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The Army Times Book of Great Land Battles: From the Civil War to the Gulf War

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diplomacy, economics, politics, and preparations than to the battles themselves. The text starts well before U.S. involvement, with a discussion of the roots of the Cuban revolution. We see that the Spanish played a role similar to that in which the U.S. found itself during the Vietnam War. Military preparations receive a thorough description, with no attempt to gloss over problems, which included a minuscule standing army, prejudice, poor logistics, and disease. The state of U.S. military preparedness may seem almost comical to the modern reader. Smith spends a good deal of time on the domestic situation in Spain and describes that nation's attempts to marshal its forces. However, once the conflict begins, Smith falls into a more familiar mode, giving the U.S. the lion's share of space and the most complete coverage. He offers clear descriptions of the blockade of Cuba, the American expedition to Santiago, and the battle of Manila. Smith takes pains to examine the appalling and nearly total lack of cooperation between U.S. naval and land forces, an object lesson for those who object to "jointness."

Modern American ties with the Philippines are rooted in this conflict, and it is illuminating to see how differently U.S. forces dealt with Cuban revolutionaries, who were treated (albeit reluctantly) as allies, and Filipino guerrillas, who were treated as a threat almost from the start. The book ends with a thorough discussion of the peace negotiations and the politics behind them, as well as an exploration of the peacetime trends set in motion during the conflict.

Studying the Spanish-American War sheds light on our long involvement in the affairs of the Caribbean and points to the uneven distribution of wealth that lies at the root of the region's troubles. Professor Smith has done an excellent job of illuminating the history of the war. It remains to be seen whether we can learn from it.

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Morelock, J.D. *The Army Times Book of Great Land Battles: From the Civil War to the Gulf War*. New York: Berkley, 1994. 331pp. \$29.95

Since peace makes poor reading, *The Army Times Book of Great Land Battles* will be certain to please those who enjoy reading about war without getting dirty. The author has selected fourteen land battles (billed on the dustjacket as "the battles that redefined modern warfare") that he believes "changed the nature of both warfare and politics."

Understandably subjective in approach, Colonel Morelock's book is nonetheless an eager attempt to clarify the importance of battle on land in the shaping of strategy and policy from 1863 to 1991. As an Army officer and historian with two other books to his credit, Morelock has put together a simple, straightforward description of Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Sedan, Port Arthur, Tannenberg, Verdun, Meuse-Argonne, Stalingrad, the Bulge, Okinawa, Korea, Dien Bien Phu, the

Yom Kippur War, and the one-hundred-hour war in the Gulf.

Included in each battle section is a vignette of a participant and an overview of the historical perspective and the weapons and tactics of the opponents. The bulk of the book is, of course, about the battles themselves, a narrative account of each engagement's events from start to finish. For such an immense undertaking, this is a small book, only 320 pages of text; naturally, the space allocated for each battle is small. Consequently, this is not a scholarly, in-depth analysis of land battles; rather, it is more a layman's primer, similar to the "Classics Illustrated" comic books of years past.

Despite its promotional hype and self-stated goal of becoming "required reading for the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College," *Great Land Battles* does not qualify for that status. For readers new to the subject of war and to military history, this is a brilliantly organized, brief, and simply stated history that serves as an introduction to modern land warfare. More experienced, critical readers will quickly see the book's shortcomings.

Morelock's selection of land battles is both predictable and refreshing. Gettysburg is certainly a predictable pick; it appears on nearly every American historian's list. Stalingrad is another familiar selection, nothing new here. However, it is refreshing to see Morelock choose several other significant but obscure engagements, like Sedan (1870), Port Arthur (1905), and Tannenberg (1914). In fact, Morelock's chapter on Tannenberg is

clearly the best in the book, the most insightful, entertaining, and instructive.

As Morelock moves into the World War II era, however, the choice of land battles becomes murky and less focused. Stalingrad and the Battle of the Bulge are straightforward, but Okinawa as a land battle cannot truly be divorced from the naval fighting that raged while the soldiers and Marines struggled ashore. The author treats Korea as one giant land battle, but his own writing makes it clear that what he describes, 1950 to 1953, was in fact a campaign, encompassing the battles of Task Force Smith, Pusan, and Inchon, and also the series of battles up to the Yalu River and back to the 38th parallel.

Also, the chapter on the Yom Kippur War (1973) cannot be considered a single land battle; even Morelock deals separately with the fighting in the Sinai and that for the Golan Heights, two distinctly different battles. The final chapter, on the "100 Hour AirLand Battle" of the Gulf war (1991), is a well presented and concise account of the ground operations of that war. However, as with Okinawa, Korea, and the Yom Kippur War, it is too narrowly focused on the land battle, which cannot be legitimately separated from all the other aspects of truly modern warfare—air power, naval forces, intelligence, and electronic warfare.

This book takes on too big a challenge for its size. Probably most lacking is a clear understanding of the roles of the commanders in these land battles. Command personalities on the opposing sides are treated superficially in most cases, and that deficiency eliminates much of

the style, color, and character from Morelock's analyses. A collection of excellent photographs and adequate maps cannot bring *Great Land Battles* up from the general-reader category to the level it claims. If this were a paperback selling for ten dollars, it would be a bargain. As it is, *Great Land Battles* is a good idea carried out in a workmanlike way, but it falls short of its greater potential.

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Howse, Derek and Thrower, Norman J.W., eds. *A Buccaneer's Atlas: Basil Ringrose's South Sea Wagoner, A Sea Atlas and Sailing Directions of the Pacific Coast of the Americas, 1682*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992. 314pp. \$75

In the centuries during which Spain controlled the Pacific coasts of America, Spanish officials took care to guard carefully the knowledge that their experienced pilots and seamen had gained about those coasts, as it was the kind of knowledge that an enemy could use in making an attack. Little of this information reached English or Dutch map makers directly. In those days, it was as rare and unusual to find a set of sailing directions as it would later be to find an enemy code book. For an Englishman to find such information in the seventeenth century probably involved a tale of adventure as well as an intellectual and hydrographical coup.

Among the manuscript maps and charts in the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich there is just such

an unusual set of sailing directions for the Pacific coast of South America, drawn about 1682. Two years before, a band of English pirates under Captain Bartholomew Sharpe had crossed the Isthmus of Darien on foot, passing through the hot, humid rain forests of easternmost Panama to reach the Pacific coast. There they attacked Spanish shipping and reaped a harvest for themselves, although one marked by many setbacks. Sharpe and his band stole a Spanish ship and became the first Englishmen to sail from the Pacific to the Atlantic, eventually returning to England via the West Indies. The story was very well known at the time, and the most popular version of the day may be found in the second volume of Exquemelin's classic account, *Buccaneers of America*.

Basil Ringrose, one of the buccaneers with Sharpe, wrote the journal that was revised and edited for the book under review. Among Ringrose's lesser-known accomplishments was to copy the Spanish charts and sailing directions, translating them into English. Another Englishman, William Hack, used Ringrose's work to produce a very famous atlas in 1683-1684. The book at hand publishes for the first time a facsimile of Ringrose's work, bringing us closer to what the original Spanish document might have looked like. Ringrose's "wagoner" covers the Pacific coast from Cape Mendocino in California southward to the Galapagos Islands and Cape Horn. It is a fascinating collection of information and a reflection of late seventeenth-century knowledge of the region, including a