultimately, Sherman proved to be one of the press’ most formidable adversaries during the Civil War, but his battlefield accomplishments in 1864 made it nearly impossible for the northern newspapers to portray him as anything less than the savior of the Union. The primary reason for Sherman’s passionate disdain of the press was his belief that the newspapers consistently provided damaging operational information to the Confederacy. This point was made clear in a letter to his brother on 18 February 1863 in which Sherman inquired: “Who gave notice of McDowell’s movement on Manassas, & enabled Johnston so to reinforce Beauregard that our Army was defeated? The Press. Who gave notice of the movement on Vicksburg? The Press. Who has prevented all secret combinations and movements against our enemy? The Press.” And while Sherman also expressed his loathing of the “mutual hatred & misrepresentations made by a venal press,” the lion’s share of his animosity seemed to dwell with the publication of military information, which Sherman viewed as the equivalent of treason.<sup>18</sup> As in most cases with Sherman, his actions never quite lived up to his fiery rhetoric, but they did do substantial harm to military-press relations on the Union side.

Not nearly as critical of the press as his friend Sherman, General Grant did express his disappointment with the suspect veracity of Civil War reporting in his memoirs. After all, it was a reporter from the *New York Herald* that claimed that Grant was intoxicated



during the attack on Fort Donelson in February of 1862. Grant wrote, “Correspondents of the press were ever on hand to hear every word dropped, and were not always disposed to report correctly what did not confirm their preconceived notions, either about the conduct of the war or the individuals concerned in it.” He was especially upset when one reporter accused him of expressing disloyal sentiments, something Grant adamantly denied.<sup>19</sup> Particularly in the first two years of the war, the northern papers’ treatment of Grant swung to opposite extremes. Upon his capturing of Forts Henry and Donelson, Grant received high praise from the press. This all came crashing down weeks later after the shockingly bloody Battle of Shiloh on 6–7 April 1862. A number of papers issued scathing rebukes of Grant’s performance in the battle and the editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* personally visited President Abraham Lincoln and urged him to relieve Grant of his command. Lincoln responded with the famous reply, “I cannot spare this man, he fights!”<sup>20</sup> The monumental bloodletting at Shiloh was not enough to dissuade Lincoln in his support of the one Federal general who seemed willing to press the enemy.

Sherman’s ardent distrust of the press and Grant’s disappointments were hardly special. In fact, they were quite unoriginal. While few officers on either side of the war spent as much breath or ink damning the Fourth Estate as Sherman, troops of all ranks frequently expressed similar sentiments about reporters. In other words, while Sherman’s ferocious language



**11. Major Brinton**  
**12. Lieutenant Perry**  
**13. General Frémont**  
**14. General Meade**

about the press was not exactly typical, his attitude toward it was. Within a year of the outbreak of war, antipathy toward newsmen was widespread within military camps. In November of 1861, one Union officer complained about “meddlesome reporters” in his camp, claiming, “I am afraid to address my staff officers above a whisper in my own tent. My most trivial remarks to my officers are caught up, magnified, and embellished, and appear in print as my ‘expressed opinions,’ much to the surprise of myself and those to whom the remarks were addressed.”<sup>21</sup>

Army surgeon, Maj. John H. Brinton, recalled in his memoirs how he and his fellow officers on Grant’s staff “were much annoyed by newspaper correspondents” during operations on the Mississippi River in December of 1861. He also recounted how “obtrusive correspondents” who snuck onto a Union riverboat were locked in the ship’s guardhouse for a week, which he claimed, delivered a “useful and lasting” message to other reporters.<sup>22</sup> In Brinton’s case, as in several others, the fact that reporters did not necessarily follow orders or instructions, as military officers and soldiers themselves were required to do, served to agitate ill will toward them and to justify arrests, banishments, and the like. Perhaps the most common complaint from soldiers was that newspaper reports did not accurately portray the reality on the ground. Union assistant surgeon, 1st Lt. John G. Perry, spoke for many of his comrades when he claimed, “I wish such newspaper grumblers could be sent down here and put into the front

ranks. . . I rather think things would be seen in a different light.”<sup>23</sup>

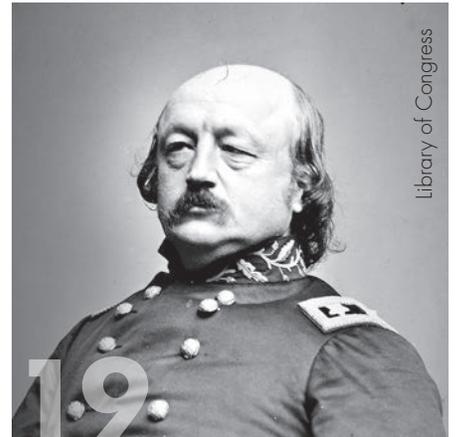
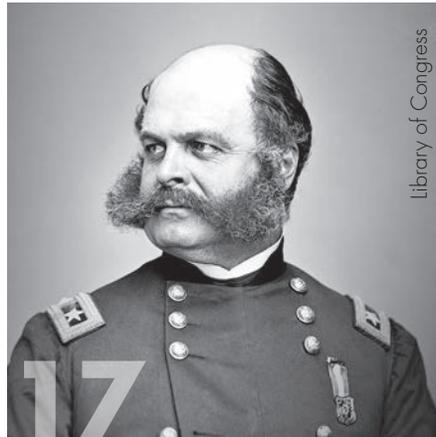
Wounded egos were often the driving force behind the military’s criticism of the press and actions against its reporters and editors. In an age when most of the men in uniform were quite concerned with their public image, either locally or on the national stage, few could hold their tongues when they believed themselves to be unfairly treated in newspaper reports. Much of this stemmed from the fact that many officers, both Union and Confederate, had designs for a career in politics after the war. Others simply believed that reporters had no place in criticizing a war fighter’s performance on the battlefield. In 1861, Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont, commanding the Union’s Department of the West banned all the major newspapers based in New York, as well as a number of papers within his jurisdiction in Missouri, when they criticized his competence.<sup>24</sup> One of the most noted incidents of public humiliation resulting

in correspondent abuse involved Union Maj. Gen. George Meade and Edward Crapsey, a reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. After lambasting Meade’s failure to seize the opportunity to defeat the retreating Army of Northern Virginia following the Union victory at Gettysburg in July 1863, Crapsey found himself on the losing end of a two-star temper tantrum. A furious Meade issued the order to arrest Crapsey and have him expelled from the Union lines wearing a sign that read “libeler.” As a message to other reporters, Meade threatened that he would not hesitate to “punish with the utmost rigor” anyone who published material that would “impair the confidence that the public and army should have in their generals.”<sup>25</sup> This warning only served to bring about further criticism from the journalistic community, many of whom became bound and determined to prevent Meade from finishing the war with a favorable reputation.

To be sure, the effort in both the North and the South to suppress re-

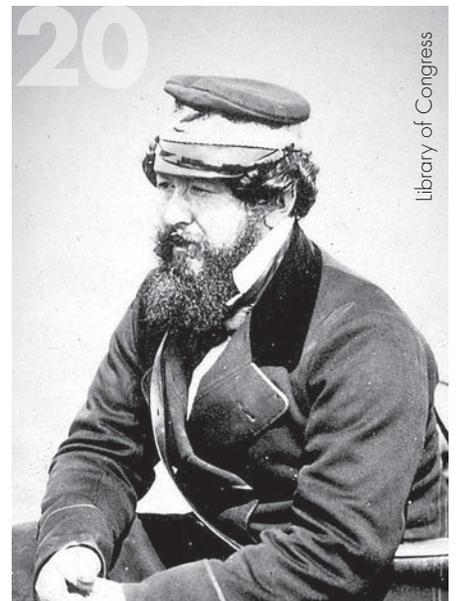


- 15. General Halleck
- 16. General Pope
- 17. General Burnside
- 18. Clement L. Vallandigham
- 19. General Butler
- 20. William Howard Russell



porting from the field was the most vigorous and heavy-handed that the nation would ever see, exceeding even those measures taken later in the twentieth century. According to at least one scholar, the Civil War saw the greatest threat to the free press since the Sedition Act of 1798.<sup>26</sup> The Union government and military put substantial effort into shutting down a number of newspaper operations that voiced opposition to the war effort or were overtly critical of Federal policies. Not surprisingly, as the Union Army occupied more and more area in the South, southern newspapers had to move their operations or risk complete shutdown. Military orders were issued expelling reporters wholesale from the area of military operations. One of the best examples of this was Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck's expulsion of the press from his lines during the siege of Corinth, Mississippi in 1862. Demonstrating that Corinth was no fluke, Halleck issued similar orders when he rose to the position of general in chief of the U.S. Army. In August of

1862, Halleck directed Maj. Gen. John Pope to "immediately remove from your army all newspaper reporters, and you will permit no telegrams to be sent over the telegraph wires out of your command except those sent by yourself."<sup>27</sup> Union commanders issued a number of proclamations outlawing open support for the Confederacy with arrest and even death as the punishment for those found guilty of such. The most notable of these was General Order No. 38, issued by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside in April 1863, which led to the famous arrest and trial of Clement L. Vallandigham, a Copperhead leader and an outspoken critic of the Lincoln administration who claimed the war to be both illegal and immoral.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, troops on both sides were often denied access to newspapers that were critical of the Army's performance or the government's policies. Particularly after failed Union campaigns in Virginia in 1862 and 1863, soldiers found it harder and harder to gain access to newspapers bearing the bad news.



For every argument, there are two sides, and those in the press did not take kindly to the efforts of the military to hamper their reporting or sully their trade. When Union Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler threatened to ban any reporter from his department who published information on troop

movements in July 1861, the *New York Tribune* sharply replied, “Why dear Major General! The newspapers have made you. . . . Without the newspapers you would, at this moment, have been a petty attorney in a petty country town.”<sup>29</sup> William Howard Russell, noted war correspondent for the *London Times*, experienced unprecedented obtrusion and criticism for his reporting during the first year of the war, particularly on the Union loss at Bull Run. While the majority of the malevolence directed toward him came from politicians and editors in the North, Russell noted that the military officials usually treated him with “the utmost civility,” but they quickly became more and more hesitant to divulge any information. On speaking of Maj. Gen. George McClellan, “who at first was very polite,” Russell wrote, “[he] has become quite invisible and is evidently afraid to raise an outcry by showing me any attentions.” He also noted that most officers, in dealing with the press, operated under “a sort of restraint” and that they exhibited “a spirit of defiance towards their own press which they cordially detest & abominate.”<sup>30</sup> Northern editors frequently showed that name-calling was not strictly reserved for political officials, but extended to military figures as well. When General Halleck ordered all correspondents out of his lines near Corinth in 1862, the *New York World* called him “an irritated old maid,” and “a silly schoolgirl.”<sup>31</sup> Halleck remained resolute in his distrust of the press corps, which he had maintained since the war’s first months. Halleck wrote to a member of congress that,

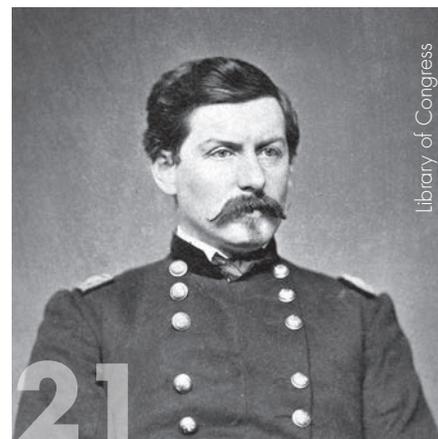
It seems to have become the fashion all over the United States for editors and scribblers to criticise [*sic*], abuse, and even blackguard any officer who devotes his time and health and life to the service of his country. . . . I have had a pretty good share of it myself. . . . but I have not and I shall not notice anything they say of me.<sup>32</sup>

Correspondents and editors for the larger newspapers did not retreat in the face of rebukes from senior mili-

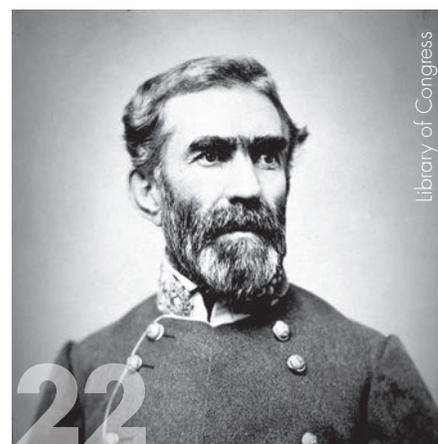
21. General McClellan
22. General Bragg
23. General Lee
24. Secretary Stanton
25. General Hill
26. Junius Henri Browne
27. Jonah Franklin Dyer
28. Charles S. Wainwright
29. John Cheney, shown here as a major, c. 1864

tary figures like Halleck, but rather, remained steadfast in their denunciation of poor military planning and decision making when they saw it.

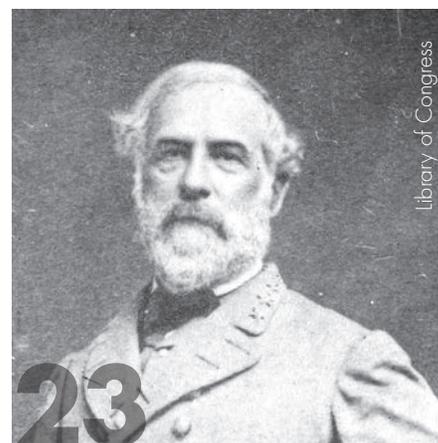
Despite the fact that many military leaders used the threat to operational security as a convenient cover for what was truly their fear of having their image publicly tarnished, the danger was very real. Both armies did, in fact, benefit from newspaper reports on enemy dispositions and activity. During the Corinth Campaign in early 1862, reporters from northern newspapers made daily reports of Union troop strengths and even divulged the operational plans to bypass a Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River. Confederate Maj. Gen. Braxton Bragg found the Union plan to divide one of its armies near Chattanooga printed in the *Chicago Times* and another plan to draw his army out of its defenses in the *New York Times*. General Robert E. Lee consulted the Union papers almost daily, looking for information on enemy activities.<sup>33</sup> The fact that these details allowed the Confederate Army to make necessary adjustments mattered little to those in the press. As one historian described, “Many of them [reporters] wrote with what seemed to be a stag-party exhibitionism, determined to conceal nothing,” and also, “the press showed a strange density about understanding the importance of leaks in military news.”<sup>34</sup> It was this lack of understanding that worried General McClellan, who during his push toward Richmond in 1862, implored Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton to “please prevent the newspapers from publishing as much



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Battle of Pea Ridge in March 1862, although this did little to damage his career in journalism.<sup>38</sup> Like many of the generals in the Civil War, newspaper correspondents and editors were often prone to the lures of celebrity. There were those, like the crusading Greeley, who were driven by political agendas. Others simply desired to have their names associated with the top tier of the journalistic field. But as historian Joseph Mathews noted, “Most of the acclaim that the correspondents received flowed from their own pens.”<sup>39</sup> This self-serving nature was not lost on the soldiers and officers of the Union and Confederate armies, and it made them all the more suspicious and less respectful of the reporters in their midst. Considering all of this, it is safe to say that newspaper correspondents and editors in the Civil War did not live up to the professional or ethical standards that would come to be expected of a twentieth-century journalist.

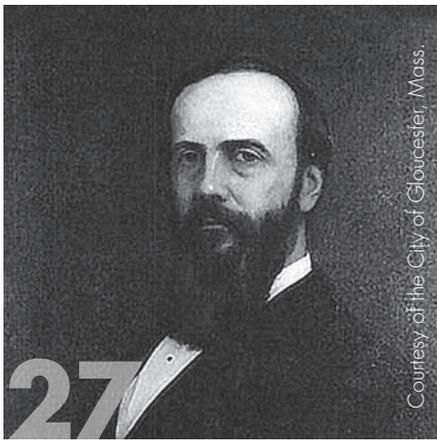
For all the past scholarly effort devoted to depicting the Civil War as a showcase for American military suppression of dissent or “upsetting opinions,” little has been said about the very real fact that much of the military’s aversion to journalists in their midst stemmed from often irresponsible, slanderous, or outright false reporting.<sup>40</sup> Many soldiers were not nearly as concerned with the potential breach of wartime security as they were with the reporters’ perceived inability or unwillingness to get the simple facts straight. Such was the case for Union Army surgeon Jonah Franklin Dyer, who wrote in 1863, “The ridiculous statements of correspondents are really disgusting.” A year later, nothing had improved for Dyer, who claimed there was “scarcely a truth” in the *New York Times* reporting on Grant’s Overland Campaign of 1864.<sup>41</sup> During that same campaign, one young Federal staff officer expressed his frustration with the Northern newspapers’ depiction of the Confederate Army as rapidly retreating and on the verge of defeat. “The newspapers would be comic in their comments, were not the whole thing so tragic,” he wrote, “More absurd statements could not be.”<sup>42</sup>



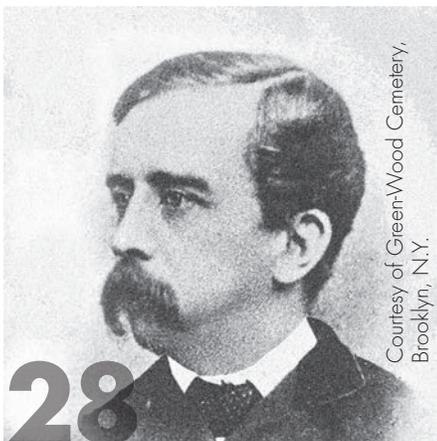
Courtesy of Xavier University

as they do now,” adding, “they give the enemy too much information.”<sup>35</sup> At the time, McClellan was likely still smarting from the failed gentleman’s agreement he had attempted to make with the press at the outset of the war, one which failed to last more than a few weeks. McClellan’s opponents on the peninsula shared his frustrations with their own newspapers. A thoroughly perturbed Confederate Maj. Gen. Daniel H. Hill appealed to his superiors in Richmond, “The lies of the newspapers ought to be stopped. Could they not be forbidden to publish anything?”<sup>36</sup> Much to the dismay of many a general in blue or gray, the press continued to publish troop strengths, campaign plans, and army movements on a regular basis.

Whether concerned with military secrecy or their own reputations, much of the grousing about the capabilities and character of the reporters expressed by military authorities was well justified. The average newspaper correspondent in the Civil War was not a tenured professional; seasoned neither in writing nor in war. Journalism scholar Greg McLaughlin described the American Civil War as “a low-point in the history of war reporting,” in which the subjective and inexperienced reporters of the time were influenced by “intense competition” between publications that “nurtured a culture of sensationalism and jingoism in their coverage.”<sup>37</sup> It was not uncommon for reporters to manufacture stories in order to create a more scintillating headline. Such was the case with Junius Henri Browne of the *New York Tribune*, who crafted false eyewitness accounts from the



Courtesy of the City of Gloucester, Mass.



Courtesy of Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.

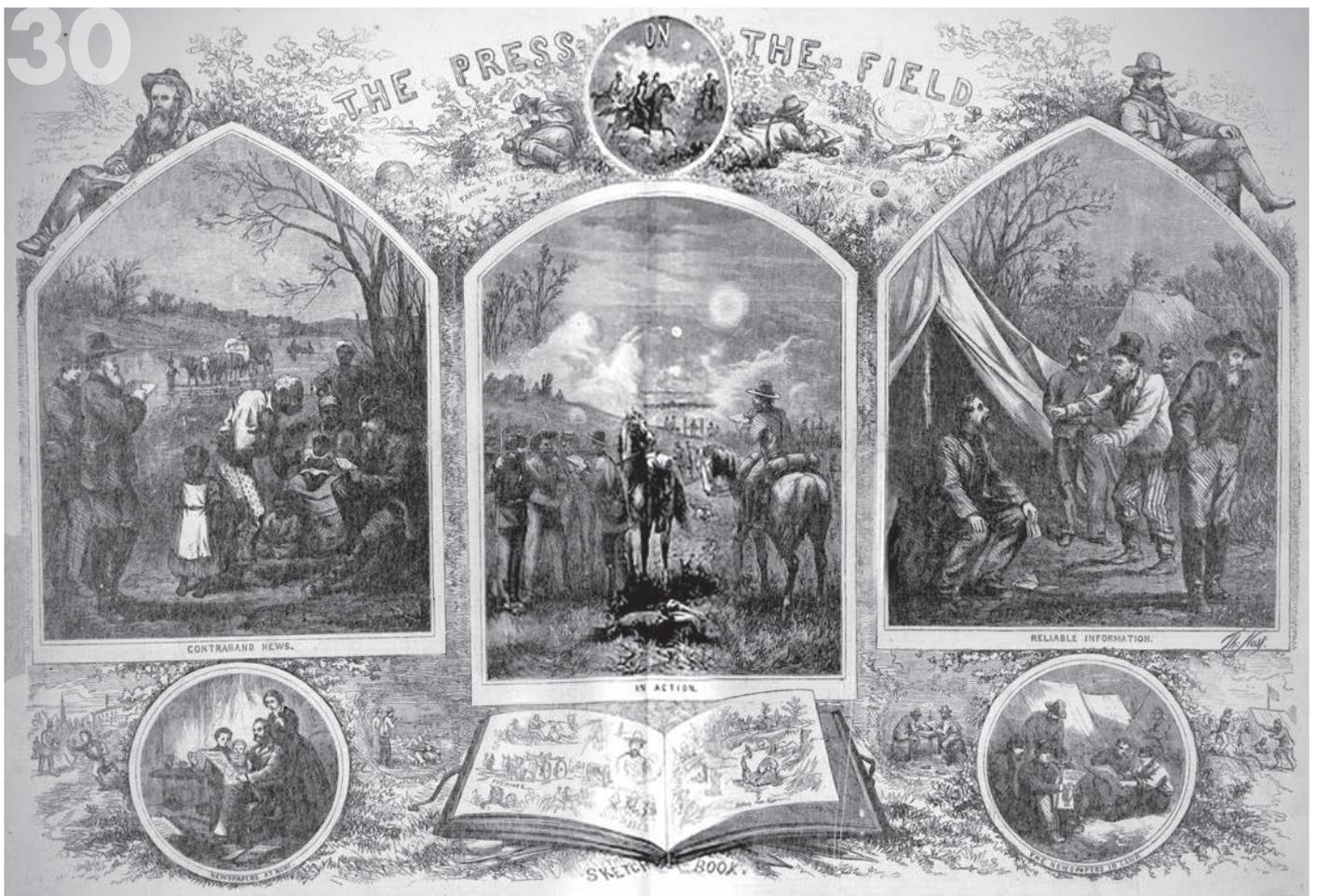
Having witnessed the enemy's resolve and determination in battle firsthand, he had good reason to be irritated.

Although many had their own criticisms of war correspondents, the periodic ban on newspapers in the camps did not sit well with the soldiers who relied on them for information on the war outside of their line of sight. Even though he supported preventing the press from publishing information on Union troop movements, Col. Charles S. Wainwright did not approve when the War Department blocked the distribution of newspapers to the troops following the tough Union defeat at Chancellorsville in 1863. "This attempt to keep the newspapers is a very absurd step," Wainwright complained, arguing that he and his fellow soldiers were indeed not "Like Europeans, content to remain in ignorance." Additionally he noted, "The very stopping of the papers excites their curiosity to see what is in them." Wainwright's frustration was shared by a junior officer in a regiment of New York volunteers, who

complained in a letter to his wife, "We are not allowed get any newspapers and I don't know what is going on at all." In the opinion of Illinois artillery officer, Capt. John Cheney, keeping the newspapers from the soldiers was a mistake. "Soldiers in the ranks are possessed of good common sense," he noted in his diary, "They should not be deprived of newspapers—let them contain whatever news they may. They cannot harm our soldiery."<sup>43</sup> And while almost all military bans on newspapers were temporary, they served as more proof of unprecedented action against the free press.

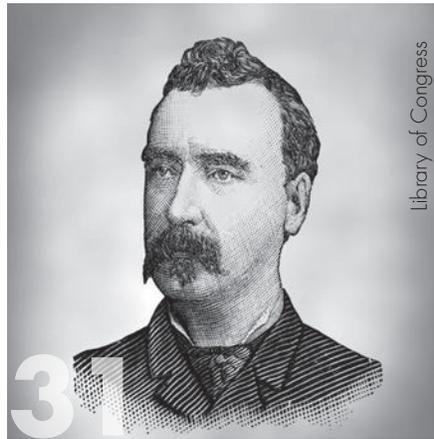
The fact that soldiers from the North and the South expressed reservations about the press, but also displeasure with censorship and official bans on newspapers, suggests that the armies on both sides were not single-minded, autocratic organizations. This fact becomes important when considering the common scholarly depiction of the Union and Confederate armies as monolithic masses, content to blindly

commit themselves to the assault on civil liberties directed by the power-hungry leadership. Perhaps historian Geoffrey Stone did not over exaggerate when he argued that Union military commanders "too often acted on the assumption that war substitutes the rule of force for the rule of law," but such conclusions should not be applied to either army as a whole.<sup>44</sup> The Union and Confederate militaries were made up of independent, discriminating thinkers with a wide array of beliefs, mores, and opinions. Curious, introspective minds filled the ranks. While the majority of soldiers on both sides believed in their cause and supported their government and chain of command, they thought for themselves and were hungry for news. Whether they were volunteers or conscripts made little difference. They indeed cared about the concept of liberty and the freedom of speech, as they understood it, and yet, they saw with their own eyes how newspapers could also provide useful information to the



opposing force. When considering the relationship between the American press and the military, it is essential to remember that attitudes and judgments were not the sole purview of generals and politicians. Foot soldiers, literate or not, cared deeply about how their war was being presented in the papers back home.

In the end, the Civil War demonstrated that although military leaders did not place their implicit trust in the press (nor should they have) they also relied heavily on the news that the papers provided. On both sides, field correspondents and soldiers were locked in a begrudging partnership. The military's distrust of the press (especially in the lower ranks) stemmed as much from the rampant sloppy and inaccurate reporting as it did from the printing of operational information or antiwar editorials. Conversely, members of the press often found themselves unjustifiably silenced, detained, or expelled by military authority in a manner that completely ignored the tenets of a free society, for which both sides claimed to be fighting. The war proved that, at times, the press and the military were willing to rely on one another to further their cause, whether it was professional or personal. As one scholar aptly observed, "Editors had their favorite general and their pet strategies, and generals were partial to particular journalists."<sup>45</sup> Despite these issues, the Civil War ended with the bonds between the media and the military weathered, but certainly not broken. As historian Bernard A. Weisberger described, "Freedom of the press, in new-style war, was an early sacrifice. It was not killed. It went into pawn, and after the armistice the claim checks were presented and the safe opened."<sup>46</sup> And yet, the drastic measures taken by the government and military to control the reporting of the Civil War set a mark for animosity the likes of which would not be seen again for another hundred years. Even so, the subsequent American wars during the remainder of the nineteenth century resulted in an ever-changing dynamic between the war fighters and correspondents, adding another nuanced chapter to the story.



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**30.** Illustration by Thomas Nast titled "The Press on the Field" that appeared in the 30 April 1864 issue of *Harper's Weekly*. It depicts various scenes of newspaper correspondents at the front reporting on the Civil War.

- 31.** John F. Finerty
- 32.** Andrew S. Burt
- 33.** Captain Henry

## THE INDIAN WARS

When examining the drastic difference between the military-press relationship in the Civil War, and the subsequent wars on the plains against the Native Americans, the deviation is centered primarily on the role of the war correspondent. In somewhat of a return to the writer-fighter character of the Mexican War journalist, those who reported on the Indian Wars did so from up front, riding, sleeping, living—and sometimes fighting—alongside the military. But this was hardly by choice. The military campaigns against the Indians made this embedded approach to reporting a necessity. Fighting on the frontier involved small detachments engaged in long expeditions over extensive distances in terrain that was often quite rough. Engagements with the Native Americans, whether violent or not, made up only a very small fraction of the time spent on the plains. Therefore, those correspondents who did not report from the saddle were left to rely on secondhand accounts from those who did. It was an irregular war which called for irregular reporting, at least when compared to the reporting during the Civil War.

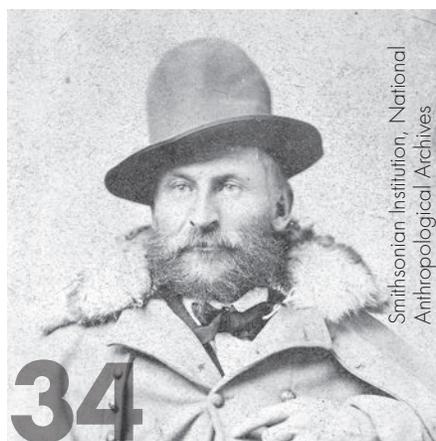
Journalists during the campaigns in the West were indeed their own brand of frontiersmen. Historian Oliver Knight described John F. Finerty, the war correspondent for the *Chicago Times* as such: "Finerty did not take a passive place in the column by any means. Where there was action, there was Finerty," who became known by the troops as the "Fighting Irish Pencil Pusher."<sup>47</sup> In a few cases, as with the war in Mexico, a number of active military men served as correspondents. Andrew S. Burt, a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Cincinnati Commercial* (formerly the *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*), was also an Army officer, as was Guy V. Henry, who wrote for *Harper's Weekly*. Naturally, this raised questions about their objectivity, but at the time, the newspapers were more interested in vivid, detailed reports of Indian fighting than in analysis of military policy, and the firsthand accounts from soldiers made

for compelling reading which sold more newspapers.

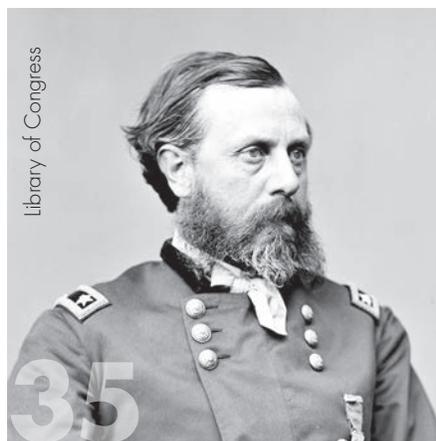
The majority of correspondents in the West, however, were not in uniform. They were not soldiers, but they were not quite civilians either, nor were they simply noncombatants. The fact that these frontier reporters self-identified with the subject matter of their writing clearly colored their portrayal of the war and their conclusions. Their close association with all things military resulted in a level of brazen support for the Army and the action against the Indian tribes that matched, if not surpassed, any seen before or since in American history. But it also resulted in a group of newspapermen who possessed a personal understanding of the intricacies of warfare, much more than their predecessors had. This knowledge led to comments like Finerty's "Americans cannot too highly respect the officers and soldiers whose combined heroism and endurance settled . . . the great Sioux difficulty on our long-harassed frontier."<sup>48</sup> This favorable portrayal of the military was also influenced by the shared belief that the enemy was culturally inferior to the white man. Although a number of journalists spoke of the bravery exhibited by the Plains Indians and expressed admiration for their stoic fortitude and simple approach toward living, they still commonly referred to them in terms such as "our savage foes" and "a savage race contending against civilization."<sup>49</sup> It was easier for the press to support the war against the Indians, and to justify it to their readers, because they believed that the white Americans held the cultural, and therefore the moral, high ground.

This saddle and campfire camaraderie, however, did not prevent all tensions between the Army and the press. Friction was indeed present, albeit a fraction of what existed during the Civil War. Like most soldiers throughout American history, those performing the frustrating, inglorious, and tedious task of Indian-fighting did not take kindly to negative or otherwise debasing portrayals of their work in the newspapers.

When the *New York Herald* published an editorial about the Battle of



34. General Crook  
35. General Willcox



the Rosebud that was critical of Brig. Gen. George Crook, he accused the paper of printing "villainous falsehoods." After news of the editorial made it to the soldiers, an officer in Crook's command wrote in his diary about how the *Herald's* correspondent, Reuben Davenport, was "prowling about camp like a whipped cur," and described how the reporter's perceived attempt to discredit Crook resulted in "a retribution of contempt hard to be borne even with [Davenport's] unusual immodest audacity."<sup>50</sup> In September 1881, during the campaign against the Apaches, the military telegraph superintendent directed that all newspaper dispatches needed approval from a military commander prior to being sent over the telegraph. The department commander, Bvt. Maj. Gen. O. B. Willcox, enforced the order. Not surprisingly, this act of censorship, rare for the Indian Wars, evoked passionate disapproval from

the correspondents in the field. Finerty responded as such:

This government is not Russian, and the submission of press telegrams to the supervision of military commanders who can not [*sic*] help being interested, is an outrage on journalistic freedom, against which the *Times* correspondent desires to enter protest. He does not desire to be acrimonious, but it is well that the country should learn that some military people at least are afraid of being criticized and will permit nothing to go over the military wires that is unfavorable to the character of their operations, or that even presumes to question the wisdom of some particular commander.<sup>51</sup>

For Finerty, it was one of the very few times he would offer overt criticism of the organization of which he had grown very much a part. Nevertheless, his reference to "some military people" suggested that the Army's aversion to public criticism extended beyond just one individual. The geniality that developed between the frontier soldiers and the correspondents that rode with them did not apparently supersede the need for unhindered reporting. It may have resulted in reporters tending toward a more favorable assessment of their comrades in the saddle, but when they did see fit to post criticism of those in uniform, they expected to be heard.

Ultimately, the experience during the Indian Wars of 1865–1890 demonstrated a period of renewed amiability between the press and the military not seen since the Mexican War. Even so, the few episodes of bad blood proved that the free press could and would still clash with the military when censorship or misuse of authority occurred. In essence, it again showed that nothing was absolute in the military-press relationship. This fact would be reinforced yet again at the close of the nineteenth century, as the press was largely supportive of the American involvement in the Spanish-American War (for which the press was at least partially responsible) only to become increasingly critical of military policy

and soldier actions in the Philippine Insurrection.

As one of the best known chroniclers of Indian War correspondents, Oliver Knight, dramatically lamented, “The great god of mass technique castrated American reporting by clamping the spurious doctrine of objectivity upon American newspapers and forcing the news story into a formula pattern.”<sup>52</sup> And although this “spurious doctrine” would grow in strength and find its defining moment in the Vietnam era, it did nothing to change the fact that the interaction between the American military and reporters continued to shift between harmonious cooperation and bitter resentment and distrust through the World Wars, Vietnam, and beyond. Objectivity, once “found” by the American press, did not guarantee an adversarial relationship with the military, but it did make it more difficult for representatives of the press, such as those on the Indian frontier, to self-identify with their counterparts in uniform, which undeniably influenced their reporting.

## CONCLUSION

What happened between the armed forces and the press during Vietnam should not come as a surprise to any student of American history. William Hammond’s claim that there were “no precedents” for what happened between the military and the media during Vietnam was not entirely true.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, there were. While the Vietnam experience created a rift in the media-military relationship the depth of which was new to the Cold War generation, this was in actuality the rediscovery of traditional adversities that had gone dormant during the World Wars. As such, Vietnam was less of a turning point than it was a stark reminder of the unavoidable paradox created by the coveted American values of a free press and victory in war. To be sure, the Vietnam era included the profound impact made by television broadcasts from the warzone, something that prior conflicts had lacked. The great advantage (or disadvantage) that video has over print media, to include still photogra-

phy, in creating a visceral image of the brutal, inglorious reality of war for the viewer, should not be underestimated. Nevertheless, television did not create a whole new dynamic between the media and the military; it simply added another facet, albeit a powerful one, to the existing relationship.

The experience in the nineteenth century underscored the vacillating nature of the media-military relationship in the nation’s history. The Mexican War generally saw mutual support and cooperation, with most of the press’ criticism aimed at political policy. The disaster of the Civil War then brought unprecedented distrust, discord, and suppression. With the Indian Wars and Spanish-American War, war correspondents and troops became almost indiscernible in both their purpose and practice. More than just the reporting of sensitive information or opinions of dissent, the cause of bitterness between the press and the military has often involved personal politics, vendettas, and even jealousy. Although the U.S. military does have an unfortunate history of suppressing the media and controlling the flow of information during wartime, the press itself has often engaged in sloppy, irresponsible, and erroneous reporting that has been equally unfortunate. Historians must be careful not to lay the blame for wartime restrictions on sharing information solely on the government or military; to do so undeservedly absolves the American media of the responsibility that it most certainly shares in creating the checkered past between the journalist and the soldier.

There is no reason to believe that this traditional animosity will not, or should not, be present in future conflicts. Despite the basic logic behind historian Jeffery Smith’s recent proposal that “The cultures of military and media do not have to clash on coverage of defense issues,” the prolonged look at American history, in both victory and defeat, suggests otherwise.<sup>54</sup> As long as Americans value the freedom of speech and success on the battlefield equally, friction between the military and the Fourth Estate, to some degree, is unavoidable. Rather than view this

as a problem—a regrettable situation in need of a solution—Americans should perhaps embrace the underlying message contained within. The historical durability of this dynamic speaks to its value. Of course, cooperation is necessary. Both the media and the military should seek to understand and appreciate each other’s purposes and objectives and do their best to preserve them for the benefit of the nation. However, as concerning as the possibility of permanent animosity between the media and the military might be, the total absence of such would most certainly be a greater cause for concern.

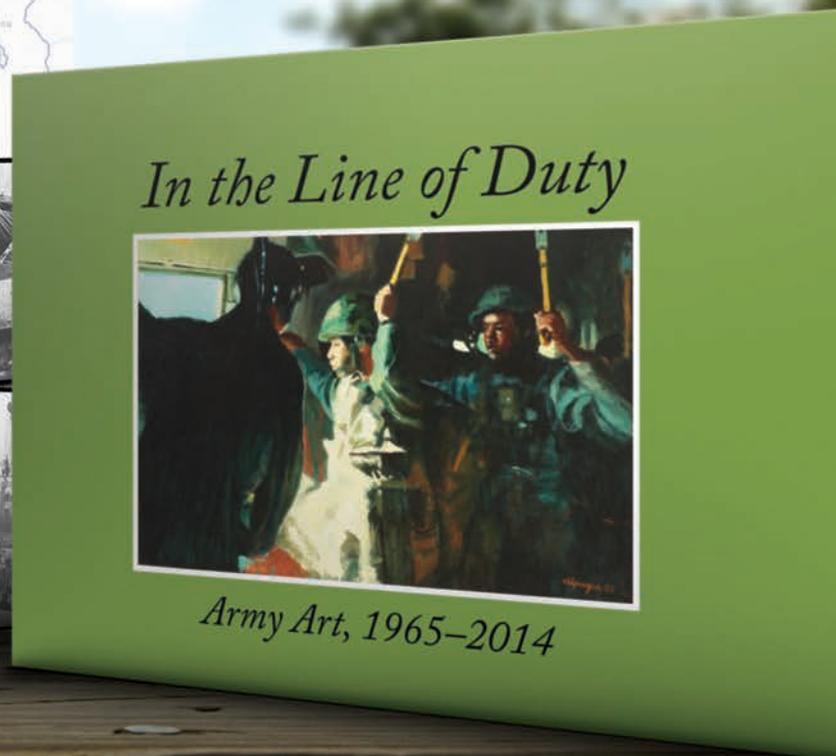
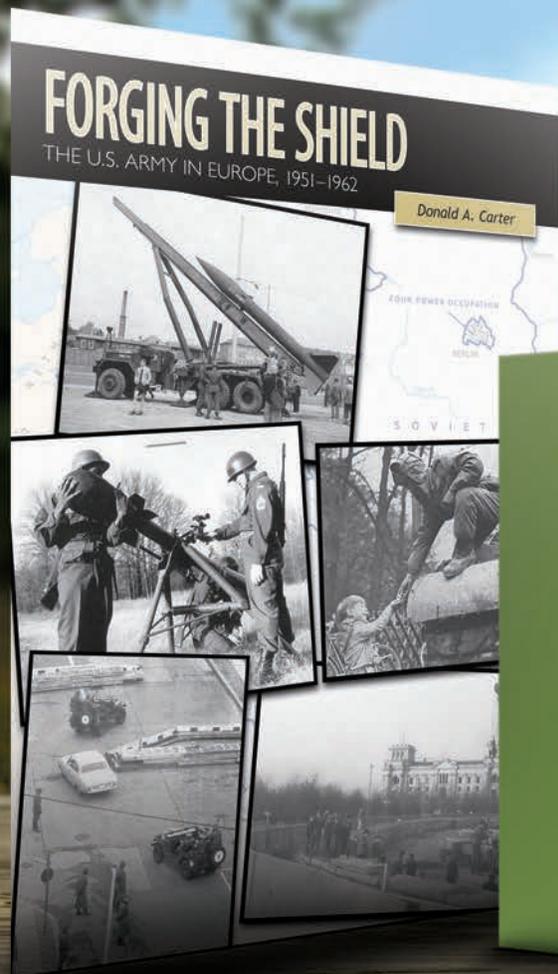


## NOTES

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44. Stone, *Perilous Times*, p. 133. To his credit, Stone specifically mentions “commanders” in his conclusions, and not soldiers, but his conclusions about the military do not differentiate between general, staff officer, or common foot soldier, allowing the reader to assume that Stone sees “the military” as largely a single-minded organization.
45. Mathews, *Reporting the War*, p. 81.
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51. *Chicago Times*, 15 September 1881.
52. Oliver Knight, *Following the Indian Wars: The Story of the Newspaper Correspondents among the Indian Campaigners* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 328.
53. Hammond, *Reporting Vietnam*, p. ix.
54. Smith, *War and Press Freedom*, p. 227. Smith proposed that “Mutual mistrust can be overcome with better communication with confidence-building efforts to find solutions.”

# Coming Soon...



# U.S. ARMY ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT

## TO THE BITTER END THE GERMAN STG44 ASSAULT RIFLE

By Dieter Stenger

In the early months of 1945, with most German armed forces rallying for the final defense of the Reich, the Nazi war industry continued to produce armaments critical to sustaining the fight. In Hitler's New Year's address, he assured his people that ". . . like a Phoenix out of the ashes, the German Will has risen anew from the rubble of our cities . . . , and thousands of People's Assault battalions have been established."<sup>1</sup> The weapon used to equip most of these troops represented a significant step forward in small-arms technology.

The assault rifle, or *Sturmgewehr* 44 (StG44), introduced late in World War II followed a substantial change in German ammunition ballistics. After World War I, comprehensive studies showed the 7.92 x 57-mm. rifle cartridge, with 45–50 grains of propellant, was too powerful for average combat distances. In 1938, after economizing to the short infantry cartridge 7.92 x 33-mm. with 24.6 grains, better known as "7.92 Kurz" (short), weapons designer Hugo Schmeisser developed a gas-operated, select-fire carbine that used the new cartridge. Improving on the machine carbine, designated MKb42(H), Schmeisser developed the *Maschinenpistole* 43 (MP43) and the almost identical *Maschinenpistole* 44 (MP44). Reclassified as an assault rifle or StG44 at the end of 1944 for purely political reasons, it was the first mass-produced, select-fire weapon that used an intermediate cartridge. The StG44 and the MP43/44 were essentially the same weapon, with only a few minor differences in production. These new weapons were designed primarily to replace the standard-issue bolt-action rifle, but also replaced submachine guns and light machine guns. German soldiers entered combat in the summer of 1943 carrying more ammunition and a lighter weapon with less recoil and greater firepower.<sup>2</sup> American troops first encountered the StG44 in the Ardennes in December 1944.<sup>3</sup>

First Lt. James Clifford Brace, a tank commander in the 739th Medium Tank Battalion, may not have engaged any of the People's Assault battalions while serving in the European Theater during World War II, however, he did capture and bring home a freshly manufactured StG44, which most Volks Grenadier Divisions, or People's Grenadier Divisions, used during the final phase of the war. The 739th Tank Battalion, activated in March 1943 at Fort Lewis, Washington, received specialized training in the use of the medium Sherman T1E1 and T1E3 mine exploder tanks, and the M4 dozer tank. Mine exploders were M4 Sherman tanks fitted with devices for detonating mines including plungers, rollers, and flails. The majority of these vehicles remained experimental. The dozer tank incorporated the M1 dozer blade. Upon arrival with three companies in France in October 1944, the 739th was assigned a support role to the Ninth Army. In early 1945 Lieutenant Brace and his men captured a railroad car full of assault rifles destined for German forces prepared to fight to the bitter end.

The unissued StG44 confiscated by Lieutenant Brace is one of the most recent weapons acquisitions for the U.S. Army Center of Military History's core collection housed at the Museum Support Center at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.



### Notes

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Courtesy of the Brace family

*Lieutenant Brace (left) with an unidentified soldier in front of an M4 Sherman tank*

NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE

One of the key roles of *Army History* magazine is to engage the entire Army historical community with new ideas and concepts about the importance of military history to the Army. Many of us regularly find ourselves defending the writing and study of military history to an often “presentist-minded” officer corps. Our academic counterparts, meanwhile, have been similarly engaged in a multiyear campaign in the colleges and universities of the world to justify military history programs as essential to a liberal arts education and to gain a better understanding of the human condition, even its darkest side that often appears in war. This is an important struggle because military history, as a scholarly discipline, has often failed to gain full acceptance in the academy for a variety of reasons, many of them outlined in the following article, which is reprinted here with the permission of the Society for Military History.

It is important that we understand this struggle and participate in any scholarly fora to highlight the critical importance of the study of military history to our armed forces, our citizens, and leaders. Our Army history program draws its best historians from universities that have robust military history courses of study. Our future military and civilian leaders need a firm grounding in military history to understand the nature of war. And our citizens who provide their sons and daughters, and give vital support to our military in time of war, also need to understand military history, especially as fewer and fewer members of our society experience war firsthand.

I urge you to read this article, written by Tami Davis Biddle of the Army War College and Robert M. Citino, also at the War College this year and coincidentally chair of the Department of the Army Historical Advisory Subcommittee (DAHASC), as a guide to helping each of us formulate better arguments to explain the critical value and utility of military history to our Army and our citizenry. It is particularly important that we all understand the value of teaching military history to our civilians as well as our soldiers. As Biddle and Citino state so clearly in their last paragraph:

It is incumbent upon those who train our college and university students—our next generation of civilian leaders—to address the civilian side of the equation. They must teach today’s students about the role of the military in a democracy, the blunt character of military force, and the lasting consequences of the decision to wage war.

The future of our Army and our nation rests on a greater understanding of the power and limitations of military force. To paraphrase George Santayana, our future military and civilian leaders must study military history or we are all doomed to regret it.

  
Dr. Richard W. Stewart, Chief Historian



# The ROLE of MILITARY HISTORY in the CONTEMPORARY ACADEMY

BY TAMI DAVIS BIDDLE AND ROBERT M. CITINO

**R**esorting to war signals the failure of far more satisfactory means of settling human conflicts. It forces us to face and wrestle with the darkest corners of the human psyche. It signals the coming of trauma and suffering—often intense and prolonged—for individuals, families, and societies. War fighting concentrates power in nondemocratic ways, infringes upon civil liberties, and convulses political, economic, and social systems. From the wreckage—the broken bodies, the redrawn boundaries, the imperfect treaties, the fresh resentments, and the intensified old ones—altered political and social patterns and institutions emerge that may help to prevent future conflicts, or sow the seeds of new ones. All of this creates a difficult, complicated, and fraught historical landscape to traverse.

Though the study of war is demanding, both intellectually and emotionally, we cannot afford to eschew it. Examining the origins of wars informs us about human behavior: the way that we create notions of identity, nationality, and territoriality; the way that we process and filter information; and the way that we elevate fear and aggression over reason.

Analyzing the nature of war informs us about the psychology of humans under stress: the patterns of communication and miscommunication within and across groups, the causes of escalation, and the dynamics of political and social behavior within nations and across populations. Studying the consequences of wars helps us to understand human resilience, resignation, and resentment; we learn to identify unresolved issues that may lead to further strife and we develop a heightened ability for comprehending the elements of political behavior that can lead to sustainable resolution and the rebuilding of broken—indeed sometimes shattered—social, political, and economic structures and relationships.

Research in military history not only informs and enriches the discipline of history, but also a host of other fields including political science, sociology, and public policy. Students need this knowledge in order to become knowledgeable, thoughtful citizens. If the role of a liberal education is to hone analytical thinking skills and prepare young people to accept their full responsibilities in a democratic society, then it is more imperative than ever that we prepare our

students to think critically and wisely about issues of war and peace. Among its many roles, scholarship has a civic function: it facilitates our understanding of the institutions we have created and opens a debate on their purpose and function.<sup>1</sup>

The members of the Society for Military History have a broad and inclusive sense of our work and our educational mission. We see our realm as encompassing not only the study of military institutions in wartime, but also the study of the relationships between military institutions and the societies that create them, the origins of wars, societies at war, and the myriad impacts of war on individuals, groups, states, and regions. Our mission encompasses not only traditional studies of battles, but also of war and public memory. The cross fertilization in these realms has been extensive in recent years, and each one has influenced the others in salutary ways.

Several decades ago the phrase “new military history” arose to highlight a shift away from traditional narratives that focused on generalship and troop movements on the battlefield. But events have clearly overtaken the phrase. The

“new military history” is simply what military history is *today*—broad-based, inclusive, and written from a wide range of perspectives. In an essay for the *American Historical Review* in 2007, Robert Citino wrote, “Once controversial, and still the occasional subject of grumbling from a traditionalist old guard, the new military history is today an integral, even dominant, part of the parent field from which it emerged. It has been around so long, in fact, and has established itself so firmly, that it seems silly to keep calling it ‘new.’”<sup>2</sup>

Those of us who labor in this realm believe that our work, which is regularly published by some of the most discerning presses in the world, deserves not only a wide readership, but serious scholarly attention. The increasing number of university presses initiating military history book series reflects our field’s vitality. The National Endowment for the Humanities has signaled its support for our work by launching a major initiative to fund military history research: <http://neh.gov/veterans/standing-together>. Beyond this, we believe that for our democracy to remain healthy, the study of war must be included in the curricula of our nation’s colleges and universities.

### OVERCOMING OLD STEREOTYPES

The phrase “military history” still stirs conflicted emotions or hostile reactions among those who teach history in the nation’s colleges and universities. Indeed, this fact has convinced some of those who study war to distance themselves from the phrase, or to eschew it altogether. But there is a case to be made for retaining and reinvigorating the term, linking it to the body of innovative scholarship that has been produced in recent years, and continues to be produced today. The first step is open communication and exchange between those inside the field and those outside of it. Within the academy, conversation and education ought to be the first steps toward breaking down stereotypes.

The challenges facing those who study war extend beyond the fact their terrain is challenging, morally freighted, and emotionally draining. Wariness toward the field persists despite its evolution in

recent decades. Other historians—for instance those who study slavery, or the history of Native peoples, or the dictatorship of Josef Stalin—work in fraught spaces without finding themselves the object of suspicion or stereotype. Part of the problem stems from the way that military history is, and has been, identified and categorized inside American popular culture.

Anyone walking into a large bookstore will find, in most cases, a sizable section labeled “military history.” Some of the work located there will be of high quality—serious, deeply researched, and conforming to the highest scholarly standards—but some of it will consist of shallow tales of adventure and conquest, written for an enthusiastic but not terribly discerning audience. Some of it will cover esoteric topics that appeal to those with highly particularized interests, such as military uniforms, weapons types, or aircraft markings. Popular military history varies immensely in quality, and there is a great gulf between the best and the worst it has to offer. Outside the subfield, all this work tends to be lumped together, however, and academics with little exposure to serious scholarship in the field may assume that it is a discipline defined by the weaker end of the spectrum.

Popular television also complicates the lives of academic military historians. “Info-tainment” via commercial media shapes ideas about what military history is, and how its practitioners allocate their time and energy. The academic subfield struggles also to free itself from association with popular writing and film that grasps too readily at “great man” theories, triumphalism, nationalism, gauzy sentimentality, or superficial tales of derring-do. We face a suspicion that those drawn to the field are mesmerized by the whiz-bang quality of arms technology, or the pure drama of organized violence. Sometimes we find ourselves called on to answer the charge that by studying armed conflict we are glorifying it or condoning it. Because the field was predominantly male for a long time, many of our colleagues assume that it remains so, and is hostile to women.

Unfortunately, many in the academic community assume that military history is simply about powerful men—mainly

white men—fighting each other and oppressing vulnerable groups. The study of the origins of war was fertile ground during the 1920s and 1930s as scholars searched for answers about the complex, wrenching, and seemingly incomprehensible event that was the “Great War”—as WWI was then called. But by the 1960s, critics had begun to conclude that military and diplomatic history focused too much on presidents, prime ministers, and generals; many felt it had become dry and stale, and had few new insights to contribute to our understanding of the past. In the United States this problem was exacerbated by the Vietnam War, and the terrible, searing divisions it created in the domestic polity. No small number of senior academics today came of age during that war, and, understandably, they resolved to put as much distance as possible between themselves and engagement with military issues of any kind.

### SHEDDING THE BAGGAGE AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Shedding these burdens will require ongoing and mutual outreach from both military and nonmilitary historians. Perhaps the best way for military historians to make their case to the broader profession is to highlight the range, diversity, and breadth of the recent scholarship in military history, as well as the dramatic evolution of the field in recent decades. Military historians believe that our work is a vital component of a liberal education that prepares students to be informed and responsible citizens.

Young scholars taking up the study of war are broadly trained and well-trained—and they must be because high-quality military history demands that its practitioners understand the intricate relationship between a society and its military institutions. This requires competence not only in political and economic history, but in social and cultural history as well. Scholars fortunate enough to have grown up in departments that are home to outstanding social and cultural historians have benefited immensely from the privilege, and it is reflected in their work.<sup>3</sup>

Over time, the practitioners of academic military history have become

more diverse, and have looked at war from new angles. As minorities and women enter the field, they bring to it their own unique lenses and fresh perspectives. In 2005 the Society for Military History (SMH) elected its first woman president, Carol Reardon. In recent years SMH has awarded a high percentage of its prizes, grants, and scholarships to young women, specifically the Edward M. Coffman Prize for First Manuscript. Recent awardees include Ellen Tillman from Texas State University, San Marcos, for “Dollar Diplomacy by Force: U.S. Military Experimentation and Occupation in the Dominican Republic, 1900–1924” (2014); Lien-Hang Nguyen, University of Kentucky, for “Hanoi’s War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam” (2012); and Kathryn S. Meier, University of Scranton, for “The Seasoned Soldier: Coping with the Environment in Civil War Virginia” (2011).

Even a quick glance at the program for the 2014 Annual Conference of the Society of Military History reveals a thriving subfield that is diverse and dynamic. Papers delivered in 2014 included: “The Chemists’ War: Medical and Environmental Consequences of Chemical Warfare during World War I” (Gerard J. Fitzgerald, George Mason University); “World War I, Manhood, Modernity, and the Remaking of the Puerto Rico Peasant” (Harry Franqui-Rivera, Hunter College); “British Counterinsurgency and Pseudo-warfare in Palestine, 1936–1939” (Matthew Hughes, Brunel University); “War, Disease, and Diplomacy: Transatlantic Peacemaking and International Health after the First World War” (Seth Rotramel, Office of the Historian, Department of State).<sup>4</sup>

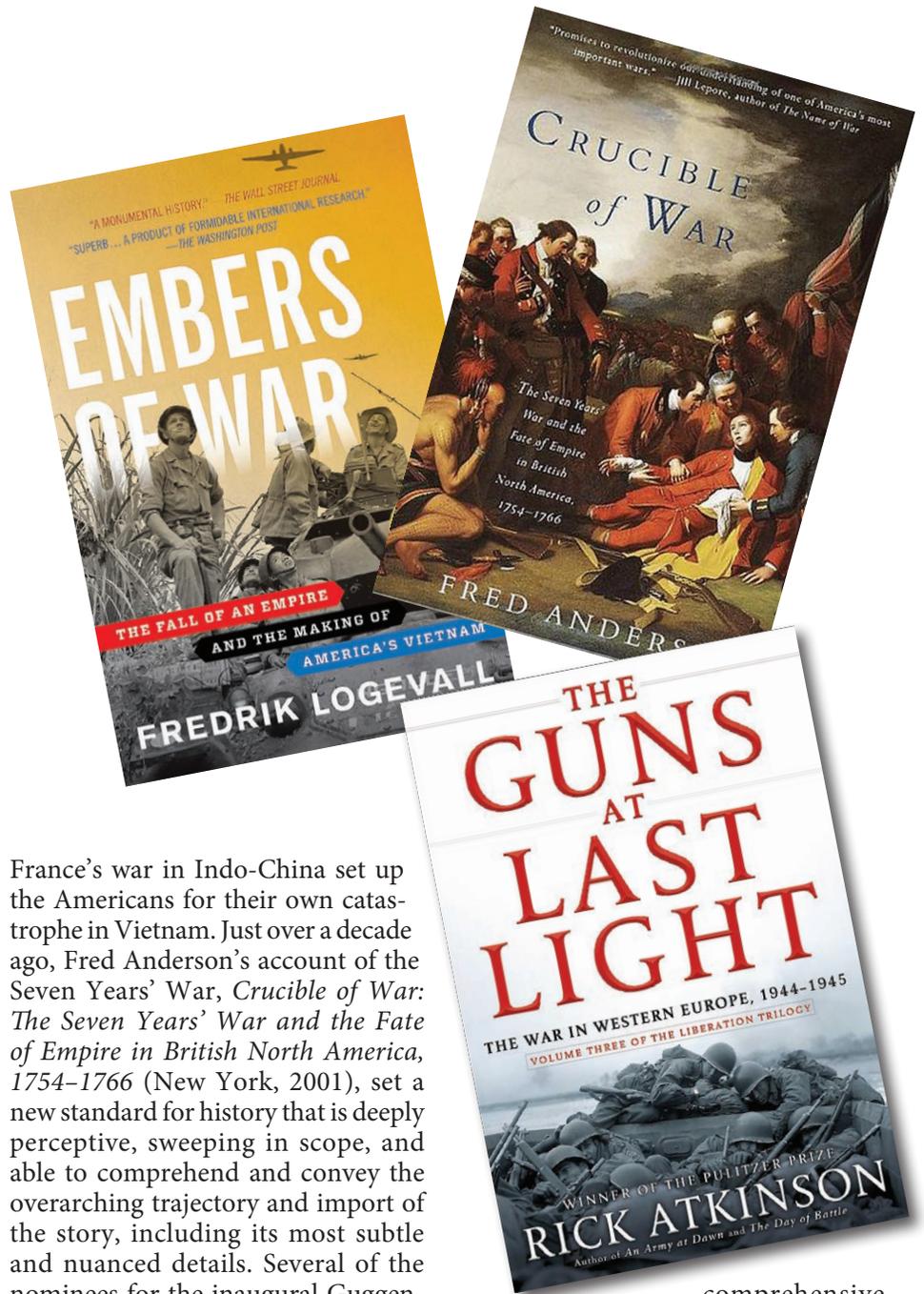
The scholarship in our field entitles its authors to claim a legitimate place among their colleagues in the academy and beyond. Indeed, books about war continue to earn national and international recognition. Fredrik Logevall’s superb work, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America’s Vietnam* (New York, 2013), was a recent winner of the Pulitzer Prize (2013) and the Francis Parkman Prize (2013). It examines the way that disastrous decisions at the end of

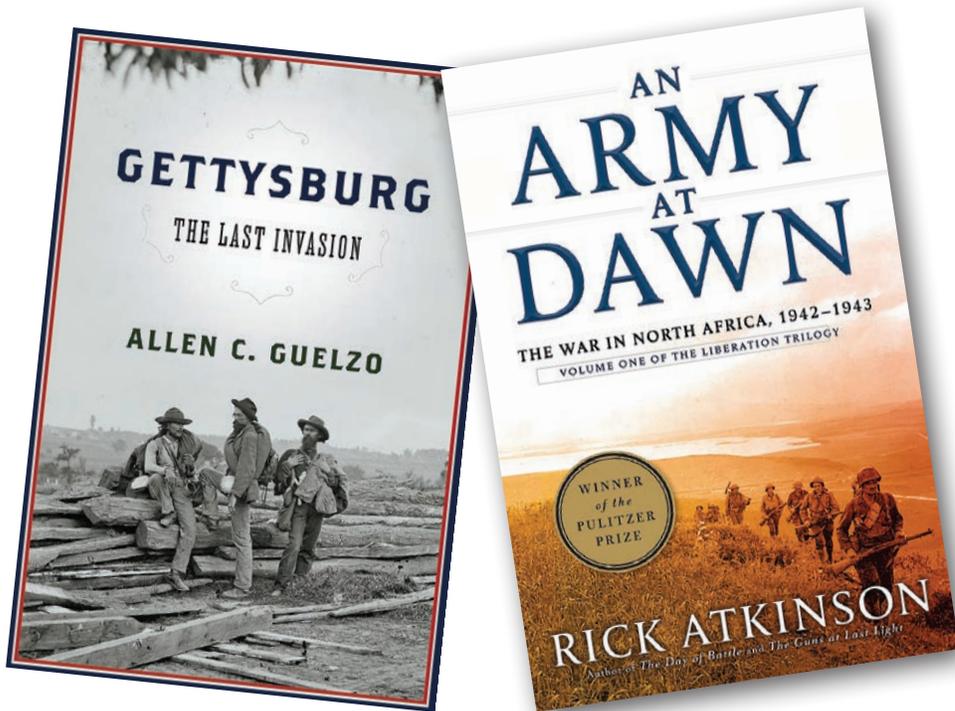
France’s war in Indo-China set up the Americans for their own catastrophe in Vietnam. Just over a decade ago, Fred Anderson’s account of the Seven Years’ War, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766* (New York, 2001), set a new standard for history that is deeply perceptive, sweeping in scope, and able to comprehend and convey the overarching trajectory and import of the story, including its most subtle and nuanced details. Several of the nominees for the inaugural Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History—including Rick Atkinson’s *The Guns at Last Light: The War in Western Europe, 1944–1945*, and Allen C. Guelzo’s *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York, 2013)—are works not only of breathtaking research but also of profound literary merit. The first book in Atkinson’s trilogy on the Second World War, *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942–1943*, won the Pulitzer Prize for History in 2003.<sup>5</sup>

Contemporary military history has been incorporated into some of the best broad scope and survey literature written in recent decades, allowing the narrative of conflict to become part of a

comprehensive story that includes—rather than avoids—warfare and all of its wide-ranging and long-lasting effects. Here the excellent volumes produced for the “Oxford History of the United States” series come immediately to mind.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time as it has branched out into new areas, however, military history retains a footing in “operational history,” the province of war, of campaign, and of battle. As today’s military historians recognize, battlefield history gains maximum impact when it is infused with insights into the nature and character of the organizations taking part. It requires knowledge of their social composition, command hierar-





chies, norms and cultural codes, and relationships to nonmilitary institutions. Insights from social, cultural, gender, and ethnic history have influenced the study of more conventional military history, with scholarship emphasizing aspects of mobilization, training and doctrine, and combat as a reflection of values and institutions in society. Operational history enables us to make sense of the larger story of war because battlefield outcomes matter: they open up or close off opportunities to attain (or fail to attain) important political ends.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, combat sheds light on the civil-military relationship within states, and the way that societies are able (or unable) to leverage technology by setting up organizations and processes to take advantage of it. What happens on the battlefield also influences, and sometimes crafts, key social and political narratives. For instance, the tactical and operational reasons for stalemate on the Western Front matter precisely because this stalemate shaped the human experience of the war, burdened its settlement, and shaped its legacy. The stalemate also changed the way that European power was understood and interpreted by those peoples under the yoke of European colonialism in the early part of the twentieth century. Similarly, one cannot understand the intensity of the Truman-MacArthur civil-military

clash during the Korean War—and its long and damaging legacy—unless one understands the power and influence gained by the latter through his military victories in World War II, and, in particular, at Inchon in 1950.

### ADDING DEPTH AND INSIGHT TO COLLEGE CURRICULA

Scholarly military history puts big strategic decisions about war and peace into context; it draws linkages and contrasts between a nation's socio-political culture and its military culture; it helps illuminate ways in which a polity's public and national narrative is shaped over time. All this gives the field relevance, and, indeed, urgency, inside the classroom. Scholars in our field are well-positioned to draw linkages and build bridges among subfields in history, and to engage in interdisciplinary work. Because warfare has dramatic consequences at every level of human existence, it must be a central element in the way that we understand our own narrative through the ages. To avoid the study of war is to undermine our opportunity to fully comprehend ourselves—and our evolution over time—in social, political, psychological, scientific, and technological realms.

Students long for intellectual frameworks that help them understand the

world in which they live—and the study of war and conflict is an essential part of such frameworks. For instance, it is difficult if not impossible to understand the geo-political fault lines of the twenty-first-century world if one does not understand the causes and outcomes of the First World War. Students will not understand Vladimir Putin's contemporary Russian nationalism if they do not understand (at least) Western intervention in the Russian civil war, the history of the Second World War, the Cold War that followed it, and the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization following the Soviet collapse in 1989.

Through popular media and public discourse in this decade alone, American students have heard about such events as the bicentennials of the Napoleonic Wars and War of 1812, the centennial of the First World War, and the sesquicentennial of the Battle of Gettysburg. They realize that in order to fully comprehend the significance of these commemorations, they need a basic historical grounding that can explain why the events mark turning points—and have thus become influential pieces of our contemporary narrative.

Our students' desire for knowledge creates an important opportunity for departments of history. The recession of 2008 has produced a drop in humanities majors as students seek courses that seem more likely to produce an immediate payoff in terms of jobs and wages. Legislative budget cuts have forced even state schools to conform to a tuition-driven model, and departments that cannot attract a sufficient number of students can expect hard times to get harder. College administrators, particularly deans and chairs of history departments, may find some relief in the appeal of military history. Courses in military history tend to fill, not only with history majors and minors, but also with students from other disciplines who are interested in the field. And because military history intersects regularly with the profession's other subfields, it can serve as an ideal gateway to the other specializations history departments have to offer. It may, as well, lure back some of the students who have been drawn away to political science, inter-



national relations, and public policy departments. But the central reasons to embrace contemporary military history go far beyond the practical realities of departmental budgets.

### CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Military history ought to be a vital component of a liberal education, one that prepares students to be informed and responsible citizens. Because civilian control of the military is a foundational element of American democracy, our citizens must have enough basic knowledge to carry out this function competently and responsibly. In the U.S. today, the burden of military service is carried by only about 1 percent of the population. The remaining 99 percent have only limited (if any) contact with serving military personnel, and military institutions; our young people know little about warfare—and its profound costs and consequences—outside of what partial, and often unhelpful, information filters through via popular culture. Little is done to prepare our citizens to understand their role in owning and controlling a large military institution. Indeed, many of our young people have no idea of how the U.S. military came to exist in its present form, what tasks it has been called on to carry out in the past (or why), and what tasks it may be called on to carry out in the future.

This is an unsettling state of affairs, especially because the U.S. military does not send itself to war. Choices about war and peace are made by civilians—civilians who, increasingly, have no historical or analytical frameworks to guide them in making the most consequential of all decisions. They know little or nothing about the requirements of the just war tradition and the contemporary legal and ethical frameworks that affect *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, and *jus post bellum*. They know little about the logistical, geographical, and physical demands of modern military operations; they do not realize that the emotional stresses, profound complexities, and constant unpredictability of war fighting make it more difficult than any other human endeavor to carry out successfully; and they do not sufficiently link this fact to the family stresses and emotional wounds that veterans endure.

Any use of military force is so consequential on so many levels that it demands serious contemplation and full comprehension by *all* those in a democratic polity who own some piece of responsibility for the decision-making process. In a democracy, the burden—including and especially the moral burden—of choosing to use violence for political ends belongs to elected officials and to the people they represent.<sup>8</sup> And, once a choice to use

force is undertaken, elected officials continue to have a serious responsibility to remain fully engaged in the wielding of violence on behalf of the state. When Americans go to war, they do so because they have been sent by the elected leaders of the Republic; they carry the flag of the United States, and wear that flag on the sleeves of their uniforms. Civilians must respect the requirements of just war; this is essential not only for the preservation of American leadership in the world, but also for building a foundation on which a stable postwar peace can be built. Just as crucially, civilians must realize that respect for just war requirements is essential to the mental and emotional health of the troops they send to war.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, civilians need to understand how consistently and tirelessly one must work to align means and ends in war. Soldiers will be fully occupied trying to cope with the intense and ever-changing demands of the battlefield, while civilian policymakers will be fully occupied trying to build and maintain support for national strategy. With both groups working round the clock in their own realms, it is easy for them to begin to drift apart.<sup>10</sup> An intentional and unflagging effort must be devoted to maintaining the ongoing civil-military communication that gives strategy its meaning, and that prevents the nation from engaging in counterproductive or even senseless conflict.

The rather cavalier and shortsighted way that Americans sent troops to war in Iraq in 2003 spoke to vast gaps in civilian understanding of the capabilities of blunt military instruments in the complexity of sectarian political divisions (exacerbated by a colonial legacy) within Iraq and in the myriad and long-lasting costs of warfare and war fighting among individuals and societies.

Officers and noncommissioned officers who enter the U.S. professional military education (PME) system learn about the responsibilities they hold in a society where civilians control the military and make decisions about where and when to use military force. At the most senior level of PME, for instance, War College students become well-versed in the special responsibilities they hold on the military side of the civil-military equation. Today's civilians, by contrast, are undereducated about their responsibilities. Even as the American people built a large military and handed it vast responsibilities, they devoted less and less time to equipping their future civilian leaders with the knowledge they need to interact with the military in informed and constructive ways. This affects the nation's ability to develop, implement, and sustain an optimal national security strategy for itself, and to adequately address the great range of crucial issues pertaining to the effects and consequences of war.

It is incumbent upon those who train our college and university students—our next generation of civilian leaders—to address the civilian side of the equation. They must teach today's students about the role of the military in a democracy, the blunt character of military force, and the lasting consequences of the decision to wage war. To ignore the study of such an enterprise is, in the end, corrosive of the constitutional principles that legitimize choice and action in the American system of government. The strong body of literature produced by contemporary military historians, and the knowledge and pedagogical skills that they bring to the classroom, can surely help in this crucial task.



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**Dr. Robert M. Citino** is the Harold K. Johnson Professor of History at the U.S. Army War College and a professor of history at the University of North Texas. He is the author of numerous articles and books, including *Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm: The Evolution of Operational Warfare* (Lawrence, Kans., 2004), which won the Distinguished Book Award from the Society for Military History and the American Historical Association's Paul Birdsall Prize. His most recent book is *The Wehrmacht Retreats: Fighting a Lost War, 1943* (Lawrence, Kans., 2012).

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This article was first published online as a white paper by the Society for Military (SMH) in 2014. Its text and notes have been edited to conform to the style of *Army History*. Any references to this material should cite the original document on the SMH Web site: <http://www.smh-hq.org/whitepaper.html>. The views and opinions of the authors are their own and not necessarily those of the Department of Defense or its subordinate elements.

## NOTES

1. Walter McDougall, Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania, makes this point powerfully in a short essay for the Foreign Policy Research Institute entitled "The Three Reasons We Teach History," *Footnotes* 5, no. 1 (February 1998). See [www.fpri.org/footnotes](http://www.fpri.org/footnotes).

2. Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reinterpretation," *American Historical Review* 112 (October 2007): 1070–90.

3. In her essay for the *Times Literary Supplement* special issue, "New Ways in History," Stella

Tillyard commented on the productive cross-fertilization between academic and popular history. She specifically cited the influence of social history upon military history. See Tillyard, "All Our Pasts: The Rise of Popular History," *TLS*, 13 (October 2006): 7–9.

4. Gerard Fitzgerald presented his paper as part of a Presidential Panel on "The Environmental Dimensions of World War I" sponsored by the Society for Environmental History, which has established a productive partnership with the Society for Military History.

5. Atkinson's "Liberation Trilogy" on the U.S. Army in the Second World War includes: *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942–1943* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002); *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943–1944* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007); and *The Guns at Last Light: The War in Western Europe, 1944–1945* (New York, 2013).

6. Two prominent examples include David Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). The former won the Pulitzer Prize (2000) and the latter won the Bancroft Prize (1997).

7. This is a point that is made and emphasized in another Pulitzer Prize-winning volume in the Oxford series, James McPherson's classic analysis of the U.S. Civil War, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). This work, too, won the Pulitzer Prize in history.

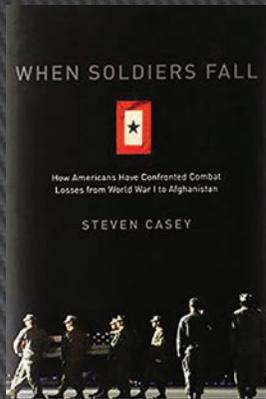
8. An illuminating argument about the need for citizens to reclaim this responsibility is found in Sebastian Junger, "Veterans need to share the moral burden of war," *Washington Post*, 24 May 2013. The citizen's role in the use of military power is the central concern in Rachel Maddow's *Drift: The Unmooring of American Military Power* (Crown: New York, 2012).

9. Richard K. Betts puts the case powerfully: "Any significant resort to force will hurt people on a large scale, without definite assurance of achieving its purpose. For these reasons, force should be used less frequently, with better reason, and with more conscious willingness to pay a high price than it has been in many cases since the Cold War." He adds, "The presumption should actually be against it unless the alternatives are unambiguously worse." See Betts, *American Force: Dangers, Delusions, and Dilemmas in National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), pp. 12–13.

10. Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion," *International Security* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 7.

# BOOKREVIEWS

*When Soldiers Fall: How Americans Have Confronted Combat Losses from World War I to Afghanistan*



By Steven Casey  
Oxford University Press, 2014  
Pp. x, 310. \$29.95

## Review by Richard A. McConnell

“Casualties are not just numbers or images to be manipulated at will. Each one is a tragedy—a life curtailed, a family left grieving, a community made emptier. . . . This is the most important wartime lesson of all, and it needs to be in the forefront of leaders’ minds whenever they commit the nation to battle” (p. 248).

In *When Soldiers Fall* author Steven Casey provides a compelling description of the evolution of casualty accountability and notification over the last century. In the above quote, Casey eloquently establishes the vital importance of capturing and accurately reporting our nation’s investment in blood while prosecuting war. This joint endeavor between military and political leaders has the power to establish or destroy their credibility. Determining whether war is justified and worth the invest-

ment of such a precious commodity as its citizens’ lives takes place on the stage of public opinion. Often, balancing public resolve with military necessity in the accomplishment of our nation’s wars has been challenging. Some military and political leaders have done this task effectively and met with success. Others have lost credibility along with the nation’s commitment to the endeavor and paid the price. Casey expertly chronicles the highs and lows of this evolutionary process from World War I through Afghanistan. Readers who are interested in understanding how our nation holds itself accountable for its losses in combat will find this a useful discussion, especially in light of recent military endeavors and the casualties they have suffered.

Casey starts by discussing the context prior to World War I in regard to casualty notification. During the Civil War casualty accountability and notification was in the hands of local commanders. Soldiers going into battle sometimes pinned notes to their uniforms to aid identification should they fall. Commanders might release casualty lists to newspaper reporters depending on the commander in question. However, there was little governmental leadership provided for casualty accountability. By 1913, U.S. military casualty accountability and notification procedures were in their earliest form and the military adopted “dog tags” as a form of identification for the first time. For some readers, this preamble to the innovations in how our nation accounts for and reports casualties may be a revelation.

The description of innovations in casualty accountability and notification during World War I is very engaging as a small general staff struggled with Herculean challenges.

The American public watched with keen interest the losses experienced by France and Britain in the preceding years of World War I. America was isolationist and ambivalent about joining the conflict and President Woodrow Wilson faced a challenge in maintaining public support. General John Pershing’s reluctance to release casualty information, concerned that it might aid the enemy, stirred up public controversy and inflamed Congress. This demonstrated to military and political leaders a need for balance between military necessities and keeping the public informed. Several innovations were inaugurated that proved successful. Press pools and a limited media embedding took place. Military leaders streamlined administrative procedures for casualty accountability and notification. In spite of these developments, when major offensives occurred, the system was overwhelmed with the sheer volume of casualties. Such surges in casualties hit the public hard and made military leaders seem like they had been withholding information. Casey frames these challenges and early innovations as setting the stage for further improvements adopted during World War II.

At the beginning of World War II, the American military and political establishment was determined to learn from past lessons and not repeat mistakes made in World War I. World War II produced many success stories. Technology advancements improved the speed and accuracy of reporting casualty numbers using tabulators and punch cards. Political and military leaders grappled with the balance between too much and not enough casualty information adopting descriptors, “light, moderate, and heavy,” for initial reports and followed up with

periodic reports that were more detailed. Interestingly, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in an effort to combat complacency among the American public, loosened casualty-reporting restrictions. Roosevelt clearly did not suffer negative consequences for his casualty reporting policies because he was re-elected in 1944—the bloodiest year of the war for America leading to the victories of 1945. Casey calls World War II, “The Good War” although casualties were high, the American people could connect the high price to ultimate victory. Casey refers back to World War II later in examining subsequent wars, where the connection of casualty to victory was often tenuous or nonexistent.

The wars in Korea and Vietnam suffered similar challenges. Both wars experienced a credibility gap. In Korea, American troops appeared unprepared for the ferocity of the fighting and the high casualties seemed the proof. Americans cast about to determine who was responsible. The fact that military and political leaders appeared engaged in a strategy to return to the status quo did not improve public support. Thus, coining the ignoble slogan, “die for a tie” described how soldiers were dying for something other than victory. Casey discusses a similar dilemma in Vietnam, where military and political leaders described the war going well, just before the Tet Offensive. Such situations damaged the credibility of both military and political leaders. For both conflicts, as public support eroded, so did the apparent justification for the price in blood. Casey notes a similar antiwar sentiment in America after Vietnam as existed after World War I. Clearly, America was grappling with how it should justify war in light of its human cost. How should the lessons of these past wars influence future ones?

Casey describes America’s application of these lessons in the Gulf Wars as being marked with numerous revolutions that set them apart from preceding wars. For example, the 24/7 news cycle that emphasized detailed personal interest stories changed how

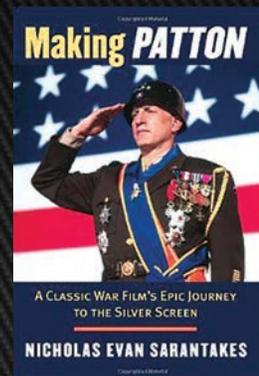
public perception was formed. Additionally, the speed of information along with Internet access to casualty lists made the flow of information constant. The importance of credibility is still paramount, but very difficult to manage. Indications that the war was going well preceding announcements for a surge revived memories of the Tet Offensive and the credibility gap it caused.

Readers may find Casey’s discussion of America’s lessons during the last two conflicts as most apropos. The end of our involvement in Afghanistan is approaching and few are optimistic about the outcome. U.S. forces withdrew from Iraq in 2011 and current reports indicate that nation teeters on the brink of collapse. As Casey observes, “the idea that success works is hardly novel” (p. 246). That the American people find victory a more compelling argument for justifying casualties than failures is no revelation. How our nation justifies a military action should include more than ideology, but practicality—can we succeed in the proposed endeavor? Regardless of which side one falls on this argument, *When Soldiers Fall* is an excellent description of how our current system of confronting combat losses came to be. This book also serves as an outstanding reflective piece for asking how America should decide what military involvements are worth the investment of blood and treasure. This is a question most relevant in light of the costs and outcomes of the last two wars—one in its twilight, another that seems lost.

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### *Making Patton: A Classic War Film's Epic Journey to the Silver Screen*



By Nicholas Evan Sarantakes  
University of Kansas Press, 2012  
Pp. xii, 258, \$34.95

### Review by Robert A. Taylor

In 1970 my father took me to see a new movie titled *Patton*, and it made quite an impression. The opening scene, with the medaled General George S. Patton Jr. speaking before a huge American flag, both frightened and inspired me, as it has audiences ever since. Patton’s absolute confidence in himself and his soldiers’ ability to defeat the enemies of the United States radiated through the entire theater. Actor George C. Scott’s Patton quickly became the real general for me and many other Americans. Now historian Nicholas Evan Sarantakes reveals the long and winding road the idea of a Patton biopic took to make it to the screen in *Making Patton*.

The twenty-year push to make a Patton movie was spearheaded by producer Frank McCarthy. A veteran Army officer, McCarthy served on General George C. Marshall’s staff during World War II then left the military for a successful career in Hollywood. He knew there was a good story to be told about the famous general and fought long odds to put together a winning production team. For years formidable opposition came from the Patton family who were concerned that the media might somehow further tarnish his memory. Without the family’s

support, cooperation from the Department of Defense was difficult to obtain. But by 1965 family objections faded, and Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation was ready to begin. McCarthy needed a script, and in time he turned to a then little-known screenwriter, Francis Ford Coppola, to pen one.

Coppola used the most current biography, *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph* (New York, 1964) by Ladislav Farago and General Omar N. Bradley's wartime memoir *A Soldier's Story* (New York, 1951) to craft a tale carrying Patton from 1943 to 1945. He devised the unorthodox speech scene and fought hard to have it placed at the very beginning of the film. In the end his vision shaped the fictional Patton more than any other writer involved in the project. Director Franklin Shaffner, coming off his 1968 hit *Planet of the Apes*, signed on to direct the picture from Coppola's script. And after considering practically every leading man in motion pictures, including John Wayne and Ronald Reagan, fiery George C. Scott was signed for the lead role. His interpretation of Patton turned out to be one of the greatest performances of his career.

Another major player in *Patton* was General Bradley himself. Hired as the senior military adviser for the production, he read and approved the script. Naturally, because *A Soldier's Story* made up half of the movie's material, Bradley came off as much more sympathetic than Patton. According to Sarantakes, the five-star general was more than willing to cash in with his involvement in the film rather than attempt to enhance his historical reputation. Producer McCarthy all but admitted years later that he got far more from Bradley by the lending of his name to *Patton* than anything else.

Another World War II commander cast a shadow over the movie. Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery was very much alive in the 1960s and as sensitive about his reputation as Bradley.

The Coppola screenplay at times made the Montgomery character

seem nearly as villainous as the Nazis, and played up the rivalry with Patton almost to the final scenes. Lawyers warned Twentieth Century Fox that under British law the hero of El Alamein had grounds to sue for libel. Fortunately nothing came out of this potential public relations disaster.

Ironically the U.S. Army had almost nothing to do with the actual filming of *Patton*, as much of it was filmed on location in Spain. The Spanish Army garnered a starring role by playing both the American and German forces in the film. Military-minded movie viewers couldn't miss the irony of Spanish-owned M60 Patton tanks playing German panzers on the screen. The final effort, with its thundering soundtrack, went on to be a box office blockbuster and a critical hit. It received seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture (beating out *M\*A\*S\*H*, *Airport*, *Love Story*, and *Five Easy Pieces*). Perhaps the highest accolade came from the Pattons who loved the movie. There were rumors about President Richard Nixon seeing the film multiple times in the White House and it inspiring him to launch the invasion of Cambodia.

A student of military history might ask why they should even consider a fictional Hollywood account of the career of George S. Patton Jr. First, the film generated a wave of interest in the man that has yet to crest. A quick look at the major scholarly studies on Patton that appear after the film was released in 1970 confirms this. Scott's Patton has almost supplanted the historical Patton in American culture. Art intruded on life when *Patton* was shown to recruits in Army basic training in the 1970s. Even the current American military history textbook used in ROTC classes refers to the film in a blurb that states how the opening speech "completed his transformation from legend to folk hero."<sup>1</sup> Sarantakes has produced an interesting chronicle of the creation of *Patton* and its impact on American military history and culture. It is thoughtful, engaging, and simply fun to read.

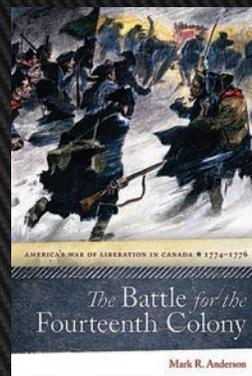
## NOTE

1. Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol. 2, *The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917–2008*, Army Historical Series, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2010), p. 141.

**Dr. Robert A. Taylor** is associate dean and head of the School of Arts and Communication at the Florida Institute of Technology. He is currently working on a military history of Florida from 1513 to the present.



### *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony: America's War of Liberation in Canada, 1774–1776*



By Mark R. Anderson  
University Press of New England, 2013  
Pp. xiv, 438. \$35

## Review by Gary Shattuck

Only thirteen months separated the capture of Fort Ticonderoga by rebellious colonists in May 1775 and the embarrassing return to its grounds of a disheveled, disorganized Continental army in full retreat from Canada. As events of great moment unfolded in and around Boston during this time following Lexington, others of equal significance took place farther to the north involving this army from

the United Colonies, one sent out to accomplish dual missions directed toward idealistic liberation of their neighbor and pragmatic self-defense of the homeland. In *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony*, retired U.S. Air Force officer and independent historian Mark R. Anderson tackles this challenging story, one implicating a multitude of complicated and unanticipated forces colliding in the frozen environment the invasion occupied.

Over the course of twenty-three chapters, interspersed with several excellent period prints and helpful maps, Anderson charts out a comprehensive and interesting tale of the challenges America's founders, and their military leaders, faced in their grandiose effort to coax Canada into the cause of independence. This is not a story of campaigns, sieges, and battles (albeit, they are addressed in measured fashion), but, rather a behind-the-scenes account of events and machinations taking place allowing for a fuller appreciation of what occurred than has been previously described. Anderson admirably achieves his goal through exhaustive research, evidenced by over fifty pages of detailed notes, conducted at many American and Canadian archives revealing much new information. Many little known, or appreciated, individuals are brought to life in the effort, including American, British, and Canadian participants, all coming from their respective patriot, loyalist, and uncommitted political, civil, military, mercantile, and religious backgrounds as they fought and negotiated each other through a highly volatile time. In the end, notwithstanding the immense challenges that Americans faced, Anderson shows just how close they came to actually accomplishing their wild goal.

Fundamentally, this was a bold attempt to rapidly incorporate a bewildered, confused, and "predominately uneducated" people (p. 15), without any preexisting inclination to break away from their current situation, into the sudden maelstrom unfolding in nearby New England. A large majority of the Canadian population at the time were of French origin with

over a century and a half of history living on their lands, and were at that moment accommodating the seismic changes brought to their lives a decade earlier with the arrival of British rule following the close of the Seven Years' War—itself posing an internal problem because of squabbling French and British parties vying for prominence. This was a population strongly possessive of their Catholic tradition, which had previously been savagely attempting to evict their Protestant neighbors from the North American continent for many decades. Now, living peacefully, they found themselves being curiously solicited to join the rebels in throwing off their British overseers.

In an attempt to define common ground overcoming their hesitancy and to make the proposition palatable, Anderson describes how Americans sought to exploit the application of perceived deficiencies in Britain's recently enacted Quebec Act of 1774, one of the Intolerable Acts. Seeking to invoke fear in the Canadian population, they argued in the fall of that year that it was simply an effort to bring the entire continent into "political slavery" (p. 13) and asked them to send delegates to the Second Continental Congress meeting the following May to discuss their future involvement. That the first congress understood the immense challenges before them is without question as shown by the eighteen-page missive it sent to the Canadians describing their reasons to join the rebellion, whereas those provided to other North American colonies consisted of a mere two sentences.

However, and in what is perhaps the most valuable lesson laid bare, Anderson makes clear that Congress wholly failed to anticipate the necessary next step (indeed, it chose to adjourn during several of these decisive months) to exploit the possible arrival of fortuitous events, such as Fort Ticonderoga's capture. In short, it neglected to fulfill one of its most critical roles in overseeing the country's nascent military establishment, finding itself being constantly manipulated by the rush of events. As a result, many of Congress' ensuing

efforts were reactive in nature and, because it lacked an understanding of the population they were soliciting or appreciation of the large geographical theater they occupied, failed to anticipate appropriate military, diplomatic, and political responses, resulting in overall failure.

Notwithstanding those obstacles, Anderson describes the important contributions made by Generals Philip Schuyler, Richard Montgomery, David Wooster, and Col. Benedict Arnold as they sought to execute a complicated pincher movement along the Richelieu, St. Lawrence, and Kennebec Rivers between 1775 and 1776. What Congress sitting in Philadelphia failed to fully appreciate quickly became all too clear to the various commanders confronting day-to-day realities, struggling to fulfill unrealistic expectations placed on them while at the mercy of a calendar portending the arrival of substantial British reinforcements with the spring thaw.

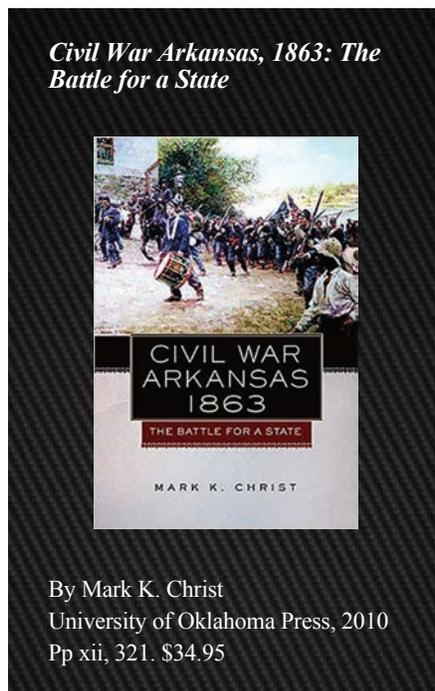
As it was for George Washington in Cambridge at the same moment, the expiration of enlistment terms posed significant problems for those in Canada. Throughout these early months after first marching their troops northward, the officers faced the prospect of many men simply picking up and leaving at year's end; indeed, it was the main contributing factor forcing Montgomery and Arnold to precipitously launch their unsuccessful New Year's Eve attack on Quebec City, resulting in the former's death and the latter's wounding. Then, with arriving replacements—many undisciplined and prone to cause problems with civilians—thereby undoing hard-fought gains for their assistance, the problem continued with their leaving in April when they were most urgently needed. Regardless, Anderson makes clear that through the strenuous efforts of Arnold and Wooster, the pox-ridden, spread out army was largely able to withdraw homeward without significant loss when large contingencies of British troops arrived in May.

Military considerations aside, Anderson provides a telling indict-

ment of American political fumbling when, in the face of early favorable operations by Montgomery, they failed to follow up with critically needed specie that Canadians required. Of equal import, despite repeated pleading from Schuyler and Montgomery for assistance, they further compounded their difficulties in failing to send experienced politicians directly into the theater of operations to assist sympathetic Canadians in forming appropriate democratic measures to overcome any reluctance of those withholding support for the rebel cause.

There is little to fault with *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony* and it is an important contribution to the historiography of the opening days of the American Revolution. It provides significant insights into the “hows” and “whys” the Canadian venture met with failure. While other works concentrate on Arnold’s incredible journey and his actions with Montgomery at Quebec, few have delved as deeply into their background as Anderson has done. Of added significance, he sets right the inevitable aspersions that politicians directed at the soldiers to excuse their own shortcomings. *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony* is an admirable effort providing critically needed context explaining the motivations, capabilities, and results obtained by a large cast of players and is a telling lesson in the value of deep archival research.

**Gary Shattuck** is a former federal prosecutor currently pursuing a master’s degree in military history, concentrating on the Revolutionary War. He researches historical events from a legal perspective and is the author of *Insurrection, Corruption & Murder in Early Vermont: Life on the Wild Northern Frontier* (Charleston, S.C., 2014) and *Artful and Designing Men: The Trials of Job Shattuck and the Regulation of 1786–1787* (Mustang, Okla., 2013).



### Review by Scott A. Porter

As the community outreach director for the Arkansas Historic Preservation program, a member of the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, and the author of five books on the Civil War in Arkansas, Mark Christ’s depth of knowledge in the Trans-Mississippi is certainly noteworthy. As part of the “Campaigns and Commanders” series edited by Gregory Urwin from Temple University, *Civil War Arkansas, 1863* is a historically accurate and remarkably descriptive account of this crucible year for Arkansas. Most importantly, Christ’s work closes a huge gap in Trans-Mississippi Civil War history, examining significant, defining events in Arkansas and Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). He does this by using numerous primary sources, telling soldier’s stories, and skillfully tying together the larger tactical, operational, and political pictures.

The challenge with any book that captures a “year in history” is the ability of the author to set the stage with previous events, and Christ accomplishes this exceptionally well. As a frontier state, leaders within the Confederacy saw Arkansas as a source of manpower for other theaters, and Arkansas was to first serve as a springboard for invading Missouri. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, Union forces from Missouri invaded

western Arkansas in the spring of 1862, resulting in the dramatic Confederate losses at Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove. Helena would also fall in 1862, and these losses further convinced the Confederate leadership in Richmond to transfer most of the Arkansas troops east of the Mississippi to reinforce depleted units after Shiloh and the current fighting at Vicksburg. By the beginning of 1863 the civilian inhabitants of Arkansas were anticipating Union intervention from not only the western part of the state, but from the east by way of the Arkansas River. Christ articulates this time period well with abundant quotes from letters and diaries within the context of unfolding events. Furthermore, his analysis of the importance of the Arkansas River Valley is an indicator of his scholarly abilities to integrate personal stories and perspectives with historical relevance, in this case the people’s concerns over losing the breadbasket of Arkansas.

Christ begins by highlighting Arkansas’ entry into the war in 1862, key battles and events in the Eastern and Western theaters, and Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. With the proclamation a new moral cause based upon human rights emerged to the forefront, and Christ captures the mood of the nation in early 1863 by including excerpts from letters and diaries that express many of the opinions and perspectives of soldiers from both the South and North. Christ then moves directly into the first major Arkansas battle in 1863, Arkansas Post.

With operations at Vicksburg ongoing, Confederate General Theophilus Holmes realized the criticality of protecting the Arkansas River Valley. He ordered Col. John W. Dunnington to build fortifications along the Arkansas and White rivers to stop any Federal assault. The primary defensive position would be established at Arkansas Post, and dubbed Fort Hindman after the fire-eating secessionist. Highly entertaining, yet at the same time very informative, the story unfolds from Confederate Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Churchill’s planning and preparations of Fort Hindman overlooking the Arkansas River. Outnumbered nine-to-one and outgunned by Union ironclads, Confederates at Fort Hindman fought for three days before being overpowered by Maj. Gen John

A. McClernand's Army of the Mississippi. Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman commanded XV Corps during the assault; however, the turning point in the battle was Admiral David D. Porter's six ironclads which he ordered covered with tallow or slush. Confederate artillery rounds glanced off the slushed ironclads as they closed within sixty yards of the fort and commenced to fire round after round of large-caliber shells that effectively knocked out all the Confederate artillery and reduced the fort. Christ is on target with his analysis that the significance of the Union victory was that fully one fourth of Confederate forces in Arkansas were lost. This Confederate loss of forces would directly impact their ability to forestall an eventual overpowering Union advance within the state.

With the destabilization of Confederate Arkansas the opportunity for criminal bands and the inflation of basic goods put significant stress on the population, many of whom had men off fighting the war in distant places. Still not deterred, Confederate forces remaining in Arkansas went on the offensive, Missourians Col. Joseph I. "Jo" Shelby and Brig. Gen. John S. Marmaduke lead cavalry raids deep into Missouri. Afterward, Holmes planned a major attack on Union-held Helena, a strategic strongpoint on the Mississippi that both aided the Vicksburg Campaign and served as an entry into Arkansas. Holmes planned a complex coordinated attack from three sides. Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, and Brig. Gens. John S. Marmaduke and James F. Fagan would each command an axis of the attack with a total of over 7,000 men. Unfortunately for the Confederates at Helena, Union Maj. Gen. Benjamin M. Prentiss had over 20,000 men and plenty of warning of the Confederate assault. Although the Confederates did make some headway, in the end their poorly coordinated attack fell apart against a well-prepared Union defense. This was Holmes' last act, as he would hand over Confederate command of Arkansas to Price.

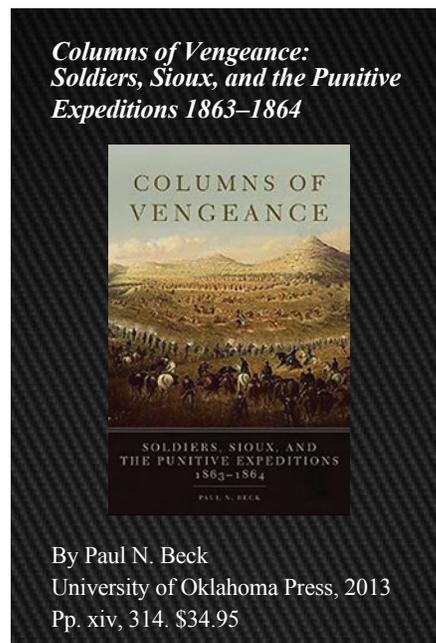
By mid-July a renewed Union offensive into Arkansas led by Col. John W. Davidson would end with the capture of Little Rock by Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele's troops from Helena. In the sweltering eastern Arkansas heat, Steele's

6,000 infantrymen were plagued by disease stemming from the greenish bayou water. Personal memoirs from many of the Yankees underline the misery, telling of many who died from painful diseases during the long march. Again, accounts of the fighting from both sides add credibility and the "human factor" to Christ's narrative, and the reader easily finds himself as an infantryman, artilleryman, or cavalryman on the hot and confusing battlefield of Bayou Forche just east of Little Rock. The Confederate's Arkansas capital would fall on 11 September 1863. Fearing being outflanked, Price abandoned Little Rock when Davidson's cavalrymen crossed south of the Arkansas River. The Confederate loss of Little Rock was significant because it effectively restricted Price's forces to the southern half of the state.

Confederate forces fared no better in the western half of Arkansas, as Fort Smith fell to Union occupation and Steele opened up a supply line down the entire Arkansas River. Christ explains a very confusing situation in Indian Territory whereby allegiances changed and combat was characterized by relatively small engagements.

Christ includes six maps that significantly improve the tactical clarity of Arkansas Post, Helena, Bayou Fourche and Pine Bluff. Over twenty illustrations are well-placed throughout and greatly enhance the book; they are rare images of individuals and units who participated in the events of 1863, from private through general officer. This book is for any Civil War enthusiast, and indispensable for those focused in the Trans-Mississippi.

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### Review by Harold Allen Skinner Jr.

*Columns of Vengeance: Soldiers, Sioux, and the Punitive Expeditions* focuses the reader's attention on the largely ignored United States Army campaigns against the Plains Indian tribes during 1863 and 1864. Paul Beck, a history professor at Wisconsin Lutheran College, wrote his dissertation (along with two published books) on other aspects of the Dakota Wars, is well qualified to write on the subject. Beck drew extensively from more than sixty manuscripts supplemented by a wide range of books and articles to richly illustrate the often missing human dimension within the campaign narrative. Instead of treating the Punitive Expeditions in isolation, Beck placed the campaign within the larger context of the American Civil War. From the American viewpoint, the Punitive Expeditions were a logical response to the Dakota War of 1862, where Santee Indian bands destroyed several Minnesota settlements in revenge for repeated treaty violations. President Abraham Lincoln's administration was already predisposed to military action against the Plains tribes to prevent the Confederate rebellion from spreading to the West. Furthermore, Lincoln felt strong pressure from the frontier governors, who demanded a military response to avenge the Santee depredations, and to deter future raids. Accordingly, the War Department created a new Military Department of

the West to prosecute the campaign, headed by Maj. Gen. John Pope. A competent tactician (Pope had earlier orchestrated the successful amphibious operation to capture Island Number 10) he was exiled to the West in disgrace after his miserable failure at Second Bull Run. In his diminished role as department commander, Pope planned a grand offensive ostensibly as a way to punish the Indians, but in reality—as Beck convincingly points out—as a way to restore his tarnished reputation.

As the Regular Army was fully engaged in fighting the Civil War, the War Department planned to conduct the Punitive Expeditions with volunteer regiments originally raised to fight the rebellion. Beck's manuscript research revealed that the administration's plan was met with mixed feelings among the volunteers. Those who had suffered firsthand from tribal raids were eager to participate in the Punitive Expeditions; while settlers who had enlisted to fight the rebels were angered by their diversion to what they believed was a useless sideshow fought only to benefit outsiders: "It was a first class fraud. The government had been bamboozled into aiding a grand scheme for shipping whiskey to Idaho; the men along were in a grand scheme for plunder" (p. 243). Beck's research also demonstrates how Pope fostered a command climate which virtually guaranteed the widening of the war to include previously friendly or neutral tribes. In his quest for glory, Pope made little distinction between the hostile Santee and neutral tribes in directing the campaigns; actions which resulted in the virtual destruction of several uninvolved tribes as the Federal columns indiscriminately attacked every Indian band within reach. Pope's lack of target discrimination was mirrored by many of the volunteers, who were openly hostile to all Indians—friendly or not—attitudes that shaped the conduct of the campaigns.

In his analysis, Beck evenhandedly discusses the impact of the expeditions on the white settlers as well as the various aboriginal peoples of the Plains. While the white settlers and soldiers certainly suffered losses, the campaigns caused the near destruction of the Lakota and Yanktonai tribes, and fractured the

cohesion of the previously tight-knit tribes and clans of the Sioux nation. Although Pope portrayed his operations as successful, Beck argues convincingly that the expeditions failed both tactically and strategically. Not only did the guilty Santee tribe escape retribution, Pope's indiscriminate treatment of the other tribes turned former allies into enemies. As a result, fifteen more years of campaigning and bloodshed (including the Little Bighorn disaster) lay ahead for the American Army and the Sioux nation as a result of Pope's lust for glory and redemption.

One minor annoyance found in the text was Beck's tendency to include personal details not germane to the narrative into the main text instead of in the footnotes—details, though certainly poignant, but which detracted from the flow of the narrative. A major disappointment was the relative lack of photos, particularly of the main characters of the book, and the absence of detailed tactical maps.

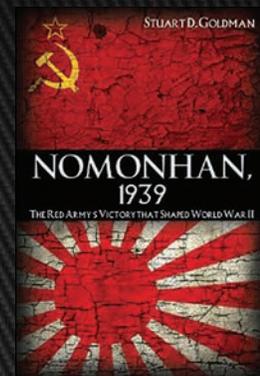
At first glance, the book will prove of little utility to military members. On closer examination, Beck's work provides many insightful lessons for military leaders. He contrasts the volunteer Army's use of combined arms—infantry, cavalry, and artillery—during the 1862 campaign versus the Regular Army's cavalry-centric columns seen in subsequent campaigns and the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. Beck comments at length on the Sioux's quick adaptation to the superior firepower and mobility of the Federal force by exploiting restrictive terrain and natural lines of movement. Furthermore, the aboriginal warriors well understood the impact of individual feats of bravery which, as the accounts in the book show, had a psychological impact on the whites all out of proportion to the warriors' efforts. Logisticians will want to take note of the supply arrangements for each campaign, and how the lack of water and supplies impacted the return of the 1863 expedition. Another lesson for leaders to draw is the importance of target discrimination, and avoiding injury to neutral or friendly natives. Students of the art of leadership will find much to mull over in studying how Pope exercised command and control of his detached columns in

the days before tactical radios and the importance of command climate in influencing the behavior of soldiers on the battlefield. Lastly, Beck's work richly highlights how the human dimensions of revenge, fear, greed, and thirst for glory influenced, and ultimately determined, the outcome of the campaigns.

**Harold Allen Skinner Jr.** is the command historian for the 81st Regional Support Command, United States Army Reserve. Prior to his retirement from the Army National Guard in 2015, he served as a military history detachment commander and the command historian for the Indiana National Guard. He received his master's degree in military history from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 2006.

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### *Nomonhan, 1939: The Red Army's Victory that Shaped World War II*



By Stuart D. Goldman  
Naval Institute Press, 2012  
Pp. xi, 226. \$31.95

### Review by Chris Buckham

The Battle of Nomonhan has been described by author Stuart Goldman as "the most important World War II battle that most people have never heard of" (p. 5). Indeed, in many respects this is true and it comes across with striking clarity in this definitive work on the subject. *Nomonhan, 1939: The Red Army's Victory that Shaped World War*

II, is two narratives that are mutually complementary, one providing critical background information for the other.

The first half of Goldman's book sets the environment at the macro level. Drawing on extensive access to both declassified Soviet/Russian and Japanese archival material, Goldman provides insight into the intensity of the political, economic, and national turmoil that gripped the nations of Japan and the Soviet Union during this period. This baseline information is critical to understanding the Battle of Nomonhan; indeed, taken in isolation this conflict would make absolutely no sense to the reader as it was fought over nonstrategic ground for seemingly irrelevant reasons. From the Soviet perspective, a series of critical factors influenced not only its actions, but those of its adversaries. The Soviet Union was terrified of strategic isolation between two powerful opponents: Germany and Japan. Therefore, its behavior during the first half of the 1930s was initially focused on placating Japan while trying to turn the attention of Germany west. The thawing of relations with Germany in the latter half of the 1930s and the commencement of Japan's war with China (and the subsequent weakening of the Japanese Manchukuo Army) resulted in a more confrontational regional stance. Unfortunately, Stalin's subsequent purge of the USSR military leadership starting in 1937 undermined the message of the less accommodating Soviets and reinforced the preconceived low opinion of the local Japanese command to the Soviet military.

Japan, for its part, was undergoing its own internal challenges. Perhaps more than any other country, Japan had been experiencing internal machinations unlike anything that had happened in the west. An aggressive, agrarian society built upon the tenants of the Bushido Code of the Samurai had been supplanted within a few short decades into a modern technological and industrialized society led by a government that was dominated by serving military officers. Racist, assertive, and lacking in domestic resources, it followed an expansionist policy bound to bring it in conflict with its neighbors, especially China and Russia.

A unique and traditional aspect of the Japanese code of honor was absolute subservience to the will of the emperor and to those in high office; however, with the rapid onset of technological change this subservience adapted itself under a concept called *gekokujo* or "rule from below." Basically, this entailed the younger generation of the Japanese military seeing themselves as the experts in the new Japan with a duty to force decisions that older, more traditional members of society were unable or unwilling to make (as determined by the subordinate officers). The traditional reluctance against losing face or causing another to do so resulted in these younger leaders having an inordinate amount of authority and influence over their superiors. This perverted sense of honor and command and control would have profound consequences in the subsequent battles between the Soviets and Japanese.

The second part of the book delves into the battle itself, commencing with a precursor engagement at a location called Changkufeng. What is important about the geography of this region (both at Nomonhan and Changkufeng), situated at the intersection of the Soviet Union, Manchukuo, and Mongolia, is not its strategic relevance, but the fact that the border was not clearly defined because of the area's isolation. Therefore, there was ample flexibility for an aggressive staff looking for a fight as movements close to the borders could be interpreted as incursions.

Goldman's discussion about the battle—which was actually a series of escalating strikes and counterstrikes—is illustrative of the hubris and fanatical courage of the Japanese and the determination of the Soviets. During this period the degree of blatant insubordination by Japanese commanders on the ground, against clear direction from Tokyo, was breathtaking. Conversely, the failure of the Japanese senior command to deal effectively and aggressively with the out of control local commanders is equally shocking and telling. This conflict served as a clear indicator to those paying attention of what would become both the strengths and weaknesses of the adversaries. The final tally of between 30,000 and 50,000 casualties and over 100,000

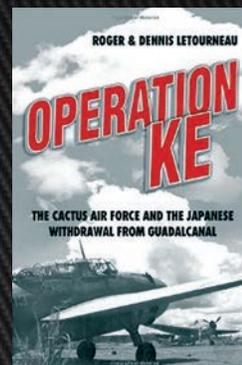
soldiers engaged in this undeclared war is a sobering indicator of the intensity of this conflict.

*Nomonhan, 1939* is a particularly noteworthy book on this four-month battle. Goldman's writing style is engaging and absorbing. As a historian, he brings a unique ability to inform and entertain; his topic is complex and vast but he deftly navigates the reader in a clear and logical way. The book has extensive endnotes and a comprehensive bibliography. This reviewer would recommend the book very strongly to anyone, historians and casual readers alike, who wish to comprehend the intricacies of the Far East in the months prior to Japan's entry into World War II.

**Maj. Chris Buckham** is a logistics officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada and holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's in international relations. He is currently assigned to the A5 Planning Branch at 1 Canadian Air Division in Winnipeg, Canada.



*Operation KE: The Cactus Air Force and the Japanese Withdrawal from Guadalcanal*



By Roger and Dennis Letourneau  
Naval Institute Press, 2012  
Pp. xx, 370. \$42.95

**Review by Eric Setzekorn**

The long-understudied South Pacific Theater is finally getting the scholarly attention it deserves as the

subject of a slew of insightful and provocative books released in the past three years. John Prado's *Islands of Destiny: The Solomons Campaign and the Eclipse of the Rising Sun* (New York, 2012), Ian Toll's *Pacific Crucible: The War at Sea in the Pacific, 1941–1942* (New York, 2012), and *Neptune's Inferno: The U.S. Navy at Guadalcanal* (New York, 2011) by James Hornfischer have attempted to resituate the Solomon Islands Campaign, especially the pivotal Battle of Guadalcanal, within our broader understanding of the Pacific Theater. *Operation KE: The Cactus Air Force and the Japanese Withdrawal from Guadalcanal*, by father and son duo Roger and Dennis Letourneau, focuses on the Japanese effort to withdraw its battered troops from Guadalcanal in January and February 1943, and paints a vivid picture of the reconnaissance, intelligence, and logistical difficulties that hindered American attempts to stop the evacuation. American commanders V. Adm. William Halsey and Maj. Gen. Alexander Patch have been criticized for their failure to quickly and decisively attack Japanese troops and ships, but the Letourneaus identify a large number of systemic difficulties in air operations in the South Pacific as well as a savvy, determined Japanese effort, thus providing a more balanced and less judgmental operational history of Operation KE.

Japan's Operation KE, the withdrawal of the remnants of 30,000 Japanese troops from Guadalcanal, was first conceived in December 1942 after American forces on the island, especially the hybrid Army-Navy-Marine Corps "Cactus Air Force" operating from Henderson field, made effective resupply impossible. Beginning in early January 1943, Japan began redeploying massive air and naval forces to provide cover and support for the evacuation. Most prominently, Japanese Army Air Force units were assigned to the Solomon Island Campaign for the first time, increasing Japanese air strength to over 300 aircraft. Opposing this re-energized Japanese force was a motley collection of

American aircraft flown by sick and exhausted pilots. In a high-tempo air campaign between mid-January and mid-February 1943, the Japanese air forces were able to achieve tactical parity with American forces, providing sufficient air cover for Japanese destroyers to make shuttle runs on 1, 4, and 7 February that evacuated 10,000 men.

The core of the book details the unrelenting aerial warfare throughout January and February, as U.S. forces sought to block Japanese supply runs through the Solomon Island chain—the famous "Slot"—by high-speed destroyers operating as transports. In this seesaw battle, American forces relied on reconnaissance planes such as the PBY Catalina to determine course and bearing during the nighttime hours when single-engine fighters were grounded to prepare for an early morning strike before the Japanese moved out of range. *Operation KE* examines in nitty-gritty fashion this delicate balance of reconnaissance, fighter sweeps to occupy Japanese Zeros, and close-in attacks, all of which required tactical skill, high morale, and aggressiveness. The American forces in January 1943 were running a significant deficit in all three of these areas.

This subject has already been ably covered by Eric Bergerud in his seminal *Fire in the Sky: The Air War in the South Pacific* (Boulder, Colo., 1999). The Letourneaus highlight operational issues, particularly Army-Navy coordination, or the lack thereof, to analyze American efforts and explain the U.S. failure. For example, rather than develop patterns of attack suited to their particular aircraft, the U.S. Army Air Force continued to use B-17s in an anti-shiping role, while U.S. Navy dive bombers often targeted airfields. Targeting fixed locations—like repeatedly bombing the ancillary and strategically unimportant Munda airfield—of limited military value, similarly distorted American efforts by taking the focus away from the vital Japanese transport ships.

Although the strength of the book is in its highly specific accounts of

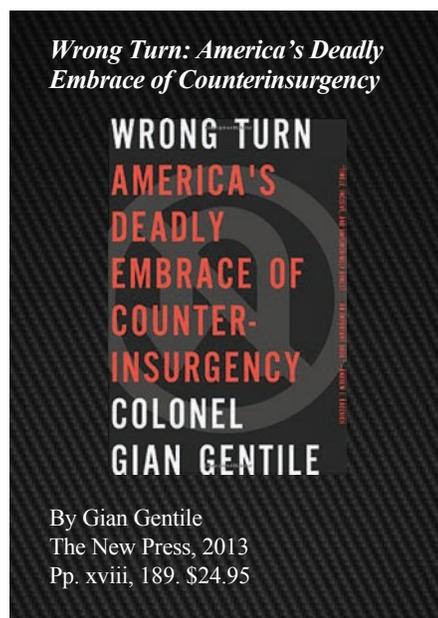
aerial battles, the breathless narrative of maneuvers and dogfights can become tiresome. *Operation KE* is built around a large number of oral histories, interviews, and correspondence, which provide an excellent feel for the tempo and experience of the fighting but often obscures larger issues and historical analysis. The book's unrelenting emphasis on combat phases of the campaign also comes at the expense of exploring the operational context. For example, an overlooked area of analysis is the role of aircraft maintenance to the outcome of the campaign. The Letourneaus cover the role of ground crews and ground operations, including vital procedures like dispersal patterns and aircraft servicing in only three pages (pp. 265–67). In a theater where mechanical issues resulted in losses nearly equivalent to losses due to enemy action, and with less than 60 percent of aircraft being combat ready at any time, maintenance seems a vital but missing part of the *Operation KE* narrative.

In their concluding analysis of the campaign, the authors attribute much of the success of the operation to skillful planning and solid execution by the Japanese rather than American failure. The concentration of Japanese assets, including the deployment of a sizable naval force in Truk to preoccupy Admiral Halsey, and the efficient marshaling of fighter strength was a textbook staff operation that greatly increased the chances of a successful evacuation. At the tactical level, Japanese pilots and naval officers displayed a high degree of skill and audacity, repeatedly confusing American commanders as to their ultimate objectives. Lastly, after a period of six months of brutal fighting in some of the world's worst terrain amid severe logistical difficulties, American forces, especially air units, were in a weak position to challenge a determined Japanese effort.

*Operation KE* has a tremendous amount of historical value to offer readers and the "revisionist" assessment of the campaign is sufficiently provocative to attract popular inter-

est, but the work should be paired with a larger macro-history of the war in the Pacific to enhance understanding. Reading *Operation KE* alongside Ronald Spector's *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan* (New York, 1984), or even John Toland's dated *The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire, 1936-1945* (New York, 1970), would benefit both historical approaches. For a military readers and WWII aficionados, *Operation KE* will make a fine addition to their library, and with a little background pre-reading general readers should also benefit from this highly focused work.

Dr. Eric Setzekorn is a historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History and an adjunct professor at the George Washington University. He is currently working on a book project involving the American military assistance program in Taiwan.



### Review by Jon B. Mikolashek

For those who have listened to recently retired Col. Gian Gentile and read his other works over the years about counterinsurgency, his long awaited book, *Wrong Turn: America's*

*Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* offers nothing dramatically different. Gentile has long beat the drum that counterinsurgency is wrong and that the United States' struggles in Vietnam, and then, Afghanistan and Iraq, are due to failure in policy and strategy. He is half right. The United States has failed at policy and strategy over those three wars, but counterinsurgency can, and has, worked. To steal a phrase from Gentile's work, "history supports this assertion" (p. 3).

Despite the black-and-white assessment of counterinsurgency, *Wrong Turn*, excels when Gentile turns to the false narrative around the myth of counterinsurgency, the Malayan Emergency, and the Vietnam War. Gentile is correct when he writes, "the COIN (counterinsurgency) argument is a blend of some history, a lot of myth, and suppositions about roads not taken, as analysts today imagine what might have been if different strategic decisions had been made in the past" (p. 12). Over the last decade, historians and writers have littered counterinsurgency historiography with "what ifs" and "what might have beens," with John Nagl and Lewis Sorley leading the charge. Gentile debunks the myth of counterinsurgency, as well as, the "Great General" narrative that has become all too popular.

The high point of the book is Gentile's takedown of the narrative around Malaya and Vietnam. The popular narrative goes that in both wars an old, outdated general was losing the war, but then a new general emerged, who understood counterinsurgency and that the people were the center of gravity. While the British experience in Malaya remains the supposed gold standard in how to counter an insurgency, General Creighton Abrams' was on the verge of winning the war in Vietnam before meddling politicians and hippies turned American support against the war. Gentile's evidence in regards to these two conflicts is strong and supported well by historical documents. It is a shame that much of what Gentile has said and written about Vietnam over the years did not make it to President Obama's desk, instead of the works of Sorley.

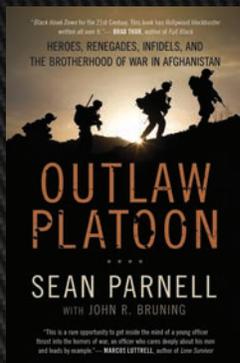
The main problem with *Wrong Turn* is that Gentile, like his intellectual rivals David Kilcullen and Nagl, is that their view of counterinsurgency is too simplistic, too black and white. To Gentile, counterinsurgency "is catnip for advocates of U.S. intervention overseas because it promises the possibility of successful 'better wars'" (p. 139). Gentile is correct in his assessment that counterinsurgency is not just winning "hearts and minds," but he is wrong in thinking counterinsurgency does not work. The fact is that counterinsurgency is about getting at the enemy and providing security for both the population and the counterinsurgent forces. Gentile and those of Kilcullen and Nagl's ilk, are partially correct, but also partially wrong. In counterinsurgency, both the enemy and the population matter and are important.

*Wrong Turn*, despite its simplistic interpretation of counterinsurgency operations, is a definitive read for military officers and anyone interested in the last thirteen years of war or counterinsurgency operations. While Gentile does not "drive a stake through the heart of the notion that counterinsurgency has worked in the past and will therefore work in the future," *Wrong Turn* is a succinct study on the myth of counterinsurgency and the narrative that evolved around Malaya, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq (p. 8).

Dr. Jon B. Mikolashek is the author of several articles on World War II and the Global War on Terrorism. He is also the author of *General Mark Clark: Commander of U.S. Fifth Army and Liberator of Rome* (Havertown, Pa., 2013). He is an associate professor of history at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.



*Outlaw Platoon: Heroes, Renegades, Infidels, and the Brotherhood of War in Afghanistan*



By Sean Parnell  
William Morrow, 2012  
Pp. viii, 374. \$26.99

## Review by Bryan R. Gibby

*Outlaw Platoon: Heroes, Renegades, Infidels, and the Brotherhood of War in Afghanistan* is a combat memoir by a young Army officer serving with the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment (Catamounts), in the 3d Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. The Catamounts deployed to eastern Afghanistan in the mid-winter of 2006 and remained until June 2007, after being extended for 120 days. Like most wartime memoirs, *Outlaw Platoon* contains what you'd expect: the coming of age of a warrior, the bonds of brotherhood formed in the crucible of hardship and shared sacrifice, and the experience of battle at its most personal, gritty, and terrifying level.

This book is not just a good war story. *Outlaw Platoon* is in fact three stories woven together to document the author's, and his platoon's, combat experience in a remote district of Paktika province, just a handful of kilometers from the Pakistan border. First Lt. Sean Parnell is an unlikely combat leader, probably typical of the post-9/11 Army serving in Afghanistan. Parnell gives the reader periodic glimpses of his formative years, his educational background, and his motivations to join the Army and "do something" to avenge the terror attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. This line of development as an American combat leader continues throughout the

book as Parnell honestly and realistically deals with the trials of leadership in an austere environment, all the while trying to stay alive and do his duty as he saw it. It is an authentic portrait of a leader in battle and a main strength of this book.

The second story is that of the American soldier, personified by 3d Platoon, B Company, 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment. The "Outlaws" are an eclectic bunch—young Americans thrown together in the Army's mixing pot to accomplish a difficult and dangerous mission. Along the way, they grow to love each other as brothers. Their mettle is tested and tried in some of the most unimaginably intense combat to be experienced at the platoon level—rocket attacks, roadside ambushes, improvised explosive devices, and direct assaults. Lieutenant Parnell is able, without preaching or overdoing it, to demonstrate what makes American soldiers truly exceptional as individuals and as a team. Parnell identifies small but significant leader- and team-building techniques that seem to have been organic to him and his group of primary noncommissioned officers. These techniques likely can be learned and absorbed, and *Outlaw Platoon* illustrates them well.

The final story is about battle in Afghanistan at a time when enemy forces were resurgent, aggressive, and competent. The platoon faced off against a branch of the Haqqani network, professional insurgents trained, equipped, and backed by Pakistan's militant apparatus. Parnell describes in vivid detail the experience of combat through half a dozen discrete incidents. Each one depicts the enemy's capabilities and the Army's ability to respond and eventually achieve the upper hand and win the battle. The Outlaws are successful at inflicting significant damage to their Haqqani-led adversaries. Two soldiers are mentioned by name as being killed in action. Given the level of combat and the number of awards for valor (five bronze stars and twelve army commendation medals with V device) and combat wounds (thirty-two purple hearts), it is clear that Outlaw platoon had cracked the code to tactical survival. Parnell gives credit to his subordinate leaders' aggressiveness, resourcefulness, and will to win. They didn't ever want to allow the enemy a

"moral victory." Consequently, Parnell and his leaders vowed to finish the fight, never to cede the battleground to the enemy (pp. 142–43).

This is the warrior ethos clearly displayed. It contrasts with other platoons in the battalion who saw success differently. It also points to a fundamental truth of infantry combat: the ability to remain clear headed, to prepare ahead of time for contingencies, and the willingness to honestly critique an engagement or decision after the fact is a crucially important skill for the Army's young leaders to learn. Parnell rarely fires his own weapon (when he does, he acknowledges how rare an occasion it is); his contribution to the fight is to direct the weapons of the platoon and call for supporting fire, whether it be artillery, rotary-wing, or fixed-wing airpower.

The author avoids moralizing or promoting an agenda or critique of policy. This is appropriate, though this reviewer understands Parnell's frustration. Pakistan's territory was inviolate. Pakistani border troops aided, abetted, and at times joined Haqqani's troops. Afghan security forces made a poor showing, failing to protect their own people and themselves. Civilians caught in the path of battle suffered most, and they hardly knew the reasons why.

*Outlaw Platoon* is likely to be a classic on small-unit leadership, the experience of battle, the brotherhood of war, and the personal journey every soldier has to endure when thrust into the most inhuman of endeavors. For those who want a gritty and realistic story of war, they'll get it. But for those looking for a vicarious professional education in the unforgiving school of close combat, they'll get that too.

Dr. Bryan R. Gibby, an Army colonel, is currently serving as a historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. He is the author of *The Will to Win: American Military Advisors in Korea, 1946–1953* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 2012), which received the Army Historical Foundation's 2012 Distinguished Writing Award.



# NEWSNOTES

## 2015 ARMY HISTORIANS TRAINING SYMPOSIUM

The U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) will host the Army Historians Training Symposium (AHTS), formerly the Conference of Army Historians, at the Crowne Plaza National Airport in Arlington, Virginia, from 27 to 31 July. The symposium is open to Army and Department of Defense historians and professional historians from other government agencies, academia, and the public. The symposium will consist of training workshops focused on key aspects of the Army History Program, presentations of papers, and discussion panels. The theme of this year's symposium is "Adapting to Peace, Preparing for War, Responding to Crisis: An Unworkable Triad?" with a focus on postwar demobilization and restructuring, preparing for the next conflict, and the role of history in preparing forces during periods of relative peace.

There are no conference or registration fees for the AHTS. Rooms are currently available at the Crowne Plaza for those attending the symposium from outside the greater Washington, D.C., area at a discounted rate of \$162 per night. Reservations can be made by calling the Crowne Plaza at 877-227-6963 or online at [www.cpnationalairport.com](http://www.cpnationalairport.com). Army historians with at least three years of permanent civilian service are eligible for funding of travel, lodging, and per diem from the Career Program (CP) 61 Proponent office. For competitive application requirements, contact the CP 61 point of contact, Edward Clarke, at 202-685-2798 or [edward.c.clarke.civ@mail.mil](mailto:edward.c.clarke.civ@mail.mil).

Those wishing to attend should notify the CMH point of contact, Tom Crecca, at 202-685-2627 or [thomas.w.crecca.civ@mail.mil](mailto:thomas.w.crecca.civ@mail.mil), and

provide name, address, Army command or civilian institution, and historical specialization.

Additional information on the conference may be found on the CMH Web site at [http://history.army.mil/news/2015/150300a\\_AHTS.html](http://history.army.mil/news/2015/150300a_AHTS.html).

## 2015 SPURGEON NEEL ANNUAL AWARD

The Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Museum Foundation is pleased to announce the 2015 Spurgeon Neel Annual Award competition for a paper of 5,000 words or less that best exemplifies the history, legacy, and traditions of the Army Medical Department.

Named in honor of Maj. Gen. Spurgeon H. Neel, first commanding general of Health Services Command (now U.S. Army Medical Command), the annual award competition is open to all federal employees, military and civilian, as well as nongovernmental civilian authors.

The AMEDD Museum Foundation will present a special medallion and a \$500 prize to the winner at a foundation-sponsored event in early 2016. The winning submission will be published in the *AMEDD Journal* in 2016.

All manuscripts must be submitted to the AMEDD Museum Foundation by 30 September 2015. At the time of submission, a manuscript must be the author's original work and not pending publication in any other periodical. It must conform to the *AMEDD Journal's* writing and submission guidance, which can be found on the publication's Web site: [www.cs.amedd.army.mil/amedd\\_journal.aspx](http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/amedd_journal.aspx), and must relate to the history, legacy, and traditions of the Army Medical Department. Manuscripts will be reviewed and evaluated by a six-member board with representatives from the AMEDD Museum Foundation, the

AMEDD Center of History and Heritage, and the *AMEDD Journal*. The winning manuscript will be selected and announced in December 2015.

Submit manuscripts to [amedd.foundation@att.net](mailto:amedd.foundation@att.net). Additional details concerning the Spurgeon Neel Annual Award may be obtained by contacting Sue McMasters at the AMEDD Museum Foundation, 210-226-0265.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM THE CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY

The Center of Military History recently published two more brochures in its U.S. Army Campaigns of the Civil War series.

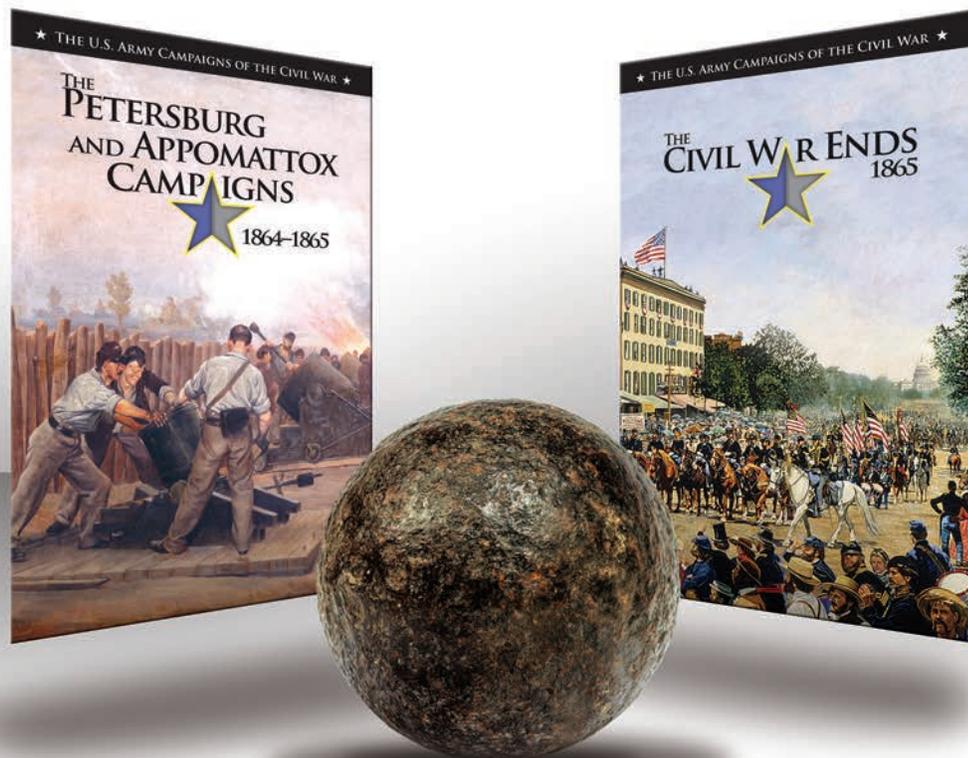
The first, *The Petersburg and Appomattox Campaigns, 1864–1865*, by John R. Maass, highlights the Civil War's last year as the Union and Confederate forces squared off in central Virginia in a series of battles that eventually determined the struggle's outcome. This publication has been issued as CMH Pub 75–16.

The second brochure, *The Civil War Ends, 1865*, by Mark L. Bradley, tells the story of the war's final months and the myriad of smaller battles and skirmishes that took place as the Confederacy made its last desperate grasp for survival. The brochure also examines the flight of Confederate president Jefferson Davis and the Union Army's mop-up operations against the various pockets of continued rebel resistance. This title has been issued as CMH Pub 75–17.

Both items are available for purchase by the general public from the U.S. Government Publishing Office online bookstore: <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>.



# New From CMH



## ARMY HISTORY UnLine

The Center of Military History now makes all issues of *Army History* available to the public on its Web site. Each new publication will appear shortly after the issue is printed. Issues may be viewed or downloaded at no cost in Adobe® PDF format. An index page of the issues may be found at [www.history.army.mil/armyhistory](http://www.history.army.mil/armyhistory).

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The Professional Bulletin of Army History