



BUSH WARFARE: THE EARLY WRITINGS OF GENERAL SIR WILLIAM C. G. HENEKER, KCB, KCMG, DSO

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

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Reviewed by Sergeant K. Grant, CD

In any informed discussion regarding contributions to the art of warfare, Canadian soldiers are usually noted only for their complete absence from the subject matter. Indeed, in the shadow of such giants as Sun Tzu, Clausewitz and Machiavelli, only a true student of the art would know that Canada has contributed more than its share to the topic.

In fact, the Canadian Army has a long tradition of tactical and technical innovation. Furthermore, we have a history of senior leaders who have continually attempted, with varying degrees of success, to innovate at the operational and strategic levels and apply their ideas to practical problems.

For instance, Canada debated the merits of mounted infantry over cavalry in the 1880s and 1890s, the nature of small wars and counter-insurgencies at the turn of the century and the relationship between military operations and national command in the first decade of the twentieth century. Canadians developed the art of the set-piece attack during the First World War, debated the future of armour between the wars and the strategic nature of both arctic and atomic warfare after the Second World War. In the 1960s, the ideas of expeditionary war and “mobile commands” (concepts required to implement the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s flexible response) evolved, thus sowing the seeds of a paradigm that the Canadian Army continues to employ today. The fact that these antecedents are not well known or studied is not a validation of their non-existence but rather is an admission of ignorance.

Such is the case with William Heneker, a person seldom remembered in Canadian history. Born in Canada on 22 August 1867, William Charles Gifford Heneker served as a soldier his entire life. Enrolling in 1884, he was one of the early (college number 168) gentleman cadets at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC); like many of his fellow Canadian classmates of that period, he accepted a commission to serve with the British Army upon graduation in 1888.

The range and scope of Heneker's 43-year military career, even when compared to today's careers, is simply put ... impressive. He served with the British Army in West Africa and India, and later during the First World War, he continued to serve with the British Army on the Western front. Through these experiences, Heneker became a notable military strategist and tactician. He also became one of the most experienced and highly decorated Canadians in the British Empire as well as one of only a handful of Canadians to reach the rank of full general. Yet with the exception of his First World War service, his career was characterized by his constant involvement in peacetime military engagements, stability operations, small wars and counter-insurgencies—all subjects of considerable relevance to the Canadian Army today.

Once commissioned into the British Army, Heneker quickly gained extensive operational experience in a wide range of missions similar in scope to those observed today. His career evolved during a time that later scholars identified as the period where modern small wars and counter-insurgency theory originated. For instance, when Colonel C.E. Callwell published the now famous book, *Small Wars, Their Principles and Practice*, in 1896, Heneker was just about to deploy to West Africa where he would first apply and then later challenge and improve upon many of Callwell's ideas.

In an era when there was little in the way of published doctrine on counter-insurgency to guide the army, Heneker realized the value of his own experiences and the need to share them with his fellow officers just as Callwell and another British officer, Colonel A.F. Montanaro (the Ashanti Campaign of 1900), had done. In 1907 he added his own voice to the debate and discourse of small wars theory and practices by publishing his manuscript *Bush Warfare*.

This version of the text is a reproduction of Heneker's original work and, as such, needs to be read within the context of the original period; however, as the editor points out, the aim of republishing this book has been two-fold. First, it is designed to bring General William Heneker, his writings and his ideas back into the current debate on the nature of small wars, counter-insurgency and stability operations. He was an important contributor to the development of modern small wars and counter-insurgency theory and practices that later influenced British and Canadian schools of thought and thus deserves a place in the current lexicon of study. Second, the conceptual and doctrinal products that were derived from these ideas and the debates of the day characterized what should be recognized as a distinctly Canadian school of thought. The legacies of William Heneker and other early Canadian soldiers who shaped the evolution of both the British and Canadian Armies must also be recognized within that context.

Bush Warfare: The Early Writings of General Sir William C.G. Heneker, KCB, KCMG, DSO represents the very beginning of counter-insurgency theory and practice and is highly recommended reading for the serious student of counter-insurgency warfare, its evolution and development.

This book is not sold in bookstores but is available from Directorate of Land Concepts and Designs on their website at www.army.forces.gc.ca/DLCD-DCSFT/monograph_e.asp free of charge.

