



# **A Military Transformed?: Adaptation and Innovation in the British Military, 1792-1945 (Wolverhampton Military Studies)**

*Michael LoCicero, Ross Mahoney, Stuart Mitchell*

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Between 1792 and 1945, the character of warfare changed. Battalions standing shoulder to shoulder during the Napoleonic era gave way to the industrialized, modern armies of the First and Second World Wars. The organization and operational methods of the major military powers dramatically altered during this period and the British forces were no different. From the transition of the Royal Navy's ships to oil from coal to the creation of an independent air force in 1918, the British military pioneered key innovations that affected the character of war on land, sea and air.

To date, many commentators and historians have focused on contemporary debates or specific historical examples. *A Military Transformed? Adaptation and Innovation in the British Military from 1792 to 1945* brings many of these debates together and forms a broader picture. The complexity of change in the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force is explored in chapters drawing on new and original research. Examples covered include the British military performance in the Napoleonic Wars, the developments of the Army medical services in the late-nineteenth century, the Royal Navy's introduction of the Whitehead torpedo in the 1870s, air power doctrine on the eve of the First World War, British Army reorganization in 1918 and amphibious operations in the Second World War.

Spanning the period of both peace and war this ground-breaking survey illustrates the different drivers for transformation and innovation. Culture, technology, tactics, organization, personality, doctrine, command and context have all shaped the speed and development of the British Forces. *A Military Transformed? Adaptation and Innovation in the British Military from 1792 to 1945* shows that while it was neither a revolutionary nor a conservative organization, the British military certainly evolved and reacted to the character of warfare in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; even if change, at times, did not come easily.

## REVIEWS

“... the editors have done an excellent job of making this valuable volume as accessible as possible to the more general reader and it therefore succeeds on two levels; as an account as good as any you may find on the state of the historical debate on change in the British armed forces (certainly outside expensive and limited distribution academic titles) and as an thought provoking work the general military history reader can profit from.” Society of Friends of the National Army Museum Book Review Supplement

"This book showcases the work of some of our brightest emerging scholars and makes a hugely valuable contribution to studies of both the military and institutional innovation more broadly." Dr Jonathan Boff, University of Birmingham

"This is a splendid collection of essays by a group of outstanding scholars of the younger generation. The

future of military history and war studies is clearly in very safe hands." Peter Simkins, Honorary Professor of Western Front Studies, University of Wolverhampton

"This is an extremely interesting and intellectually stimulating volume." Gary Sheffield, Professor of War Studies University of Wolverhampton

The fifteen excellent essays in this handsomely-crafted volume serve as models of clarity and original archival research. They also provide an examination of technological advances and their impact on tactical and doctrinal development, the relationship between military and political spheres of influence and authority, and the identification and description of the prime movers in British military transformation. Each diverse chapter serves as a thread woven into a larger, relevant, and viable tapestry, confirming that historical studies can provide insight into contemporary military issues.

International Bibliography of Military History 35, no. 1 (2015) And the Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research and Soldiers of the Queen, the Journal of the Victorian Military Society

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