

Book Reviews

Special Warfare

Prisoner of the Rising Sun. By William A. Berry, with James E. Alexander. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993. ISBN 0-8061-2509-8. 241 pages. \$24.95.

This book provides a moving account of the extreme hardships endured by those captured in the Pacific Theater during World War II and the atrocities committed by the Japanese Imperial Army. The author, a Navy ensign captured at the fall of Corregidor, accurately describes how miserable captivity can be when faced utterly unprepared, with the torments of hunger, isolation and harsh interrogation. Non-signatories to the Geneva Accords, the Japanese government denied those captured humane treatment, even though they held prisoner-of-war status. This clearly illustrates the important distinction between the classification of being held captive as a war prisoner or a criminal.

The author gives an excellent example of the type of dilemma that might be put to the prisoner who is the senior ranking officer, or SRO. The Navy *Bluejacket's Manual*, a basic handbook for all Navy men, explicitly stated that seamen must consider escape if captured. The concentration camp regulations stated, however, that one attempted escape would result in the death of 10 men from the escapees' "blood group." After an escape and weeks of successful evasion, the author and two others were captured and delivered back to an internment camp. Fearful of retaliation, the SRO ordered the escapees to identify themselves to their captors as prior detainees and face possible execution, rather than jeopardize the lives of dozens of fel-



low prisoners.

The questions are posed: when, if ever, does a servicemember decide to relieve the anguish of starvation while evading capture, forgo that final day of freedom and surrender? Can the SRO legally and morally decide how to meet the needs and welfare of the majority and does that justify the possible sacrifice of a few? As these difficult decisions present themselves, the SRO must be guided by a fundamental principle of leadership: to be responsible for the lives and welfare of those under his command at all times.

Also this: can anyone realistically expect to be completely versed in all the "correct" responses to the potentially life-threatening situations he or she is faced with in captivity? No. Can they prepare themselves to better endure capture? Yes, through attendance at one of the military Survival, Evasion, Resistance and

Escape Courses. As illustrated in this book and in events as recent as Desert Storm, capture by enemy forces does not discriminate by military specialty or gender.

As a young reserve intelligence officer in 1941, the author realized how truly unprepared he was for wartime service, let alone the three years he would serve as a Japanese prisoner of war. Fifty years later, the armed forces have made considerable changes in how servicemembers are prepared to fight.

These advancements have been based on victories and defeats on the battlefield. Important lessons have likewise been learned on how soldiers, sailors and airmen prepare to survive captivity while keeping their honor intact. These techniques have been drawn from the experiences of those who endured captivity in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War. It is through the suffering of men like Lt. Cdr. William A. Berry that the U.S. forces have been able to improve and provide realistic training that emphasizes survival with honor.

CWO 3 Robert McKague
JFKSWCS
Fort Bragg, N.C.

Experience of War. Edited by Robert Cowley. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1992. ISBN: 0-440-50553-4. 574 pages. \$14.95.

Experience of War is an anthology of articles compiled by the editors of the *Quarterly Journal of Military History*. If you are a military-history buff, this anthology is a treasure trove of sometimes little-known stories from historical accounts of wars from as far back as ancient Greece

and up to the Persian Gulf War.

Fifty-one articles make up the anthology, and it would be hard to find better reading material to place on your nightstand. Since the articles are relatively short — each focusing on a specific topic of military historical significance — the volume makes for excellent bedtime reading.

There are too many articles to attempt to recount all in this review, but a few of the more interesting examples should serve to make the point. Essays include "The Origins of War," "Alexander (The Great) in India," "Cannae," "The Masada Myth," "The First Crusade," "The Stonewall Enigma," "Ulysses S. Grant's Final Victory," "Mutiny on The Potemkin," "The Secrets of Overlord" and "The Gulf Crisis and The Rules of War."

These essays' credibility comes from the outstanding array of some of military history's best modern chroniclers. These include David Clay Large, Robert L. O'Connell, Martin van Creveld, David Lamb, Richard M. Ketchum, Paul Fussell, Thaddeus Holt and Stephen E. Ambrose, to name only a few.

Pieces are arranged in historical chronological order — although there are few articles which relate to

one another in any meaningful way. Robert Cowley did a very credible job in selecting some of MHQ's finest articles. There is literally something in *Experience of War* for everybody.

It is important to recognize that *Experience of War*, as all MHQ essays, are configured for the general reader. Articles are written in narrative, not academic style — which makes the stories easy for reading and comprehension. In this reviewer's opinion, the anthology loses nothing by its lack of footnotes and other laborious academic trappings.

The bottom line is that *Experience of War* makes for great reading. At \$14.95, the book is a bargain for those who have more than a passing interest in the history of warfare.

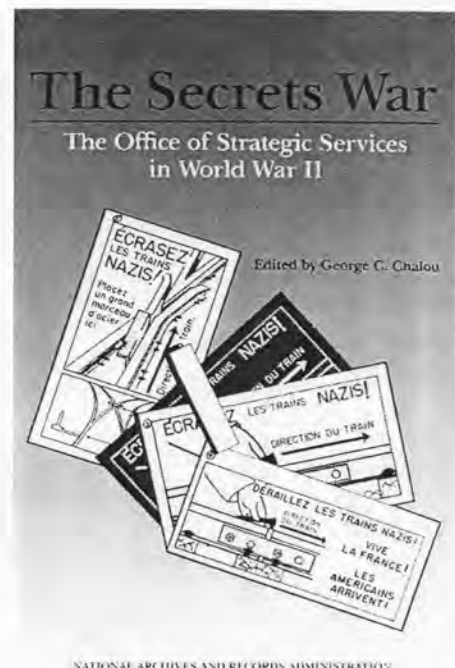
*Lt. Col. Robert B. Adolph, Jr.
Joint Special Operations Cmd.
Fort Bragg, N.C.*

The Secrets War: The Office of Strategic Services in World War II. Edited by George C. Chalou. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992. ISBN 0-911333-91-6. 392 pages. \$25.

This book is a collection of papers originally presented at a National Archives conference of the same title held in Washington in July 1991. It is a valuable collection of articles which highlight various intelligence and operational aspects of the Office of Strategic Services and how to get into the sources for more information. It is in this latter aspect that the book provides its most valuable service. It is essential reading for any researcher interested in pursuing a topic on the OSS.

The articles presented in this collection cover how the OSS was created, how the various branches evolved, the recruitment of personnel, its relations (not always smooth) with the various British intelligence and special-operations agencies, and some of the OSS's more successful (and unsuccessful) operations around the world.

Of particular value are the articles



on the penetration of Thailand by the OSS, the failure of the McDowell mission to Yugoslavia in 1944 and the discussion of James Angleton and his counterintelligence operation (X-2) in Italy. While the emphasis throughout the book is on intelligence operations (which was, after all, the main reason for the existence of the OSS), an article by James Ward on the justly famous Detachment 101 gives some background on the operational and unconventional-warfare successes of the OSS.

All in all, this is a very useful and interesting book which should be on every SF soldier's reading list. The OSS was filled with a colorful collection of amateurs who make for interesting reading. Along the way, their stories provide valuable lessons learned. For the serious researcher, *The Secrets War* provides an essential synopsis of what is in each of the OSS Record Groups and how to evaluate what one finds. I recommend it to both the operator and the researcher.

*Dr. Richard W. Stewart
Director of History and Museums
USASOC
Fort Bragg, N.C.*

