

# REVIEWS

**Armored Car: A History of American Wheeled Combat Vehicles** by R.P. Hunnicutt, Presidio Press, Novato, CA, 2002, 340 pages, \$95.00 (hardcover).

In the Foreword, General Gordon R. Sullivan (Ret.), states that there is no better time for this book. He has his crosshairs zeroed in on the target as today's Army prepares to field a major force of functionally wheeled armored combat vehicles for the first time in history — the Stryker. These new vehicles are designed primarily for strategic deployability in low- to mid-intensity combat situations.

In Part I, the author begins his developmental history in 1898 with the introduction of Colonel Royal P. Davidson's Duryea light three-wheeled armored car, armed with a .30 caliber Colt machine gun. At first, the vehicles were fitted with a gunshield and later with armor plates. Only a few reached the Mexican border in 1916, but never saw combat. During World War I, a number of armored cars were developed and used by the British and Canadians. The American Expeditionary Force deployed none and, as a result, after the war there was a lack of interest. In the 1920s, the Army evaluated a series of stripped-down commercial vehicles referred to as "cross-country cars," which served with the cavalry's armored car troop as part of the Experimental Mechanized Force in 1928, and in 1930-1931 with the Mechanized Force. In 1931, the first armored car, the M1, was standardized. The vehicle was designed by the Ordnance Department and built by James Cunningham, Son, and Company. The M1 became a prominent part of the Mechanized Cavalry at Fort Knox. One of many interesting developmental histories in Hunnicutt's book is his discussion of the scout car, introduced in 1932 as a light-weight cavalry reconnaissance vehicle. As a result, heavy armored cars were deleted from Army requirements in 1937. The following year, the last M1 was delivered.

In Part II, Hunnicutt depicts the move to the lightweight M8 and M20 armored cars used for reconnaissance during World War II and the ill-fated superior M38. The M38 had greater cross-country mobility due to less weight and an excellent independent suspension system. A general board on mechanized cavalry units was established after the war to analyze equipment and tactics. The board recommended the improved M38 for the post-war Army over the light tank. Instead, Army doctrine gave the role of reconnaissance to light tanks. Subsequently, the Stilwell Board recommended that armored cars be eliminated from future Army requirements. However, the M8 and its variants served with the constabulary in Germany until after the Korean War.

In Part III, the author covers the Cold War period. The war in Vietnam brought about new requirements — a need for an armored car for escort duty and military police work. As a result, the Army turned to a commercial source.

In Part IV, the book details an interesting history on efforts to improve cross-country mobility with the Lockheed Twister, an interesting but inauspicious vehicle. The Army, however, was more interested in a track vehicle for scout and reconnaissance purposes. This part of the book also depicts various experimental programs and the development of the high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV) to replace the jeep. In addition, there is considerable historical information supported by numerous pictures on the development of the light armored vehicle (LAV) adopted by the Marine Corps. In the fall of 1999, an Army transformation program was announced with emphasis on wheeled combat vehicles. The author effectually moves his picture-documented history through this developmental process that eventually produces the Stryker variants. This time, the wheeled combat vehicle was designed for prompt force projection in full-spectrum operations. Concluding, Hunnicutt states "at long last, the wheeled combat vehicle will have a major role in the U.S. Army."

*Armored Car* is timely and a must read to understand the wide variety of vehicles developed by the U.S. military to satisfy user demands leading up to today's debate over strategic, operational, and tactical mobility. The book's organization will easily satisfy readers, including the arrangement of numerous interesting pictures and the references and research data. The view drawings by Michael Duplessis are an improvement. *Armored Car* is the last of 10 monumental volumes and worth the cost. In our lifetime, it is doubtful that a military historian will reach the depth of Hunnicutt's developmental history of American fighting vehicles.

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**Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life** by Carlo D'Este, Henry Holt & Company, New York, 2002, 848 pages, \$35.00.

Carlo D'Este has again produced a comprehensive, well documented military history to join his *Decision in Normandy*, *Fatal Decision*, and *Patton*, among others. With 100 pages of notes, 21 major primary sources, and 10 pages of secondary sources, this is a serious work of history. The professional military historian or soldier should consider *Eisenhower* a must read, however, it may be a bit much for recreational readers. D'Este thrives on detail, particularly concerning Eisenhower's relationships with his family, his mentors, the leaders of World War II, and his subordinates.

Eisenhower's family was generally antiwar and certainly less than enthusiastic about his choice of career. His brothers were type A personalities with differing goals and ambitions, which meant that they were seldom close to Dwight. His wife, Mamie, came from a wealthy Denver family, which did nothing

to prepare her for the hardships of Army life. When the going got tough, Mamie went home to her parents. She also spent much of World War II writing self-absorbed, whining letters; this reached a peak following John's graduation from the Military Academy. She wanted to ensure that John would not serve in combat even though he was an infantry platoon leader.

Eisenhower's mentors, particularly Fox Conner, Douglas MacArthur, and George Marshall, were the best of the best. Marshall, who was a deft talent spotter, was to become the most important of these. Major Dwight David Eisenhower made the pages of his famous black book, along with most of the Army's top World War II leaders. D'Este points out that Eisenhower was anything but the reluctant warrior seen in previous biographies. He was a very ambitious officer who, after spending World War I training troops in the United States, said "By God, from now on I am cutting myself a swath and will make up for this." He, of course, did just that, finishing number one at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and following his stellar performance during the Louisiana Maneuvers, becoming George Marshall's chief of war plans. This set the stage for his moving from lieutenant colonel to general in just over 16 months, and receiving his fifth star less than 2 years later.

Winston Churchill and Eisenhower maintained a healthy respect for each other throughout the war, although Eisenhower spent a great deal of time struggling against the Prime Minister's more innovative strategic initiatives, including his Balkan strategy, which seemed unabated even as the war drew to a close.

Bernard Law Montgomery was perhaps the most serious cross Eisenhower had to bear, especially after D-day. Montgomery, perhaps the most overrated general of World War II, constantly campaigned to take over command of allied ground forces from Eisenhower, while failing to take Caen on D-day (a D-day objective in his own plan — finally captured in late August), failing to close the Falaise Gap, failing to clear the Scheldt estuary (which might have significantly improved the logistics situation by opening the port of Antwerp), and most significantly, failing to succeed with Market-Garden. Montgomery's performance, or lack thereof, and Eisenhower's failure to relieve him, may have added months to World War II in Europe. Another serious adverse impact on SHAFE logistics, as D'Este points out, was Eisenhower's chief logistician J.C.H. Lee. Although Eisenhower was never happy with Lee's performance, he failed to replace him. An example of Lee's incompetence can be seen when he moved his headquarters from Normandy to Paris (using hundreds of trucks and thousands of gallons of gasoline), while Bradley's Army Group was stopped cold for lack of fuel.

Omar Bradley was an Eisenhower favorite, but even he was frustrated by his treatment

from his superior, specifically by the logistics priority given to Montgomery when 12th Army Group's way to Germany was wide open.

Bradley was also more than unhappy when Eisenhower gave all of 12th Army Group's troops, except the 3d Army, to Montgomery during the bulge. His long friendship with George Patton, was initially strengthened when Patton took over II Corps in North Africa from Lloyd Fredendall after Eisenhower waited far too long to relieve him. This, plus Patton's performance in Sicily, would have assured command in France if it had not been for the soldier-slapping incident, which unfortunately created problems for Eisenhower that were not appreciated.

D'Este does nothing to clear up the enigma of the relationship with Jacob Devers, the commander of the 6th Army Group. Eisenhower did not like him, and there are strong indications that the feeling was mutual.

Don't expect D'Este to clear up Eisenhower's "special relationship" with Kay Summersby. D'Este clearly believes their relationship was platonic, but he does little to support this position, except to note that her London lover was Major Dick Arnold (USMA 32), while she remained married to Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Summersby, who was serving in India.

D'Este paints a picture of Eisenhower as an intensely ambitious and self-confident officer with a fiery temper who was universally regarded as a smart, efficient, well-organized staff officer. However, such diverse observers as MacArthur, Montgomery, Bradley, and Patton seriously questioned his command ability.

Every book has a few shortcomings and this one is no exception. D'Este tends to occasionally leave the reader concerned about chronology as he skips back and forth in time and space with abandon. D'Este also tends to draw on many other authors' work quite frequently, which, at times, makes it difficult to follow the analysis and to determine whose work is whose.

The book ends relatively abruptly with the end of World War II in Europe. Perhaps this means that D'Este plans a second volume to cover Eisenhower's post-war activities. If so, it could fill the same void for that period that this tome does for World War II.

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**A Command Post at War, First Army Headquarters in Europe, 1943-1945** by David W. Hogan, Jr., U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, DC, 2000, 360 pages, \$40.00. Available online at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov/sb/sb-098.html>, S/N 008-029-00345-7

*A Command Post at War* is a new offering from the Center of Military History, which examines an area of military historical study

that has previously received little notice — the organization and workings of a higher level headquarters during conflict. Hogan's study specifically looks at the headquarters of First U.S. Army during its European campaign in World War II. Officers currently serving, or who expect to serve, on higher level military staffs should take note that this is a book worth their time.

At first glance, much of Hogan's material seems very familiar. After all, much has been studied and written about the western European Theater of World War II, and Hogan repeats much of that familiar story here. However, most of what has been written about the U.S. Army's war in Europe has told the story of Patton's Third Army, or provided the lofty perspective of General Eisenhower's SHAPE headquarters.

Hogan offers a slightly different perspective for those whose view has been colored by the emphasis placed on Patton's exploits or combat accounts at the tactical level. Hogan reports about the war in western Europe by relating the experiences of an Army staff, that had to cope with difficult operational, administrative, and logistical details to successfully bring thousands of soldiers and pieces of equipment across hundreds of square miles. And, because he writes about the First Army, the familiar story includes vignettes and characters about which readers may have less knowledge. First Army planned and executed the American part of the Allied invasion of German-held France, and then conducted operations in conjunction with other American and Allied armies. How well the Army commander and staff did this is the basis for Hogan's story.

The First Army staff included many II Corps veterans from the North Africa and Mediterranean campaigns, brought to England by General Omar Bradley, where they joined First Army staff members from stateside. This mixing created tension that Hogan argues never completely dissipated. In addition, several staff principals, including the Army G2 and G3, did not always get along. These petty animosities and jealousies affected how well the staff worked together, and thus, influenced how well the Army performed in operations. Hogan's portrayal of these officers, including Army commander Courtney Hodges, is not always complimentary. Nonetheless, Hogan argues that the Army performed competently, if not always brilliantly, during its operations. In some cases, like the final offensive after seizing the Remagen bridgehead, First Army's exploits rivaled anything done by other American armies during the war.

As our Army copes with similar problems in regional conflicts or operations other than war, staff officers may glean valuable lessons or insight from the experiences that Hogan records here. This well researched and written story of the First Army offers excellent insight into the complexities of running a large military headquarters in the midst

of conflict. While many of his observations may not surprise seasoned staff officers, Hogan's conclusions will confirm what many of us have learned from personal experience: that personal relationships and the commander's persona greatly influence the performance and, therefore, the success of a military organization. This book will certainly interest military historians and students with an interest in World War II, and should be given serious consideration as a study assignment for student officers in the Command and General Staff College.

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**The Secrets of Inchon: The Untold Story of the Most Daring Covert Mission of the Korean War** by Commander Eugene Franklin Clark, U.S. Navy (Retired), G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 2002, 325 pages, \$26.95.

This book, a remarkable narrative by a true hero of the "Forgotten War," details an operation conducted by the author, Commander Eugene Franklin Clark, prior to the amphibious landing at Inchon. Working in concert with two Korean officers, Clark spent 2 weeks, prior to the decisive battle of the Korean War, conducting invaluable amphibious reconnaissance and leading untrained villagers in commando raids on local communist forces. In a manuscript written for his family and published after his death, Clark weaves a readable tale that if presented as fiction would be hardly believable, yet describes a mission as daring, heroic, and strategically important as any in the history of the first major armed conflict of the Cold War.

The author, a World War II mustang, describes his mission in gripping detail, from planning and preparation, to his team's extraction shortly before the start of the invasion. While Clark is extreme in his modesty and effacement, his unspoken bravery and unwavering devotion to accomplishing his mission is clear. As the days go by after his team's insertion, Clark expertly enlists local villagers to aid in accomplishing his mission. Retaliatory communist incursions into the village grow in size and intensity for the duration of his mission, ending only with the arrival of the extraction force.

From clandestine reconnaissance, to organizing indigenous forces, to wartime governance of occupied territory, Clark's work could be read as a guerrilla warfare how-to manual. An invaluable addition to every warrior's library, this memoir should be a must read for anyone seeking insight into unconventional warfare, and the ability to overcome extreme adversity and personal hardship to accomplish the mission.

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