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Command and Cohesion: The Citizen Soldier and Minor Tactics
in the British Army, 1870-1918 (review)

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they stood apart from their civilian peers. As with some veterans today, they found that it is possible to physically leave the service yet, psychologically, remain attached to the comradeship that can never be replaced in civilian society.

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Command and Cohesion: The Citizen Soldier and Minor Tactics in the British Army, 1870–1918. By M. A. Ramsay. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002. ISBN 0-275-96326-8. Tables. Figures. Notes. Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xii, 246. \$54.95.

In *Command and Cohesion*, M. A. Ramsay attempts to synthesize military and intellectual history to provide a better understanding of British military thinking and practice in the years leading up to and during World War I. Liberally adapting the Kuhnian model of scientific development, Ramsay explores the paradigmatic shift which took place in the British military establishment, specifically the infantry, as it was forced to leave behind the era of “small wars” and find a new purpose on the continental battlefields of the Great War.

In the first half of the book, Ramsay presents a broad survey of British and, more generally, European military cultural and tactical change in the nineteenth century. Starting with Napoleon Bonaparte and G. W. F. Hegel and ending with Garnet Wolseley and John Ruskin, the author presents an interesting, although at times chaotic, analysis of the interactions of psychological, technological, and cultural factors which shaped military thought. Ramsay tells us that, ultimately, a study of this sort “must rest on the values of the British military community.” Yet just what these values are remains unclear in these chapters. There is little or no discussion of the interplay of muscular Christianity and volunteerism, the cult of athleticism, Social Darwinism, and the growth of militarism—all profound trends of the late nineteenth century which shaped the values of the military community. And perhaps more surprisingly for a work of this kind, a discussion of the impact, or lack thereof (as Ramsay informs us), of Sandhurst and especially the Staff College on both the military community and on military thought is missing. Although Ramsay recognizes the importance of military theorists like J. F. Maurice and G. F. R. Henderson, he fails to draw on the impact that they and others had as Staff College professors on such future World War I notables as Ian Hamilton, Douglas Haig, Julian Byng, and Henry Wilson.

As the focus of the book narrows in its last two chapters, *Command and Cohesion* becomes a more valuable source of analysis. Ramsay's exploration of changing British infantry tactics and training is thoughtful and engaging. Numerous tables and diagrams clearly illustrate an often difficult subject for even a specialist. But the general reader as well should have little difficulty

understanding the tactical “paradigmatic crisis” which the British infantry faced in 1914. Indeed, *Command and Cohesion* as a whole may be better suited to the general reader interested in minor tactics in the British Army than to the professional looking for insight into how these tactics and the process of their change reflect British military thinking and culture.

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German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial. By John Horne and Alan Kramer. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002. ISBN 0-300-08975-9. Maps. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xv, 608. \$40.00.

This impressive, multilayered study is a reexamination of the violent opening stages of World War I. From the war’s first weeks, as German armies plunged through Belgium and France to realize the sweeping victory charted in the Schlieffen Plan, reports spread of horrible atrocities against civilians committed by invading forces: summary mass executions, arson, use of “human shields,” rapes, and deportations. In the ensuing propaganda war, the Allies cited these reports as evidence of German barbarism. The Kaiser’s diplomats and generals denounced them as fabrications. In the disillusionment with great causes that followed this “war to end all wars,” many in Western Europe and the United States came to believe that the stories had indeed been manipulative propaganda sponsored by their governments.

In this study, however, the authors return anew to the original sources to reexamine an entire range of questions concerning German actions in 1914. They conclude that there indeed were over 6,400 civilians deliberately killed in the invasion from August to October 1914. To establish these concrete facts, they critically survey a variety of sources: records of Belgian, French, and German investigative committees, diaries, regimental histories, and contemporary press reports, substantiating in detail the claims of atrocities. The book includes excellent maps, vivid illustrations of propaganda, and an appendix with a detailed database of incidents showing locations and army units involved. The authors argue that the German reaction was caused by a mass delusion gripping the invading army of a million men: the false conviction that they faced a mobilized civilian populace resisting their onslaught with guerrilla tactics. The archetypal figure of the “franc-tireur,” an invisible sharpshooter lurking in ambush (as in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71) was “the unacceptable alter ego of the nation in arms” (p. 140) for the self-consciously elite German officer caste. In response, the army took brutal reprisals against civilians.

These human casualties, and the destruction of famous sites like the library of Louvain, soon became notorious. Rumors were supplemented by legends which were not true but symbolically expressed deep fears. The