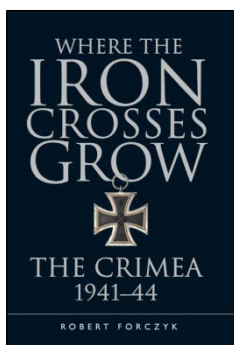


# Book Reviews



***Where the Iron Crosses Grow: The Crimea 1941-44***  
By Robert Forczyk  
NY: Osprey, 2014, 335 pages

Reviewed by 1stLt Walker D. Mills, U.S. Marine Corps



**W**here the Iron Crosses Grow is a history of the contest for the Crimea during World War II. The actions in the Crimea, particularly the first siege of Sevastopol, were some of the bloodiest battles on the Eastern Front. This book is a blisteringly detailed work that covers every combat action in the region from the initial German invasion through the evacuation of Sevastopol three years later. Set against the current geopolitical situation in Crimea and the Ukraine, the history is an easy companion for current events and a course in the most important theater of the Second World War that you've never heard of.

The author, Robert Forczyk, is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve where he served for 20 years as an Armor and Intelligence officer; he also earned a doctorate in international relations from the University of Maryland. He has published 26 books on topics ranging from the Napoleonic Wars to World War II, but German military history is his most common topic.

*Where the Iron Crosses Grow* is organized chronologically; it begins with a scene-setting prologue followed by a section on the conquering of Crimea by Bolshevik forces during the Russian Civil War. Forczyk uses this starting point to emphasize the deep roots of the Crimea in Russian consciousness, roots that far outweigh any other material value the region has. He continues his chronological narrative with the German capture of the peninsula culminating with the successful capture of Sevastopol in 1942 after a 250-day siege and the German defeat of the attempted Soviet amphibious landings on the Kerch Peninsula in eastern Crimea. But the Germans are beaten back in a multi-pronged Soviet assault and become surrounded in Sevastopol themselves. Overrun much more quickly than the Soviets months prior, they are evacuated Dunkirk-style to Bulgaria and other parts of the Ukraine. Forczyk ends his book with a timely chapter on the current situation in the Crimea and the assertion that Russia will never give it up; he takes some time throughout the narrative to talk about both the German and Soviet ethnic cleansing schemes that highlight the brutality of the theater.

The book is exceptionally detailed, with abundant footnotes and no shortage of dates, names, and places. Forczyk often provides the exact time for the initiation

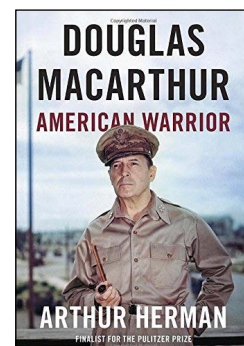
of assaults and barrages, drawing directly from primary sources that are often German war records. It is truly a unit history with a focus on the decisions and personalities at the regimental level and higher; all the German unit names are written and abbreviated in German. Forczyk often takes the time to examine the reasoning behind the decisions of the commanders involved and at times even describes their career trajectory in the context of the battles in the Crimea. The reading can be dry in parts and it's definitely intended for an audience that has a strong background in the war. Forczyk tries to liven the narrative by including a few firsthand accounts or descriptions of low-ranking soldiers and their exploits, but these breaks are few and far between.

Overall, the book is a great read for anyone interested in the Crimea or the Eastern Front of the war. It is a grim reminder that most of the fighting in the war was done on the Eastern Front and that more Germans were killed in the Crimea than Americans in the Korean War. Forczyk also attempts to view some of the actions through a contemporary military lens that any graduate of U.S. military schools would recognize and understand his terminology. It is also an important history for understanding the development of amphibious warfare and joint operation because both the Germans and the Soviets progress from inter-service bungling to true joint operations over the course of the campaign.

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***Douglas MacArthur: American Warrior***  
By Arthur Herman  
NY: Random House,  
2016, 940 pages

Reviewed by LTC (Retired)  
Rick Baillergeon



**I**n his 19 April 1951 address to Congress, GEN Douglas MacArthur concluded by stating, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." For many, this may ring true. However, in the case of MacArthur himself, military historians and writers have not let him fade away. At last count, there have been over two dozen biographies on MacArthur. The past few years have seen another resurgence on books focused on MacArthur. The latest addition is Arthur Herman's excellent volume, *Douglas MacArthur: American Warrior*.

Any new book on MacArthur, immediately generates several questions. First, "What, if anything differentiates this volume from the many others written on MacArthur?"

Second, "What, if anything does this volume add to our understanding of MacArthur or add to the body of knowledge existing on him?" Third, "How does this book compare to the others focused on MacArthur?" Finally, "Is this book worthy of reading?" Let me answer each of these below.

In distinguishing Herman's effort from past MacArthur volumes, the clear difference is his use of previously unavailable sources. In the past few years, several have become available to the public. This includes newly declassified documents from the National Archives and the U.S. Center of Military History. Perhaps, more importantly, he had access to recently released Russian and Chinese archival documents, and availability of a 1998 oral interview MacArthur's wife Jean gave, which was stored in the MacArthur Memorial. In total, they are a collection of sources which previous biographers were not afforded, and Herman utilizes them well within the volume to reinforce his position.

Despite the addition of the above sources, it would be a stretch to proclaim that *American Warrior* adds significantly to the existing body of knowledge on MacArthur. Certainly, these sources assist him in adding important background throughout the biography. They are particularly valuable in Herman's discussion of MacArthur's role in U.S. foreign policy. It is Herman's ability to articulate this role that is one of the major strengths of this book.

With so many biographies written on MacArthur, comparison is a challenge. With critics, several have stood out in their quality. These include *American Caesar* by William Manchester, Geoffrey Perret's *Old Soldiers Never Die*, and the recent *The Most Dangerous Man in America* by Mark Perry. Overall, I believe *American Warrior* clearly compares favorably in many areas with these books. In particular, I will address the objectivity and the readability of the volume.

The biggest test authors have in crafting a biography on MacArthur is being as balanced as possible in their approach. Truly, there are few more polarizing figures in history than MacArthur. It is extremely easy for authors to let their overall opinion of MacArthur make a biography overly positive or negative in tone. I believe readers will find this biography as pro-MacArthur — but not overtly so. Herman is unquestionably generous on his compliments of MacArthur, but he is also critical of his subject when he feels it is merited. In my opinion, it is one of the fairest depictions of MacArthur.

The quality which tremendously assists Herman in achieving this depiction is the superb readability of *American Warrior*. This is one of best written volumes I have read in recent memory. It is difficult to envision a volume weighing in at well over 800 pages as being a page-turner, but this is truly the case. It is crafted in a very conversant style and will immediately engage the reader.

In his introduction, Herman states, "In short, it is time for a biography that gives this larger-than-life figure his full due by peeling back the layers of myth, both pro and con, and revealing the marrow of the man, and his career."

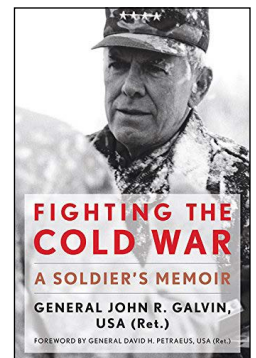
In essence, his goal is to make his volume the definitive biography on MacArthur. To be honest, that is an incredibly ambitious goal. It is a goal that has not been attained yet, and because of the complexity of the man and his polarizing nature, it will likely go unachieved.

What Herman has accomplished is writing a biography which is balanced, highly readable, and informative. For those who have read some of the other outstanding biographies on MacArthur and are steadfast in their opinions on him, this may be a volume you can pass on. However, if you are seeking to read your first biography on the man, this is an excellent choice. Don't let the length of the volume preclude you from reading *American Warrior*. They are pages well-worth consuming.

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***Fighting the Cold War: A Soldier's Memoir***  
By GEN (Retired)  
John R. Galvin  
Lexington, KY: University  
of Kentucky Press, 2015,  
568 pages

Reviewed by Maj Timothy Heck,  
U.S. Marine Corps Reserve



As tensions between the United States and Russia continue to simmer, the memoirs of the late GEN (Retired) John R. Galvin, NATO's last Cold War commander, offer a more nuanced view than the standard black and white portrayal of the adversary. *Fighting the Cold War*, which spans Galvin's life from youth to West Point to Vietnam to NATO command and beyond, is a free-roaming reflection on the events, people, and causes that made GEN Galvin one of the key architects to the peaceful end of the Cold War. Galvin's stories reveal him to be an adept commander, staff officer, and an astute judge of human character.

Throughout his early military career, GEN Galvin was placed in assignments that were not necessarily career-enhancing. When his Ranger School and West Point classmates headed to assignments in Germany, Galvin went to Puerto Rico to a unit about to furl its colors. From Puerto Rico, he served as an advisor and instructor with the Colombian Escuela de Lanceros where he saw firsthand a counterinsurgency and learned how to work with foreign forces, experiences that would benefit him later in his career. Later, with the 101st Airborne Division he was transferred from company command to running an administrative center, a less-than-desirable career step. Regardless of his circumstances, GEN Galvin managed to improve the Soldiers, their support of the division, and his proficiency through leadership, "self-awareness, [emphasis