

in the Epilogue that politicians should be aware of the “dangers of turning words into violent actions.” In the aftermath of the Tucson tragedy in January 2011 and a renewed call for political civility, his words remain ever so timely and the story of Sumner becomes even more compelling. Taken as a whole, the short length, subject, and writing style of *The Caning of Charles Sumner* will make this text a staple in survey and upper-level American history classes alike.

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D.K.R. Crosswell. *Beetle: The Life of General Bedell Smith*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. Pp. 1070. Hardcover, \$39.95; ISBN 978-08131-2649-4.

It is almost impossible to read a book about General Dwight David Eisenhower and not find references to General Walter Bedell Smith. Throughout the Second World War, Smith worked alongside Eisenhower as his Chief of Staff and most trusted assistant, directing the largest, most complex, and most important command organization in American military history. While the commander made the decisions, Smith supervised the preparation of the orders that got the military forces moving: in Sicily, Italy, and for the Invasion of Normandy in June 1944. In no small way, Eisenhower was successful because of “Beetle” Smith’s competent leadership and sound advice, a fact he acknowledged after Smith’s death in 1961. He never carried the responsibility of senior combat command, yet his role in the Allied defeat of Germany was as critical as anyone in Europe. After the war, he served President Harry S. Truman as ambassador to the Soviet Union, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Under Secretary of State. In spite of this distinguished career, few are aware of Smith or his role in twentieth-century American history.

D.K.R. Crosswell’s *Beetle* captures the essence of Smith’s fifty years in government service. He innovatively commences his mammoth study, almost 1000 pages including notes, discussing the general’s transition from military to civilian bureaucrat after the war. These years as Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Director of the CIA, and Under Secretary of State, were, as Crosswell describes, less than satisfying but exceedingly important. Elderly and in poor health, Smith ended his days in 1961 at Walter Reed Hospital, rejecting an elaborate funeral. He lies buried near his mentor, George C. Marshall, at Arlington National Cemetery.

The author arranges the remainder of the book in a more conventional manner beginning as a sixteen-year old private in the Indiana National Guard. Parts two and three describe Smith’s transition from soldier, to officer, to consummate staff officer as Secretary of Marshall’s General Staff at the beginning of the Second World War. Crosswell superbly describes how the Army’s pre-war professional education system, with postings at the Infantry School and Command and General Staff School, compensated for Smith not attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point or

another college or university. His relationship with Marshall, a demanding taskmaster, further prepared him for his critical role in Europe. The author's description of Smith's duties in a series of demanding Washington assignments sheds light not only on his personal development, but also on the Army Chief of Staff's duties and leadership style. In the last three parts, Crosswell describes, in detail, Smith's development as Eisenhower's principal assistant. Arriving on the eve of Operational Torch in September 1942, the new chief injected an element of efficiency and dependability into the command process. As described by the author and confirmed in most accounts of Eisenhower as a commander, Smith's role was critical in the success of the North African, Sicily, and Normandy invasions. It was Beetle Smith who accepted the German surrender in Rheims, France, on May 7, 1945.

It will be impossible for future historians to write about Eisenhower or his role as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe without reference to Crosswell's *Beetle*. It is exhaustively researched, and extremely detailed, and few records have escaped the author's review—at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, the home of Smith's papers, or archives at the National Archives, the Army War College, the Command and General Staff College, and a host of other archives in the United States and Great Britain. The same is true for the secondary literature, and every published source this reviewer is aware of has contributed to this massive biography. Without question, this book is required for any future study of the American military participation in the Second World War.

Unfortunately, *Beetle* is most likely not particularly useful for most readers of this journal. Its grand scale makes it unwieldy for most high school and undergraduate history courses. It also assumes the reader's general familiarity with the outlines of the century's major events and the role of the major participants. Finally, it is a narrative about organizational structure and bureaucratic process, essential for the specialist but mind-numbing for the general student. However, it should be purchased by all school libraries and used to help students understand the inner workings of both the national military organization and civilian government.

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