

# BOOK REVIEWS



In our July-August 1982 book review section, we referred to the title of Ernle Bradford's book as being **HANNIBAL: THE GENERAL FROM ROME**. The correct title of that book is, of course, **HANNIBAL: THE GENERAL FROM CARTHAGE**. We apologize for our mistake.

In addition, in our September-October 1982 issue we said that David Trask, the author of **THE WAR WITH SPAIN IN 1898**, was a U.S. State Department historian, which he was when he wrote his book. But since then he has moved over to the Army and now serves as the Chief Historian with the Center of Military History.

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**GENERAL JOHN SEDGWICK: THE STORY OF A UNION CORPS COMMANDER**, by Richard E. Winslow III. (Presidio Press, 1982. 205 Pages). Reviewed by Professor Benjamin F. Gilbert, San Jose State University.

Originally a dissertation, this study is the first book-length biography of General John Sedgwick. Although his correspondence was published in two volumes eighty years ago, historians have neglected his career.

Born in Connecticut in 1813, Sedgwick attended West Point, graduating in 1837. He saw action in the Seminole and Mexican wars, and took part in various expeditions against the Plains Indians. By 1860 he had earned the rank of major and was considering retirement, but the outbreak of the Civil War caused him to remain in the Army.

During the spring and early summer of 1861, Sedgwick was confined to bed by a severe illness. Upon his recovery he served briefly on a court of inquiry and then in August 1861

was given the command of a brigade in the defenses of Washington.

In February 1862, General George B. McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac, relieved Brigadier General Charles P. Stone of his division and assigned Sedgwick to lead it. This he did through the Peninsular campaign and later at Antietam.

Given command of the 6th Corps, Sedgwick led it through the Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Rappahannock Station, and Mine Run operations. His infantrymen referred to themselves as "Sedgwick's Cavalry," claiming "they were kept on the gallop."

On 9 May 1864, while conducting a reconnaissance at Spotsylvania, Sedgwick was shot and killed by a Confederate sharpshooter. General U.S. Grant, when he heard the news, reportedly said: "His loss to this army is greater than the loss of a whole division of troops."

Sedgwick was a competent leader of troops who was admired by his men and affectionately called "Uncle John." His remarkable career is objectively evaluated and vividly described in this fascinating biography, which Civil War enthusiasts should welcome.

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**LEE: THE LAST YEARS**, by Charles Bracelen Flood (Houghton Mifflin, 1981. 308 Pages. \$14.95). Reviewed by Colonel Robert G. Clarke, Headquarters, CINCPAC.

Here is the story of a truly incredible man, a rebel against the United States but a man still admired and respected in both the North and the South.

The author begins his book with Lee's surrender at Appomattox and follows carefully the last five years of his life. In the process, he successfully

captures the strength and depth of Lee's character, and portrays him as a beloved commander and a leader who has an almost hypnotic effect on those around him. Thousands simply wanted to see or touch him as he passed.

Flood's main thesis is that Lee's example led the South through those early and difficult days of Reconstruction and greatly helped the South back into the Union.

Lee accepted the presidency of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) and used his immense influence and his abilities as an administrator and educator to help the South repair itself and to rebuild its fabric. His presence and fatherlike leadership healed many postwar wounds and bridged the gap between North and South to a degree no other single person could have done.

By the spring of 1870, Lee's health was failing and he took a two-month vacation. He returned to the college for the fall term but was stricken with a cerebral thrombosis and died within a few days, on 11 October.

This is a warm and moving account of a great man's important last years. We see Lee clearly as the leader, the general, the father figure, and the great conciliator. The military professional should not miss this excellent book.

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**THE UNION CAVALRY IN THE CIVIL WAR: VOLUME II, THE WAR IN THE EAST FROM GETTYSBURG TO APPOMATTOX, 1863-1865**, by Stephen Z. Starr (Louisiana State University Press, 1981. 526 Pages). Reviewed by Captain Don Rightmyer, United States Air Force.

With the passing of such eminent Civil War historians as T. Harry

Williams, Bell I. Wiley, and Bruce Catton, many people may feel that quality history on the Civil War period will disappear. Fortunately, that concern seems unfounded with historians such as Stephen Starr on the scene. This, his latest book, is proof of that fact.

This is the second of a planned three-part series on the Union cavalry in the Civil War. The first volume dealt with mounted operations from the war's beginnings through the battle of Gettysburg in July 1863. This second volume continues the cavalry story in the East through the end of the war. The third volume will look at the operations of mounted forces west of the Alleghenies.

The first volume in the series received the highest marks in a review by Bell Wiley that was published in *INFANTRY* in 1980. This second volume upholds the same standards of excellence.

The last two years of the cavalry war in the East included such men as Philip Sheridan, George Custer, George Crook, James H. Wilson, and other cavalymen who played key roles in Northern cavalry operations. The author brings these men and the soldiers they led into focus as real people, not just statistics that moved around the countryside in a flurry of saddles and sabers.

Overall, Starr's second volume is an excellent coverage of a topic that is normally romanticized and given little serious treatment. Readers of this book will be eagerly awaiting the third volume.

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**ON STRATEGY: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE VIETNAM WAR**, by Harry C. Summers, Jr. (Presidio Press, 1982. 224 Pages. \$12.95). Reviewed by Dr. Joe P. Dunn, Converse College.

This book is one of the hottest commodities around. It is being reviewed in most of the military journals as well as in many academic and popular periodicals. For the most part, the reviews are laudatory. One enthusiastic reviewer even proclaims that the book will "not merely

become a seminal work on Vietnam; it will make history." The book obviously has official sanction, and it is making the rounds in the senior military colleges.

But I am astonished that such a mediocre study should attract this kind of attention, and I am concerned that such superficial analysis and shoddy scholarship has garnered this acclaim. It is not encouraging that this volume is the best that could emerge from study over several years at the Army War College.

It is not as though Colonel Summers has nothing to say. In fact, he makes a number of cogent points about the lack of an American military strategy in Vietnam, the weak, vacillating, politically motivated civilian leaders, the gimmickry that substituted for tactics, the self-imposed limitations on our military conduct of the war, and the surreal climate in which the conflict was conducted. But all of these points have been made repeatedly in a host of military memoirs. In addition, Leslie Gelf, Raymond Betts, Guenter Lewy, Larry Berman, and Dave Palmer have addressed these issues in a far better and more scholarly fashion.

Summers' book is essentially a polemic. Its journalistic tone, elementary development of arguments, weak documentation, and overall wandering nature weaken any serious consideration it might merit. A good editor would have sharpened the book's focus and stripped it of much of its miscellany.

As a forceful, committed little essay, which repeats some valid points and emphasizes the need to return to the study of basic strategy, Summers' book has value. To the extent that it has helped to rekindle the Vietnam debate, it has served an important function. But the merits of the book have been blown ridiculously out of proportion.

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**DEFENSE OR DELUSION: AMERICA'S MILITARY IN THE 1980s**, by Thomas H. Etzold (Harper and Row, 1982. 259 Pages. \$14.95). Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel

**Jerry M. Sollinger, United States Army.**

In writing this book, Thomas Etzold has identified himself as the newest recruit in the ranks of purveyors of doom and gloom. "America's military is sick," he moans, "and if left to military professionals and experts, it will remain so...incapable of meeting the Nation's needs in the coming decade." The officer corps is a collection of knaves, fools, incompetents, or, at best, well-meaning bumblers who lack the wit to see problems, let alone provide solutions. The enlisted force, composed of fugitives from high school, sits in simian bewilderment before technical, expensive, and inoperable equipment. In short, we have the incompetent leading the illiterate armed with the unworkable.

The tone of the book offends, but that would be no more than a small irritant if its substance were worthy. For a book about national defense to merit a reading, it ought to bring something new to the debate: identify a new problem, offer an innovative remedy, or suggest an enlightening interpretation. But Mr. Etzold does none of these things. His catalogue of problems is a numbing repetition of the same issues people in and out of the service have argued for years.

The book has other drawbacks as well. Etzold frequently displays dubious logic. He argues, for example, that the military fixation with nuclear weapons contributes to the "military's inability to solve modernization dilemmas," at least in part because of the large funds such forces consume. But how something that traditionally takes about eight percent of the defense budget has such a dramatic effect Etzold leaves to our imagination. In another case, he claims that the officer corps is "becoming lower middle-class, or simply lower class." Yet almost all officers enter the service with college degrees, not normally the hallmark of the lower classes. In fact, today's tuition rates increasingly make a college education a goal for the well-to-do.

The book also contains some small factual errors — "eight-inch mortar

rounds," instead of 81mm rounds, and "FM 105" instead of FM 100-5. Somewhat worse is Etzold's penchant for including war stories (described on the dust jacket as "vivid anecdotes") to illustrate his points. He offers such gems as a recruiter who claimed he could find only two of thirty men capable of reciting the alphabet, and an ROTC instructor who cited ungrammatical letters of recommendation for scholarship applicants from the owner of the local diner as evidence of the miserable quality of people entering the military service. These stories may be true, but the real question is: are they representative? Anyone thoroughly familiar with the military service knows they are not.

One can only sympathize with the book's major recommendation, which is that our leaders use a sustained and measured approach to solving the real problems of the United States' military service. Unfortunately, platitudes and a tiresome repetition of the problems will do lit-

tle to bring about that happy event, but that is about all this book has to offer.

**USSR FACTS AND FIGURES ANNUAL, VOLUME 6, 1982**, edited by John L. Scherer (Academic International Press, 1982. 425 Pages. \$46.50). Reviewed by Alexander S. Birkos, Mount Shasta, California.

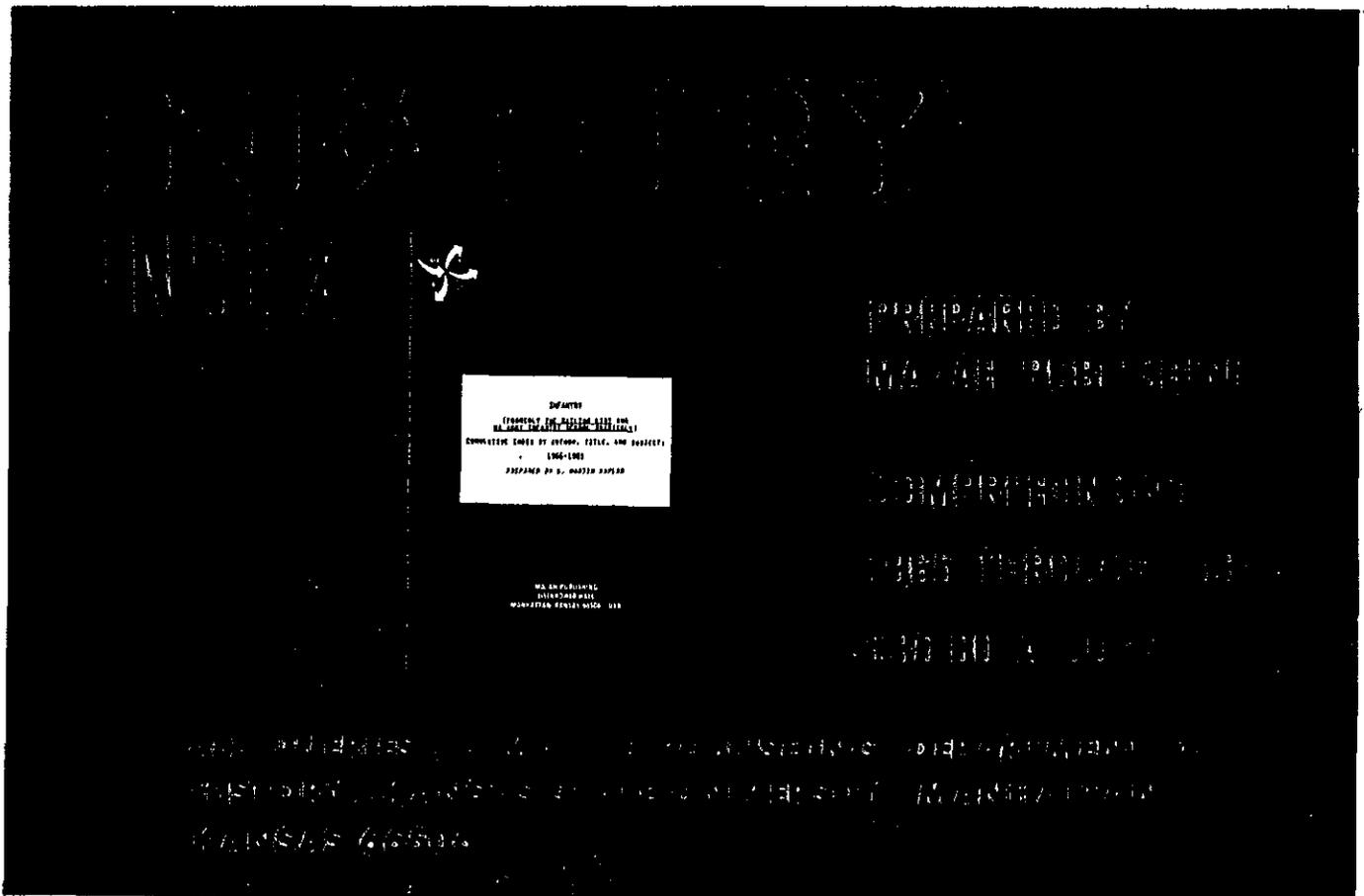
Anyone who needs solid, quantitative data about current political, military, social, and economic developments in the USSR should familiarize himself with this reference source. Interspersed among its numerical statistics is enough qualitative material to give the reader greater insight into the nature of Soviet policies.

The contents cover 16 major categories of national activities, including a general survey for 1981 that discusses Soviet actions in Poland, the economy and agriculture, energy, health and welfare, the military, Europe and disarmament, and the Third World. The chapter on the

armed forces gives a good overview and an interpretive evaluation of the various branches of the Soviet defense establishment and the East-West military balance.

Unfortunately, in this series, some special topics in the armed forces section are not covered regularly, and the user has to consult the cumulative index to determine which volume contains the material he is interested in. For example, the deployment of Soviet divisions by regions and military districts can be found in Volume 5, but not in Volume 6. Nevertheless, when this work is used with the publisher's *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual* and his *Military-Naval Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union*, it can provide the researcher with a broad base of information from which he can assess Soviet strategic and defense trends.

This book is an excellent addition to reference literature about the USSR, and military officers of all branches would do well to make note of it.



**MARSHALL: HERO FOR OUR TIMES**, by Leonard Mosley (Hearst Books, 1982. 608 Pages. \$18.50). Reviewed by Major D.R. Kiernan, University of South Carolina.

The author has succeeded in providing a factual biography of George C. Marshall that is also thoroughly entertaining. It is evident that Mosley did a good deal of painstaking research before preparing his narrative.

Marshall's humanity is the characteristic that is woven into the book. The author describes this humanity through the interpersonal relationships Marshall shared with the military and political giants of the first half of the 20th century. The reader catches glimpses of the parade of personalities who were a colorful part of this soldier-statesman's career.

Beyond the personal relationships, the reader also traces the seeds of contention that were sowed among the Allied powers during World War II and the ultimate split with the Soviet Union from its first chilly reception to the Marshall Plan. The behind-the-scenes efforts at appeasing such men as Charles de Gaulle and Bernard Law Montgomery leave the reader with the feeling that some of the combat in the global struggle did not take place on the battlefield.

Despite his more than 50 years of service to his country, Marshall was an enigma to the public. But his humility and his stoic approach to public service was not without its personal disappointments. His first wife, Lily, was a fragile woman who died childless after 26 years of marriage. His long-awaited promotion to Brigadier General came in 1935 after he had served 35 years in the Army. The command of the D-Day invasion in Europe in 1944 eluded him and went instead to Dwight Eisenhower. Finally, after serving as Army Chief of Staff, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense, he had to withstand the vituperation of the McCarthy investigation.

In this biography, a man slowly emerges who is a touchstone of stability to everyone he meets. The

great and near-great personalities of today need only to look at Mosley's book to measure the length of their shadows as they bask in the limelight that Marshall so successfully avoided during his career but which he now enjoys within the pages of this fine tribute.

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**THE MILITARY BALANCE, 1982-1983.** The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1982. 141 Pages. \$14.00, Softbound.

This publication, which appears in the Fall of each year, is eagerly awaited by those who are interested in the facts of military power around the world. This year's book looks at those facts as they were in July 1982, and as the Institute freely admits, "There have been so many conflicts occurring during the preparation of this year's *Military Balance* that it has been peculiarly difficult to assess what has been lost in action and what replaced."

Despite this qualification, a more thorough assessment of the military power of the countries of the world is not likely to be found in any other publication.

As usual, the Institute first tackles the military stature of the world's two super-powers and then goes on to discuss the military power of the other countries of the world, the principal regional defense pacts and alignments, and, in three separate essays, the military balance in Europe. Several tables compare nuclear delivery vehicles, defense expenditures, military manpower statistics, and arms transfer agreements.

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**WAR SINCE 1945**, by Michael Carver (Putnam's, 1980. 322 Pages). Reviewed by Captain Harold E. Raugh, Jr., 2d Infantry Division.

Field Marshal Carver, who retired a few years ago from the British Army as Chief of the Defense Staff, has written the first clear and concise account of significant military activities since the end of World War II.

He vividly describes six British colonial conflicts, two French co-

lonial conflicts, two American "adventures," and several unconventional clashes — those between India and Pakistan, and between India and China, and the four Arab-Israeli wars.

He tells in great detail of the events that led up to each conflict, discusses the politico-military facets of the conflicts themselves, and, with great objectivity, relates the results and the lessons that were learned from each confrontation. His narrative is well-illustrated by an excellent photographic section and by eighteen maps, plus a month-by-month chronology of each conflict.

It is an indispensable reference work for the professional soldier and for the historian.

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#### RECENT AND RECOMMENDED

**MILITARY SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES.** Edited by Brent Scowcroft. The American Assembly, Columbia University. Prentice-Hall, 1982. 231 Pages. \$7.95, Softbound.

**MACARTHUR IN KOREA.** By Robert Smith. Simon and Schuster, 1982. 256 Pages. \$16.50.

**THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA.** By Hugh F. Kayser. ETC Publications, 1982. 382 Pages. \$16.95.

**WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURES AND ARMS TRANSFERS, 1970-1979.** Defense Program and Analysis Division, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Washington, D.C. ACDA Publication 112, 1982. 134 Pages. Softbound.

**OUR CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL PREMISES.** By Thomas P. Roma. National Strategy Information Center, 1982. 352 Pages. Softbound.

**GEPARD: THE HISTORY OF GERMAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT TANKS.** By Walter J. Spielberger. The Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1982. 256 Pages. \$29.95.

**NAPOLEON'S GREAT ADVERSARIES: THE ARCHDUKE CHARLES AND THE AUSTRIAN ARMY, 1792-1814.** By Gunther E. Rothenberg. Indiana University Press, 1982. 219 Pages. \$18.95.

**KINGDOMS OF THE BLIND.** By Harold W. Road. Carolina Academic Press, 1980. 294 Pages.

**SOVIET MILITARY STRATEGY IN EUROPE.** By Joseph D. Douglass, Jr. Pergamon Press, 1980. 237 Pages.

**SUCCESSFUL SHOOTING.** By Bill Pullum and Frank T. Hanenkrat. NRA Stock No. ASB 17310. National Rifle Association, 1982. 213 Pages. \$14.95.

**VIETNAM: THREE BATTLES.** By S.L.A. Marshall. A Reprint. A DaCapo Paperback. DaCapo Press, 1982. 242 Pages. \$7.95.