

placed within the book, which greatly personalizes the experience for readers. This starts with an outstanding photograph section inserted in the volume. Foley has placed more than 30 photographs to complement his written words. These key on significant events in his career, the Soldiers he served with, and his family.

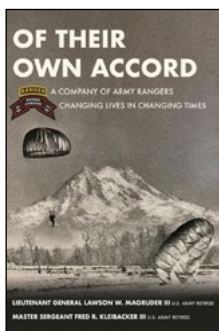
Another important addition is the outstanding appendix section at the end of the volume. It is filled with items enabling readers to better understand and appreciate Foley's career. These include his assignment history, Medal of Honor citation, and citations and press releases for several other prestigious awards Foley received. Readers would benefit from reading the appendix section first. This would provide an excellent background of the author prior to delving into the main portion of the book.

In summary, for those expecting a standard-fare memoir or leadership primer, you will not find it in *Standing Tall*. What you will discover is a volume which is part memoir, part historical commentary, part tribute, and part leadership discussion. These elements combine to make this a superb book and provide another example of validating Aristotle's premise. It also affords a new generation of readers the opportunity to learn and value the career of LTG Robert Foley.

Of Their Own Accord: A Company of Army Rangers Changing Lives in Changing Times

By LTG (Retired) Lawson W. Magruder III and MSG (Retired) Fred R. Kleibacker III

Fred Kleibacker, 332 pages, 2024



Reviewed by SFC (Retired) John C. Simpson

Let me begin the review properly by saying that I'm not going to be able to contain my enthusiasm for this book. It was obviously a labor of love for the two authors, and we're fortunate that their combined vision was so well executed that they created a text that will serve future generations of Soldiers whether read for individual study or used in a professional development forum.

In the interests of full disclosure, I served with author Fred Kleibacker in B Company, 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Devens, MA, in the 1970s into the 1980s.

I won't be going too much into the biographies of the authors since I'm a firm believer in judging ideas on their own merits and not their pedigree. With that said, however, you should know that these two authors served together in the 2nd Ranger Battalion with then-CPT Magruder serving

as the first Bravo Company commander of that organization and Kleibacker starting as a team leader and then a squad leader in 3rd Platoon, B Company, 2nd Ranger Battalion, 75th Infantry. (That's right, before there was the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 1970s saw the organization and training of the 1st and 2nd Ranger Battalions.)

The book begins with the historical context of the realities of the post-Vietnam Army and how Army Chief of Staff GEN Creighton Abrams came up with the idea to arrest the rapid slide of his beloved Army into ineffective oblivion with a bold idea: to create a unit that would be a shining example and standard setter going forward. To this end, he issued what became known as the Abrams Charter in 1974:

The battalion is to be an elite, light and the most proficient infantry battalion in the world.

A battalion that can do things with its hands and weapons better than anyone.

The battalion will contain no "hoodlums or brigands" and if the battalion is formed from such persons it will be disbanded.

Wherever the battalion goes, it must be apparent that it is the best.

The authors then go on to relate the experiences of those initial members of the battalion prior to their joining, their time in the unit and afterwards, and then how their military service shaped their post-service careers. From the foreword, "The intent of this book is not to recount war stories (of which we have more than a few), but to share the positive impact our time together many decades ago had in shaping how we lived our lives in the future."

To that end, the chapters are divided by recurring themes that were identified while interviewing 40 former Bravo Company Rangers over the course of 70 hours. These include Service, Accountability, Physical and Moral Courage, Honor and Integrity, Competence, Becoming a Good Citizen, and Heroes at Home. These are all followed by an epilogue, a very welcome glossary, and a comprehensive biography of all of the witnesses to the story. Another aspect I was impressed with was the space devoted to discussing the role of spouses in the lives and careers of these early Rangers. And I mean, in a book written about Rangers, the wives were interviewed for their insights as well.

I stated that I was enthusiastic about everyone reading AND re-reading this book, but there are a couple points that jumped out at me that I had to highlight.

In chapter 10, "Leading Others" recounts a story of a squad that failed a major evaluation and what measures the chain of command took to fix the problem. That account ends happily, and lessons learned are expressed as simple statements of fact: "Humility, listening to your men, and understanding their strengths and weaknesses are the key ingredients of exceptional leadership."

I was further struck on the Rangers' emphasis of doing things "by the book." Given the treatment of that concept

over the decades by fictional TV and movie characters, not to mention self-serving military memoirs, it was refreshing to read that doing things doctrinally was considered a cornerstone of the Ranger battalion's success.

Before I go, a few quick notes. First, when looking for this book, check that it's by these two authors. There's a 2005 Ranger novel with the same title.

Second, there are a few typos in this book, and I've informed Fred about them for future editions. Nothing serious and not one of them detracts from the valuable lessons that this book has to offer. Stuff like misstating order of precedence for an award or mixing up hyperthermia and hypothermia doesn't detract from the main function of this useful book.

Lastly, don't be surprised if this book leaves you wanting more. There are many references to B Company, 2nd Ranger Battalion having to insert new recruits into a unit training program that was already in progress and relentlessly heading toward the fixed date of its first evaluation as a battalion. I told Kleibacker to give some thought to perhaps writing another book on just what that experience taught. That could provide invaluable knowledge in the event of future mobilizations or standing up new units.

21st Century Patton: Strategic Insights for the Modern Era

**Edited by J. Furman Daniel III
Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute
Press, 176 pages, 2016**

Reviewed by 2LT Andrew Kim

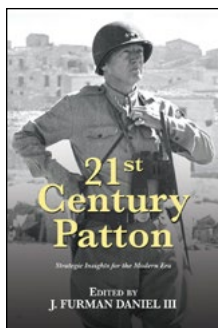
GEN George S. Patton remains one of the most iconic U.S. Army warfighters who led Soldiers across numerous conflicts, ending with his command of the Third Army after the invasion of Normandy. *21st Century Patton*, edited by J. Furman Daniel III, takes readers across Patton's life and attempts to break down how he grew into the larger-than-life figure perpetuated by popular culture. The editor recaps Patton's life across his military and personal career while intertwining his works to analyze and highlight the strategic and leadership insights revered by many.

From a young age, Patton was an avid athlete and a life-long learner. During his honeymoon in London, the leader purchased several rare books on military history and theory which would eventually lead to a massive collection. His trips across Europe as a young man taught him to reflect about the landscape and nature that he had encountered, which would prove quite useful during World War II. He displayed his competitiveness as part of the United States

Military Academy's (USMA's) track and football teams and competed at the Olympics in Stockholm. His high-energy mentality bled into his personality, and he chose to always lead from the front, believing that both physical and mental training were key components to success in any endeavor.

The book highlights seven articles written by Patton himself, which are then analyzed by the editor. Beginning early in his career, Patton wrote on topics such as the flaws in the U.S. Army Cavalry's sabers and his ideas for redesigning them. As a field grade, he studied and addressed political conflict and the situations that led certain sides to victory and others to defeat. By noting a number of variables, he considered the amalgamation of training, human capital, newly developed equipment, differences in leadership, and the political systems that could be analyzed to predict future conflicts and wars. One of his most insightful articles studied the change in power balance from manpower to equipment introduced by the advent of gunpowder. Throughout his life, Patton believed that the complex study of military conflicts and political knowledge would prove necessary as a great leader.

Across many aspects, Patton lived an exceptional life as an extraordinary leader and man. A graduate of USMA, Patton displayed brilliance from the beginning of his military career. From a star on the track to the eventual commander of the Third Army, his insights into character development and his never-ending pursuit of knowledge led him to become the brilliant man we know today who continues to serve as an example for military officers across all ranks and branches.



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