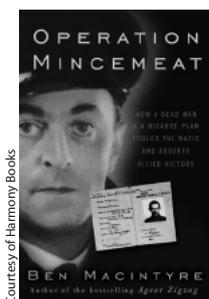


about entering prolonged conflict. It is a curiously deflating ending to a book propelled by indignation and a sense of certitude about US affairs. Perhaps like many of us, Dr. Record is confessing that he doesn't have all the answers.

One attractive feature of *Wanting War* is the author's insight into warfare in general. A long and perceptive observer of strategic affairs, Record's asides and general observations on war sprinkle the book with thoughtful points, as when he mentions that "strategy must deal first and foremost with the realities of power (including, for the United States, the limits of its own power) . . ." or in another chapter, ". . . elections, written constitutions and other democratic institutions can and have been exploited by antidemocratic parties to achieve power . . . Democracy may not turn out to be the cure for the political ills of the Middle East but rather the vehicle on which political extremism rides to power." Record's eloquence and experience, his long study of war, and his insight into current events enliven a book that suffers from his evident rage at duplicitous policy and botched planning.



New York: Harmony Books, 2010

400 pages

\$25.99

## ***Operation Mincemeat: How a Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured an Allied Victory***

by Ben Macintyre

**Reviewed by James R. Oman, COL (USA Retired),**  
Director, Senior Service College Fellowship Program,  
Defense Acquisition University, Aberdeen Proving  
Ground, Maryland

“Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori,” originally written in the ancient Roman poet Horace's *Odes*, cited by the author in *Operation Mincemeat: How a Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured an Allied Victory*, and inscribed as the epitaph on Glyndwr Michael's headstone this Latin phrase translates into “It is sweet and fitting to die for your country.” It is ironic that Michael, while not dying for his country, as the author points out, nonetheless, “. . . had indeed given his life for his country, even if he had been given no choice about it.”

This reviewer suspects that most readers have never heard of Glyndwr Michael. Michael played an instrumental role in concealing the Allies true strategic intentions during the decisive middle years of the Second World War. Actually, Michael's mortal remains, combined with the contents of his briefcase chained to his body, and the many items placed in his wallet and on his person, were all part of a grand strategic deception plan. A plan aimed at misleading Hitler and other senior, influential German military leaders.

Author Ben Macintyre describes Michael's role and much more as he tells the “rest of the story” in *Operation Mincemeat*. This latest work is extremely interesting, well written, and exhaustively researched. Macintyre is

an accomplished author with numerous publications, a columnist, and writer at large who can easily be classified as a “skillful storyteller.” Macintyre’s work supplements and rests upon the foundation provided by an earlier tome authored by Ewen Montagu. Montagu’s work, *The Man Who Never Was* is more recognizable due to its longevity in print, greater readership, and subsequent movie.

Macintyre demonstrates his penchant for research as well as his investigatory proficiency as he tracks down Ewen Montagu’s son during the course of his initial research and development of the story. Jeremy Montagu provided Macintyre with access to his father’s once classified files that were untouched for countless years. Using this source, the author develops numerous threads, twists, and turns inherent in the multiple story lines and subplots that are stranger than fiction. They are more akin to a detective novel.

Macintyre provides a superb context for the developing operation. The Allies faced a strategic crossroads in January 1943 when they met at the Casablanca Conference in French Morocco. As Roosevelt and Churchill contemplate the destruction of the Axis Powers in North Africa and the Third Reich in its totality, they are faced with the challenge of determining where and when the initial attack on Hitler’s “Fortress Europe” would take place.

Following a good deal of debate and deliberation, they reach a decision to assault Europe from the South via the Mediterranean Sea. A cursory examination of the land masses surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea unmistakably points to Sicily. The Allies plan envisions Sicily as a vital springboard for their drive into Italy, fulfilling Churchill’s oft-stated goal of assaulting the Third Reich by attacking through the “underbelly of Europe.”

One of the challenges facing the Allies in early 1943 was convincing the German commanders in general and Hitler specifically that the next target was anywhere but Sicily. From this inauspicious beginning sprang Operation Mincemeat, one of the most creative, ambitious, and ultimately successful deception plans in history. Operation Mincemeat was comparable in significance and complexity, albeit on a much smaller scale, to that of Operation Fortitude, the subsequent strategic deception plan that concealed the true location of D-Day.

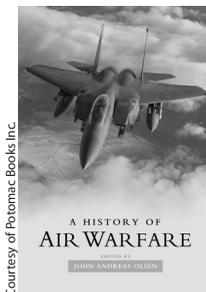
Macintyre introduces the reader to a diverse group of individuals that includes many memorable figures. Most notably is Acting Lieutenant Commander Ewen Montagu. Recognized by the head of Naval Intelligence for his terrific intellect, Montagu is the main character and the principal driving force in developing, coordinating, and shepherding Operation Mincemeat to fruition. Montagu’s primary assistant is Royal Air Force Flight Lieutenant Cholmondeley. Cholmondeley is described as an unconventional intelligence officer with a brilliant, creative mind. He plays a supporting yet significant role throughout the operation. Other supporting members make their entrance, play their part as the operation evolves, and move to the background, although a number of participants reappear throughout the book. Whether it is Admiral Godfrey, the Director of Naval Intelligence and his assistant Lieutenant Commander Ian Fleming (the future creator of James Bond), both highly adept in deceiving their adversaries; or the noted pathologist Sir Bernard Spilsbury

(who serves as a key advisor for the operation) or his colleague, Dr. Bentley Purchase, who, as the coroner for the St. Pancras mortuary, “bent the rules” to obtain an unclaimed, once nameless corpse (Glyndwr Michael) that masquerades as a courier lost at sea.

All of these individuals, plus a number of key players, do their part in making a fantasy become plausible in the eyes and minds of their enemy. Undeniably, the successful invasion and seizure of Sicily in the summer of 1943, with its lower than expected casualty figure of 7,000 deaths out of an invasion force of 160,000 participants, can readily be traced to the successful execution of *Operation Mincemeat*.

The author has again vividly demonstrated that the topic of World War II remains a rich subject with an enormous number of stories yet to be told. While numerous books and articles have been written on strategic deception operations in World War II, Macintyre's *Operation Mincemeat: How a Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured an Allied Victory* is an invaluable addition to this genre and one offering fresh insight.

Macintyre's work clearly provides a cautionary note to today's strategic leaders and illustrates the importance of understanding one's enemy, of properly interpreting intelligence, and the timeless relevancy of strategic deception. It is important that today's strategic leaders be proficient in readily distinguishing between fact, fiction, and deception.



Dulles, VA: Potomac Books Inc., 2010

488 pages

\$35.00

## ***A History of Air Warfare***

edited by John Andreas Olsen

**Reviewed by Antulio J. Echevarria II**, Director of Research, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

This anthology is a welcome addition to any library responsible for keeping an up-to-date collection of works addressing the history of warfare. The editor, John Andreas Olsen, has put together an exceedingly useful volume of 16 essays covering the history of air operations from the Great War to the Second Lebanon War (2006).

Several of the chapters are written by some of the most respected of air power's historians: John H. Morrow Jr. covers the First World War; Richard Overy has a chapter concerning the European theater of the Second World War; Richard R. Muller takes up the air war in the Pacific; Wayne Thompson examines air operations over North Vietnam (1965-1973); Benjamin S. Lambeth discusses Operation Enduring Freedom (2001); James S. Corum addresses air power's role in small wars; and Richard P. Hallion offers an essay arguing that technological advances have made air power essential, if not decisive, and that moving into space is the next logical step in the evolution of air power; this is an argument that air enthusiasts will surely embrace, but one that land and naval proponents might challenge.