

more punitive and violent – aspects of both sides. Hence French is blunt about the role (and to some extent incompetence) of EOKA's 'enforcement terrorism' (p. 158-74) in sustaining its campaign, it may have killed 187 'traitors' and injured another 181, sometimes choosing deliberately public, demonstrative sites such as coffeeshops. On the other hand, Chapter 6 on 'The Nazi Methods of Hitler' (pp. 194-236 and the summary at p. 307) is a master class in analysing British limitation and toleration of abuse, severe methods of interrogation, and 'torture'. For this reader, at least, this chapter is the most compelling and the one with the most contemporary resonance. The book is particularly effective and scathing in its account of the whitewash in the aftermath of Mrs Cunliffe's murder in October 1959. Tens of Cypriots were beaten as soldiers took revenge, and three died (pp. 208-11). Even if accusations of British torture in Cyprus do not now reach the British courts, as they did for Kenya, issues such as why and how limitations on coercion fail, and why and how 'enquiries' are stymied, are of more than mere historical importance. French's chapter 6 and related sections on courts, law and abuses are therefore deeply relevant as well as superbly crafted and balanced pieces of scholarship.

In short, this is an authoritative and exhaustive resource for anyone who needs to understand the Cyprus emergency in its domestic and international aspects or is interested in issues surrounding the control of force and reactions to excessive force and losses of control.

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Mark S. Thompson, *Wellington's Engineers: Military Engineering in the Peninsular War 1808-14*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2015. Appendices, Notes, Bibliography, Index. 276pp. ISBN: 978-1-78-346363-3 Hardback. £25.00.

Detailed studies of the Peninsular War abound but, until recently, few considered *in depth* the individual components of Wellington's Army. William Napier's infantry-centric and xenophobic work on the war was significantly improved upon by Sir Charles Oman's seminal study but it is only recently that comprehensive works have been published on the cavalry (Fletcher, I., *Galloping at Everything*, Staplehurst, 1999) and the artillery (Lipscombe, N., *Wellington's Guns* Oxford, 2013). Consequently, a study and published work on Wellington's engineers was only a matter of time.

The subject was selected by the author for his PhD thesis and he has chosen to adapt and expand it for a wider audience. The bibliography bears testament to his significant research; most notably from the archives of the Royal Engineers' Museum where a number of new primary sources have been revealed. Thompson highlights

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the difficulties the corps of engineers endured in the run up to and during the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. These originated to a great extent from the nonsensical army command and administration system, a lack of resources and the somewhat insular approach of British military engineering. The first of these caused absurd frustrations for both Wellington and, amongst others, his field engineers. Furthermore, it resulted in the duplication of engineer organisations, for example the Royal Staff Corps which was formed in 1800 and reported to Horse Guards not the Board of Ordnance. This book skilfully highlights that struggle and portrays the role and rise of military engineering. It is a struggle that was not resolved or concluded for it was to be many decades before the Royal Military Artificers and the Royal Sappers and Miners were to amalgamate to become a single corps of Royal Engineers.

Unlike the infantry, cavalry and artillery (that became a combat support arm in the early twentieth century), the engineers were/are not a fighting component and, as such, Thompson could have chosen to tackle this work in two ways. Firstly, a detailed study of the key roles and responsibilities of the engineers during the Peninsular War superimposed freely over a template of the war; or, secondly, to go down the well-trodden path of using the war as the chronological framework onto which the engineer roles and achievements were overlaid and examined. By following the latter route his work is less comprehensive in nature. Arguably this makes it more appealing to a wider audience but it correspondingly lacks a level of detail that the more knowledgeable Napoleonic historian and reader may have found useful. Thompson adds three marvellous appendices covering Military Reconnaissance and Surveying, Military Bridging and Military Education but again I would have preferred to see these as an integral part the main body of the work and not tucked away as an afterthought. More positively, I found his analyses following the description of each siege particularly constructive and innovative.

Wellington's Engineers is a unique and splendid insight into the role and contribution of the Royal Engineers who enjoyed, by and large, a far better relationship with Wellington than their Gunner counterparts (and one could argue the cavalry as well). Wellington's relationship with his chief engineer (for most of the war) Richard Fletcher, is one that ebbs and flows with the successes and failures of the consecutive campaigns. Following the construction of the Lines of Torres Vedras, arguably the greatest military engineering achievement of the war, Fletcher can do no wrong but after the failures at the first two allied sieges at Badajoz the following year that relationship became strained. At the start of the Peninsular War the Royal Engineers consisted of only about 170 officers; a mere fifteen deployed with Arthur Wellesley to Portugal in 1808. It is not until the penultimate year of the war in 1813 that a company of the newly formed Royal Sappers and Miners makes an appearance. For the Commander Royal Engineers, and his engineer officers, it was an unremitting and

(often) unrewarding challenge, providing engineer advice and support against a backdrop of insufficient expertise, manpower and resources.

This is a very useful work and one which provides a marvellous insight into the Royal Engineers and military engineering in the Peninsula. It is not, however, exhaustive for there are still gaps to be filled in the area of a detailed study into military bridging (mobility and counter-mobility) in the Peninsula, a more comprehensive and up to date work on the Peninsular sieges, an examination of military survey and cartography during the war and a lesser work, by way of a comparison, of the French engineer resources and capabilities.

NICK LIPSCOMBE

Richard Overy, *A History of War in 100 Battles*, London: William Collins, 2014. Bibliography, Index. 384pp. ISBN: 978-0-00-745250-7. Hardback. £25.00.

As anyone who has casually explored the history shelves in the big book chains or glanced at the top sellers of the leading online retailers knows, military history books are in huge demand. Much of what is on offer is, however, of questionable quality, especially the lavishly illustrated coffee-table books dedicated to weapons, uniforms and battles that often appear in the run up to Father's Day and Christmas.

Richard Overy's *A History of War in 100 Battles* shows that a popular format and real scholarship can be combined into a richly illustrated and compelling survey that deserves a wide readership among enthusiasts and students alike. Capturing 6,000 years of military history in under 400 pages is no easy task. Doing so without conveying superficial Darwinian assumptions about war – that it has been a constant in human history because humans are by nature a violent and competitive animal – is an even harder task. As Overy rightly argues, the archaeological evidence shows that violence among human communities in the last 20,000 years has been sporadic and at times unusual. Warfare must therefore be explained in historical and cultural rather than evolutionary terms. The idea of 'battle' as a distinct event with its own rules, norms and choreography dates as far back as ancient Egypt. The study of how battles have been organised and conducted over the millennia reveals much about how the prevailing historical and cultural conditions of the time, especially the way in which political communities have organised themselves, shaped war. The sieges and stalemates of the late medieval period stand in sharp contrast, for example, with the mobility and firepower of contemporary war.

To make illuminating contrasts and to underline the constants about battle, Overy organises his short narratives of a hundred battles into six themes that usually