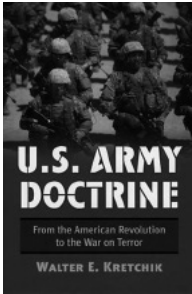


DOCTRINE & TRAINING IN AMERICAN AND BRITISH ARMIES



Lexington: University Press
of Kansas, 2011

408 pages

\$39.95

U.S. Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror

By Walter E. Kretchik

Reviewed by Dr John A. Bonin, Professor of Concepts and Doctrine, US Army War College

U.S. *Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror* is an ambitious book. Walter Kretchik attempts to capture a previously ignored complex and esoteric subject in a comprehensible manner. He is a member of a small group of contemporary military historians who are unafraid to study previously unappealing topics in institutional history, in this case, Army doctrine. Kretchik is a retired Army officer and an associate professor of history at Western Illinois University.

Kretchik seeks to provide an overview of the US Army's dominant doctrinal publications and some of the individuals who shaped its operations from 1779 to 2008. Kretchik considers doctrine to be a subcategory of military literature distinguished by two characteristics: approval by a government authority and mandatory use. As an approved and prescribed publication, doctrine stands juxtaposed to "informal practice" which evolves from custom, tradition, and actual experience. His primary focus is how Army leadership perceived the conduct of military operations, with less attention paid to administration or sustainment. The author acknowledges he does not consider every Army doctrinal publication during this long period, but establishes what constituted the service's "keystone" manual during a particular era and judges its impact in preparing the Army to accomplish its mission.

Prior to 1779, no American warfighting doctrine existed as Colonial militia and Ranger units followed "informal practice." According to Kretchik, General George Washington realized by 1778 that the Continental Army needed a standardized doctrine to regulate tactical warfare procedures. Baron von Steuben's *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States Army* were approved by Congress in April 1779 and constituted the US Army's first doctrine. Adaptations of French or Prussian tactics, essentially branch tactical drill manuals, constituted the first era of Army doctrine from 1779-1904. This changed in 1905 when the Root reforms fixed doctrinal responsibility with the new Army general staff. The *Field Service Regulations* of 1905 shifted from pure tactical branch matters to regulating broader combined arms service behavior in the field, with the division as the basic combat organization. Post-World War I, the *Field Service Regulations of 1923* captured the lessons of that war and emphasized field forces within a theater of operations from groups of armies to divisions, while including considerations of tanks, the air service, and chemical weapons. On the eve of World War II in 1939, the Army split *Field Service Regulations* into three parts: FM 100-5, *Operations*; FM 100-10, *Administration*; and FM 100-15, *Large Units*. Unfortunately, from this point on, Kretchik only traces FM 100-5 and its successor, FM 3-0. In 1944, FM 100-5 became multiservice with the acknowledged requirement for mutual support from the Navy or Air

Force. Later, in 1962, Army doctrine in FM 100-5 became noticeably more multinational. General Donn Starry's 1982 AirLand Battle version reversed the defensive posture of General William DePuy's 1976 manual and assumed a more maneuver-oriented offensive stance. After 1991, and the end of the Cold War, Army FM 100-5, *Operations*, contained more interagency considerations. In addition, as a concession to the growth of joint doctrine in 2001, the Army renumbered FM 100-5 as FM 3-0, *Operations*. Overall, Kretchik believes that doctrine has served the Army well in preparation for conventional war, but the Army has noticeably neglected unconventional operations. General Petraeus's FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, from 2006 was a notable exception.

While the research for this book is extensive, I believe Kretchik fails to completely identify the Army's dominant publication in all eras. For example, he selects the *1891 Infantry Drill Regulations*, and its update the *1895 Infantry Drill Regulations*, as the keystone publication of its era. "Tactics were explained in clearer language." He acknowledges, however, this manual deleted "divisional and brigade movements." In addition, Kretchik didn't consider the *1896 Drill Regulations for Cavalry* that described "independent cavalry" which had strategic raids among its missions. In addition, by not tracing the evolution of the 1939 FM 100-15, *Large Units*, or its successor doctrinal publication such as FM 100-7, *Decisive Force: Theater Army Operations* of 1995, Kretchik fails to adequately describe the evolution of the Army's doctrine at the operational to theater strategic level, but instead follows the more tactically oriented FM 100-5/3-0 doctrinal evolutions. Unfortunately, Kretchik ended his account with FM 3-0, *Operations* of 2008 and thereby lacks the entire revision of Army doctrine started in 2010 and resulted in FM 3-0 split into Army Doctrinal Pub (ADP) 3-0 and Army Doctrinal Reference Pub (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* by 2012. Finally, Kretchik missed the increasing significance of FM 100-1, later FM 1 and now ADP 1, *The Army*. This has been the Army Chief of Staff's personal document and now provides a superior presentation of the Army to external audiences than does ADP 3-0.

Regardless of this criticism, *U.S. Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror*, is a valuable book for serious students of the history of the US Army and a must for readers interested in the evolution of FM 100-5/3-0, *Operations*. However, what is still needed is a companion history of the evolution of the Army's doctrine for larger units at the operational level.