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Review of *Queen Victoria's Wars: British Military Campaigns, 1857-1902* by Stephen M Miller (ed.)

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and Hamm's clear analysis of what can and cannot be concluded from European weapon burials 300-500. Some contributions make strong efforts to bring the literature on particular aspects up to date (e.g. Bourgeois on western European fortifications 750-1000, Summer on early medieval warrior images), while others highlight well the need to use our evidence with considerable caution (e.g. Coupland on the blinkers of militarisation in ninth-century Frankia, Bennett on the construction of the enemy in pre-Viking England). These are mere examples of some of the many good essays in this collection, which apart from ranging widely across time and space also manages to cover a very wide range of primary material: from poetry and narrative sources to imagery, fortifications and material culture in burials. Furthermore, this book also does what the most useful edited collections should do: frame the essays with an introduction, setting them within relevant historiographical literature(s) and conceptualising the overall idea, and with a conclusion, summarising the whole but also questioning and raising points of future research.

One issue perhaps required further consideration by both authors and editors; namely, why so many contributions focus on the sixth and seventh centuries. It could be that this is an accident of case studies picked by the authors, or the availability of surviving evidence, or there might be something specific happening in those two centuries. Whatever the reason, it would have been useful for editors/authors to have reflected and/or commented on this a bit more. Moreover, many of the chapters could usefully have cited well-known primary sources, for which several editions and/or translations exist, by books and chapters, so as to facilitate easy access to the evidence examined for students. Nevertheless, there is no question that this edited collection is a welcome contribution to the historiography on the subject, especially for the wide comparative perspective that it offers.

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Stephen M Miller (ed.), *Queen Victoria's Wars: British Military Campaigns, 1857-1902*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Xiii + 322pp. 13 maps. ISBN: 978-1108490122 (hardback). Price £29.99.

This collection of essays, edited by Stephen M. Miller, represents a useful addition to the literature on Victorian wars of empire. Miller opens the introduction to the book by referring to Brian Bond's edited volume, *Victorian Military Campaigns* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1967). The aim of *Queen Victoria's Wars* is to provide a much-

needed updated version of Bond's work. As Miller notes, Bond's volume 'made great inroads in expanding the body of literature and influencing scholars for years to come' (p.1). However, since Bond's book came out, scholars have benefitted from increased access to archival materials. Perhaps most important among the developments is the much-needed attention given to the 'other side of the hill': the story of these imperial wars should no longer be told from the British perspective only. Miller's volume, therefore, incorporates the five decades of scholarship since Bond's book.

Each chapter of the book examines a different conflict. There are thirteen chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion written by Miller. The book examines the Indian Revolt of 1857 (Douglas M. Peers); the expeditions to China, 1857-60 (Bruce Collins); the expedition to Abyssinia, 1867-68 (Christopher Brice); the New Zealand Wars, 1845-72 (John Crawford); the Anglo-Asante War of 1873-74 (Ryan Patterson); the Second Anglo-Afghan War, 1878-80 (Rodney Atwood); the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 (Ian Knight), the First Anglo-Boer War, 1880-81 (John Laband); the conflicts in Egypt and the Sudan, 1881-85 (Rob Johnson); the Third Anglo-Burmese War and the Pacification of Burma, 1885-95 (Ian F.W. Beckett); the Tirah Campaign of 1897-98 (Sameetah Agha); the Reconquest of the Sudan, 1896-98 (Edward M. Spiers); and the South African War of 1899-1902 (Stephen M. Miller).

Edited volumes often lack the coherence of monographs, but that is not the case here. The chapters are all of similar lengths, around 20 pages each; Peers' and Johnson's chapters are just over 30 pages each. All chapters have the same structure. Each begins with a brief overview of the background to the conflict. A short literature review outlines how the historiography has developed. A section on the 'outbreak of war' explains how each conflict began. There is a discussion of the organisation of the armed forces of both sides, and an exploration of each side's strategy and war aims. Each chapter explains the course of the war and has a section called 'anatomy of a battle', in which a particular engagement is explored as a case study. Each covers the use of technology, and the role of the Royal Navy. Finally, each chapter ends with a section on the aftermath of the war. The chapters all include a list of further reading and a map – both features are especially useful. The uniform structure means that it is easy to pick out individual relevant sections, something that will be much appreciated by both researchers and students. For those wishing to read cover to cover, the uniform structure makes the book easy to digest.

The introduction and conclusion, both written by Miller, are fairly brief, but nonetheless useful in pointing out some key themes. In particular, Miller highlights the importance of the broader political context; the use of the 'tools of empire' (borrowing from Daniel Headrick's book of that name); and the relationship between the use of armed force, and the expansion and maintenance of empire (and the role military leaders had as agents in that process). In an edited collection, some degree of

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variety is, of course, inevitable. Some chapters cover longer periods of time (Crawford's on the New Zealand Wars is the obvious example here). Some cover conflicts that were larger in scale and are the subject of a vast literature: Peers' chapter on the Revolt of 1857 and Miller's on the South African War come to mind here. Other chapters cover wars on which relatively little is written in English: as Ian Beckett notes, the Third Anglo-Burmese War has been little studied (p.222). Indeed, the interesting variety of the conflicts presented together here may help to redress such imbalances. Obviously, there are limitations on space, and so some battles and campaigns do not make the cut; but the editorial choices here make sense. It is worth noting that the Revolt of 1857, the New Zealand Wars, the Second Anglo-Afghan War, the Anglo-Zulu War, the Sudanese Campaign of 1884-85, the Third Anglo-Burmese War, Tirah, and the South African War of 1899-1902 are additions to what was covered in the Bond volume.

What these chapters do, then, is provide a 'way in' that one hopes will lead to further enquiry. Overall, this volume is a welcome addition to the historiography. It will be immensely useful for students studying courses on the history of the Victorian era British Empire, and will be especially helpful for students looking at the military history of the period. Moreover, Miller concludes by noting the hope that the book 'will have opened up new questions and debates' (p.311). The book shows how much our understanding of Victoria's wars has grown since Bond's volume came out in 1967; but it also shows that there is still plenty of room for fresh perspectives.

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Christopher Phillips, *Civilian Specialists at War: Britain's Transport Experts and the First World War*. London: University of London Press, 2020. 444 pp. ISBN 978-1909646902 (hardback). Price £50.

Logistics and transportation during war often make for rather dull reading, especially when academic studies underestimate the human element imperative to its success. However, this is where *Civilian Specialists at War: Britain's Transport Experts and the First World War* deviates. Christopher Phillips has produced an accessible and compelling monograph that examines how British transport specialists were 'redirected [during the First World War] from the pursuit of profits towards the production of military power' (p. 372). Drawing on years of pre-war experience, as well as established