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## Surfboats and Horse Marines

W.S. Pullar Jr

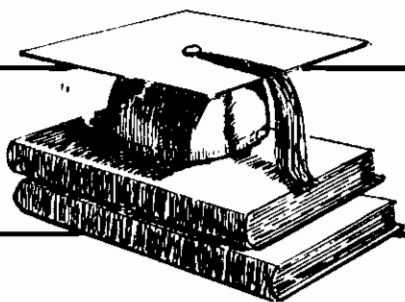
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## PROFESSIONAL READING

Bauer, K. Jack, *Surfboats and Horse Marines*. Annapolis, Md.: United States Naval Institute, 1969. 279p.

K. Jack Bauer, Associate Professor of History at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is an authority on U.S. military history and well acquainted with the naval service from his previous positions as Head of the Operational History Section in the Department of the Navy and as Historian for the U.S. Marine Corps. His work, *Surfboats and Horse Marines*, is an attempt to present in one volume a detailed history of the naval operations that occurred during the Mexican War (1846-1848). He has organized his work in two separate parts—the first deals with the war in the east, the Gulf of Mexico, and the second with the western war, the Pacific Ocean. This method of presentation appears quite suitable since the simultaneous actions in both theaters were unrelated, and no attempt was made to coordinate the operations of the Home Squadron in the Gulf with those of the Pacific Squadron.

The author's easy style, thorough research, and extensive knowledge of naval matters ensure interesting reading. Of particular importance are the comprehensive discussions of future Civil War naval leaders, of fleet logistical support, and the development of an amphibious body within the U.S. Navy. Although scant attention has been paid to the naval operations of the Mexican War, it was here that the character and career of such men as David G. Farragut, David D. Porter, Samuel F. DuPont, and Raphael Semmes were molded for

the next war. Here too the naval commanders and the Department of the Navy were tested in their ability to adequately plan for and maintain logistical support for squadrons at sea during hostilities. Both were found to be completely unprepared for the task. In the Home Squadron, Commodore Connor introduced specially constructed surfboats, a self-contained Naval Brigade, and detailed procedures for landing General Scott's force at Veracruz. This excellent opportunity for the development of an amphibious doctrine within the Navy was soon lost to history.

In his conclusions the author quotes Alfred T. Mahan's statement on the prime objective of a navy, "that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it, . . . and which, . . . closes the highways by which commerce moves to and from the enemy's shores." Bauer maintains that if Mahan's definition of the Navy's role is correct, then the U.S. Navy was eminently successful in performing its mission in the Mexican War.

This naval history is interesting and informative, but there are a few minor observations, both pro and con, that are relative to the book as a historical work. The author's selection of a title is very misleading; it implies a thorough study of both naval and marine actions. In his preface he states that his narrative "deals only with naval operations" and these operations received the thrust of his labor. The marine actions take the form of an appendix to the shipboard events. For those interested in the

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record of marine participation in these engagements, see Clyde H. Metcalf's *A History of the United States Marine Corps*, New York: Putnam's, 1939; or R.D. Heinl's *Soldiers of the Sea*, Annapolis, Md.: U.S. Naval Institute, 1962.

Although some historians may find fault with the author's lack of footnotes, his documentation in the bibliographic notes and the valuable material contained in the appendices more than compensate for this slight omission. The only additional comment that might be made about the material presented by Professor Bauer concerns the quality of the maps included in the text. This may be a personal preference, but more detailed maps would help the reader to better understand the operational situations that confronted the squadron commanders.

*Surfboats and Horse Marines* is an impressive research into the little publicized naval operations of the Mexican War and should prove useful to the student of naval history in the areas of management, logistics, and amphibious warfare. In addition, this publication supplies excellent reading for the armchair sailor or casual reader who enjoys sagas of the sea.

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Beihman, Arnold. *The "Other" State Department*. New York: Basic Books, 1968. 221p.

This work is a study of the United States Mission to the United Nations (USUN) and its relationship to the State Department and to the United Nations organization. On the organizational wiring diagram, USUN is at the same level as other diplomatic missions throughout the world and, like them, presumably receives policy guidance and orders from the Secretary of State. Such policy guidance is the particular concern of the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs under

an Assistant Secretary. However, the Assistant Secretary is, of course, hardly in a position to do much guiding because the man he wishes to guide has Cabinet rank and is therefore on a level with the Assistant Secretary's own boss two echelons above. The main thrust of Mr. Beihman's well-reasoned and documented thesis is that the USUN is in a unique and powerful position and is not necessarily responsive to the wishes of the Secretary of State and his departmental officials. Many instances are cited where the policy pursued by the USUN has been openly conflicting with that of the State Department. One of the major reasons for this state of affairs, the author feels, is that the USUN Chief has always been a man of national eminence, with his own political constituency. He has never been a career Foreign Service Officer—that is, until now. One might conjecture that in his appointment of career diplomat Charles Yost as Ambassador to the UN, President Nixon has taken heed of Mr. Beihman's argument.

G.H. WINSLOW  
Commander, U.S. Navy

Drueker, Peter F. *The Age of Discontinuity*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968. 394p.

Professor Drueker, in this very interesting and readable book, has attempted to identify and discuss the discontinuities which are likely to mold and shape the near future, the closing decades of the 20th century. He claims no gift of prophecy, however, only forecasting the probable changes that today's trends indicate.

The author discusses the major discontinuities in four areas: new technologies, major changes in the world's economy, the concentration of power in organizations, and the universe of learning and knowledge. In the first area—technologies—Mr. Drueker claims that the three major fields of activity that