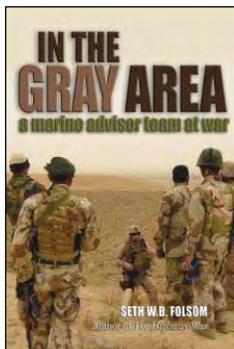


Book Reviews



In the Gray Area: A Marine Advisor Team at War
By Seth W. B. Folsom
Annapolis, MD: Naval
Institute Press, 2010, 196 pages
Reviewed by LTC Keith Everett



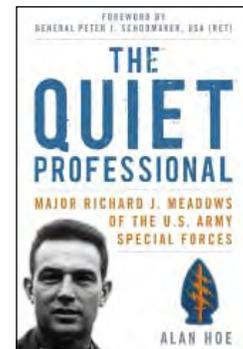
U.S. Marine Corps LtCol Seth Folsom started his first week as an advisor to the Iraqi Army with an accidental shooting incident where one Iraqi soldier held an AK-47 up to another soldier's ear and pulled the trigger as a joke. Since weapon safety is so basic, this incident and others like them clearly highlight how huge an advisor's job was in Iraq. Folsom began his time as an advisor with a somewhat pessimistic view towards the task. After his year in Iraq, he left the country with that same pessimistic view, but with concrete examples to support it. The strength of his story are the many examples of what an advisor was tasked to do in Iraq and how he accomplished some things but failed at others.

Before deploying, Folsom completed six weeks of advisor training, which revolved around tactical training and culminated in a three-day exercise called "Mojave Viper." Folsom provides a sparse outline of this training and also discusses the training he received in-country through the Phoenix Academy. Folsom describes this training as six days of substandard training given by contractors.

This story touches on the role of advisors in the counterinsurgency effort in Iraq and is compiled from Folsom's deployment journals, after action reports, and discussions he had with his team. Part of his preparation for his second deployment to Iraq was reading reports of the kidnapping and execution of an Army transition team in Karbala in 2007. Transition team operations are not for the faint of heart and require flexibility and adaptability as well as other capabilities picked up along the way.

The short, concise chapters each contain nuggets of information on how to adapt to the environment — from surviving the blinding sandstorms (aajaaz) to the various ways and means of establishing relationships with the Iraqi soldiers. This war memoir is a solid introduction to the life of an advisor in Iraq, with the proviso that the situation varied from place to place in Iraq and the situation was constantly changing as time passed. I would recommend Folsom's book for anyone wanting to supplement reading on an advisor's role in Southwest Asia.

The Quiet Professional: Major Richard J. Meadows of the U.S. Army Special Forces
By Alan Hoe
Lexington, KY: University of
Kentucky Press, 2011,
253 pages
Reviewed by LTC (Retired)
Rick Baillergeon



In every profession, there are those select people who have established themselves as legendary figures. Within the circle of U.S. Special Operations Forces, Richard "Dick" Meadows is a celebrated Soldier. For those unfamiliar with his career, his credentials are incredible. These include achieving the rank of master sergeant at age 20 (the youngest at that time), becoming the first U.S. Army NCO to serve with the British Special Air Service (SAS) regiment, participating in numerous behind-the-lines operations in the Vietnam War (leading to a battlefield commission), and serving as a team leader in the Son Tay Raid. Additionally, after retiring from the Army, Meadows was a special consultant and conducted covert reconnaissance during the Iran hostage rescue mission. Clearly, Dick Meadows should be known and admired by a far greater audience.

Author Alan Hoe has filled this void with his excellent biography of Meadows appropriately entitled, *The Quiet Professional*. Within its pages, Hoe provides readers with a detailed perspective of the life and career of Meadows. Obviously, Hoe keys on the above achievements of Meadows; however, he also delves into the personal life of Meadows and his relationships with friends and family.

Hoe is uniquely qualified to craft a biography on Meadows for several reasons. First, he was a close friend of Meadows for 35 years and was asked by him to write this biography. Second, Hoe understands the world Meadows operated in since he is a retired British Army special forces soldier. Finally, he has written (or co-written) several acclaimed books including a biography on famous British Special Forces Colonel Sir David Stirling. It is a background and skill set Hoe deftly utilizes throughout *The Quiet Professional*.

From start to finish, Hoe has organized a volume which will hold the attention of any reader. Certainly, he has much to work with; clandestine operations in Vietnam, the Son Tay Raid, Operation Eagle Claw (the Iranian hostage rescue mission) each in themselves are highly

captivating. Combine them was other intriguing stories and you have a gripping and highly readable book. Of course, it takes a talented author to put it all together, and readers will agree Hoe is unquestionably gifted.

The clear strength of *The Quiet Professional* is the words of Meadows himself. As addressed earlier, Meadows asked Hoe to pen his biography and made himself available for hours of interviews. Hoe utilizes these words to provide readers unique details and perspectives on the missions Meadows participated in. For those with prior interest and knowledge on the aforementioned operations, Meadows' thoughts will fill in some blanks and in some cases, "tell the rest of the story."

Before starting *The Quiet Professional*, readers must understand what this book is and just as importantly what it isn't. Hoe's objective is to introduce a new audience to Dick Meadows and celebrate his distinguished career. Those looking for a biography which may provide any "warts" Meadows may have had in his life are not going to find them. Hoe focuses on the positive and in today's world of journalism I found it refreshing. Perhaps Meadows did possess some warts along the way. However, all things I have ever read indicate he was an extremely rare man in that regard.

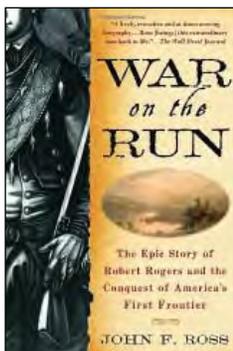
You must give credit to Alan Hoe in writing a biography on a close friend. This is a difficult undertaking, and the end result is often a volume lacking in substance or containing information only of interest to the author. Hoe surely meets the challenge though. He has written a book which is substantive, informative, and highly readable. More importantly, *The Quiet Professional* is a fitting tribute to a true legend.

War on the Run: The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America's First Frontier

By John F. Ross

**NY: Bantam Books, 2010,
549 pages**

**Reviewed by BG (Retired)
Curtis H. O'Sullivan**



A generation of Americans thought that Robert Rogers looked like Spencer Tracy at the start of "Northwest Passage." There are no surviving pictures of him, but it is unlikely there was much similarity. Rogers was a rugged, six-foot, scarred (from wounds and smallpox) backwoodsman. In *War on the Run*, author John Ross gives a good verbal portrayal of Rogers — warts and all. Not all of his campaigns were successful and some of the fault lay with him. He was twice in debtors' gaol (jail) for being careless with his accounts.

This didn't have quite the stigma you might expect. (Robert E. Lee's father, Light Horse Harry, was incarcerated under similar circumstances.) He was once charged and tried for treason. Although he was acquitted, the case is reminiscent of the Burr-Wilkinson case a bit later.

Disturbing to some is that he remained loyal to the Crown during our Revolution. After all, he was a half-pay British officer. Also, it should be remembered that about one-third of the population was loyalist Tories, one-third patriot rebels, and the rest neutrals who said a pox on both sides and went their own way. Little known is that when he was recalled to the British army, he served in counterintelligence and was responsible for the capture and execution of another American hero — Nathan Hale.

Ross gives a vivid account of Roger's various campaigns and journeys. The book reads like a novel, and the reconstructed part may be fiction but is based on solid research. Although I knew the broad outline of the stories, I was kept in suspense.

The addition of a *dramatis personae* is a little unusual but was helpful. On the other hand, the chronology was much too brief. The maps supplemented the text. It is not only the story of the man, but a good summary of the history of the era. I highly recommend to anyone with an interest there. It is fairly long, but there is much new (or with a new angle) to warrant reading it.

INFANTRY NEEDS ARTICLES

Infantry Magazine is always in need of articles for publication. Topics for articles can include information on organization, weapons, equipment, and experiences while deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. We can also use relevant historical articles with emphasis on the lessons we can learn from the past. If you're unsure whether a topic is suitable, please contact us. We can let you know whether we would be interested in the article and can also give further guidance.

Our fully developed feature articles are usually between 2,000 and 3,500 words, but these are not rigid guidelines. Shorter articles can be used in our Professional Forum and Training Notes sections. We prefer clear, correct, concise, and consistent wording expressed in the active voice. Also, please spell out all acronyms and abbreviations the first time you use them.

Sketches, photographs, maps, and line drawings that support your article are encouraged. When you submit your article, please include the original electronic file of all graphics. Please also include the origin of all artwork and, if necessary, written permission for any copyrighted items to be reprinted. Authors are responsible for ensuring their articles receive a proper security review through their respective organizations before being submitted.

Articles can be submitted by email to usarmy.benning.tradoc.mbx.infantry-magazine@mail.mil or call (706) 545-2350/6951.



Sergeant Kyle J. White

MEDAL OF HONOR
OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM



I WILL ALWAYS PLACE THE MISSION FIRST • I WILL NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT

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I WILL NEVER QUIT • I WILL NEVER LEAVE A FALLEN COMRADE

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- * **When a River Runs Through It: Riverine Operations in Contemporary Conflict**
- * **The Tactical Application of Military Mountaineering**
- * **'Seeing the Terrain' -- Using Terrain and Anti-Tank Systems to Increase SBCT Lethality Against Enemy Armor**

