Redleg Update
The United States Army Field Artillery Branch’s Newsletter

From the CMDT’s Desk:
Intelligent Warfare

Redleg Pride
DEEP Fires in Operation Inherent Resolve

Book Review: The Face of Battle
Purpose: Founded in 2011, the Redleg Update provides past and present Field Artillery leaders with a monthly update of informational highlights to assist in their individual, collective and professional training efforts, as well as report on activities occurring throughout the Field Artillery community.


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RFIs, Notes, and Notices: To submit a Request for Information (RFI), please email the POC listed below.

Points of Contact:
We appreciate those who have provided announcements, notices, articles and lessons learned.

Additionally, if you have a story of interest or wish to initiate a discussion on any topic or issue facing the Field Artillery community, contact Ms. Sharon McBride, Field Artillery Public Affairs Officer, at (580) 558-0836 or sharon.g.mcbride4.civ@mail.mil

Editor’s Note:
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Intelligent Warfare:
Experience and Education will remain the key to developing the Strategic Leaders of Tomorrow

For the past few months, I have been talking extensively about the art and science of our profession and how we must effectively design the battlefield to our advantage.

In this edition, however, I want to address an equally important topic, one that requires significant leader energy. We always say that the true success of the Field Artillery branch lies within our people, which is why in this edition of the Redleg Update I have chosen to put a deliberate focus on talent management and the leader development of our officers. Equally as important, we will focus on enlisted development in the next edition of Redleg Update.

We must prepare our FA force by providing them the best training. We can have the best technology in the world, but if we don’t have intelligent and knowledgeable leaders to use that technology we will not succeed.

This article endeavors to shed a light on what it takes to progress through a successful career, because it is only through transparency that we can maintain openness, communication, and accountability in our branch.

Here are a few things to consider when assessing an individual’s (or your own) performance as a Field Artillery leader, or what the next step should be in your career progression. Reading DA PAM 600-3 “Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management” is the first step however, in this article I want to expand upon what is discussed in the DA Pamplet.

Company Grade Officers

At this point in an officer’s career the focus is on development of branch skills versus broadening. For the most part, Lieutenants have a very prescribed career path, though exceptional Lieutenants may be selected for the “Senior LT to Korea Initiative.” For KD complete Captains, the range of options expands to unique education opportunities and broadening assignments.

Over the last 8-12 months HRC’s FA Branch has worked directly with the field in order to identify Officers who are highly competitive for promotion to CPT and within one year of their PZ board to be assigned to the Korea. This initiative addresses some of the Manning challenges units on the Peninsula experience.

Typically, 2LTs are directly assigned there, remain for a year, and are then immediately being backfilled by another 2LT. Lieutenants selected for this program will have experience in at least one, but most likely two, of the LT 13A developmental positions (PL, FDO, FSO) and their experience will be of great value to the new 2LTs being assigned to organizations stationed in Korea. It will not impact officers’ ability to attend the FACC on time because identification is made early and in conjunction with their chain of command.

Officers will attend the Captain’s Career Course (CCC) at approximately the four year time in service mark. The most competitive officers, with designated experiences, may be selected for Marine Expeditionary Warfare School or the Maneuver Captain’s Career Course. Diversification by both weapon system, type of unit (Light, Stryker, Armor), and duty location is critical post-CCC. In addition, prior to taking command, Captains should strive to serve in positions such as a Battalion/TF FSO, Battalion AS3, or Battalion FDO.

Unit leaders must develop an iterative process of dialogue with HRC to discuss Senior Captains who have distinguished themselves in command. This process begins once the officer receives their first command OER. Our most talented officers will compete for assignments in the Security Forces Assistance Brigades (SFABs), Combat Training Centers (including Project Warrior), Field Artillery Schoolhouse Instructor, USMA, Broadening Opportunities Programs such as Congressional and Joint Staff fellowships and other nominative positions.

The most critical nominative assignment is Project Warrior. Those selected for Project Warrior will serve two years as an observer-coach-trainer at a CTC followed by two years as a small group instructor for the Field Artillery Captains Career Course.

Field Grade Officers

Captain (P)s and Majors will attend Intermediate Level Education (ILE) at commissioning plus 10 years of service. 50 percent of a year group will attend Resident ILE including Sister Service and International ILE. Officers selected for resident ILE should be considered for early slating to KD positions to maximize the opportunity for joint qualification prior
to selection to LTC. Diversification of weapon system is minimized post-ILE to provide maximum success in the follow-on assignments. Assignments are based on past performance, interviews, by name requests, and needs of the Army.

Similar to Senior Captains, the assignments process for Senior MAJs who distinguish themselves in KD positions must involve an iterative dialogue between HRC and the Chain of Command. The most talented Majors compete for Joint assignments, work for General Officers or within the Army Enterprise, or serve within the schoolhouse, at USMA, in a SFAB, or at a CTC.

Officers who are selected for Lieutenant Colonel will compete for battalion command. The Army’s Selection Board process will identify the most talented Officers for a variety of command opportunities. The Field Artillery Commandant will manage former battalion command assignments in conjunction with the Field Artillery Branch and the Fires Center of Excellence Commanding General.

Furthermore, successful LTCs will compete for selection to Senior Service College (SSC) and Colonel. These officers will also be provided post CSL development opportunities. Colonel assignments are very closely managed based on the officer’s potential and the needs of the Army. All colonel assignments are endorsed by the Fires Center of Excellence CG and approved by the Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

Junior Warrant Officers

Warrant officers at the junior level should begin to build their depth of expertise as apprentice and journeyman target acquisition and targeting subject matter experts. Initially, their critical developmental positions are as Target Acquisition Platoon Leaders and FA Battalion Targeting Officers. Those that excel early should be considered for follow-on positions such as Counterfire Officers and Maneuver Brigade Target Analysts. At this point in a warrant officer’s career, the focus is on development of branch skills and technical depth, versus talent management. However, exceptional senior CW2s should be considered for follow-on assignments as CW3s in Project Warrior or as Warrant Officer Career College TAC Officers.

Mid-Career Warrant Officers

As well-developed targeting and fire support experts, our field grade warrant officers should excel as Targeting Officers in Maneuver and FA brigades. Often providing the continuity within their organiza-

Senior Warrant Officers

Warrant Officers at the senior level should provide the technical depth and expertise senior commanders rely on for continuity, systems integration, mentorship and warfighting acumen. CW4s will serve as primary Division Targeting Officers, Corps FAIOs and BCD Targeting Officers, as well as Proponent PME Instructors or in other critical functions within USAFAS.

While few in number, our CW5s are expected to assist our most senior commanders in warfighting and institutional commands to leverage their technical depth, expertise and experience. CW5s operate at Corps and Army-level commands, as well as within senior FCOE billets.

Closing

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that it takes a concerted effort from all to make sure our leaders get the developmental opportunities they require and deserve. It’s easy to become complacent in mentoring, to trade comfort for challenges and mistake staleness for stability. We must recognize where our knowledge and skills are best regarded - both immediately and in the long-term future – but it requires an investment of time, energy and planning. Officers at all levels should continue to seek opportunities to develop into well-rounded leaders, and mentor junior leaders to do the same.

Thank you for all you do; and remember, we are indeed the world’s premier Artillery force – Modernized, Organized, Trained, and Ready to integrate an employ Army, Joint, and Multinational Fires because of the tremendous efforts of you and your Soldiers – 24/7/365, Regardless of weather, in any terrain, Quickly, Accurately and Danger Close.

BG Stephen J. Maranian
I received a message recently through my official page that I thought was worth discussing with a larger audience, as it speaks directly to something that is often misunderstood or overlooked outright – pride in one’s branch. In this particular message, a young noncommissioned officer expressed concern that some younger Soldiers have lost their pride and honor in being a Redleg.

The Army is an organization that instills pride in its members because of its history, mission, capabilities, and the respect it has earned in the service of the Nation. A reflection of that pride is visible in the customs, courtesies, and traditions the Army holds. Adherence to them connects us with Soldiers throughout America’s history. This connection isn’t automatic and we can’t expect our young Redlegs to just plug in and go when it comes to buying in to what makes us the King of Battle - this connection takes engagement, example and shared experience. We as leaders, need to understand the continuum of a Soldier’s path, reflect on how we got to where we are and objectively consider what and who influenced us along the way.

We start with a pretty good ingredient, those in the less than one percent of the American population who desire and are qualified to serve. These folks, from across every socio-economic demography can give all kinds of reasons why they joined – money for college, adventure, learn a skill – but every one of those things, you can get elsewhere; the real reason they’ve joined – they all want to be a part of something bigger than themselves. By doing so, they place themselves in a position from which they must earn; earn the respect, the trust, the comradery of their peers. They do so through shared experience, hardship and training; passing through this process, they each begin to understand the strength of the team, they begin to function as a team, and they begin to identify as a team. During this early phase, they are introduced to the Army values – at first just words on paper that they must memorize and learn each definition – and they’re told they must follow them. The reality is that it will take time for them to adopt them as their own – they know they must follow them, but they have not yet internalized them. As they experience examples of those values demonstrated by others around them, as they endure trials and hardships where these values become guiding principles and they are led by leaders who espouse these values, they too will assume said values as their own.

We can’t simply tell our troopers they should be proud to be a Redleg or expect that pride to be automatic. Pride is a funny thing. You can outwardly show your affiliation by wearing certain items, but it doesn’t mean you’ve invested yourself into what it is you’re affiliating with. Not convinced? Ever see a fat guy wearing a “UFC” shirt? How about a two year old with a mini NFL jersey on? You know they ain’t endured what it takes or experienced the tough road to actually be a part of that particular profession. Now, you see someone wearing that jersey while putting in work at the gym, training long hours with their team to be the best, stepping onto the field and dominating an opponent; you know they are truly committed to their profession and of what they have accomplished. They have faced tough training, endured hardships together and built an identity as a team. They have studied the game together, learning what those before them had to do, gaining an appreciation for what it took and developing mutual trust and an understanding of what it takes to get ‘there.’ As they may move to other teams, they’ll always have the pride for what they earned and will take that with them as they go on to play and lead on other teams.

Much is the same when developing a sense of pride as a Redleg. You want your Soldiers to be proud to be a Redleg? Start by setting tough, realistic stan-
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standards and hold them to them, include yourself in that, in everything. Good enough, ain’t. We can’t preach standards and precision, and then allow short cuts. If that last occupation wasn’t perfect, retrain the sticking points and do it again, and again, and again until it is. Will it be tough? Yep. Will there be some moaning and complaints? Yep. Do it anyway, so your crew will be the fastest and can perform to standard under any conditions. Don’t leave the motor pool so early. Use that time to teach them more about their equipment and how it works and how to keep it working, so when times get tough, they know what to do. Get out of the classroom/barracks and hit the local training area every chance you get, hell, make chances – no competition or battle was ever won from a classroom or with the best Power-point slide show. They may not understand it while they’re sweaty and tired, but that work will pay off when they win those competitions or are engaged in battle and they’ll gain that appreciation for what it took to get ‘there’.

Show them what the whole team does any chance you get. We all know what our particular function is in the kill chain, but how many have seen what the rest of that action looks like? Do they truly understand why their standards and precision are so important? How many Cannoneers or Rocketeers have seen what happens when the round/rocket leaves the tube, have they seen them impact? How many Fisters or FDC bubbas have loaded a round or pulled a lanyard? We take for granted what we do, because it’s what we do, but to the uninitiated, that stuff is pretty cool. When Soldiers get to see the big picture, what their actions actually accomplish, their chest will poke out just a little bit more. Couple that with understanding of what the other Redlegs around you contribute to putting steel on target and decimating said target, well, three bubbas in a tank just can’t compare.

Don’t shy away from customs, traditions and ceremonies. Even leaders sometimes look at these as a distraction, something else to get done and their Soldiers will approach it with the same attitude. If you take the position that each of these opportunities is an important step in passing on these customs, traditions and ceremonies to the next generation of leaders (your Soldiers) you’ll not only pass on the experience, but will also help develop their appreciation of what those that did it before them had to do which prepares them to pass it on to their Soldiers, each step instills a little more pride along the way. If it’s important to you and you show them, it’ll be more important to them. Everyone knows the Salute Battery is the coolest thing on the parade field. Just as cool is the ranks of other Redlegs marching behind those cross-cannon guidons, because they can all do it too. Regular in-ranks inspections where you quiz your Soldiers’ knowledge, doesn’t matter the uniform, gets them focused on importance of appearance while teaching them. How about that new Sergeant, up on the stage during their NCO Induction Ceremony, looking out over the audience of their former peers, who are now their responsibility, think that Redleg will have a little pride? It’s totally worth the investment.

Competition breeds success, participation trophies don’t. Everyone likes to win, to be the best at something – those that say they don’t are only trying to convince themselves. Everything should be a competition. Healthy competition makes everyone go a little harder and it doesn’t have to be limited to “official” events or sports. Of course, your Soldiers will put forth extra effort when it’s time for section competitions, but why wait until then? Instill in them that you’re always in competition with someone, even if it’s yourself, and that drive becomes contagious. Little rewards to each winner along the way, particularly if the rewards are outward in nature, will motivate those around to go a little harder next time, to search out and pursue their band of excellence. It doesn’t matter what it is, make it a competition and you’ll see a different level of performance. Make competition a regular thing and you’ll see gains across a whole bunch of areas and a marked increase in pride. First round safely out of the tube, first finisher on the ruck march, “300” club in APFT, those are the typical things, but take it further; if competition becomes consistent, it will become part of the culture; that culture leads to identity and within it, pride.

One of my priorities when taking this job was to ensure we strengthen the role of our branch. Being a
Redleg is physically demanding and mentally challenging. It ain’t easy, if it was they’d call it Infantry. For many years we’ve been called on to do other things, and doing them well, but along the way we got away from doing some of those things that make Redlegs the best damn Soldiers in the Army. We’re making progress everyday as we’re getting back to our roots in training, traditions and customs but we’ve still got work to do. Soldiers will lead as they have been led, I have great confidence in our Soldiers and their leaders, if we all just focus on making our little piece of the Army the best it can be, we’ll get there. Lead your Soldiers, teach and train them well, they will follow the example you give and that identity, that pride you help instill, will always be with them.

King of Battle!
Redleg 7

CSM Berk Parsons

Social Media Best Practices

If a Soldier or leader uses a social networking site where he or she is or may be identified or associated with the U.S. Army, they must remember how they appear to represent their organization and the United States of America. UCMJ and other guidelines and regulations still apply.

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This paper demonstrates how XVIII Airborne Corps, as the Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) headquarters (HQs), re-established corps-level fires capability emulating a division-level Joint Air Ground Integration (JAGIC) - like structure at corps level to improve air-to-ground integration (AGI), and synchronize effects across the depth of the corps joint operations area (JOA) to support the commander’s priorities, and address the unique challenges associated with a non-standard organization and complex operational environment.

Background

The corps-level fires system across the Army was degraded over the last decade with the inactivation of Corps Artillery HQs, divestiture of Air Support Operations Centers (ASOCs) from corps to divisions, and decentralization of fires staff structures to support tactical level HQs. This has limited a corps HQs to supporting tactical echelon units with prioritization of assets with limited or no inherent strike capability itself and essentially relegated management of the corps deep fight to the supporting Air Operations Center (AOC). The large, complex environment of the CJTF-OIR JOA, spread across two countries, with limited ground assets, an extensive deep fight area, and a non-dedicated and over-tasked AOC presents significant challenges in prosecuting deep shaping operations.

JAGIC organization and purpose (ATP 3-91/AFTTP 3-2.86)

The JAGIC is rooted in doctrinal and force design developments emanating from analysis of both Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The JAGIC functions are established within Joint and Army doctrine, culminating in the publication of the Army/Air Force combined ATP 3-91.1/AFTTP 3-2.86, The Joint Air Ground Integration Center (18 June 2014). This document lays out the baseline roles and responsibilities of the JAGIC as well as organization and operational employment procedures. However, it should be noted that this document is founded on tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP), as the ATP designation indicates, to support inherent roles and responsibilities established by the doctrinal foundation found in FM 3-94, Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations (21 April 2014) and FM 3-52, Airspace Control (20 October 2016). The JAGIC as described in ATP 3-91/AFTTP 3-2.86 is an effective means to de-conflict division level airspace control and to facilitate the rapid employment of joint fires within an area of operations.

The TTP established within ATP 3-91/AFTTP 3-2.86 apply to a generic organizational structure and operational environment. In order to apply this concept to an actual operation with a non-standard organizational structure in a vast and complex operational environment, modifications to the JAGIC concept were adapted to support the CJTF-OIR JOA requirements. This paper identifies areas where the CJTF-OIR adapted techniques for deep fires and AGI that vary from current TTP established under ATP 3-91/AFTTP 3-2.86 as well as restrictions that limit the potential for JAGIC employment under the current authorities and organizational structure.

The JAGIC is intended to enable divisional level airspace control and de-confliction. The Army fires elements, air and missile defense (AMD) capabilities, airspace control, and aviation elements are paired with a division assigned Air Support Operations Center (ASOC) to enable the control and de-confliction of division airspace below the coordinating altitude (CA). This integration facilitates the rapid clearance of surface-to-surface fires as well as employment of both fixed and rotary wing simultaneous to surface to surface engagements. This synchronization of fires enables overwhelming firepower to be brought to bear against a target and facilitates efficient use of assets through the echelonment of fires supporting maneuver operations. Additional supporting elements to the JAGIC include the legal, intelligence analysis, and
target development enterprises as required.

In its most simple form, a JAGIC is composed of an Army element (fires, airspace, AMD, and aviation), and Air Force element (ASOC with associated airspace control/de-confliction capabilities), and assigned and dedicated airspace (from ground up to the coordinating altitude – CA).

Insights from CJTF-OIR CJOA
CJTF-OIR
Airspace

The airspace of the CJTF-OIR JOA is considered sovereign to the host nations. All operations conducted in Iraqi or Syrian airspace are coordinated through airspace agreements and/or real time de-confliction with pertinent parties. The airspace therefore cannot be completely controlled and managed as envisioned within the ATP 3-91/AFTTP 3-2.86. Agreements are in place between the affected parties for the Combined Forces Air Component Commander (CFACC) to be the Airspace Control Authority (ACA) for the establishment of an Airspace Control System (ACS) or to directly de-conflict airspace with affected parties as required. These agreements meet the needs of the combatant commander while still recognizing other parties as the lead agency for airspace matters, but they are still ultimately subject to the airspace owner.

Coordinating Altitude (CA)

The unit must be able to control the airspace up to the CA. This CA must be liberal enough to encompass the majority of the assigned or attached surface to surface indirect fire assets maximum ordinates (Max Ord) to prevent unnecessary airspace de-confliction. If the CA is established at an altitude below the expected Max Ord of supporting indirect fires assets, the efficiency of controlling the airspace is negated as the ASOC must clear fires through the ACA, further increasing response times.

(U/FOUO) For example, a CA of 3000’ AGL is ineffective for essentially all surface-to-surface fires except for potentially 60mm mortars, and would force airspace clearance for any indirect fires above the CA through the ACA. A CA of 10000’ AGL or more is ideal, as surface fire support assets could manage charges to ensure the Max Ord remained under the CA in most scenarios except for maximum range engagements.

(U/FOUO) Currently, the CA for the CJTF-OIR JOA is 3000’ AGL. This greatly reduces the effectiveness of units to employ the JAGIC concept as defined in ATP 3-91/AFTTP 3-2.86 as the ownership of airspace above the CA requires coordination and de-confliction with the AOC.

Restricted operating zone (ROZ) versus airspace ownership

(U/FOUO) Due to the restrictions of the 3000’ AGL CA and airspace within the JOA under host nation (HN) sovereign control, subordinate element

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strike cells have modified the JAGIC TTP to manage a permanently active ROZ over critical areas where ground maneuver is conducted. These techniques extend the airspace control from ground level to 25000’ AGL and essentially provides JAGIC-like capability to synchronize surface and aerial delivered fires without requiring airspace clearance through the AOC. The ROZ TTP provides localized airspace control for the supported unit during deliberate (permanent ROZ) or dynamic (temporary ROZ) operations.

CJTF-OIR Deep Fires Support

(U/FOUO) Currently XVIII Airborne Corps, as the CJTF-OIR, is employing a functional (deep fires) strike cell [Editor’s note: The strike cell is similar in construct as a deep operations coordination cell – DOCC] consistent with the general principles of the prescribed doctrinal JAGIC structure with a few exceptions. The CJTF currently functions as both an operational level HQs within the JOA and at the tactical echelon for CJTF designated deep battlespace within the CJOA. This modified JAGIC-like structure includes the corps fires cell, an ASOC with dedicated Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs), formal collateral damage estimate (CDE) capability, and linkages with Air Defense, Army Aviation, Legal, and Intelligence functions to synchronize strikes within the CJTF designated deep battlespace. It also provides a redundant and special targets strike capability for subordinate division level joint operation centers (JOCs) / tactical operation centers (TOCs). While the CJTF-OIR JAGIC-like organization has all the functional capabilities required, it is not a doctrinal JAGIC as it lacks assigned airspace, which is retained by the host countries.

Subordinate JOCs/TOCs

Subordinate JOCs/TOCs with the capability to conduct strikes have proven to be a useful organization for improving AGI. The CJTF-OIR modified structure and subordinate unit JOCs/TOCs employ TTP that align with the JAGIC concept. While the current structure of CJTF-OIR subordinate division level units do not have an ASOC aligned against them, these elements have created a JAGIC-like organiza-
DIVARTY masses guns for the first time in 14 years

By Maj. Jason Turner

YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash. -- In 2003, Pfc. Jesse Kobussen, a Field Artillery Fire Direction Specialist, was processing mass fire missions at Rodriguez Live Fire Complex, South Korea, for 2nd Infantry Division Artillery. This would be the last time the DIVARTY would control fires for multiple artillery battalions before its deactivation on Nov. 30, 2006.

But on June 10, 2017, Sgt. 1st Class Kobussen sat again in the DIVARTY Fire Control Center as the Senior Fire Direction Specialist -- controlling fires for multiple field artillery battalions for the first time since 2003.

DIVARTY, based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., orchestrated the massing of 33 M777 Howitzers from three field artillery battalions, including one Washington Army National Guard unit, while conducting Force Field Artillery Headquarters training at the Yakima Training Center, Wash. This was the first time since the DIVARTY’s reactivation on Sep. 25, 2014, the fire control team has demonstrated this critical capability required by the 2ID commander.

“It is truly awesome when you see 33 cannons mass on a single target. That destructive power shakes the earth for miles and shows the lethality of the DIVARTY.”

DIVARTY routinely participates in 2ID Exercises, such as Operation Key Resolve, Operation Ulchi Freedom Guardian and division-level warfighting exercises. Their ability to integrate fires with maneuver and set conditions for maneuver commanders has proven critical to the success of 2ID missions.

“Re-establishing and training on this critical capability after some 14 years clearly demonstrates the lethality and the significant role the DIVARTY’s have in a Decisive Action battle,” said Col. David Pierce, 2ID Artillery commander. “The Force Field Artillery HQs can control multiple field artillery battalions and effectively mass onto a single target simultaneously and instantly destroy the adversary, creating that marked battlefield advantage for our brigade combat teams.”

Soldiers of DIVARTY stand ready now to support their Republic of Korea partners. Kobussen and the Soldiers of DIVARTY have proven they can effectively control the field artillery fight, mass all indirect fires on enemy targets and are prepared to take the fight to the enemy.

Soldiers of 2nd Infantry Division Artillery fire their M777 Howitzers at a target during the DIVARTY Mass Fire exercise June 10, 2017, at Yakima Training Center, Wash. This was the first mass fire exercise for the Joint Base Lewis-McChord-based unit since 2003. (Photo courtesy of 7th Infantry Division)
Keegan was a brilliant historian who had an uncanny ability to cast a strategic eye over centuries of political, economic, cultural, social, and technological changes and weave these together to show how they impacted militaries and their conflicts, while also showing how militaries and military conflict in turn affected these other areas. In a way, this book takes Keegan out of his comfort zone, having him turn his rigorous, rational gaze toward three individual battles and put them under the microscope. Keegan does not disappoint, asking many hard and relevant questions as to what happened and why, looking at the commanders, but also the men and the environment. Still, he begins the work with a sweeping critique of military history and outlines what approach he preferred to take, compared to many other renowned military historians. At the end of the work, Keegan again applied his sweeping strategic view to draw some conclusions about the trend of battles and society and what that meant for the future of warfare.

Keegan sums up his approach to the study of battle -- What battles have in common is humanity: the behavior of men struggling to reconcile their instinct for self-preservation, their sense of honor and the achievement of some aim over which other men are ready to kill them. The study of battle is therefore always a study of fear and usually of courage; always of leadership, usually of obedience; always of compulsion, sometimes of insubordination; always of anxiety, sometimes of elation or catharsis; always of uncertainty and doubt, misinformation and misapprehension, usually also of faith and sometimes of vision; always of violence, sometimes also of cruelty, self-sacrifice, compassion; above all, it is always a study of solidarity and usually also of disintegration - for it is towards the disintegration of human groups that battle is directed. (p 303)

Like many others before him, Keegan appeared convinced that the destructiveness, the inhumanity, and the industrialized pressures of modern warfare spelled the end of war. He could not see how any human being could endure the increasing noise, speed, firepower, destructiveness, and mechanization of warfare. In his own words, "the suspicion grows that battle has already abolished itself." (p 344) Of course, those others who predicted the end of war, from the Kellogg-Briand Pact through Francis Fukuyama, have been proven so tragically wrong after the fact they all appear as naïfs. As Keegan noted when analyzing the casual atrocities during World War II: "It must be counted as one of the particular cruelties of modern warfare that, by inducing even in the fit and willing soldier a sense of his unimportance, it encouraged his treating the lives of disarmed or demoralized opponents as equally unimportant." (p 329) (I myself might quibble with this, as soldiers that thought highly of themselves were often the most likely to treat opponents mercilessly, but I'll let Keegan speak in his own voice here.) It is too bad Sir Keegan is no longer with us; we would benefit greatly from his contemporary interpretation of how warfare actually developed after the Vietnam conflict (the era when this book was published).
Warfare has forked. One fork has indeed embraced the mechanized, industrial, inhuman route by going with armed drones. In fact, this route seems to be leading the way the original Star Trek episode "A Taste of Armageddon" presaged, comfortable war fought far away without any of the inconveniences coming home; well, except for the dead. The other fork led away from pitched battles, with those would-be belligerents recognizing their inability to face major powers on the open field and opting for terrorism, guerilla tactics, cyber war, and other such asymmetrical methods. Indeed, the reality Keegan saw when he wrote this book--the frightening possibility of warfare between the world's major nuclear powers, conflicts that would lead to losers but no winners, is still a threat with which we live. But in terms of those conflicts that have been active since the book's publication, they have tended in the two ways outlined above. The last great pitched battle was Desert Storm, and that was over in a flash, a completely one-sided massacre.

Indeed, Keegan could have foreseen the turns warfare has taken, for he noted herein, "it will be his task [a general's] to bring his enemies to battle on his own terms and force them to fight by his rules not theirs." (p 191) Just so have the asymmetrical actors drawn in the United States and other great powers to fight them on their terms. One lesson Keegan undoubtedly drew from the just-concluded Vietnam conflict and many others, "Battle, therefore...is essentially a moral conflict. It requires, if it is to take place, a mutual sustained act of will by two contending parties, and if it is to result in a decision, the moral collapse of one of them" (p 301) Just so, modern conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere pit external actors (be they the United States, Russia, the UK, or Saudi Arabia and Iran) against indigenous actors (often working through indigenous proxies). Invariably, the external actors talk of graduated escalation, withdrawal timetables, rules of engagement, apply detailed legalistic micromanaged political oversight, refuse to declare wars as wars, send in "advisors" instead of soldiers, and so on. They thereby show that they are fighting a limited war with limited means, while the local actors are typically fighting a total war for survival itself. There is no mystery who will win each of these conflicts, regardless of the apparent inequalities between the contenders otherwise.

A worthy book, like any of Keegan's works. Of course the reader interested in military history ought to read it, but most of Keegan's books, this one included, can be quite beneficial for those who are not ordinarily students of military history, given his ability to tie military affairs into ordinary life. If anything, the beginning section with its detailed review of historical methods might be a little tedious for the non-historian, but Keegan's examination of the battles and his concluding remarks are certainly worth waiting for.

Book Review Courtesy of Good Reads @ https://www.goodreads.com/
This Month in History July & August

2 July 1869, General Phillip Sheridan officially named Fort Sill in memory of his West Point Classmate, Brigadier General Joshua W. Sill, who was killed at the Battle of Stones River, Tennessee, 31 December 1862.

3 July 1968, General William C. Westmoreland, a field artillery officer and graduate of the Field Artillery School, became the 25th Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

6 July 1973, The Army activated the branch-immateri-al Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill closed its doors.

10 July 1941, The first Field Artillery Officer Candidate Course class arrived at Fort Sill as the Army and Fort Sill began mobilizing in response to the war in Europe.

15 July 1917, Twenty-one student officers met by Sergeant Morris Swett, the school’s librarian, stepped off a train from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for field artillery training for World War I at the recently reopened School of Fire.

30 July 1815, Thomas Jackson Rodman, a U.S. Army artilleryman, was born. He developed rifled wroughtiron artillery pieces used extensively during the American Civil War.

3 August 1917, A small contingent of French officers with combat experience in World War I reported to the School of Fire for Field Artillery to serve as instructors.

6 August 1901, Federal officials auctioned off lots in what became present-day Lawton to white settlers. Lawton was named after Major General Henry W. Lawton who had been quartermaster at Fort Sill, had earned a Medal of Honor, and had participated in capturing Geronimo.

8 August 1917, Construction of Henry Post Army Airfield was begun on the same site used by the First Aerial Squadron in 1915. The airfield was named after Lieutenant Henry B. Post of the 25th Infantry who was killed in an airplane accident near San Diego, California in 1914 while he was attempting to set an altitude record.

8 August 1929, Snow Hall, the Field Artillery School’s main academic building, burned down. Named after Major General William J. Snow; Snow Hall housed the Field Artillery School headquarters and a majority of the classrooms.

14 August 1954, The Artillery School officially opened Snow Hall (B730) to replace McNair Hall built in the 1930s. Snow Hall housed classrooms and administrative offices and was air conditioned. The building had 190,000 square feet of floor space and facilities to accommodate 2,500 students.