ing, but the present work will be a most useful contribution to the fund of resources on the tumultuous seventeenth century, as well as providing a new valuation of the very remarkable Roger North and his many pursuits.


Professor Wanklyn’s latest work builds on his previous research, which underlined the importance of logistical dominance and the art of writing about conflict in Parliament’s eventual victory in the Civil Wars. Here, though, Wanklyn aims to illustrate the centrality of the decision-making process to the short and long-term outcomes of battles. In this sense, the author has not drawn on recent historiographical developments on the experiential level of conflict, as recently encapsulated by Barbara Donegan’s monograph *War In England 1642-1649*. Furthermore, Wanklyn seems to have at least partly discarded his reservations about using the phrase “British Civil Wars,” with which, as recently as 2005, he “fundamentally” disagreed. However, by deliberately maintaining a focus on the strategic and higher-level decisions involved in conflict, Wanklyn is able to present a lucid chronological portrayal of the conflicts that engulfed Britain and Ireland in this period.

The criteria set for assessing military leadership is deceptively simple and masks the depth of research put into the work. The achievement of one side’s sovereign’s war aims (whether it be the Parliament, the Committee of Both Kingdoms, the Royal Council or the Estates General in Scotland) is defined as constituting success, whether by design or through the mistakes or ineptitude of other generals. Wanklyn charts a roughly chronological narrative to assess individual decisions and their relationship with higher war aims. To do so, he examines the fast-moving source material of personal correspondence and burgeoning numbers of newsbooks rather than accounts such as Clarendon, whom Wanklyn refuses to countenance as a fair source of assessments of Prince Rupert or other rivals.
By using such criteria, Wanklyn is able to challenge a number of views on notable figures in this period, both parliamentarian and royalist. Questioned first is the prevalent image of the inactivity of the Earl of Essex after the battle of Edgehill and Turnham Green in 1642-1643. Essex is introduced as a “well-padded figure of sedentary middle age” yet with a deceptively “solid core of resolution and determination” (14). Despite confusion at the battles of Lostwithiel in 1644, Wanklyn concludes that “the most remarkable aspect of the whole affair was the loyalty that Essex’s officers and men showed towards their general” in contrast to his negative stereotype (112). The assessment of the marquis of Newcastle similarly inverts prevalent negative stereotypes with a closer reading of the sources. Traditionally cited for Newcastle’s failure to march south to attend the battle of Newbury is his lack of military experience. Wanklyn objects to this view and finds that royalists in Yorkshire requested that Newcastle protect them from the imminent invasion of Alexander Leslie from Scotland. The author also rejects overly negative assessments of the Earl of Manchester, claiming that views that hold Manchester to have lost the will to fight or to have experienced post-traumatic shock, to be “questionable at the very least and may be totally erroneous” (122). Rather, Wanklyn asserts that Manchester delayed for purely military reasons and that he kept his northern force intact to shadow the movements of Prince Rupert, in keeping with his orders. Such important reinterpretations show the complexity of both parliamentarian and royalist sides in the wars and the intrigue within each camp.

In extending his work to Scotland and Ireland, Wanklyn has given other geographical areas of study his expertise, but unfortunately, he limits himself to a few handpicked generals. The reasons for this may be explained by lack of space, but for Ireland at least, the author contends that “the Confederate generals did not rise much above the level of mediocrity” and by not achieving any notable war aims do not warrant assessment (180). His discussion on generalship in Ireland is limited to that relating solely to English commanders in the country after 1648. In one paragraph, Wanklyn rejects Owen Roe O’Neill’s leadership qualities without assessment and does not assess the possibility of military leadership from the Catholic Confederacy. For Scotland, Wanklyn is less denunciatory, and reassesses the role
of James Graham, marquis of Montrose extensively; questioning the view that he was a bungled military leader. Yet, by illustrating the degree of control Montrose could indeed exert, Wanklyn regularly reflects on his ally, Alasdair MacColla, without assessing the latter’s leadership qualities on their own terms. Although such omissions are disappointing, as Wanklyn may have offered further reinterpretations, they allude to a number of research questions for future scholars and engage in debate outside of an English-focused discussion.

One assessment that warrants much attention is that of Oliver Cromwell, and it is certain to have resonance with the current work of John Morrill, Micheál Ó Siochrú and Andrew Barclay. Wanklyn tentatively suggests that Cromwell may have deliberately misrepresented the Earl of Manchester to hide his own shortcomings after the battle of Newbury (a topic Professor Wanklyn has moved to discuss further in a recent journal article). Wanklyn concludes that Cromwell, overall as a general, was “nothing short of outstanding” and was so successful in achieving his sovereign’s war aims after 1648 because “he had the inestimable advantage of having the sovereign under his thumb” (233). The author re-examines Cromwell’s notorious carriage in Ireland, particularly at Drogheda, Wexford and Clonmel, and he concludes that overly negative views in some ways “need modifying” (211). Wanklyn applauds Cromwell for being the first parliamentarian commander to ensure that the force “did not run out of steam” and that such events as in Drogheda and Wexford were “not untypical of warfare in western and central Europe in the mid seventeenth century or indeed in Scotland” (213). Such a conclusion goes contrary to the findings of Micheál Ó Siochrú who refuted the idea that contemporary massacre stories were a good enough reason to justify the loose rein Cromwell gave to his troops. By defining “success” so specifically, Wanklyn has set himself in opposition to those who argue that Cromwell, though victorious, subverted norms of engagement by killing civilians. In such a way, Wanklyn has added a valuable contribution to an already heated debate.

Professor Wanklyn’s work adds to his already important corpus of research into the military aspects of the Civil Wars. As with his previous work, Warrior Generals includes a rich array of battlefield diagrams and maps which act as an invaluable resource to any scholar
of the period. Whilst Wanklyn’s book contains some omissions that may have proved valuable to his current “British” approach, the work is meticulously researched, and his reassessments of leading protagonists raise a variety of research questions for generations to come.


Imtiaz Habib’s *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500-1677* is an ambitious and meticulous study of the African presence in Britain from the reign of King Henry VII to that of Charles II. The book is a result of many arduous years of meticulous collection and analysis of “scattered, fragmented, and historically disregarded records of black people [in England] for four centuries back” (ix). From this painstaking endeavor, Habib has produced a brilliant monograph that successfully writes the contributions of Africans into an early history of England in which they have been considered as “absent” and “invisible.” Challenging past and current scholarship about England’s history, Habib reconstructs black presence and visibility in this history during the reigns of many Tudors and Stuarts.

Habib’s attempt to establish the presence of blacks in early modern England fits into the effort of many scholars to uncover the neglected role of these blacks in British history. One of these scholars is Peter Fryer whom Habib praises for having provided us with primary “empiricism” about “historical black people in England in the later seventeenth century” (9). In a similar vein, Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace’s book, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory* (2006), represents Fryer’s *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (1984) as a work which, like Walvin’s *Black Ivory: A History of British Slavery* (1992), attempts “to counteract the removal of traces of black life from the British past, by way of ensuring that black people are part of the British future” (8). Habib makes unique contributions to this scholarship which is still “in infancy” by tracing the origins of blacks in England to the Tudor and Stuart years from which essentialist and construc-