

ped, was the opposite (p. 85). These case studies contain a great deal of detail, and are not the easiest of reads. Readers should not be deterred by them, and should persevere. Those who do so will be rewarded with some useful insights into different battle cultures (although Krause does not use this term, preferring the clunkier term 'methodologies'). The roles of the artillery and engineers loom large in the case studies. The comparison of the two divisions gives clear evidence of the importance of the personalities of the individual commanders. The 77th Division was commanded by the charismatic and effective General Ernest Barbot, who stamped his personality on the formation and was killed during Second Artois. His eventual successor, General Pillot, was also a highly effective commander, and the 77th Division undoubtedly benefited from the strong leadership of these two men. By contrast, the 34th Division's commander was General Paul de Lobit, and his performance during this battle indicated a weak man lacking in confidence. His superior, the commander of XVII Corps, General J.B. Dumas, at times virtually commanded the Division by remote control. As Krause comments, under Dumas' tutelage Lobit's performance improved. The Western Front has a reputation for minimising the influence of the individual, but the evidence presented here suggests that, even under the immensely difficult circumstances of Second Artois, strong and weak leadership did have an impact on the combat performance of formations.

Overall, Krause does a good job of refuting the negative picture of the French army in spring 1915. He makes a persuasive case that this was an organisation that learned from its experiences, and some of its tactics have a distinctly modern feel. His comments on Ferdinand Foch support the refurbishing of the latter's reputation, and, not the least of Krause's achievements is that he places scholarship on the French army in the still-neglected year of 1915 before an audience that is unable or disinclined to read French. Although a slim and expensive volume, *Early Trench Tactics in the French Army* is a very welcome contribution to the military history of the First World War.

GARY SHEFFIELD
University of Wolverhampton

Tim Gale, *The French Army's Tank Force and Armoured Warfare in the Great War: the Artillerie Spéciale*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. 263pp. ISBN: 978-1-4094-6661-1. Hardback. £85.50.

The French Army's Tank Force and Armoured Warfare in the Great War, despite being a book about France, could probably only have been written in Britain. There are two reasons for this. The first reflects the current state of French First World War historiography. Decisively influenced by Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, Annette Becker and 'the Péronne school', academic research has focused – to excellent effect – on

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mentalités and memory. It is noteworthy that two of the few scholars who work on the war's operational history, Michel Goya and Rémy Porte, are serving soldiers. (One wonders when, if ever, we shall see volumes of comparable quality coming from the keyboards of British serving personnel.) Today the military history of France in the First World War is largely being written outside France, by authors like Robert Doughty, Elizabeth Greenhalgh, Douglas Porch and now Gale himself, rather than within it.

The second reason for the 'Britishness' of this book is its underlying assumption that its readers will know nothing of France's pioneering role in armoured warfare. Here Gale reflects a generic failing of far too much military history, a continuing and frustrating determination to tell war stories in national terms. Anglophone historians of the war or of armoured warfare discuss the use of tanks at Flers and Cambrai rather than in the Nivelle offensive and the Marne counter-attack. In speaking of 'the traditional view of the Great War French army, that it was steadfast but rather dim' (p. 220), Gale addresses a British audience unable to widen its range of vision. The broad contours of his argument should be familiar to any reader of Guy Pedroncini's *Pétain: general en chef 1917-1918*, published in 1974, or of Goya's *La chair et l'acier*, which appeared a decade ago.

None of this means that Gale's book is not important in its own right; indeed, it is the fullest and most thorough account of France's use of armour in 1917-18 available in any language. Despite the quality of much French operational history written between the wars, the specific subject of tanks never attracted writers in the way that it did British authors. Jean-Baptiste Estienne played a far more influential individual role in the formation of the *artillerie spéciale*, as the armoured units were called, than did any of the British claimants to be the founding fathers of the tank. He was at once progenitor, advocate, industrial contact, trainer and commander, but he never wrote a major memoir or theoretical treatment in the manner of J.F.C. Fuller. The very title – 'special artillery' – makes its own point. Estienne was a gunner, and French tanks were above all mobile gun platforms, designed to give the infantry direct fire support against German strong points. With cannon of calibres up to 75 mm, medium French tanks possessed more firepower than did British. The Renault light tank, which used its mobility as a substitute for armour, also stressed firepower. By contrast the British tanks were more suited to crushing wire and crossing trenches (a particular weakness of French designs). All First World War tanks were primarily intended for infantry support, but in the French case the repeated determination to design the attacks of 1917-18 around the infantry continued to shape post-war debate, not least given the immediate decision to integrate armour with infantry.

Gale makes good use of the archives at Vincennes, of doctrinal publications and of regimental histories. Estienne enjoyed the support of senior French officers, notably Joffre and Pétain, but struggled to win over some civilians, notably the ministers of armaments, Albert Thomas and Louis Loucheur. Both had to consider munitions production in the round, and so prioritised the output of guns and shells over tanks, but they went further, taking decisions that, because they were operational in their effects, more properly belonged with the army itself. Gale's account is particularly strong on tactical detail, and on the links between battlefield experience and the subsequent adoption of the lessons learnt. Unfortunately, however, the maps are too rudimentary to illustrate his detailed accounts of specific tank actions. His publishers might also have exercised a stronger editorial hand. This reads like an unrevised thesis: footnotes have not been consolidated, prepositions are left hanging, syntax can be odd, and malapropisms remain uncorrected.

HEW STRACHAN
University of St Andrews

Stephen Heathorn, *Haig and Kitchener in Twentieth-Century Britain: Remembrance, Representation and Appropriation*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. 268pp. ISBN: 978-0-7546-6965-4. £85.00.

Members of the BCMH will not need to be reminded of the particular place the First World War holds in British popular memory. During the centenary now upon us, debates about why the war was fought, how it was fought and how it is remembered have continued to run and run. With this in mind, finding something different and interesting to say might prove something of a challenge. Stephen Heathorn's book *Haig and Kitchener in Twentieth Century Britain* is not a work of biography (of which there are many good examples) but, as the title suggests, a study of the place that these two great personalities of Britain's Great War have held – and continue to hold – in British memory and historiography.

The author builds on, and includes material from, several journal articles he has published over the last few years, in which he explored a variety of themes which are developed further in the book. He also builds on the work of historians such as Dan Todman, whose book *The Great War: Myth and Memory* (2005) is essential reading for those seeking to understand how perceptions of the war changed during the twentieth century. Heathorn's book also meets a need he had previously identified in 2005 (in his article 'The Mnemonic Turn in the Cultural Historiography of Britain's Great War') for historians to treat the memory of the First World War as historically evolving and contingent. His aim is to examine the ways in which