



Forward into Battle: Fighting Tactics from Waterloo to the Near Future

Paddy Griffith

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The first edition (1981) took a critical look at the accepted wisdom of historians who interpreted battlefield events primarily by reference to firepower. It showed that Wellington's infantry had won by their mobility rather than their musketry, that the bayonet did not become obsolete in the nineteenth century as is often claimed, and that the tank never supplanted the infantryman in the twentieth. A decade later, the author has been able to fill out many parts of his analysis and has extended it into the near future. The Napoleonic section includes an analysis of firepower and fortification, notably at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Additional discussions of the tactics of the American Civil War have been included. The evolution of small-unit tactics in the First World War is next considered, then the problem of making an armored breakthrough in the Second World War. Following is a discussion of the limitations of both the helicopter and firepower in Vietnam. The author points to some of the lessons learned by the U.S. military and the doctrine which resulted from that experience. Concluding is a glimpse at the strangely empty battlefield landscape that might be expected in any future high technology conflict.

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