

Battle Exhaustion: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939-1945. TERRY COPP and BILL McANDREW. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990. 249 p. ISBN 0-7735-0774-4.

Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew break new ground with this well-researched, compassionate study which reaches beyond the phenomenon of battle exhaustion. Although only the introduction of this book was written jointly, and it therefore lacks a single focal point, the work is an important contribution and both authors display understanding and wisdom in their highly individual narratives.

They use an eclectic array of sources, including interviews with soldiers and psychiatrists who served in the Second World War, documents from the Department of National Defence, Record Group 24, in the National Archives, and other complex archival sources in Canada, Britain, and the United States. These are handled with an enviable finesse and an apparent ease. The large number of published entries in the bibliography should not mislead anyone into thinking that this is mere synthesis. These entries refer largely to contemporary articles written by psychiatrists and they are treated quite properly as primary sources for the basis of an analysis of the development of psychiatry during the period. This analysis is essential to an understanding of battle exhaustion and its treatment during the period.

The research is almost exhaustive, but at the risk of harping on one small oversight, it should be pointed out that the authors appear to have overlooked Dr. W. Clifford Scott. A Canadian psychiatrist, Scott served at Wharncliffe Emergency Hospital in Sheffield and Whitchurch Emergency Hospital in Cardiff. His papers, including post D-Day consultations, are held by the Manuscript Division of the National Archives. While all his patient files are closed, Dr. Scott published over eighty articles and monographs, including research based upon his wartime experience. This single item aside, Copp and McAndrew cover an impressive territory and they have done so well.

Although the Canadian Army attempted to select psychologically stable individuals, the problem of battle exhaustion grew and large numbers of badly needed soldiers were disabled. Many army commanders found it difficult to cope with this reality. Victims of battle exhaustion experienced confusion and shame in a system which was not well prepared to deal with them. Copp and McAndrew successfully challenge the notion that only the weak succumbed. The detailed history of the breakdown of an infantryman in Appendix Five is telling evidence indeed. The thin line which all soldiers walked is apparent in much of the well-chosen anecdotal evidence in this work.

Apart from the history of psychiatry during the period, Canadian Army personnel selection techniques, and the notion that all soldiers lived on the "borders of stark truth," the authors weave together many other threads. They compare the British, American, and Canadian approaches to battle exhaustion and discuss differences among individual psychiatrists. By comparing the neuropsychiatric casualty rates for the same units in different battles and for different units participating in the same battle, they are able to identify adequate training of reinforcements, leadership, and group morale along with the nature, severity, and length of battle as the key factors affecting the rates. The interaction between army psychiatrists and military commanders and the subsequent development of policy with respect to battle exhaustion complete a very complex picture.

The analysis of statistical evidence is particularly good. The demands of war do not always make for accurate record keeping and reactions to stress do not always fit into

neat, numbered columns. The authors treat figures for neuropsychiatric casualties, desertion, and self-inflicted wounds with appropriate caution. They observe that the figures might not reflect cases where patrols did not meet their objectives, where individuals looked the other way, or where soldiers were shot by the enemy as a result of bizarre behaviour during battle. For example, in one footnote, McAndrew notes that New Zealanders recorded an extremely low rate of self-inflicted wounds, but had a much higher accidental injuries rate than Canadians. He goes on to wonder, tongue-in-cheek, why New Zealanders were so accident-prone. It is this kind of questioning and comparison which results in a very powerful, humorous narrative.

For all its strengths, the lack of one focal point in this work detracts from its overall effect. Copp concentrates on battle exhaustion, its nature, extent, and treatment in North-West Europe and Africa, while McAndrew places battle exhaustion in a larger framework of battlefield behaviour, limiting his examination to the Italian Campaign. The changes in approach are awkward at times and distracting, yet one message is very clear. Copp and McAndrew help us understand the burden carried for nearly fifty years by many men who broke down under battle stress. How much unrecognized courage is there in those who have lived through countless nightmares and carried on with a frightening self-knowledge and a label of cowardice and public shame? I recommend this work.

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Halifax: A Literary Portrait. JOHN BELL, ed. Lawrencetown Beach: Pottersfield Press, 1990. 228 p. ISBN 0-919110-65-3.

Catalogued as "Halifax (N.S.) — Literary Collections," this volume tests to some extent the meaning of the term "literary." The idea is one with great potential — to give the flavour of a city through the way it has been pictured in the minds of authors. Approaching the city in this way allows for the blurring of the distinction between history and literature, and expands on the usual presentation of information about places in edited travel accounts. There is a wide range of material included in the anthology: diary entries not written for publication such as entries from journals kept by L.M. Montgomery and Julia Horatia Ewing, narrative autobiographies including those of Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Henry Dana, autobiographical fiction from Thomas Chandler Haliburton and Thomas H. Raddall, imaginative fiction from Israel Zangwill (who appears never to have set foot in Halifax at all), and poetry ranging from Joseph Howe's ode to the town clock to Lesley Choyce's hymn of praise for fog.

Aside from the fact that the subject matter, or at least the locus of action, is in all cases Halifax, this is to some extent an odd collection. Bell makes good his claim that Halifax is a literary city. In his succinct but excellent history of literature in Halifax he gives an impressive recital of local and visiting writers and their works. In an appendix he provides a list of some forty additional volumes in which Halifax appears as setting or subject.

Interesting as these lists are, relatively few of the works noted appear in the text itself. The introduction teases, mentioning an 1861 account of Halifax published by Comte Joseph-Arthur de Gobineau, and *Tales from a Garrison Town* published in 1892, but neither of these works, nor several other intriguing entries appear to be excerpted for the anthology. Some material, as Bell notes, was excluded for reasons of space or copyright