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Editorial

Richard S. Grayson & Erica Wald

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EDITORIAL*

Some academic historians believe that military history is not worthy of the same kind of academic status as other branches of the discipline. They find it overly descriptive and where analysis is offered, focused on relatively narrow questions which do not speak to the modern concerns of the wider discipline. Such an approach is problematic. In particular, narrative accounts of warfare often interest the general public far more than apparently esoteric academic tomes and provide a way into the study of History for many. Moreover, military history is capable of speaking to the wider discipline as new historical interests open up, not least because of the range of archival material which has so often been created by militaries. As this journal shows, military history is a history of society, of culture and of politics, among many other things.

One of the most important recent developments in the broad field of history is the 'history of emotions'.¹ Sometimes labelled the 'emotional turn', new perspectives are causing historians to look afresh at a wide range of subjects in which the emotional dimension has not previously been much considered. Surely military history has much to contribute to this field? Fear, bravery, revenge, cowardice, and the ways in which different societies construct such concepts should be central to the study of warfare and therefore to history more widely.

For this reason, we were delighted when we were asked by Professor Benjamin Deruelle of the Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada, about the prospect of the *British Journal of Military History* producing a special issue on the history of emotions and early modern warfare. This suggested an opportunity to place the *BJMH* at the cutting edge of wider debates in the field of history. It also offered a rare opportunity to focus the journal on early modern matters and to make clear that despite our 'British' title, we are emphatically an international journal which can produce material that is globally significant. This special issue ranges across early modern Europe, addressing matters such as fear, surrender, and the perspectives of a military surgeon. In so doing it points to the richness and significance of new work in military history.

RICHARD S. GRAYSON & ERICA WALD
Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

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¹ For further information see: Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

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