



The Shadow Men: The Leaders Who Shaped the Australian Army from the Veldt to Vietnam; Scorched Earth: Australia's Plan for Total War under Japanese Invasion in World War II

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Australia's postwar immigration scheme was 'visionary and, ultimately, successful' (201). This inconsistency in argument reveals an unresolved conflict of the author: Persian wants to critique Australian government policies (possibly with one eye on current debates) while at the same time laud the program for introducing ethnic diversity into Australia.

Methodologically, the author makes sustained use of archival material held at the National Archives of Australia and personal papers held at the National Library of Australia. Curiously, she under-utilises the twenty-two oral history interviews she conducted with DPs, which is a pity as this material would have added much-needed depth to the narrative of personal experiences. Unfortunately, Persian fails to include any direct reference to the voluminous and accessible UNRRA records held at the United Nations archives in New York, or the IRO records held in Paris, and instead relies on published materials. This is a significant omission, especially given the fact that the first third of *Beautiful Balts* details the UNRRA/IRO management of the camps and selection of DPs for resettlement, and it would have benefited considerably by the inclusion of more archival material.

There is much to admire about Jayne Persian's *Beautiful Balts*; however, this book represents a starting point rather than a definitive account. Hopefully, Persian (or other historians) can delve deeper into this fascinating topic, integrating international archival material with national and personal accounts.

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The Shadow Men: The Leaders Who Shaped the Australian Army from the Veldt to Vietnam.

Edited by Craig Stockings and John Connor. Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2017. Pp. 266. A\$34.99 paper.

Scorched Earth: Australia's Plan for Total War under Japanese Invasion in World War II.

By Sue Rosen. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2017. Pp. 284. A\$32.99 paper.

Several titles over the past fifteen years have sought to highlight the stories of lesser known key figures in the Australian army's history. Works such as James Wood's *Chiefs of the Australian Army* and Justin Chadwick's *Sword and Baton: Senior Australian Army Officers from Federation to 2001, Volume 1, 1900–1939*, have brought forth the contributions of more obscure senior officers from the first half of the twentieth century. These works have been welcomed for their balance and intellectual rigour against more populist biographies of well-known Australian military leaders, especially Sir John Monash. Fortunately, *The Shadow Men*, edited by Craig Stockings and John Connor, looks beyond luminaries like Monash and approaches each senior officer's biographical essay with a critical eye.

All contributors to the volume are military historians who understand the scope of command responsibility, exigencies of operational requirements, and the complexities of the politico-military machine. Combined, their scope is broad, covering officers from the immediate post-Federation period through to the conclusion of the Vietnam War. The officers featured are Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton; Major-General Sir William Bridges; General Sir Cyril Brudenell White; Major-General Gordon Legge; Brigadier John O'Brien; Lieutenant-General Sir John Northcott; Lieutenant-General Sir Sydney Rowell; Colonel Eustace Keogh; Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Daly; and Lieutenant-General Sir Mervyn Brogan. Each chapter allows more substantial military analysis than their respective *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entries.

Hutton was a giant of his day, yet is all but unknown now. His involvement in the formation of national defence policy places his influence on the post-Federation army above such luminaries as Harry Chauvel, John Monash and James McCay, making his apparent modern anonymity even more surprising. Abrasive and polarising, Hutton approached his job with exceptional competence, but lacked the political acumen to patiently convince doubters of the efficacy of his plans. This places him in sharp contrast to Northcott, for example, who worked closely with and for Thomas Blamey during World War II. Hutton's story places the pre-World War I era into better context at the politico-strategic level, and establishes that tensions between political intent and financial reality were a feature from

the very beginning. Similar trends can be discerned in later chapters too, as various senior officers faced the difficulty of managing government expectations within resource constraints.

Like many officers of the pre-World War I period, Bridges was a protégé of Hutton and his career was materially advanced by the association. His rise intersected with Legge's, who disagreed with Bridges' 'imperialist' outlook for Australian defence policy. Such revelations uncovered by these probing biographical studies allow the reader to better understand the frictions and competitiveness between army officers and bring into focus how they interacted with each other. The chapter on White by Peter Stanley, for example, illustrates how he cruelled the ambitions of others, ending Legge's operational command after Pozières and frustrating 'Pompey' Elliott's ambitions for promotion to Major-General. White's somewhat hagiographical reputation (established by C.E.W. Bean) is challenged and major new directions for research on White and his career are identified, including on the formation and transmission of orders within the Australian Imperial Force staff system. Many chapters suggest further opportunities for research for budding PhD students to break new ground. The volume also contains some of the last work written by the late Jeffrey Grey (Professor of History at UNSW, Canberra) – specifically, the chapters on O'Brien, Keogh and Daly.

This book is well researched and written; it situates these officers' careers within the context of their time, and serves as a 'tasting plate' for the generalist reader to learn about comparatively unknown figures in the army's history. Further, it is a welcome alternative to uncritical military titles filling bookshelves nationally. *The Shadow Men* deserves better quality print stock and final production values from the publisher, as the review copy had marginal quality paper and some pages had less than sharp print.

Sue Rosen's *Scorched Earth* is based on records found in New South Wales (NSW) Forestry files she discovered while researching another project. The book uncovers the NSW government's detailed plans for the denial of resources to the enemy – a scorched earth policy – in the event of Japanese invasion in 1942–43. It makes fascinating reading, especially to those familiar with NSW geography.

Driven by the forceful personality and vision of Edward Swain, Commissioner for Forests in

NSW, planning for resource denial was meticulous and impassioned. His January 1942 paper on the matter convinced the NSW premier to install Swain as chair of the 'Scorched Earth Sub-Committee'. Under this official body and with the participation of the military authorities, a formal policy eventually received government endorsement in November 1942. By then, the critical threat of Japanese invasion had passed, though Prime Minister Curtin formally declared the risk had passed in June 1943. The work of senior army officers like Northcott informed the strategic level discussion over civilian and military preparation for invasion that men like Swain were planning. The works reviewed here, therefore, are in some ways complementary for the era and themes they cover.

Within the context of Japanese midget submarine attacks in Sydney Harbour and bombing across northern Australia, the NSW Scorched Earth Sub-Committee drafted very specific and detailed plans, outlining which areas were to be defended (predominantly industrial centres), those that should be evacuated, where, and in what manner. Rosen has reproduced Swain's initial paper and the documents of the Scorched Earth Sub-Committee to illustrate just how serious the fear of invasion was. While Peter Stanley has convincingly demonstrated that the Japanese were not planning to invade (see his *Invading Australia*, Penguin, 2008), such fears of invasion were still tangible for an Australian public denied access to Allied intelligence assessments and intercepts.

Most of the book is the transcription of key policy documents directing the planning of the scorched earth policy. These are valuable resources, though serious researchers may prefer to consult the originals. Rosen provides a short contextual introduction to each section of document reproduced, including the 'General Citizen Code', 'General Industry Code', and 'Denial of Resources to the Enemy': Jetties and Wharves; Watercraft; Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants; Motor Transport; Motor and Repair Equipment; Coal Mines; and Public Utility Services. Combined, the work is expansive and detailed, covering everything from the recommended destruction of machinery to the role of the Volunteer Defence Corps in guarding mooring sites. The documents are explicit on the public's obligation to participate in resource denial to the enemy, something Swain referred to as 'total civilian collaboration in a

master plan' (5). Every civilian effort to destroy or sabotage was designed to hinder the enemy and buy time for the armed forces to mount a defence and eventual counter-attack.

The publisher's claim of the book being 'Australia's secret plan' is misleading as the work doesn't cover national planning, but Rosen's book is essential reading for both World War II and NSW historians. As evidence for Australia's preparedness for invasion, it is a valuable source. However, due to its focus on NSW, it will have limited appeal to those without a good knowledge of that state. The book would also have benefited from an index for readers keen to know what plans were prepared for specific areas of NSW.*

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Apologies and the Legacy of Abuse of Children in 'Care': International Perspectives.

Edited by Johanna Sköld and Shurlee Swain.
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
Pp. 217. A\$127.25 cloth.

What drives someone to abuse the body, mind or spirit of a child in their care? Alongside comparable sentient creatures, humans seem to distinguish themselves by their capacity for cruelty towards their own offspring and the children of others. Explaining why is a difficult task. As historians, we can search in vain for the motivations that might drive an individual abuser, or look for other clues in the institutional or private settings in which that abuse takes place. It is a murky task, especially where records are missing or incomplete. Much clearer to see are the long-term effects that mistreatment, cruelty and assault can have on children whose lives are marked by it. In a memoir published shortly before he died in 2017, the veteran ABC journalist Mark Colvin asked a pointed question that arose from his experience

of being arbitrarily caned at his English prep school: 'Sexual abuse of children is rightly at the forefront of people's minds now, but isn't it time people also recognised the profound trauma that sadomasochist brutality, even without an overt sexual aspect, wreaks on small boys and girls?'

Undoubtedly it is time to take up that question. Since the end of the Cold War, a feature of political life in the West has been the myriad attempts to bring authorities to account for the abuse of children in the 'care' of the state or religious organisations. Australian readers will recall national inquiries into the Stolen Generations, child migrants, children in out-of-home care and, most recently, institutional responses to child sexual abuse. Often, those inquiries have been accompanied by victim and survivor campaigns for official apologies from representatives of the state. In this regard, the Australian experience has been replicated elsewhere throughout the world.

In *Apologies and the Legacy of Abuse of Children in 'Care'*, Swedish economic historian Johanna Sköld and Australian social historian Shurlee Swain (my PhD supervisor) have marshalled an impressive collection of authors to form the latest book in Palgrave's series on the history of childhood. Together, they reflect on some of the particularities and general trends that can be drawn from looking at the ways that states, historians and other professionals approach questions of justice for care-leavers and those who have been abused. The book's contributors focus their attention on late capitalist nations that include Canada, The Netherlands, Denmark, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden and Australia. They provide a useful account of the ways that commissions of inquiry around the world observe and borrow from one another and are modified to suit conditions in those individual states. *Apologies* combines its national case studies with broader discussions on historical method and the politics of apologies. Some of its best chapters are on the lessons that can be learned from collaborating with care-leavers and working with evidence that relates to trauma. These contributions would provoke excellent discussions in seminars with Honours or Masters students.

There are two major points that recur throughout the book. These relate to the sites

* The views expressed in this review are the author's own.