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American Airpower Comes of Age: General Henry H. "Hap"
Arnold's World War II Diaries (review)

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personalities and they help explain a number of the campaign's early failures. He pulls no punches regarding rivalries among leaders and he has some refreshingly frank comments about Anglo-American mutual disdain. The Tunisian campaign brought forth many changes of strategy and much replacement of commanders, matters that Atkinson handles judiciously, placing blame among many, as well as on inexperience and confusing chains of command. He excels in sensitive coverage of events—for example, animating the formulaic “heavy casualties” with vivid pictures of hopeless attacks, senseless slaughter, and the agony of dying men.

While unquestionably well informed on global grand strategy, Atkinson minimizes war problems as viewed from Washington or London. At the Casablanca Conference he depicts Eisenhower, tired and unsure of himself, vying with the well-prepared British chiefs over objectives and means, but presents little on Churchill and Roosevelt who, after a meeting, “blessed the agreement and returned to their cocktails” (p. 289). But his conclusions on Casablanca, while brief (pp. 297–99), convey the essence of the new American-British relationship and the leaders’ uncertainties—“the compromises at Anfa had been greased with ambiguity.”

Atkinson is not trying to cover everything that happened in North Africa—the book is essentially an accolade to the American army and its commanders, evolving from untried and naïve in November 1942 to hardened, blooded veterans six months later. “No soldier in Africa had changed more—grown more—than Eisenhower” (p. 533). “Troops had learned the importance of terrain, of combined arms, of aggressive patrolling, of stealth, of massed armor. They now knew what it was like to be bombed, shelled, and machine-gunned and fight on” (p. 537). This is a fascinating work which any reader can enjoy, and professional historians will find perusal of it eminently worth their while.

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American Airpower Comes of Age: General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold’s World War II Diaries. Edited by John W. Huston. 2 volumes. Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2002. ISBN 1-58566-094-9 and -093-0. Photographs. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xix, 568/xviii, 440. \$47.00.

“Hap” Arnold was the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Air Forces (AAF) during World War II and the only American airman ever to wear five stars. Although biographies of Arnold have appeared, his papers in the Library of Congress have been underutilized by scholars, due largely to their poor organization and indexing.

Major General “Jack” Huston, a retired head of the Air Force History Office, alleviates this problem by editing and annotating Arnold’s wartime

diaries. Because Arnold only kept a diary on the twelve occasions he traveled out of the country, Huston has provided extensive prologues and epilogues to each chapter—as well as a lengthy biographical sketch—to fill in the blanks. In fact, Huston's commentaries, based on Arnold's voluminous official files and a host of other sources, are twice as lengthy as the diaries themselves. The result is a masterful effort that sheds more light on Arnold's wartime activities than has existed previously. That's the good news.

Unfortunately, the diaries themselves are surprisingly unrevealing. First, because they were trip diaries, they cover only a small portion of Arnold's tenure as commanding general. Also, he tended to be so busy on these trips his notes were short—sometimes only words or phrases—and intended more to jog his memory later than to accurately record activities and impressions. In addition, because secrecy was imperative, Arnold seldom referred to classified subjects or even discussed key personalities. Finally, Huston concedes that Arnold was not a deep or sophisticated thinker. He recorded what he saw and heard, not what he thought. In short, the diaries are a disappointment.

Nonetheless, Huston illuminates important events while also putting them in context. His research and insights are exceptional. Thus, for example, he provides a detailed and authoritative account of aircraft production planning prior to the war, and how those plans were shaped by the British. Arnold resented British influence in U.S. production schedules, because he believed it retarded AAF growth. When he expressed his displeasure over this situation, he found himself in hot water with the Roosevelt administration, which strongly supported military aid to Britain. Arnold's standing suffered as a result, and it appeared he would be pushed into retirement early in the war. From this rocky start Arnold matured; by 1945 and his fifth star he had earned the steadfast support of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, Undersecretary of War for Air Robert A. Lovett, Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, and even the President himself.

Arnold's personality, both his strengths and weaknesses, emerge in this account. Partly because of the difficulties with the British over aircraft production, he remained critical of British performance throughout the war, but his opinion of the French was even lower. At the same time, the diaries reveal the continuous and often heated debates with the Navy over both strategy and resource allocation. There were persistent complaints from the Pacific that the Navy, who controlled the logistics system there, deliberately rationed supplies to AAF units in an effort to reduce their effectiveness. Arnold thought it ironic that the Navy constantly denigrated airpower in general and long-range bombing in particular, yet worked incessantly at trying to gain greater control over such assets in the Battle of the Atlantic and throughout the Pacific campaigns.

Arnold was a tireless worker who drove himself and those around him to exhaustion. He suffered four heart attacks during the war, and was constantly urged to rest and delegate duties to his subordinates. This Arnold found difficult. He insisted on making decisions about even the most mun-

dane matters, never adequately training his staff or potential successors to handle increased responsibility. As a consequence, on a visit to Europe in April 1945 he received a cable from Lovett urging him to return home immediately: "since my departure AAF has been ignored in all high-level conferences." Much of that was Arnold's own fault.

Overall, this is an extremely valuable effort, even if largely because of Huston's extensive and insightful commentary. Arnold emerges as a far-sighted, determined and driven leader who pushed the AAF relentlessly to victory. This is an intensely human portrait, revealing that Arnold's disorganized but creative and frenetic mind was a source both of inspiration and confusion. This is the best account of Hap Arnold's wartime activities we are likely to see.

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The Shadow Warriors of Nakano: A History of the Imperial Japanese Army's Elite Intelligence School. By Stephen C. Mercado. Dulles, Va.: Brassey's, 2002. ISBN 1-57488-443-3. Map. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xix, 331. \$27.95.

Japanese military intelligence during the Second World War is an important topic infrequently investigated in-depth by western scholars. In particular, training for and the execution of Imperial Japanese clandestine operations are obscure and murky areas of study. Nevertheless, Stephen Mercado, a former Central Intelligence Agency analyst and Asia specialist, admirably assembles, focuses, and delineates a wealth of material, often Japanese-language works, to produce this insightful volume.

The Nakano School, named after its location in the Nakano area in northwestern Tokyo, was founded in 1938 for the purpose of training student soldiers in nonconventional military arts, such as subversion, espionage, and guerrilla warfare, but also in the art of intelligence gathering. At the outset the small school (there were only about 2,500 graduates by 1945) struggled for funding and recognition among Japan's large military forces. Moreover, the regular Japanese army, not unlike many foreign armies of the age, held the intelligence field in low regard.

Earlier in the war there were a few occasions when Nakano-trained "shadow warrior" graduates were given opportunities to demonstrate the potential of guerrilla tactics against stronger forces. For example, Nakano paratroopers captured oil fields in the Netherlands East Indies intact before Dutch demolition teams had a chance to destroy the refineries and oil fields. Nonetheless, only in 1943, when the war was clearly turning against Japan, did the Nakano School receive significant recognition by the Imperial Army Staff and become sought after for training commandos.

Nakano graduates, although always small in numbers, carried out