

BOOK REVIEWS



Here are a number of books you should find of interest; they have been selected from a large stack of publications we have received in recent months:

• **MASK OF COMMAND**, by John Keegan (Viking, 1987. 368 Pages. \$18.95). The author is a widely known British military historian. In this book he presents his views about generals and generalship as he feels the men and the methods of generalship have developed down through the ages. He believes "that the generalship of one age and place may not at all resemble that of another" and "that the warfare of any one society may differ so sharply from that of another that commonality of trait and behavior in those who direct it is overlaid altogether in importance by differences in the purposes they serve and the functions they perform."

He also believes that a successful military leader, much like leaders in religion, politics, business, and education, "can show himself to his followers only through a mask, a mask that he must make for himself, but a mask made in such form as will mark him to men of his time and place as the leader they want and need."

He uses the lives and careers of four men--Alexander the Great, the Duke of Wellington, U.S. Grant, and Adolf Hitler--to demonstrate the differing leadership roles each was called on to play because of the changing nature of society and of warfare itself--"heroic," by Alexander; "anti-hero," by Wellington; "unheroic," by Grant; and "false heroic," by Hitler. (It is difficult to visualize Hitler being placed in the same category as the other three, and the author really does not bring this off too well.)

The author decries the call for "heroic" leadership in our times, and uses his last chapter to argue that in the

nuclear age that kind of leadership can easily destroy civilization. He would prefer to see "an inactive leader, one who does nothing." But one wonders: Can a person be called a leader who does nothing?

This book is really several books in one. Its central theme is difficult to find, and to follow. It is filled with material that seemingly has little to do with the central purpose, whatever that is. Still, there is enough solid military history in it to warrant reading, plus some absolute gems about generals and military leadership. There are 10 lines on page 233, for example, that by themselves almost make the book worthwhile. Give it a try.

• **THE KOREAN WAR**, by Max Hastings (Simon and Schuster, 1987. 389 Pages. \$22.95). The author, a British journalist, has never cared much for the U.S. Infantryman as a fighting man or for the leadership qualities of senior U.S. ground commanders. He has expressed his feelings on several occasions, most notably in his book on the World War II Normandy campaign. In this book, he virtually repeats himself. In his usual style, he does not give a complete picture of the war but only an overview, hitting certain high (and low) spots along the way. (Did you know that the U.S. treated its Chinese and North Korean prisoners as badly as U.S. prisoners were treated in North Korea?) He praises the U.S. Marines and, quite naturally, the British and Chinese soldiers who fought in Korea. If you keep in mind that this is not an objective piece of work, you may find some items of interest in it.

• **GREAT COMMANDERS AND THEIR BATTLES**, by Anthony Livesey (Macmillan, 1987. 191 Pages. \$39.95). This book is similar in layout and design (quite attractive, in short) to its two immediate

predecessors-- *Great Battlefields of the World* and *Great Battles of World War II*. The author is a British historian who has frequently lectured on staff organization and troop management. In this book, he discusses 20 battles that were won by 20 of history's most successful field commanders, from Alexander the Great to Moshe Dayan. The computer-generated maps and the numerous illustrations add greatly to the reader's understanding of the battles, while the brief biographical sketches of the opposing commanders that are found at the end of each battle narrative serve to indicate what was transpiring on the "other side of the hill."

• **THE COMPLETE BOOK OF U.S. SNIPING**, by Peter R. Senich (Paladin Press, 1988. 280 Pages. \$34.95). In this fact-filled, profusely illustrated book, the author traces the development of the U.S. sniper effort and U.S. sniping weapons from the time of the Civil War to the present. He is a recognized authority in his field and has previously written on the German sniper effort between 1914 and 1945 and the development of the German assault rifle between 1935 and 1945. All infantrymen should spend some time with this book, for it contains a wealth of information not only about sniping weapons, but about silencers, scope and sight developments, and night vision sights.

• **VIETNAM CHOPPERS: HELICOPTERS IN BATTLE, 1950-1975**, by Simon Dunstan (Osprey, 1988. 203 Pages. Softbound). Several years ago, the author brought out his well received book titled *Vietnam Tracks* in which he used a good, tight narrative and hundreds of photographs to tell the story of armor in Southeast Asia as it was used between 1945 and 1975. He follows the same pattern in this book. After a brief

introductory chapter, he discusses the use of U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps helicopters in Vietnam; the development of airmobile tactics and techniques; dust-off operations; and the major capabilities and limitations of each type of aircraft.

• **COMMANDING GENERALS AND CHIEFS OF STAFF, 1775-1987: PORTRAITS AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S SENIOR OFFICER**, by William Gardner Bell (Center of Military History, 1987. USGPO S/N 008-029-00125-0. 187 Pages. \$20.00). This is an updated edition of the author's book, which was first published in 1983. As such, it includes portraits (one is a photograph rather than a painting) and biographical sketches of the most recent Army Chiefs of Staff. The author's lengthy introduction explains the evolution of the office from that of Commanding General of the Army to Chief of Staff of the Army and the problems faced by each of the 51 occupants in carrying out his responsibilities. There are two appendixes as well as an index and a select bibliography. Together with the author's previously published *Secretaries of War and Secretaries of the Army*, this book does much to improve our understanding of the Army's past.

• **THE ARMY OFFICER'S GUIDE**, 44th Edition, by Lawrence P. Crocker (Stackpole Books, 1988. 608 Pages. \$17.95, Softbound). The revisor is a retired U.S. Army officer who has worked on previous editions of this most useful publication. The guide has served the young Infantry officer well over the years, and this edition will serve him equally well. It is divided into five major parts--selecting the Army as a career, your life and family, building your career, regulations at a glance, and the organization of the Army--and contains an additional duty guide, a list of acronyms, an index, and for the first time, every badge, decoration, and medal currently awarded by the Army is shown in full color. Another addition is a chapter on the Army's warrant officer career field and the

probable future of the corps. We recommend it most highly to all junior and senior Infantry officers.

• **MILITARY UNIFORMS IN AMERICA, VOLUME IV: THE MODERN ERA, FROM 1868**, edited by John R. Elting and Michael McAfee for The Company of Military Historians (Presidio Press, 1988. 139 Pages. \$40.00). This book completes the four-volume series, the previous volumes of which were titled *AMERICAN REVOLUTION*, *YEARS OF GROWTH*, and *CIVIL WAR PERIOD*. The editors selected 64 color plates for this volume from the Company's print series; each is accompanied by a full page of text that explains and describes the evolution of uniform style and material as well as the circumstances and service of the featured unit. Because the book covers more than 100 years of our country's military history, the number of plates devoted to each era had to be limited. And it is important to note that the editors have included plates that depict the uniforms of other countries such as Canada, the Philippines, Japan, Mexico, and Germany. All four of the mentioned volumes are recommended most highly; this is illustrated military history at its best.

• **DICTIONARY OF THE VIETNAM WAR**, edited by James S. Olson (Greenwood Press, 1988. 603 Pages. \$65.00). This is an outstanding reference work, for it has more than 900 brief descriptive essays on most of the people, legislation, military operations, and controversies that surrounded U.S. participation in the Vietnam War. The editor, a professor of history at Sam Houston State University, prepared the bulk of the entries and called on other scholars to do the remainder. The entries are arranged in alphabetical order, and references at the end of each give additional sources of information. The six appendixes are valuable in their own right--the population of South Vietnam by province in 1971, the minority groups of South Vietnam as of 1970, acronyms and slang expressions associated with the war in Vietnam, a selected bibliography, a

chronology of the war in South Vietnam from 1945 to 1975, and a selection of maps of South Vietnam. The book also contains an index and a list of the contributors.

• **THE FLAGS OF THE CONFEDERACY: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY**. By Devereaux D. Cannon, Jr. (St. Luke's Press, 1407 Union Avenue, Suite 401, Memphis, TN 38104, 1988. 128 Pages. \$9.95, Softbound). Drawing on a variety of primary and secondary sources, the author tells of the development of the three official flags used by the Confederate States of America, of the numerous unofficial flags that were created and carried into battle by various Confederate commands, and of the various state flags that flew during the period 1861-1865. The three official flags were the "Stars and Bars" (adopted 4 March 1861), the "Stainless Banner" (adopted 1 May 1863), and a revised version of the "Stainless Banner" that was adopted on 4 March 1865. The author has had a deep and abiding interest in the flags of the Confederacy and has actually made many reproductions of the originals for use in battle reenactments. Perhaps the most famous of all Confederate flags was the so-called "Southern Cross," which was the Army of Northern Virginia's battle flag. Sixty-seven color illustrations and numerous black-and-white drawings complement the narrative nicely, as do the several appendixes.

• **THE WAR POETS**, by Robert Giddings (Orion Books, Crown Publishers, 1988. 192 Pages. \$24.95). Infantrymen do not usually read poetry. At least, not many will admit to doing so. But all Infantrymen should get hold of this book and read it. Robert Giddings is a literary critic who specializes in the literature of war. In this book, he recaptures--through the words of the war poets and through the judicious use of contemporary paintings, cartoons, and photographs--the horrors that will always be associated with World War I and with life in the frontlines that was known only to the lowly Infantryman. The book is divided into six roughly

equal parts, each devoted to a specific year from 1914 to 1919. It also has short biographies of the poets, a bibliography, and an index. The realities of war have never been better expressed than by the men and women whose words appear here.

Now here are a number of our longer reviews:

VIETNAM AT WAR: THE HISTORY, 1946-1975. By Lieutenant General Phillip B. Davidson, United States Army Retired (Presidio, 1988. 838 Pages. \$27.50). Reviewed by Doctor Joe P. Dunn, Converse College.

None of the previous memoir-histories -- by such senior officers as Westmoreland, Sharp, Bruce Palmer, Walt, and Momyers--or the interpretative accounts like those written by Colonel Harry Summers and General Dave Palmer approaches the value of this massive volume, the finest military history of the war now available.

An astute military historian, Davidson served as MACV J-2 between 1967 and 1969 under Westmoreland and Abrams. The insight this position afforded him is evident throughout his remarkable book, the product of 11 years of work.

Davidson debunks myth after myth as he explains how and why the war was fought as it was, the mistakes that were made, the successes and failures, and the misinterpretations rendered by the media, political figures, and other commentators.

He offers rare insight into the Olympian Westmoreland and the mercurial Abrams. He is equally perceptive about such figures as Presidents Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Nguyen Van Thieu; Robert McNamara; Henry Kissinger; Robert Komer; and Vietnamese generals on both sides. General Vo Nguyen Giap, however, whose career the author analyzes through three wars between 1946 and 1975, receives the greatest attention. In fact, one of the book's strongest aspects is the material about the communist side gained from captured documents, interrogation of former enemy soldiers, and recent North Vietnamese publications.

Candid, incisive, fair, and marvelously written, this is a fascinating book that I could not put down. The author speaks forthrightly, but the shrillness, rancor, and absolute sureness found in many high ranking memoirs is absent. His concluding chapter on why the United States lost the war is one of the best analyses that I have seen on the subject.

Not everyone will agree with everything in it, but, this cogently argued book is outstanding military history, and is recommended for both scholar and layman.

ANTHONY WAYNE: SOLDIER OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC. By Paul David Nelson (Indiana University Press, 1985. 368 Pages. \$27.50). Reviewed by Captain Michael E. Long, United States Army.

The author, a professor of history at Berea College, has written an exciting and informative biography of one of the most colorful heroes of the Revolutionary War, "Mad Anthony" Wayne.

Wayne participated in some of the most critical campaigns of the war and was given his nickname because of his daring and reckless courage. He was the hero of the recapture of Stony Point, New York, a British post located on the Hudson River.

The author also gives us a complete picture of Wayne's early life--his early training as a surveyor and his involvement in surveying and settling the area now called Nova Scotia. When the Revolution began, Wayne was recognized for raising a Canadian regiment, and he later served at Fort Ticonderoga. Toward the end of the war, he was with the Marquis de Lafayette during the Yorktown campaign.

This work is thoroughly researched and documented. It is also well illustrated with prints, photographs, and accurate maps that depict the major battles of the war. It is worthy of examination by all students of the American Revolution.

DUEL FOR THE GOLAN. By Jerry Asher, with Eric Hammel (Wil-

liam Morrow, 1987. 288 Pages. \$17.95). Reviewed by Lieutenant David B. Des Roches, United States Army.

Perhaps at no time since its inception had the fate of Israel been as threatened as it was during the October 1973 war. A massive surprise attack by the Syrians, who were later reinforced by Iraqis, Jordanians, and Moroccans, almost succeeded in capturing the vitally important Golan Heights, which commanded the close and vulnerable cities of Israel. This is the story that is detailed in this book.

Asher, an Israeli, did the research and his coverage of the Israeli participants in the battle is exhaustive. Unfortunately, the years he spent in his research were primarily limited to Israeli sources. Hammel, a professional military writer, was brought in by the publishers to add life to the narrative. The product is a fast-paced, panoramic account of human struggle, determination, and heroism.

The tactical and strategic discussions are held to a bare minimum. It is the human accounts that will amaze the general readers and will probably make professional soldiers wonder about their own character.

This is not a balanced account of the war and its causes, but it is a quick and enjoyable read.

NAPOLÉON'S MARSHALS. Edited by David G. Chandler (Macmillan, 1987. 560 Pages. \$35.95). Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel John C. Spence III, United States Army Reserve.

The era of Napoleon's military exploits continues to attract widespread interest in contemporary military history writings and studies.

One of the more fascinating aspects of this era is how Napoleon rewarded his subordinates not only with military honors but often with principalities to govern as well. One primary reward involved the granting of the status of a marshal, with the issuance of a symbolic baton.

In this book, David Chandler, head

of the Department of War Studies at the British Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, has edited an informative and well-written series of essays on the 26 men who carried the symbolic baton.

Each essay writer is an expert in military history, and each essay is a concise but adequate analysis of the career of the individual about whom he writes. The Marshals themselves came from a wide range of social backgrounds--the aristocracy, the 18th century bourgeoisie, and the working class. All were honored by Napoleon. Some died heroic deaths on the battlefield. Others, such as Ney and Murat (Napoleon's brother-in-law), suffered the degradation of death before firing squads. One, Marshal Soult, survived long after Napoleon's final fall; he served as minister of war during the monarchic restoration.

Each essay also contains an analysis of a major battle in which, for better or worse, the marshal figured prominently. These are well-written descriptions of the battles, with accompanying maps that reflect the dispositions of the opposing forces.

The military institution of marshal existed in medieval and monarchic France long before the advent of Napoleon, and it continued into the Bourbon restoration and into Republican France. In fact, as reflected in the appendix, the last such designation was made in 1984, posthumously, for Pierre Joseph Koenig, a World War II hero of the Free French. But the institution of marshal undoubtedly was at its apex during the Napoleonic era.

HISTORY OF THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE: THE FORMATIVE YEARS, 1947-1950. By Steven L. Rearden (Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1984. USGPO S/N 008-000-00405-6. 700 Pages. \$25.00). Reviewed by Doctor Charles E. White, USAIS Historian.

This is the first volume in a series that will eventually provide a detailed

history of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). As the title of this volume suggests, it examines the beginnings of the defense establishment, and, specifically, the unification of the armed forces under a central head and the development of policies and programs that would have a lasting effect on this country's national security.

It is a richly documented book, and the author has drawn on a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including many oral history interviews, to focus on the larger problems and issues of national security, the major personalities of the early years, and the intense rivalries between the services.

The massive 1947 reorganization of the defense structure caused considerable tension among the three armed services, and a bitter struggle soon broke out among the services over their roles and missions, an issue still without clear resolution. It was also during those early years that most service people began to see themselves as true professionals and not as followers of a special trade. All of these conditions made those years indeed "formative."

While this book is more narrative than analytical, it does tell a good story (which is what history means) and presents some interesting interpretations and conclusions. For the Infantryman, particularly one embarking on a tour at the Pentagon, this work can provide a basic understanding of our defense establishment. Most of the challenges facing staff occupants in Washington today have changed little since the "formative years."

GENERAL A. P. HILL: THE STORY OF A CONFEDERATE WARRIOR. By James I. Robertson, Jr. (Random House, 1987. 382 Pages. \$24.95). Reviewed by Major Don Rightmyer, United States Air Force.

A. P. Hill--his name reputedly was among the last words spoken by both Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, yet he has been referred to by one biographer as "Lee's forgotten general." This new biography of Hill

makes clear why he was considered so important by the generals under whom he served and helps better document his role in the South's fight.

"Little Powell" Hill, as he was called by those who knew him, was a native Virginian, born in Culpeper. A member of the West Point class of 1847, Hill saw combat action during the Mexican War and counted among his friends such later important Union figures as George B. McClellan and Ambrose P. Burnside.

Hill entered the Confederacy's military service as a colonel in the 13th Virginia Infantry and just missed seeing his first Civil War action at First Manassas. That experience came during the battle of Williamsburg in the Peninsula Campaign.

Promoted to brigadier general in early 1862, Hill was in Richmond when the new commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, R. E. Lee, assumed his position. Hill served closely with Lee from the Seven Days' campaign around Richmond until he was killed during the last week of the war.

The author, who has written extensively on the Civil War, provides here the same type of interesting, well written history that he has become so well known for during the past 30 years. He combines valuable insight into Hill's combat performance with a thorough investigation of the records concerning a venereal disease that Hill contracted while on leave from West Point. Hill remained in the field with his troops on many occasions when he was apparently in great pain and discomfort from the disease's advanced stages.

This is a welcome look at one of Lee's chief lieutenants and an excellent study of Civil War command and leadership.

THE FIRST PEACETIME DRAFT. By J. Garry Clifford and Samuel R. Spencer, Jr. (University of Kansas Press, 1986. 320 Pages. \$29.95). Reviewed by Captain Harold E. Raugh, Jr., United States Army.

Americans were shocked when the