

REVIEWS

Carolyn Anderson and Christopher Fleet

*Scotland Defending the Nation.
Mapping the Military Landscape*

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IT IS QUITE CLEAR that Carolyn Anderson and Christopher Fleet both have long and thorough experience in working with historical cartography. Their book *Scotland Defending the Nation. Mapping the Military Landscape* couples the history of warfare with that of maps and map-making in a fruitful way. Moreover, it is pedagogically structured and contains a large amount of high quality reproduced maps. The chapters consist of a body of explanatory text and a large number of maps with generous captions to illustrate it.

The purposes of the book are fourfold. Through maps, the authors want to illustrate the military history of Scotland: the development of warfare, and changes in the military geography. Finally, they also want to focus on the maps themselves, as products of certain institutions and cartographers, as well as the results of artistic considerations and the different perspectives that naturally follow depending on who drew the maps – the defender or the aggressor.

So what is a ‘military map’? Anderson and Fleet choose to use a broad definition, which includes drawings, diagrams, aerial photos etc, it is important that they can be regarded as ‘a graphic representation that facilitates a spatial understanding of military things’. On the other hand, they have narrowed down the geographical area they deal with to Scotland itself. Scottish military events abroad, for instance the participation of Scottish troops in the Thirty Years’ War, are consequently left out. Most of the maps, which are shown, come from the National Library of Scotland, where Fleet is Senior Map Curator.

These sort of general aspects of military cartography are discussed in an introductory chapter. Here one can also see the oldest map in the book, made by the English cartographer John Hardyng in the middle of the 15th century. Strikingly many of the maps shown in the book had English origins, especially those from the period before the middle of the 18th century. Other cartographers who worked for the English or British crown came from the continent, whereas the Scottish ones in that period seem to have been relatively few.

Following the introduction, a number of chronologically organised chapters convey Scotland's military history over the last 500 years. This historical odyssey departs from the Rough Wooing in the mid 16th century. For strategic purposes, the English began to survey and draw maps of Scotland. War plans, showing for instance battles and sieges, were also made for propaganda purposes. Somewhat later, sometime between 1583 and 1614, a sizeable native map project was set up by Timothy Pont, a scholar from St. Andrews. Anderson and Fleet state that the reasons why this project started are yet to be identified, but claim that these maps must have helped King James VI to deal with the Highland clans and the lawlessness along the southern border. However, the authors omit considering the fact that from 1603, James VI was also King of England. Even though the two countries were independent, it would have been interesting to see a discussion about the possible consequences of the personal union in this respect.

A number of Jacobite rebellions, from the end of the 17th century to the middle of the 18th, led to Scotland, including the Highlands, becoming increasingly controlled by the British Army. As new fortresses had to be built, and as the Army became more mobile, new and useful maps were needed. From this time on, almost all military maps were produced by or through the Board of Ordnance. Although this institution had already been set up at the end of the 15th century, it was now that the cartographic work was established as a structured organisation. At the beginning of the 18th century, a Drawing Room was set up in its civilian department where both military and civilian maps were kept and reproduced. Here the authors claim that a British way of drawing maps developed; what this British way was, however, is not fully clear. The improved position of military cartography was, however, not only strengthened through its organisation. A growing need for specialist military expertise from the first decades of the 18th century also led to the development of military education. The establishment of The Royal Military Academy in 1741, became a strong impetus to promote cartography as part of the military culture.

The military maps of Scotland which were compiled during the era of the Jacobite rebellions were clearly characterized by these conflicts with the Hanoverians. One type was made for strategic planning, emphasising the possibilities of troop mobility. The lack of a general map of Scotland actually turned out to become a significant problem for the Hanoverians; the fact that they finally won the war was due to their superior forces. Another type of map was concerned with the construction of fortifications, roads and bridges, whereas a third type was needed for tactical manoeuvring. Lastly, a fourth group consisted of war plans, showing specific events like battles or sieges. These were set up for legal, pedagogical or propagandistic reasons, and apparently were interesting and popular with the general public.

During the second half of the 18th century, a military survey of the whole of Scotland was initiated under the Scottish Major-General William Roy. The motive behind the project was precisely that what the last war had shown – the British Government and Army lacked knowledge about the Scottish landscape, roads had to be built and fortifications improved. The risk of new uprisings was one reason for the enterprise. But soon another reason, and before long also the most important one, was that the defence against an external enemy had to be planned and prepared for. Similarly, of course, these external enemies made maps to plan attacks on Scotland as part of wider strategic planning against Great Britain. The American Revolutionary War, the Napoleonic Wars, the First and Second World Wars as well as the Cold War have all made an imprint on the Scottish military geography and cartography. The geopolitical, strategic, military, technical and cartographic developments can thus be followed in the book. By studying German aerial photos and maps from the Second World War showing the Scottish infrastructure and terrain, it is, for example, possible to understand their planning as well as available armament resources. In maps and photos taken in the 1940s, the authors also show how the military have utilised modifications and retouching works to keep military installations secret.

The maps presented in the book clearly illustrate the transition from a focus on the Scottish defence and the English desire to rule, to the defence of Scotland as part of Great Britain. They show the transition from an emphasis on fortifications to mobility, and the development of increasingly powerful and efficient weapons. They reveal how, depending on this, different parts of Scotland have been considered strategically important at different times. Nevertheless, there is a certain misrepresentation in that the illustrations mainly show land maps of various kinds and fortification plans, whereas there are few maritime maps. The latter, too, have without doubt played a considerable role in the military landscape. Another objection concerns the

title of the book. *Scotland, Defending the Nation...* seems a bit misleading, as many of the maps were compiled for, and can thus tell us more about, other countries' efforts to plan attacks or occupation.

As for the maps themselves and the compilation of them, the authors draw attention to several interesting aspects. The organisation of the cartographic office has already been mentioned. Furthermore, they discuss different techniques and methods for map production, as well as the use of maps. It seems like many maps, already at an early stage, were of considerable importance also outside the military circles, that they, in fact, played an important ideological role. As a comparison, the same cannot be said about Sweden at that time, which is the country my own research focuses on.

In the introduction of the book, Anderson and Fleet claim that '/t/he *distinctiveness of Scottish military mapping* [my italics] reflects the uniqueness of Scottish history'. Many of the cartographers whose work appears in the volume were, as mentioned, English or from the continent, and the international influences were considerable. Before characterising the Scottish military mapping as special, however, I argue that such an assertion must be preceded by a comparison with other countries. From my own, Swedish perspective for example, I can see considerable similarities between the maps shown in this book, and those one can find in the Military Archives in Stockholm.

There is, however, no doubt that the maps that Anderson and Fleet have chosen for their book are fascinating illustrations to Scotland's special history. In addition, they discuss these military maps from the perspective of a broad, relevant and concrete historical context. In sum, this is an interesting and beautiful book, highly worth reading.

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