

# Reviews

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***Panzerfaust Vs. Sherman: European Theater 1944-45*** by Steven J. Zaloga; New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc; 2019; 80 pages with photographs, maps, illustrations and bibliography; \$22.

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Steven Zaloga's latest work examines "the revolutionary new antitank weapons introduced on the battlefield in late 1943." His examination concentrates on the development and employment of the German *panzerfaust* (armor fist) and similar weapons against the U.S. Army's M4 Sherman tanks. A detailed chronology is provided that enhances an appreciation for the time and energy that went into the development and employment of antitank systems against American, British and Soviet tank forces.

The German experiences on the Eastern Front created a situation where massive Russian tank forces confronted German ground forces. Limited numbers of towed antitank weapons were available, forcing the Germans to improvise. Several examples of these improvised weapons systems are explained and supplemented by applicable photographs. It became apparent that while these improvised systems required "heroic bravery on the part of the infantryman," they had a limited operational effectiveness. A better way was sought.

Given their early use of shaped charges, German industry developed a shaped charge which was a "type of hollow charge that added an important ingredient: a metal liner between the warhead's explosive and the cavity. When the warhead was detonated, the explosive blast was focused on the metal liner, compressing it into a hypersonic stream of metal particles that could penetrate a great deal of steel armor." This lethal shaped charge became the warhead for the *panzerfaust*.

The German infantryman now possessed a hand-held antitank system that could permit him to engage a tank. Improvements in range and accuracy followed. Given the limited resources available to German industry, production of the *panzerfaust* initially failed to meet demand. Eventually, the Germans were able to produce eight versions of the *panzerfaust*. These improvements to the *panzerfaust* gradually increased the effective range of the system from 30 meters to almost 100 meters, with a penetrating capability of between 140 and 200 millimeters.

While range was an employment limitation in open areas, the close French bocage fields encountered by the Americans coming out of the Normandy beachhead offered ideal terrain for employment of the *panzerfaust*. However, for every German action there was an equal Allied counter-action. As the author relates, "There are no known accounts of who came up with the idea of using sandbags" as a field-expedient method for defeating the *panzerfaust*.

Interestingly, while the American Seventh Army employed a wide variety of sandbag and cement defensive measures, Third Army forbid any such modifications to their tanks. However, action during the December Battle of the Bulge led to "widespread complaints about the poor armor protection of the M4." Instead of sandbags for protection, Third Army cannibalized armor plating off derelict German and American vehicles as a means of offsetting the *panzerfaust*. Several diagrams and photos of these improvements are provided. The author also includes a section that discusses how the Soviets and British protected their armored forces against German antitank systems.

Allied industry also proposed several solutions, including development of a plastic armor system. Unfortunately, this added some three tons of weight to the turret and four tons to the hull area. This and other fabrications proved to "be too great a challenge." Tactical units, therefore, continued to rely on developing and improving a host of field-expedient methods to counter the shaped charge. Several of these improvisations are detailed, along with photos of their use. The effectiveness of each system is fully discussed throughout the book.

The book includes fascinating details on the technical specifications for the *panzerfaust*, including the weapon's firing and sighting procedures, along with a detailed diagram of the impact sequence. Zaloga then examines in detail the battle for the Normandy village of Villiers-Fossard to demonstrate the effectiveness of German antitank systems against the employment of armor and infantry units from the American 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division. This concluding portion of the book provides an appreciation for the difficulties of achieving battlefield success against an entrenched enemy force armed with effective antitank weapons.

This is a superbly written account of the devastating effectiveness of man-portable antitank weapons. Zaloga has written a fine work worthy of review by those seeking a better appreciation of asymmetrical warfare. Maneuver leaders well acquainted with the close combat operations of recent years will find this book insightful.

RETIRED COL D.J. JUDGE

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***American Armor in the Pacific*** by Mike Guardia; Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers; 2020; 124 pages with photographs, maps, index; \$24.95.

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When one is asked what the notable armor engagements of World War II were, more likely than not, the response would be one or more fought in Europe or North Africa: Hannut, Kursk, El Alamein, Hurtgen Forest and in the Alsace during the Battle of the Bulge. Largely forgotten is the history of the battles fought in the Pacific Theater by U.S. Army and Marine Corps tankers against the fanatical and battle-tested Imperial Japanese Army (IJA).

Mike Guardia's ***American Armor in the Pacific*** is a fine snapshot of this important time in mounted combat history. With full-color maps, photographs, graphs and his keen writing style, he vividly describes 20 operations beginning with defense of the Philippines in 1941-42 and culminating with the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. The organization of the book enhances its readability. The timeline at the beginning of the book is a useful tool that lends context to armor operations in each campaign.

The introduction describes the development of the opposing forces' tanks during the interwar years. Noting the success of Allied armor during World War I, Japan experimented with a few tanks imported from Europe, and in 1931 began producing tanks of its own design. The Type 97 Chi-Ha Medium Tank was Japan's most widely produced tank. The first variant mounted a low-velocity 57mm main gun. A later variant had a 47mm high-velocity main gun. Although considered the best Japanese tank, the Type 97 was still inferior to the American M3 Stuart and M4 Sherman tanks.

Unable to sustain tank production and losing excessive numbers to combat, the IJA abandoned shoreline defense in favor of fighting inland battles of attrition, relegating tanks to static defense missions. The IJA, cognizant of the inevitability of an American invasion of the home islands, kept a relatively large number of tanks in reserve on the islands.

The broken volcanic terrain and dense tropical vegetation of the Pacific Islands was not conducive to long-range, tank-on-tank engagements such as those in the European and Mediterranean theaters. Lacking open terrain, most armor operations in the Pacific were limited to supporting slow and unrelenting dismounted-infantry combat.

The Marine Corps, in addition to employing M3 and M4 tanks, required a platform for amphibious operations. The Landing Vehicle Tracked (LVT) "Alligator" and its follow-on variants – capable of carrying 18 troops or 4,500 pounds of cargo and mounting the M3 tank turret – satisfied this requirement. The Army also employed the LTV, ultimately fielding 15 battalions in the Pacific.

Although the Army and Marine Corps shared the same platforms, the two services tended to employ them differently. Many will find controversial Guardia's assessment of the Army's and Marine Corps' employment of armor. According to Guardia, the Marine Corps was more aggressive with its tank battalions, preferring to use tanks as the vanguard during synchronized tank-infantry operations, whereas the Army lacked the synchronicity typical of Marine Corps operations, using its armor as "back-up assets only when certain high-value targets had been identified. ... Ironically, the Army's amphibious tank battalions were more adept at conducting shoreline operations."

***American Armor in the Pacific*** is a fine book; however, it is not without shortcomings. The lack of battalion-level organizational charts is disappointing. Scattering vehicle specifications and operational data throughout the text was burdensome; a chart with tank-by-tank comparison would better capture this data. There was no discussion on sustainment operations. There are some factual errors – for instance, Guardia incorrectly wrote that the Army had a total of 50 separate tank battalions, a third of which served in the Pacific; however, at the end of the war, the Army had 150 separate tank battalions, with only 15 in the Pacific Theater. In at least two photographs, there were unit-designation errors.

Guardia's work has relevance to today's Armored Force. It clearly and unambiguously reminds us that armor can fight on extremely difficult terrain and participate in amphibious operations. The lessons of the Pacific campaigns were soon forgotten, only to be painfully relearned in Vietnam. As the Indo-Pacific and sub-Sahara Africa regions increase in strategic importance, the tactics, techniques and procedures adopted by Army and Marine Corps tankers in World War II remain relevant today. The Army's jungle-operations doctrine is woefully outdated; Field Manual 90-5, *Jungle Operations*, was last published in 1982, with only nine pages devoted to armor and mechanized-infantry operations. The Army is doing its Soldiers a disservice by not modernizing its jungle-operations doctrine.

RETIRED LTC LEE F. KICHEN

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***Tank Battles in East Prussia and Poland 1944-1945: Vilkavishkis, Gumbinnen/Nemmersdorf, Elbing, Wormditt/Frauenburg, Kielce/Lisow*** by Igor Nebolsin; Warwick, United Kingdom: Helion and Company; 2019; 544 pages; \$61.22.

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Igor Nebolsin's extraordinary efforts with his work ***Tank Battles in East Prussia and Poland 1944-1945*** need to be put into context. For many readers and military-simulation gamers, the Eastern Front of World War II is less interesting post-Operation Barbarossa – and certainly after the Battle of Kursk. A key reason for this is that the postwar "history" – as presented in popular and academic writing about the period post-Kursk to the operations leading up to the capture of Berlin – are not about spectacular wins against Soviet mass; they're solely about grinding attritional war. Also, the main German protagonists who fought on the Eastern Front – Guderian, von Manstein, Manteuffel, Raus and others – wrote less on this period of the war as well as colored their writings for their intended U.S. Army audience. A third key reason is that the Soviets' failure to open their archives due to Stalin's and Khrushchev's (and onward) security restrictions meant that accessibility to Soviet wartime operational records was lacking. These reasons meant that only post-*glasnost* did we start to get a more balanced interpretation of the gigantic struggle that consumed both the Third Reich and Stalin's Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

Nebolsin's feel for the material and this timeframe of the war is quite good. The only thing he could have done in terms of context is segue from what is commonly referred to as the destruction of Army Group Centre to the 1944-1945 phase of the Eastern Front, as the armor battles around Wilkowszki are in early August 1944. Doing so would have added greater depth to this work and more insight into the period.

Nebolsin humanizes the war from the Soviet perspective; for instance, in each of the book's four sections, he gives us thumbnail citations of various Soviet heroes. It is a shame, however, that Nebolsin didn't tell us exactly what these citations mean in terms of precedence for Western readers. Before this work, most of us had never heard of "Cavalier of the Order of Glory"; we must guess at the award's relative value in terms of prestige – a small oversight. But the number of citations or examples where soldiers covered German panzers in straw and set them alight in combat seems problematic.

Where the book truly excels is in terms of the interplay among the daily operational reports from Soviet fronts, armies, tank corps and tank brigades, as juxtaposed against reports from their German foe – in this case, mainly the German Fourth Army, as well as principal German panzer leaders and commanders during these battles. Again, the wealth of combat detail for the battles of Wilkowyski, Gumbinnen/Nemmersdorf and Kielce/Lisow, among others, is astounding. Perhaps even more astounding is the frankness that comes through in some reports as well as in notations like "the officers of the unit should not be arrested as criminals." There are a number of photographs, almost none of which this Eastern Front aficionado had seen before.

What makes this book shine for this old armor officer are the materials about preparing for combat operations, as the lack of meaningful attention paid to the prebattle side occurs too often in the history of military writing. Here we get a glimpse into how new replacement soldiers were brought into units, as well as into boresighting, weapons practice and tank gunnery (often using recovered German Tiger and Panther tanks to build vehicle recognition and a sense of self-confidence that their tank main-gun rounds would defeat these tanks). We also read how, by this point in the war, reconnaissance had almost become a fetish for the Soviet High Command, remembering the days of the border battles in Operation Barbarossa, where units often blundered into set-piece

German ambushes. Nebolsin also provides many inserts of both German and Soviet equipment-readiness reports and their current maintenance status.

There are several things I wish Nebolsin had done within *Tank Battles*. The first is perhaps more of an editorial nature: that either Nebolsin or the publisher's editorial staff had clearly set off his contributions and analysis to make that material more readily apparent to the reader. Sometimes his writing is evident, but in other places I guessed. That is a shame, as Nebolsin's comments add to the overall narrative as set forth by the operational histories used here.

The maps? How about a non-academic *ewww!* First the reader is forced to find the maps in the book. Unless he or she is well-versed on the areas of Poland or East Prussia covered in the book, he/she might not know where those places are, so it would have been helpful to include the campaign maps with their relevant areas. Instead, Helion Press lumps them all in one area at the book's midpoint. Worse, the maps have no key to them in terms of scale or what the symbols mean. Even with my armor background and knowledge of military symbology, I was frankly perplexed.

The translation is near spotless, with only several instances where things are a bit garbled.

The only time Nebolsin doesn't connect the dots well is in the geopolitical and economic sense when he calls the German movement of four panzer divisions from northern Poland to Hungary a mistake. At this point, the Hungarian oil fields were the sole remaining major source of petroleum, oil and lubricant products for the Wehrmacht, so the choice was no choice, really – the Wehrmacht was strategically obliged to control the Hungarian oil fields. Also, one might raise an eyebrow at the tragedy of Nemmersdorf, where the generally accepted version is that the Red Army avenged German actions upon Soviet civilians who had first crossed into German territory.

It is easy to recommend *Tank Battles in East Prussia and Poland 1944-1945*. For one, no comparable work readily comes to mind. The book is hard to put down – I read more than 60 percent (300 pages) of it in one day! Its overall richness in terms of detail, lessons to be learned and absorbed, and as a counter to decades of military German *ubermensch* memoirs makes it a book not to be missed. One can only look forward to future works from Nebolsin.

**DR. (LTC) ROBERT G. SMITH**

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*Blood, Guts and Grease: George S. Patton in World War I* by Jon B. Mikolashek; Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky; 2019; \$26.99 Kindle; \$35.32 hardcover.

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Countless biographies have been written about George S. Patton Jr. Unfortunately most pay only little attention to Patton's World War I experiences, which were the bedrock of his successful command of a corps and two field armies in World War II. Jon B. Mikolashek's *Blood, Guts and Grease: George S. Patton in World War I* fills that void with his detailed and insightful examination of this seminal period of Patton's career. Patton wasn't an exception to the maxim: "Great commanders aren't overnight successes." World War I was the proving ground for his command philosophy and his ability to train Soldiers and lead them in combat.

Patton's egotism, aggressiveness and his unbridled ambition first became apparent during the Mexican Punitive Expedition in 1916, when he led the Army's first motorized attack and killed Jose Cardenas, one of Pancho Villa's lieutenants. The Patton family's political influence and his wife's wealth undoubtedly contributed to his early career advancement. His sister Nita's romance with GEN John J. Pershing played no small part in Patton's becoming Pershing's aide in Mexico.

A year later, Patton sailed to Europe on Pershing's American Expeditionary Force (AEF) staff. Mikolashek described Pershing as a father figure and Patton as the obedient son. On the other hand, Patton disliked most of his seniors, who only tolerated him for his ability to win. BG (later LTG) Hugh A. Drum and BG (later MG) Fox Conner were the only other senior officers besides Pershing whom Patton trusted and respected in World War I.

Bored and disgusted with staff work and fearing that promotions and glory would elude him, he became America's first tankerman. Although not initially enamored with tanks, they were the means to his end of furthering his career. Applying to the embryonic Tank Corps, Patton stressed his combat experience in the Cardenas affair, service as a cavalry officer, knowledge of automobiles and motors, and fluency in French as his qualifications. Patton's first experience with tanks came with his attendance at the French tank-training center at Champlieu for two weeks

and another week at the French tank factory outside Paris. The paper he wrote describing his time with the French would become early doctrine for the Tank Corps.

While Patton emulated Pershing, his relationship with his immediate boss, BG Samuel D. Rockenbach, chief of the AEF Tank Corps, was rocky at best. They were diametric opposites: Rockenbach, 22 years older than Patton, was quiet and even-tempered. Although not a great thinker, due to his work ethic and political astuteness, Rockenbach had a successful pre-war career. With his career dependent on Rockenbach, Patton had only a half-hearted relationship with him. His dealings with Rockenbach were harbingers of his interactions with GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower and GEN Omar N. Bradley in World War II.

If Rockenbach was the father of the Tank Corps, Patton was the midwife with his establishment of the Light Tank School at Bourge, France, where he trained tankers and developed the organizational structure for the Tank Corps. This training and organizational structure bore fruit in what became 304<sup>th</sup> Tank Brigade, which Patton commanded in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives near the end of the war.

The school wasn't a command position, but it was what today's Army considers a "key development" position, which either makes or breaks a career. His system of "training the trainers" developed the first cadre of officers and enlisted leaders for the Tank Corps. Although respected by his Soldiers, they feared him because of his fixation on discipline.

While dealing with the complexities of training soldiers and building units for combat, Patton continued his professional development by attending the Army General Staff College in Langres. Patton learned his first lessons in the art of command and the science of control of a large unit in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives. Patton demonstrated uncommon courage and his ever-present quest for glory by leading his tanks on foot despite Rockenbach's orders directing him to remain in a command post, where he would be accessible to his higher command. While leading a trench-breaching operation, he struck some Soldiers with a shovel, exhibiting the same roughness and brutality revealed by the World War II slapping incidents.

After the war, Patton reverted from his wartime rank of colonel to his permanent rank of captain. Patton, seeing little future in tanks after Congress abolished the Tank Corps, returned to the cavalry in 1920. Although Patton returned to the horse cavalry, he continued to reflect on his World War I experience and to write about tanks and their employment in a future war.

**RETIRED LTC LEE F. KICHEN**

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***Selous Scouts: Rhodesian Counter-Insurgency Specialists*** by Peter Baxter; Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers; 2019; 72 pages; \$29.95 (soft cover).

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From July 1964 to December 1979, the white-minority-ruled nation of Rhodesia fought a long battle against two black independence movements in one of the last events marking decolonization on the African continent. Dubbed the Rhodesian Bush War, the civil conflict – which was yet another facet of the larger, global Cold War – ended with a transition to majority rule under Robert Mugabe. Viewed through a military lens, a Special Operations unit dubbed the Rhodesian Selous Scouts remains the most widely known unit to take part in the Bush War. ***Selous Scouts: Rhodesian Counter-Insurgency Specialists*** is a short, if informative, examination of the scouts' formation, selection process, training, equipment, operational employment and ultimate demobilization.

***Selous Scouts*** briefly traces Rhodesia's history through colonization under namesake Cecil Rhodes to the post-World War II movement for decolonization and eventual Communist-supported insurgency, then to eventual world recognition as the Republic of Zimbabwe. Author Peter Baxter effectively uses the Rhodesian Bush War as a backdrop for telling the scouts' brief history and lasting legacy. Baxter writes from a position of both professional and personal expertise, having grown up in both Kenya and Zimbabwe, as well as extensively studying history. For those familiar with African history, the topic of Rhodesia-Zimbabwe may easily evoke strong feelings, particularly on the civil war and Mugabe's decades of disastrous leadership. To his credit, Baxter presents a generally even-handed account of the Bush War and the scouts' role in that conflict.

Despite its relatively short length of just 72 pages, ***Selous Scouts*** will provide the reader a number of critical lessons to be remembered when introducing a new unit to an established military force. ***Selous Scouts*** repeatedly stresses the absolute need for an intelligence staff knowledgeable of the local culture and area of operations. Part

and parcel of this lesson is that military-intelligence personnel generally lack the depth and breadth of local knowledge necessary to be effective, thus requiring specialized training or assistance of experts.

Baxter also devotes significant attention to the inevitable friction between conventional and Special Operations forces for scarce resources, personnel, intelligence and operating areas. Baxter avoids the hero worship all too common in recent books and movies examining Special Operations forces, instead highlighting both the scouts' successes and failures. The book's latter passages describe the unit's undeniable tactical achievements in the field and challenges at working with the larger Rhodesia Army or the national-security services. Baxter also addresses allegations of the darker chapters in Selous history, including rogue operations and illegal ivory trading via elephant poaching.

*Selous Scouts* is Book 38 in a long-running series titled "Africa at War," which covers the post-colonial period to the present day. Prospective readers may wish to add this book to their personal library as a stand-alone work or as part of a larger collection. In either case, *Scouts* is guaranteed to provide an evening of enjoyable reading.

LTC CHRIS HEATHERLY

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*The Expansion of Military Forces: How Armies Grow In The Age Of Total War 1789-1945*, edited by Matthias Strohn; Havertown, PA: Casemate Publishers; 2019; 196 pages with footnotes and bibliography; \$41.89.

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In the broadest sense, an army is a fighting force created by a nation to provide for the "common defense." Given the requirement for defense and demands of the society, along with economic factors, nations have followed several paths in creating and nurturing a military force. One American and eight British contributors offer insight into how Germany, France, Great Britain and the United States formed effective fighting forces. Each contributor to this anthology provides a unique approach that provides insight on how a given nation used its manpower, economic resources and ingenuity to create a military force.

As pointed out by the authors, there are two general historical models upon which a nation creates a credible fighting force. The Continental Model employed by Germany and France consisted of a small regular army aided by mandatory short-term conscription that flows into a substantial-sized reserve force. Given the traditional dislike by their respective societies of large standing armies, Great Britain and the United States followed a slightly different model. In this version, a small volunteer-based regular army was supplemented by militias. Conscription reluctantly occurred as a result of a national emergency.

Regardless of the model used, a nation forms its distinctive force based on three components: the physical, containing such items as manpower and equipment; the moral, consisting of intangibles like courage and unit pride; and the conceptual, covering doctrine and tactics. This last component is the most important but also the most difficult to establish and sustain.

The chapter on the mobilization of both industry and manpower to deal with any threat, especially that posed by the 1933 rise of Germany countered by France and Great Britain, provides a balanced look at how other nations grow their respective militaries. The sections covering the various methods for establishing a reserve force are instructive. Interesting also is the chapter dealing with use of colonial forces by Britain and France during both world wars.

While France, Germany and Great Britain possessed a long-established military schooling system, the United States was a relative latecomer to this aspect of army growth. We did not establish a formal war college until the 1900s when the secretary of war in the Theodore Roosevelt Administration, Elihu Root, argued before Congress for a military school that would meet the demands for "a synergy of managerial and tactical skills." His foresight reaped rewards as the United States entered World War I with a core of Army officers who appreciated how to create a large force from what was the frontier-based U.S. Army.

Creating an army from this essentially border-protection force tested the Woodrow Wilson administration. How it met the challenge and the aftermath of the war are covered in crisp detail. The same is true for the discussion on how the American military used the interwar period to enhance the military-education system while reverting to a small constabulary force. Along the way, the Congress acceded to the Army's request and established the Army Industrial College to address mobilization of industry to support a future military force.

As World War II loomed on the horizon, the conceptual phase of our military came to the forefront as war plans, known as Rainbow 5, addressed various worldwide contingency operations the United States might face in the future. A force structure to support these possible operations resulted in a reorganization of the standard Army division from the World War I square division containing 25,000 men to a triangular one containing 15,000 men. Once a divisional structure was created, it served not only to create more infantry divisions but also was a flexible base that allowed the creation of airborne and armored units.

***How Armies Grow*** is a well-written book that addresses a host of economic, mobilization and manpower issues in a series of short chapters. While it addresses how armies grow, it does not cover the creation and understanding of a given nation's vital, major and peripheral interests that bring a society to economically and emotionally support a given-sized force. Those desiring to expand their knowledge of the role these factors play in the creation of an effective fighting force must look elsewhere. However, for those in search of an understanding of the various methods used to bring a military into being, this is a highly recommended source.

RETIRED COL D.J. JUDGE

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***German Flak Defences vs Allied Heavy Bombers: 1942-45*** by Donald Nijboer; New York, New York: Osprey Publishing; 2019; 80 pages; \$15.59.

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Donald Nijboer's ***German Flak Defences vs. Heavy Bombers*** is an easy book to overlook due to its thin size, resembling Osprey Publishing's typical volume. But no matter what your interest is, Nijboer's work truly hits the historian's sweet spot that punches way above its weight in terms of pages. Overlooking this book would simply be an error on the reader's part, as the book is not merely entertaining, but the overall narrative flow is tremendous. Professors and instructors often talk about "less is more," and here is a perfect case where less is more for perhaps the average student of history or World War II, or for the strategic-air-campaign enthusiast.

The very first thing I did upon receiving this book was turn to the bibliography. There it was, the bible of flak works: Edward B. Westermann's ***Flak-German Anti-Aircraft Defenses 1914-1945***. Knowing that Nijboer consulted and used Westermann gave me great confidence in the book without having turned a page. On the other hand, there were minor weaknesses. For example, one could have wished Nijboer had used the Oct. 12, 1944, memorandum for MAJ James L. Luke on "German Flak Defense as Related to Transportation Targets." Even more so, one might have wished for a separate cite for the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey study, "The German Flak Effort through The War." But these are very minor quibbles. (The most interesting part of the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey study was the flak-rocket development, which Nijboer didn't pay much attention to.)

The book is liberally illustrated, as is the standard for many Osprey books. The graphics of flak shells, color cutaway drawings and many well-chosen black-and-white pictures make this a treat for the reader who might be new to the subject. For the reader who is perhaps better versed, it is likely you will snuggle down into your favorite reading spot with tea or coffee and simply enjoy the selection and structuring of the book's illustrations. I was impressed that Osprey included a graphic of the U.S. Army Air Forces' combat-wing formation, which I personally use to make a point to the military-science classes I teach.

There are some choice facts that will catch your attention. For example, do you know how many women were employed in the flak realm? More than 116,000 young women were used, not in ancillary roles, but to replace flak gunners released for duties at the front. (There is no mention of casualties among these female flak gunners.) Another choice fact: The dual-barreled 128mm Flakzwillig 40/2 weighed in at 28 tons.

With his command of the facts, the author makes a good case that the Germans' investment in flak was a good exchange for the damage and destruction it wrought upon the Allies' air fleets.

There are perhaps some areas Nijboer could have explored but chose not to in ***German Flak Defences***. As noted, he didn't explore the more commonly known Wasserfall missile or the less commonly known Taifun. However, neither would have been game-changers due to the Germans' failure to develop a proximity fuze. Also, Nijboer could have examined more than he did the tradeoff regarding the need for flak vs. the inability to use the same weapon type to deal with the mass of Soviet armor. At the end of the war, many flak units were sent to the front, specifically the Eastern Front, for just that purpose, which he does lightly note.

Nijboer's *German Flak Defences vs. Heavy Bombers* is easily the best immersion book on this subject this ground pounder – who has quite the love for and library of World War II air combat – can find to date. What is most interesting is how little American fixed-wing aircraft and rotary-wing elements have faced any sustained air-defense-artillery effort since Vietnam – other than 11<sup>th</sup> Air Regiment's attack during Operation Iraqi Freedom near Bald, Iraq. Nijboer's book is highly recommended and, in terms of pure cost, is a great value. For those wanting to drill down in greater detail, the bibliography is meaty enough to enable the reader to further slake his/her thirst on the subject of flak defenses.

DR. (LTC) ROBERT G. SMITH

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***Normandy 1944: German Military Organization, Combat Power and Organizational Effectiveness*** by Niklas Zetterling; Havertown, PA: Casemate Publishers; 2019; 142 pages, including appendices, footnotes and bibliography; \$34.95.

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The largest amphibious action ever undertaken occurred June 6, 1944. Over the past 75 years, writers have reviewed and dissected the long-heralded invasion that freed the European continent from German oppression. Many books, articles and films covering almost every aspect of the invasion are available for those interested; it would be difficult to find an area not already addressed. Yet Dr. Niklas Zetterling, a Swedish historian and researcher, found a unique subject-matter area seldom detailed in other works.

By focusing his attention on German forces in Normandy from June to late August 1944, Zetterling reviews a variety of topics with clarity. His research is based on Allied and German archives, war diaries and the *Anlangen*. The *Anlangen* is a series of distinct German documents that contain "reports, compilations and documents produced at the time of the battle." Relying on these documents, the author provides insights on German combat readiness, mobility and training.

It should be noted that Zetterling does not analyze several German-type units found in Normandy. These include fixed vs. mobile anti-aircraft units and coastal-artillery formations.

Zetterling divides his work into two parts. Part I reviews the source material consulted to support his work. He then expands with a detailed chapter on German military terminology. This is most helpful in appreciating the initial part of the book. The chapters on German combat-unit organization and the number of German troops in Normandy seek to clarify the type and number of armored and infantry units in Normandy and whether army units were equipped differently than those of the elite *Waffen SS*.

Thought-provoking comments are provided in the discussion on the effects of Allied airpower on German personnel, formations and logistics. Comparing official Allied documents on the subject and his findings, Zetterling lays out charts and figures detailing Allied claims, as contrasted with information found in German-source documents. This impressive amount of data comparison is controversial and will spark debate.

Part I of the book concludes with more facts and figures on German tank strength, personnel losses and movement by German units in and around the battle area. Zetterling's comments on German combat efficiency are well founded as he applies a quantitative analysis to source personnel figures. This analysis also reviews the effects of other elements inherent in this subject area – such as tactics, air superiority, weather, logistics and weapons – have on German units.

Part II of the book lists and evaluates German combat formations, artillery headquarters formations and miscellaneous headquarters, along with the command-and-control elements of German infantry and panzer units. Eight appendices supplement and enhance material already presented. These provide more details on the arrival schedule of units into the Normandy area, a list of unit histories, commentary on the reliability of German casualty figures, logistics and comments on other works.

This is an order-of-battle book that should be approached with a certain amount of awareness. As such, there are no maps or photos presented. For example, to follow the author's discussion of weapons, types of artillery and tanks, one would need to consult a separate book covering these items or possess a familiarity with the subject matter. Zetterling's comments on the effects of Allied airpower on German tanks and infantry units, along with his views on German combat effectiveness, are certain to cause discussion.

These remarks, however, should by no means deter one from reading this book. The detail and organization of material is impressive. Maneuver-unit commanders will derive a better sense of the effects of unit organization, firepower and maneuver as exhibited by both sides during the vicious fighting in Normandy. The result of Allied air attacks on the French rail and road systems, along with attaining and maintaining air superiority during and after the invasion, will re-emphasize to ground commanders the vital role of airpower in any current and future operation. This is a well-researched and well-written book which will either enhance, refute or confirm the writings of others on the critical battle for Normandy. It should occupy a prominent place in the writings on the battle for Normandy.

**RETIRED COL D.J. JUDGE**

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***The Soul of an American President: The Untold Story of Dwight D. Eisenhower's Faith*** by Alan Sears, Craig Osten and Ryan Cole; Ada, MI: Baker Books; 2019, 230 pages; hardcover \$13.26.

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Many accounts of the storied life, military and political career of Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower grace the Internet, libraries and bookstores nationwide. They often focus on aspects of this General of the Army/U.S. president's legacy from his time as a cadet at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, to his tenure as the two-term 34<sup>th</sup> president. Until now, though, few, if any, of the historical accounts of Eisenhower's life focused on the role faith played in shaping one of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's most influential leaders.

In their book, ***The Soul of an American President: The Untold Story of Dwight D. Eisenhower's Faith***, Alan Sears, Craig Osten and Ryan Cole tell the story of a man who began life in abject poverty in rural Texas to a childhood spent in western Kansas. His parents were deeply religious people who grounded young Ike in daily Bible reading and study at home. Ike's faith sustained him through his days at West Point to the loss of a young son, marital difficulties, depression, career disappointments and the horrors and aftermath of World War II.

Eisenhower, however, was reticent about his faith. For instance, when he was still undecided about seeking the Republican nomination for president in the early months of 1952, he was urged by friends and influential people of the day to run. Two of the people who were strongly in favor of Eisenhower's candidacy were Henry R. Luce, the founder of ***Time*** magazine, and his wife, Claire Booth Luce, the formidable former congresswoman from Connecticut. The influential Republican couple were concerned about Eisenhower's lack of public clarity about his faith as a possible political obstacle, so Mrs. Luce asked Eisenhower about it when she met with him in Spring 1952. The meeting sheds some light on Eisenhower's personal view of faith.

Luce had been warned by one of Eisenhower's aides that "he goes through the roof when people ask him what his denomination is (or) what church he belongs to. We've tried to discuss it with him, and he bawls us out and says it's not any of our damn business (because) religion is an absolutely private matter." Despite the warning, Luce raised the issue with Eisenhower during the meeting. The authors recount how Eisenhower reportedly exploded in anger as predicted. Luce said, "(Ike) jumped to his feet and got red to the roots of his hair." She said Eisenhower then openly talked about his faith, saying, "Claire, do you think I could have fought my way through [World WW II], ordered thousands of fellows to their deaths, if I couldn't have gone down on my knees and talked with God and begged him to support me and make me feel what I was doing was right for myself and the world? Why, I couldn't live a day of my life without God."

Luce said she learned that Eisenhower wasn't opposed to being part of a church; he was reluctant to speak openly about his personal faith or associate himself with a particular denomination because he thought it would be perceived as a political move.

Many people throughout Eisenhower's life impacted his faith, but the authors highlight the connection to one person whose link to Ike went back to when Eisenhower was serving as Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. At that time Eisenhower began corresponding with young Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham from North Carolina in 1951. The two had become acquainted via oil baron Sid Richardson, a mutual friend from Texas who met Graham during the evangelist's Fort Worth, TX, crusade in 1951. Graham had given Richardson a letter and asked him to share it with Eisenhower. In the letter, Graham expressed his deep concern for the state of the nation's moral fiber while urging Eisenhower to offer himself for service as president.

Eisenhower remains the only U.S. president to be baptized while in office. This book captures how personal faith impacted the man whose principles shaped public policy during the Cold War era and defined the soul of a nation.

**GARY A. JONES**

Deputy Editor, ***ARMOR***

### **Acronym Quick-Scan**

**AEF** – American Expeditionary Force

**IJA** – Imperial Japanese Army

**LVT** – Landing Vehicle Tracked