

teetering when the war began. Tragically, the city's brutal occupation brought ethnic cleansing and persecution alongside starvation and disease.

The siege of Przemysl was an anomaly, for the fighting on the Eastern Front in World War I was generally a war of maneuver, unlike the static trench warfare that occurred on the Western Front. The author reveals how this war in the east foreshadowed the even bloodier one a generation later. The book is full of personal accounts of the siege and insightful looks at what happened during Przemysl's occupation.

***The Russian Who Saved the World: A Novel of the Cuban Missile Crisis*** (Capt. Steven E. Maffeo, USN, Ret., Focslie LLC, Annapolis MD, 2020, 269 pp., photographs, \$15.00, softcover)

In October 1962, the world was on the verge of World War III as the United States and the Soviet Union were at odds over the placement of Soviet missiles on the island of Cuba. U.S. warships blockaded the island to keep the Soviets from reinforcing its defenses. Near Cuba, cruising beneath the surface of the sea, was the Soviet Projekt 641-class submarine B-59. Its captain was overwhelmed by stress and fatigue as hostile ships roamed the surface hunting his vessel. He finally decided to launch a nuclear-armed torpedo at the aircraft carrier USS *Randolph*, an attack that would almost certainly start a full-scale nuclear war between the two nations. Only one man, a passenger aboard B-59, had a chance to avert the situation and prevent a global conflict.

This thrilling new novel is a fictionalized account of perhaps the most critical moment of the 20th century. The author is a retired naval intelligence officer with prior non-fiction work to his credit. His expertise and in-depth research make this work authentic and suspenseful, revealing much about the Soviet submarine service of the Cold War. This book elevates the author into the ranks of a select few skilled in the genre of historical naval fiction.

***The Warriors of Anbar: The Marines who Crushed Al-Qaeda—The Greatest Untold Story of the Iraq War*** (Ed Darack, Da Capo Press, New York NY, 2019, 246 pp., maps, photographs, index, \$28.00, hardcover)

Lance Corporal Mike Scholl sat in the turret of an up-armored Humvee, peering over the sights of his M240B machine gun. It was November 14, 2006. The vehicle was deployed 50 meters from the west bank of the Euphrates River in Haditha, Iraq. Scholl was part of a patrol moving through the town, alert for an attack by Al Qaeda fighters, who attacked the local Marines almost every day. He looked for signs of those fighters, for any tell-tale hint of an improvised explosive device or for

the sound of a rocket-propelled grenade. Neither Scholl nor his fellow Marines could afford to let their guard down for even a moment.

As the young Marine scanned the area beyond the barrel of his weapon, a grenade flew out of an alley and exploded near two Marines on foot. As the two men checked each other for injuries, other Marines looked for the grenade-thrower, but found no one. The attacker had simply melted back into the city. And none of the Marines could see another enemy fighter about to use a six-volt battery to set off a hidden bomb nearby.

The Marines sent to Anbar Province, Iraq, fought with perseverance and courage against an elusive and deadly foe. This new book tells the story of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, as they struggled to restore peace to one of the country's most violent regions. It is a well-written, descriptive, and highly readable work revealing what American troops in Iraq experienced.

***The Cornfield: Anxieta's Turning Point*** (David A. Welker, Casemate Publishers, Havertown PA, 2020, 384 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, \$34.95, hardcover)

The morning phase of the epic clash at Sharpsburg turned on control of an area forever known as the Cornfield. The 30-acre Cornfield changed hands repeatedly as both sides attacked and counterattacked. Union Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan demanded that the position on the Confederate left flank be taken. The Union I and XII corps, as well as a division of the Union II Corps, were wrecked trying to obtain the objective. Approximately 5,000 Confederates faced 8,700 Federals in the Cornfield-Dunker Church sector. Of the 13,700 men engaged, 4,368 became casualties.

The author of this new work argues McClellan's faulty tactics led to the bloodbath in the Cornfield. The morning action is described through a combination of gripping personal accounts, many of which are published for the first time. The work is a tantalizing narrative that sheds new light on the famous battle that became known as the single bloodiest day in the American Civil War.

***Alexander the Great: His Life and Mysterious Death*** (Anthony Everitt, Random House, New York NY, 2020, 464 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, \$30.00, hardcover)

Alexander the Great began his conquests in the backwater kingdom of Macedonia. From there, he embarked on the conquest of the entire ancient world. His troops marched all the way to the Indus River, toppling multiple kingdoms in the process. Those that stood in his way felt the terrible might of his army and his superb generalship. He wanted to keep going beyond the Indus,

but his troops refused to continue. Nevertheless, his success was impressive. Yet his increasingly tyrannical behavior during his march of conquest troubled his generals. His death is generally attributed to a fever, but theories about Alexander being murdered by his subordinates have existed since ancient times.

Debate over Alexander's life and his untimely death continues to this day. This new work is a fact-based study of Alexander. He was a man of many contradictions: a man who loved war, yet also knew the value of the quality of mercy. Moreover, he treated conquered peoples favorably. The author succeeds in showing his subject in the light of ancient times, judging him against the standards of his own times rather than trying to rate Alexander by modern criteria, which no figure of antiquity could hope to meet.

Scholarly biographies often fall into the rap of stodginess and unreadability, but this fresh study of Alexander the Great is clear and concise, with many trenchant observations. It is rich with anecdotes that illuminate Alexander's character and motivations.

***Tango 1-1: 9th Infantry Division LRP's in the Vietnam Delta*** (Jim Thayer, Pen and Sword, South Yorkshire UK, 2020, 168 pp., photographs, \$32.95, hardcover)

Late in the morning of October 8, 1968, Staff Sergeant Jim Thayer and his Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrol were looking for a water source to refill their empty canteens when they spotted a thatched hut only 20 meters ahead of them in the jungle. The hut had a makeshift gutter system that ended in a barrel filled with water. They took turns filling their canteens, placing a halazone tablet in each to kill any bacteria. After removing any sign that they had been there, the patrol moved out.

They soon found a clearing with another hut. Without warning, a Viet Cong soldier dashed from the structure, running for the tree line. A LRRP soldier dropped the enemy fighter with a single round. Just as the patrol got to the body, four more enemy soldiers dashed from the hut and into a banana grove. Sergeant Thayer called for air support, and two AH-1 Cobra gunships appeared and leveled the grove with a combination of machine guns, rockets, and 40mm grenades. Not a tree remained standing. As the team awaited the helicopter that would take them back to base, Jim realized he had just seen his first combat action, but he hadn't even fired a shot.

This memoir of the Vietnam War is written from the point of view of a member of one of the famed LRRP teams. These units moved quietly through enemy-held territory to gain the information needed to take the fight to the Viet Cong