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## We Shall Return! MacArthur's Commanders and the Defeat of Japan

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At every turn we find Good (guess who) thwarted by the emperor or his nefarious court. Eichelberger should have gotten more stars, more medals, more fame, and the bigger army with the bigger missions. We are asked to believe that the Bataan Gang spent more time polishing the MacArthur legend and spiting Eichelberger than thinking about how to defeat Japan. It is unfortunate that the author treats professional reputation as a zero-sum game requiring the diminution of other reputations to enlarge that of his subject. He overlooks in Eichelberger the very faults he condemns in MacArthur and his staff. In his first chapter Shortal tells us that Eichelberger transferred from the infantry to the adjutant general corps in his bid for promotion and to court his patron; later he transferred back to the infantry for the same reason: to get ahead. It is permissible even for the most ardent admirer to note that one's hero has feet of clay. Our concern is history, not canonization. Courting favor was not unusual behavior in the army of the period between the two great wars of this century. See George Patton's letters and diaries to learn the art of unabashed apple polishing.

It seems to this reviewer that Eichelberger is yet another fine product of the tiny U.S. Army of the 1920s and 1930s that somehow prepared middle grade officers—most of them quite ordinary men—for impressive performances of duty at the highest levels in a great crusade. Those concerned with

national security into the 21st century might ponder how it was done and ask if we are getting it right in our day. Because Shortal evokes reflections like these, *Forged by Fire* can be read profitably by both the general reader who cares about his nation's well-being and the specialist in security issues.

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Leary, William M., ed. *We Shall Return! MacArthur's Commanders and the Defeat of Japan*. Lexington, Ky.: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1988. 305pp. \$25

Douglas MacArthur did not reconquer the Philippines alone! That does not qualify as man-bites-dog news, but if there is a theme in *We Shall Return*, it is that many of MacArthur's subordinate commanders were competent men and he had the capability to listen to them and take their advice.

Dr. William M. Leary edited this anthology of biographical essays, written by an impressive array of authors, on the principal leaders who helped in the Southwest Pacific campaign to defend Australia and then recover the Philippines.

Probably the best chapter in the book is the well-documented scene-setter by Stanley Falk on Douglas MacArthur himself. Falk clearly calls the "Dugout Doug" appellation a slander. Equally clearly he assesses MacArthur's claim to having the

shortest casualty lists as a myth. Most serious are Falk's charges that MacArthur's self-interested attitude inhibited the development of unity of command and a unified, better strategy against Japan.

Unlike Falk's, most of the other chapters are infected with hero worship. Donald Goldstein of the Air Force Academy calls USAAF General Ennis Whitehead a "genius," which is rather extravagant given that he was working for General George Kenney, whom Herman Wolk identifies as the "first among equals"—and this in the theater that distinctly did not have first call on either materiel or men. The authors of chapters on ground generals (Walter Kreuger, Thomas Blamey of Australia, Robert Eichelberger) also admire their subjects. So do those dealing with the admirals (Thomas Kinkaid and Daniel Barbey). For the most part, the sketches deal with events that long ago were competently covered in official publications. Little is told about what made these leaders the men that they were, nor about how they managed their relationships with MacArthur. Except for the chapter on Whitehead, which contains many mistakes, all are well edited and all are supported by good documentation and bibliographical essays.

If one desires a comprehensive understanding of the Southwest Pacific campaigns, the official histories and many others are better sources than this book. For a comprehensive understanding of what made

MacArthur and the men around him tick, then some of the MacArthur biographies, particularly that by D. Clayton James, are to be preferred—even if they take more time to read.

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Dunn, William J. *Pacific Microphone*.  
College Station, Tex.: Texas  
A&M Univ. Press, 1988. 399pp.  
\$19.95

The wartime memoirs of military and naval commanders, alas, too often are defensive in tone, dreary in style, and wanting in human-interest stories. On the other hand, the reminiscences of many war correspondents are rewarding as vivid, anecdotal, you-are-there reading. It would be difficult to find a finer example of the latter genre than *Pacific Microphone*. William J. Dunn was the first editor of CBS News and represented that network as its senior radio news correspondent in the Pacific War. In his book, which is based on his personal papers and diaries as well as on his broadcast scripts of the era, Dunn graphically describes his wide-ranging itinerary of 1941-1945, principally in General Douglas MacArthur's Southwest Pacific theater (and, in a brief epilogue, during the first six months of the Korean War).

Dunn's assignments during the Second World War took him from Chungking to Melbourne and from Rangoon to Guadalcanal and