

even though increasing numbers of women chose not to marry and to pursue their own interests. Many others pursued interests even if they were married. A third theme is the rather obvious class differences.

Wiesner is thorough in her review of research, and she also suggests areas in which further research will probably reveal new perspectives on women's roles in early modern Europe. One of the major strengths of the book is the bibliographic information. Each chapter ends with an extensive bibliography related to specific points on the topic discussed. For example, in the chapter on the female life-cycle, Wiesner cites sources on early modern family, childhood, sexuality, female homosexuality, ideas of women about their own bodies, motherhood, and widows. This textbook provides plenty of bibliographical material for any student to continue research on topics about women.

Maryland State Department of Education

Diane Nagel Johnson

David Chandler. *On the Napoleonic Wars.* Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1994. Pp. 270. Cloth, \$23.95. ISBN 1-85367-158-4.

Perhaps the greatest ambition of a professional historian is to become so associated with a subject that he or she is instantly recognized as the "leading" authority. Many distinguished scholars are readily known by their work in a certain field—G.R. Elton on the Reformation and C.V. Wedgwood on the English Civil War, to name but two. Similarly, when one thinks of Napoleon, one immediately associates the name David Chandler with him. Chandler is easily identified by his mammoth and weighty tome, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*, certainly the most exhaustive and lengthy study of the erstwhile French Emperor. Chandler has added to his work with the recently published *On the Napoleonic Wars*, a collection of essays that updates and offers new interpretations in many areas of Napoleonic history.

On the Napoleonic Wars covers a wide range of Napoleonic topics, from strictly military questions to more universal historical themes. The first essay, "The Origins of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars," is a concise and useful summation of the many wars fought during the French Revolution and Napoleon's time as ruler of France. This essay also helps to clarify and differentiate the many coalitions of nations arrayed against the French Emperor. From this overview, Chandler proceeds to specific topics. There are essays on several of the largest Napoleonic battles, such as Austerlitz, Borodino, and Marengo. These essays are not mere narratives, however, and Chandler seeks to address historical problems or themes within them. The essay on Marengo, for example, attempts to put to rest the idea that the battle was a brilliant Napoleonic victory; Chandler tries to show that French victory was rather an extreme case of good luck on Napoleon's part.

Chandler also provides an essay on Wellington and his ability as a commander as well as an excellent essay on Napoleon's colorful and intriguing subordinates, the French Marshals. Finally, perhaps the most important theme in the book concerns the personality and ability of Napoleon himself. Chandler does not seek to deify Napoleon or enhance his already bloated historical reputation. Instead, he seeks to interpret Napoleon as a real person and give him credit and criticism as it is deserved. The essays on Borodino and Marengo offer criticism of Napoleon's conduct at these battles. Similarly, Chandler also seeks to demonstrate that Napoleon was not, as is widely believed, a great innovator. Rather, he simply built upon ideas and concepts begun during the French Revolution.

Perhaps the only criticism of Chandler's book can be found in its somewhat "anglocentric" view. As an Oxford graduate and British Army officer, this is somewhat understandable, but Chandler gives far too much attention to the British perspective on the Napoleonic Wars. There are, for example, several essays on Wellington and the tactics of the British Army. Considering that England was Napoleon's most implacable enemy, this is certainly justified, but there are no essays concerning Prussia and Austria, nations that suffered much worse than England at Napoleon's hands. Also, it was these nations, not England, that were the primary continental enemies of Napoleon and fielded the largest armies and fought the biggest battles against the French. Similarly, while there is an essay on the Russian Army, Chandler writes it from the perspective of a General Wilson, who was the British liaison to the Russian Army. The Napoleonic Wars were certainly not simply a case of the English versus the French, and a

more universal perspective might have helped convey how many people and nations were affected by Napoleon's reign. That said, the book is nonetheless an excellent, wide-ranging study of the Napoleonic Wars. Any teacher or scholar at all interested in this monumental historical era would find the book enjoyable. It would be especially useful on the college level, as the essays address many important historical questions from this vital historical era in brief and cogent fashion. The only concern might be that some of the essays focus on technical military questions that would be difficult for students to grasp.

St. John's University

Michael Marino

Keith Robbins. *Churchill*. London & New York: Longman, 1992. Pp. viii, 186. Paper, \$19.50. ISBN 0-582-03136-2.

Kevin Jefferys. *War & Reform: British Politics During the Second World War*. Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1994. Pp. xii, 171. Cloth, \$49.95; ISBN 0-7190-3970-3. Paper, \$18.95; ISBN 0-7190-3971-1.

Half a century after the end of the Second World War and the Labour Party landslide election in the summer of 1945, scholarly interest in Winston Churchill's wartime leadership and British domestic politics during the war has never been greater than it is today. These two books under review offer students and teachers alike different approaches to a better understanding of Great Britain in the twentieth century—the effects of two world wars, the postwar social welfare legislation, diminished great power status, and the climax and decline of the British empire.

Keith Robbins, the author of *The Eclipse of a Great Power: Modern Britain, 1870-1975* (1983), is Principal of St. David's University College, Lampeter, in the University of Wales, and general editor of the Longman *Profiles in Power* series. His brief biographical study of Winston Churchill is a welcome addition to that series. The author succinctly outlines Churchill's career and offers a balanced account of both domestic and foreign policy development and the role Churchill played in them. In the spirit of the series, Robbins seeks to evaluate the role of the individual in historical change, to uncover the nature and source of Churchill's power, and to discover what made possible his often "commanding role in national and world affairs in the first half of the 20th century." More of an interpretative biographical essay than a full-fledged biography and based on printed sources only, the work offers a quick and almost painless way for students to view Churchill's whole career and to grasp the nature of Churchill's personality in just under two hundred pages of reading. Needless to say, a large portion of the text treats Churchill's wartime coalition. The book can serve as a guide to Martin Gilbert's massive, multivolumed Churchill biography and to the more specialized, and often controversial, works of Paul Addison, John Charmley, Andrew Roberts, Norman Rose, and others. While some may question some of Robbins's interpretations, the author succeeds in displaying Churchill's brilliant successes, his failures, and the many apparently contradictory aspects of his complex personality. The work can be used with profit in advanced courses on twentieth-century Britain or in specialized courses on the individual and the nature of political power. The book includes footnotes, a brief bibliography, a chronological table, and an index.

Kevin Jefferys is a Senior Lecturer in Contemporary History at the University of Plymouth, the author of several scholarly works, including *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics, 1941-1945*, the editor of the wartime diaries of James Chuter Ede, and general editor of the Manchester University series *Documents in Contemporary History*. His contribution to that series conforms admirably to its purpose of providing advanced secondary students and university undergraduates a concise overview of the results of specialist research on British domestic politics during the Second World War, a guide through the major historiographical debates, and an introduction to the methodological problems involved in the use and interpretation of the extracts from a wide range of primary sources included in the text. Students will encounter selections from political diaries, private letters, memoirs, official government records, party manifestos, newspaper articles, political cartoons, and evidence of the state of public opinion in wartime Britain. Teachers will find the introductory chapter useful in preparing for courses at almost any level. In only fourteen pages the author lays out the major historical debates about wartime