

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

## REVIEWS

contested interpretations of Haig and Kitchener developed and why, and by whom, they were perpetuated.

During the war and in its aftermath, there was mass grief at the scale of losses. Significantly, perhaps the biggest outpourings of grief followed the deaths of Kitchener and Haig. The former was drowned when the ship in which he was travelling to Russia, *HMS Hampshire*, struck a mine and sank off the Orkneys in June 1916. Kitchener therefore became 'one of the missing', as well as Britain's highest-ranking casualty of the war. Heathorn's second chapter suggests that there was a genuine need to mourn a national loss, but also examines the way remembrance was contested and appropriations of Kitchener's memory were politicised. For example, he discusses in detail the politics of the renaming of Berlin, Ontario to 'Kitchener', a change that took place only after an extremely close vote. The third chapter looks at the conspiracy theories surrounding Kitchener's death. I particularly enjoyed this chapter, in view of the enduring popularity of the conspiracy theory genre. The 'Official Narrative' of the loss of the *Hampshire* pointed to a catalogue of errors and unfortunate coincidences which led to the sinking. However, this did not prevent a succession of self-serving individuals, such as the journalist Arthur Freeman (alias Frank Power) and the 'man who killed Kitchener', Fritz Joubert Duquesne, from seeking to cash in. Heathorn also links the issue of public responses to conspiracy theories with the anxieties and problems of 1920s Britain: the 1926 conspiracy occurred at a time of domestic crisis. Chapter 6, on visual and material culture, examines diverse case studies on Kitchener. Heathorn considers the famous Alfred Leete recruitment poster, the statue of Kitchener in Khartoum, and depictions in cinema, in particular the 1968 film *Fräulein Doktor*. He suggests that the poster's post-war legacy has been rather more influential than the impact it had during the war itself. Moreover, Kitchener was increasingly seen rather more as a relic of the imperial past than as a wartime hero. Heathorn's discussion of the removal of the Khartoum statue, following Sudanese independence, is particularly interesting in this regard.

The figure of Douglas Haig is central to the way in which the First World War is remembered. As Heathorn observes, 'the connection between one's view of Haig and one's view of the First World War remains very strong' (p. 229). The death of Haig in January 1928 prompted widespread national mourning. In chapter 4, Heathorn builds on Todman's 2003 article for the *Journal of Military History* on the retirement, death and mourning of Haig, as well as some of his own work. He argues that the public response to Haig's funeral and the storm over the design of his national monument, were less about Haig as Commander-in-Chief and more about the ex-servicemen who survived the war and did not feel their contributions were being sufficiently remembered. However, context had changed by the time of the unveiling of the Whitehall statue in 1937, with criticism of the war no longer as

provocative as it had been previously. Indeed, the process by which Haig's character became a *lieu de mémoire* for the war itself is explored in chapter 5. Heathorn presents an analysis which asserts three kinds of narratives: the romantic, in which Haig the superior man goes to war and emerges triumphant; the mimetic and tragic, in which Haig the ordinary man does the best he can; and the ironic and satirical, in which Haig the inferior man bungles the job. What follows is a useful survey of the historiography on Haig. Chapter 6 looks at examples of Haig in film, such as *Oh! What a Lovely War*. It also considers the debate over calls for the removal of the Haig statue.

*Haig and Kitchener in Twentieth Century Britain* ranges widely across the hundred years since the First World War began and it marks an important contribution to scholarship on how the war is remembered. Heathorn concludes that there is a continuing need to look at the history of the war as a story of individuals, even in an age of industrialised warfare. The centenary is perhaps demonstrating the validity of this statement.

DANIEL WHITTINGHAM  
University of Birmingham