

ICMH Newsletter, Issue 32

January 2020



With this Newsletter we would like to keep you informed about the activities of the ICMH community. We will not only look back to the realizations of the last year, but also look forward to the upcoming Congress in Poznań and the related five-year statutory elections, which will take place during the General Assembly.

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International Commission of Military History

The XLV Congress in Sofia

Prof. Massimo de Leonardis – President

From 18th to 23rd August 2019, the XLV ICMH Congress was hosted in Sofia's historical centre at the Central Military Club, which is one of the prestigious locations for cultural events. The building of the Club was paid by the Officers' association and its foundation stone was laid down in 1895.

This year's general theme had a solid connection with that of last year in Israel, a Congress we all remember with great satisfaction. In 2018 we discussed *The Creation of New States and the Collapse of Old Empires in the XX Century*, this week we focused on *Unsettled Problems after the 1919 Peace Conference: Military Conflicts and Diplomatic Negotiations*. Actually, the collapse of old Empires after the First World War created a number of problems, some of which were not settled at the Paris Peace Conference.

In the centennial of the Peace Conference, dozens of conferences have been organized on that subject; actually our Congress preferred not to rehearse once again that topic and choose instead to investigate the problems left open by the peace conference. In any case, neither the formal end of the hostilities, on 8th November 1918, after the previous armistices on other fronts, nor the signature of the peace treaties meant the end of bloodshed. In 1919 in an electoral speech in Dundee, Winston Churchill remarked that «*Europe and a greater part of Asia were in a welter of anarchy*». «*Total war had left behind all kinds of detritus that had to be cleared away*», is the comment of Churchill's biographer Lawrence James.

A German-British historian, Robert Gerwarth, in his book *The Vanquished. Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917-1923*, writes that, during the years from the official end of hostilities until the treaty of Lausanne of July 1923, «post-war» Europe, was the most violent place in the world, calculating that during those five years the victims of armed conflicts in the Old Continent were much more than four million, which is a figure higher than the casualties suffered in total by the United Kingdom, France and the United States during the Great War. Gerwarth comments that even not exaggerating the "rehabilitation" of pre-war empires shared by many historians it would be difficult to maintain that post-imperial Europe was a better and safer place in respect to that of 1914. Until 1923, peace in Europe was shaken by revolutions, counter-revolutions, ethnic strife, pogroms, war of independence, civil wars and inter-states conflicts. Civil wars and inter-state conflicts were inter-connected and bloody as during the Thirty Years' War in the XVII century

The inter-war period saw a turning point in 1929, opening a decade which precipitated a new war. Almost 60 papers were presented, by scholars from 33 countries, 4 of them not yet members of ICMH: Australia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Serbia. As usual, Acta will be published as usual. Considering all aspects, for the fourth time the Bulgarian Commission of Military History can proudly declare "mission accomplished".

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As an Italian, let me recall that 2019 marked 140 years of diplomatic relations between Bulgaria and Italy. The Italian Ambassador, H. E. Stefano Baldi, attended the closing dinner on Friday evening while his deputy, one of my former students, was present at the inaugural session.



The President delivers the ICMH medal to the keynote speaker Prof Valeri Kolev



The inaugural session

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Dr Gergana Georgieva, Manager International Relations BCMG and the President of ICMH during the inaugural reception at Lozenets



The final official dinner

Commemorative medal of the Great War

During the Congress in Sofia the President of the ICMH and the members of the Full Board were presented a fine commemorative medal of the Great War minted on behalf of the Bulgarian Ministry of Defence.



The 2020 XLVI Congress in Poznań

Prof Tomasz Cisielski

The XLVI congress of ICHM will be held in Poland from 31st August to 5th September 2020. The congress will be organized by the following institutions : the Polish Historical Society; the Polish Commission of Military History; the Department of Military History and the Faculty of Historical Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University. The theme of the Congress will be: ***Important Battles in the History of Wartime***. Reason for the choice of this topic, is that we don't want to limit the debate to the last century, especially because the recent congresses mainly focused on the XX century. It is also related to the composition of many of the national committees of the military history, which gathering researchers exploring the military history since the Middle Ages up until the newest era, as well as archivist or even non – military historians.

Over the course of the history of human civilization, many battles and skirmishes took place. Probably their quantity should be counted in hundreds of thousands. However, only a few of these battles have gone down in history due to their size, and above all

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their importance in the history of individual countries, regions or continents. Some of these battles are said to have had a decisive influence on history, although it is difficult to attribute such a role to one, even the most violent event. In the history of Poland, we have several such battles, to which we attach enormous importance, assigning them a decisive role in the history of the region. For example, in 2020, there will be the centenary of one of these battles – the Battle of Warsaw in 1920.

Possible subthemes for the Congress, will be :

1. Is it justified to discuss „decisive battles“ within the context of military history or should they be referred to as important, grand battles?
2. Is it possible to identify the battles deciding the fate of the world, a region or even specific countries or nations, or should this term be applied to the course of campaigns or wars, and we should use terms like „key“ or „great“ battles?
3. Methodology of research on battles. Should there be a new standard or standards for description of battles?
4. A standard of description of battles in historical research in various countries.
5. Battles in historiography/ Bibliographic issue.

We want to organize one or two panels concerning the problems of archival studies and other auxiliary sciences of military history in cooperation with the ICMH Archives Committee. Main issue of these panels will be: archival sources useful for research on battles; the material sources. Two panel discussions will be organized for young researchers in cooperation with the ICMH Educational Committee.



The Congress sessions will take place in the Adam Mickiewicz University and other scientific and cultural institutions in Poznań. The Adam Mickiewicz University is the major academic institution in Greater Poland (Wielkopolska region) and one of the top

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Polish universities. Its 100-year old reputation is founded on a long tradition of higher education in the City of Poznań and the outstanding current achievements of its staff, students and graduates. The Faculty of History is in a modern, very well equipped building in Campus at Morasko (25 min. from city centre).

Poznań is situated on the Warta River in west-central Poland, in the Greater Poland region and is the 5th largest city in Poland. It is the historical capital of the Greater Poland region. Poznań is best known for its renaissance Old Town. Today, Poznań is an important cultural and business center and one of Poland's most populous regions with many regional customs such as Saint John's Fair (pol. Jarmark Świętojański), traditional Saint Martin's croissants and a local dialect.



The city's population is 537.682 (2018), while the continuous conurbation with Poznań County and several other communities is inhabited by almost 1.1 million people. Poznań has many historic buildings and sights, mostly concentrated around the Old Town and other parts of the city centre. Many of these lie on the Royal-Imperial Route in Poznań – a tourist walk leading through the most important parts of the city showing its history, culture and identity. Portions of the city centre are listed as one of Poland's official national Historic Monuments (Pomnik historii), as designated 28 November 2008, along with other portions of the city's historic core. Its listing is maintained by the National Heritage Board of Poland. The city's most renowned landmarks include Poznań Town Hall, the National Museum, Grand Theatre, Fara Church, Poznań Cathedral and the Imperial Castle.



Participants of the Congress can travel to Poznań by plane, train or car. Ławica Airport, located 7 km from the city centre, has he permanent mergers with Warsaw and some German (LOT and Lufthansa). In chosen weekdays they are interfacing carried with cities of other European countries (Ryanair, Wizzair). You can also fly to Berlin or Warsaw airports and come to Poznań by train. The journey from Berlin or Warsaw to Poznań by Express train takes about 3 hours. Poznań is located by the important European railway line connecting Warsaw with Berlin (Moskva on East, and Paris on West). The main railway station is Poznań Central Station to the southwest of the city center (close to both of recommended hotels). The main east-west A2 motorway runs south of the city connecting it with Berlin in the west and Łódź and Warsaw in the east; other main roads run in the direction of Wrocław and Katowice.

For participants of the XLVI Congress, we initially booked rooms (for one, and two persons) in hotels in the centre of Poznań: Andersia (4 stras) and Altus Poznań Old Town (3 stars). If some of participants wouldn't like these proposals, Poznań offers a rich accommodation infrastructure with a varied level of services and prices, from hostels to luxury hotels. Organisers of the Congress try in such cases to help book accommodation in the chosen hotel as well as in dormitory.

For contact with the organisers - see the Congress website: <http://icmh-mmxx.home.amu.edu.pl/>

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Future Congresses

Dr. Kris Quanten – Secretary General

During the Full Board Meeting in Sofia, the locations of the next three congresses were formally approved.

The Hellenic Commission of Military History will host the 47th International Congress of Military History, which is to be held in Athens, from the 22nd to 27th August 2021. The central theme of the Congress is *“Independence Wars since the XVIII century”*.

In 2022 the South Korean Commission will organise the 48th International Congress of Military History in Seoul (28 August - 2 September). The proposed theme is *“Conflicts and confrontations during the Cold War”*.

In 2023 the Turkish Commission proposes to host the 49th International Congress of Military History in Istanbul (2 - 8 September). The theme is *“Commanders, battles and strategies that changed the course of history in the XIX and XX Century”*.

The Corvisier Prize 2019

Dr. Kris Quanten – Secretary General

During the General Assembly at the congress in Sofia, the André Corvisier Prize for the best PhD thesis in Military History was solemnly presented to the laureate of the 2019 edition, Dr. Adam Lindsay Storing, of St. John’s College in the University of Cambridge (UK), for his dissertation *‘Frederick the Great and the Meanings of War, 1730-1755’*.



Dr. Adam Lindsay Storing

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For the 2020 edition, the prize will be awarded for a PhD thesis discussed and approved in 2019 in a recognized University. The National Commissions received the regulations, which can be consulted on the ICMH website. Like last year, the award will go to a PhD thesis dealing with military history in the broadest sense: the history of warfare and military campaigns, the evolution of military doctrines and technology, the diplomatic dimensions of wars, the economics of defence, the relationship between civil and military apparatus and so on.

The prize will be awarded by a jury chaired by the President of the ICMH, including the members of the Executive Board and the President and the Secretary of the Education Committee. The amount of the Prize is fixed at € 3.000 plus a maximum of € 1.500 to cover the recipient's expenses for participation at the award ceremony during the XLVI ICMH Congress in Poznań in September 2020. The winner will also write an article to be published in the International Journal of Military History and Historiography, after peer review. The deadline for the candidatures is 31 January 2020.

For any further information, please visit our website www.icmh-cihm.org.

Statutory elections during the 2020 General Assembly in Poznań

Dr. Kris Quanten – Secretary General

During the upcoming congress in Poznań, the ICMH Statutory elections for all Board positions will take place. In order to prepare this as transparently as possible, we would already like to give some basic information now concerning the practical organization.

The eligible functions are :

- President
- Secretary General
- Treasurer
- All the members of the Bureau

Last year, the General Assembly in Sofia appointed an Election Committee that will oversee the whole procedure. The composition of this Committee is as follows :

- President : Honorary President Piet Kamphuis
- Members :
 - Prof Dr. Dimitar Minchev
 - Prof Dr. Gianluca Pastori
 - Prof Dr. Niels Bo Poulsen
 - Dr. Pieter Lieb

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All National Commissions whose dues are up to date (i.e. which have paid their contributions up to and including 2019) may propose candidates for the various positions on the ICMH Board. Candidates elected for several positions can only hold one of them. He/she must choose. A national commission may nominate more than one candidate, but in the end can only have one representative on the ICMH Bureau.

To propose a candidate, the person should send a letter of application to the Secretary General, Dr. Kris Quanten. This letter must bear three signatures : the candidate's, the President's and that of the Secretary General of his/her national commission.

The deadline for the candidate's letter is 30 April 2020. The validity of each application shall be examined and formally verified by the Election Committee.

As stated before, the elections will take place during the General Assembly of the ICMH Congress in Poznań. The only persons qualified to vote on behalf of a National Commission are the president or, failing this, any other duly appointed member of the Commission. The National Commission can only give one person the power to vote.

Please note that the two Vice-Presidents of the ICMH, according to our statutes, are not elected as such, but appointed by the members of the Board.

For more detailed information on the election process, we refer you to the ICMH Statutes and to the 'Rules for the five-year statutory elections'.

The Military Archives Online Project

LtCol Flavio Carbone – Kathleen Van Acker – Michael Steidel

In 1989, Erik Norberg published *the Guide to military archives* under the umbrella of the International Council on Archives - Working Group on Military Archives. The project started after the building up of the working group on military archives led by Colonel Dr. Manfred Kehrig with the aim to “*create a professional forum for questions concerning archival science in the military field and to promote research in military history*”. The project was ambitious and many archives accepted to fill the questionnaire set up by the working group. The result was the first publication specifically dedicated on 116 military archives worldwide. It was published as 13th volume of Swedish military archives publications. After this important result, the need to maintain better links with the military history world led the working group to become the Committee of Military Archives (CAM) within the International Commission of Military History (ICMH), starting officially all the activities on 29 August 1990, during the 16th Congress of Military History held in Madrid.

So, since the congress 41st congress held in Beijing in 2015, the CAM President pro tempore Michael Steidel proposed to start a new project ideally connected with *the Guide to military archives*. During the 2016 congress in Plovdiv a more detailed project plan has been discussed and it was decided to start developing it in connection with the new

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ICMH website (<http://www.icmh-cihm.org/en/>), with the aim to publish an *Online Guide of military archives*. During the following CAM meetings a template with small information on military archives and their hyperlinks has been approved. In the last CAM meeting held in Sofia in August 2019 aside the XLV Congress of the International Commission of Military History detailed actions have been scheduled in order to start the implementation of the Online Guide.

The general idea behind the project is the possibility to offer this Online Guide as a tool for researchers, scholars, students and archivists to find the correct basic information they are looking for and to contact the archives directly.

As primary goal CAM wants to start with large military archives institutions and, on the other hand, because the online guide will be a continuous work in progress, CAM will be happy to receive information coming from different bodies and institutions that have military records even after the starting phase.

The Committee is well aware that archival sources on military history aren't only in the government documents, so in the future it could gather as much information available, even in private or family archives.

So, CAM needs to receive full support and assistance mainly from the national commissions of military history in transferring the template in annex to different Archives in each country asking them to complete the survey and send back. This activity will be a great starting point for our Online Guide.

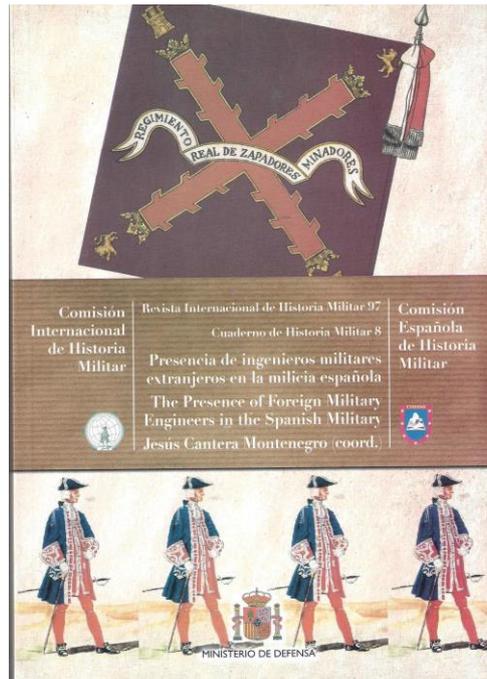
CAM is very excited to start this project and would be very grateful for the help and the support of the initiative.

As operating committee, Flavio Carbone and Kathleen Van Acker will be very pleased to receive your support and to act as points of contact for the needs of archivists and historians interested in the project and in the CAM activities.

International Review of Military History

Number 97 of the International Review of Military History has been published thanks to the praiseworthy commitment of the Spanish Commission of Military History. Continuing the series on the foreign presences in the Spanish military through the centuries, it is edited by Prof Jesús Cantera Montenegro (*Universidad Complutense de Madrid*) and deals with Foreign Engineers in the Spanish Army. All previous issues can be downloaded from our website.

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Grant to ICMH from the Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation

For the THIRD time the Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation accorded to ICMH a generous Grant of 2,000 \$, which will be employed to finance the participation to ICMS in Poznań. Very special thanks are due to the Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation's President, Col. USAR (Ret.) JD. Willard B. Snyder, member of the ICMH Full Board.



Col. USAR (Ret.) JD. Willard B. Snyder

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The President of ICMH elected member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts
Prof. Massimo de Leonardis – President

Prof Massimo de Leonardis has been elected as ordinary member in class V – Social Sciences, Law & Economics of the Academia Scientiarum et Artium Europaea / European Academy of Sciences and Arts (<https://www.euro-acad.eu/>). The Academy brings together over 2,000 eminent scholars and practitioners, among them 32 Nobel Prize winners, from across Europe. They are divided into 8 classes award. The award ceremony will take place in Salzburg on 7th March 2020.

International Annual congress of Military history in Italy

Prof. Massimo de Leonardis – President

As every year, the Defence Staff Historical Office/Italian Commission of Military History has organized an international conference, which took place in Rome on 11th and 12th November 2019. The conference was sponsored by two important Italian universities (the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milano and “La Sapienza” Università di Roma) and had the ICMH patronage. This year’s conference was a complement to five-years series on the First World War initiated in 2014 and focused on the year 1919, having as General Theme: 1919. A victorious and fatigued Italy in a Europe in transformation. More than 30 scholars from three countries examined various aspects of the year characterized by the Paris peace conference: the demobilization, the territorial issues, the confrontation between the “old”, better to say traditional, diplomacy the military fronts, the political and diplomatic strategies, and propaganda. Acta will be published in Spring 2020.



Views of the conference in Rome

Volume on the origins of Chile's Military Aviation

The *Instituto de Investigaciones Histórico Aeronáuticas de Chile* has published the *Monografía Histórica Especial N°15 1° de octubre de 2019*, authored by Dr *Norberto Traub Gainsborg* and dedicated to General *Arístides Pinto Concha*, a pioneer of Chilean Aviation. Most of the Institute's publications can be downloaded from https://iihach.wixsite.com/historiaaeronautica/about_us.

Lancaster University Merriman Prize



The Merriman Prize 2020

The Merriman prize is awarded for an outstanding undergraduate essay on any topic in the fields of international and/or military history from the ancient world to the present day. Offered by the Department of History in partnership with the Centre for War and Diplomacy at Lancaster University, it is open to current undergraduates at any UK or overseas university. The successful candidate will be awarded a prize of £250.

Possible themes may include, but are not limited to:

- The rise and fall of great powers
- The treatment of non-combatants
- Diplomacy and peace-making
- Strategy and tactics
- Battles and operations
- Wars of propaganda
- Weaponry
- Intelligence

Essays, of 2,500 to 3,000 words (including footnotes), should be submitted to Dr Sophie Ambler, s.ambler@lancaster.ac.uk, by 24 April 2020, together with a brief covering letter, which must include the name of your university and title of your degree, signed by a member of your faculty confirming that you are a current undergraduate.

For more information about Lancaster's MA International and Military History, visit Lancaster.ac.uk/history/masters

Lancaster University  

CENTRE FOR WAR AND DIPLOMACY

Poster session ICHS Poznań 2020



POSTER SESSION POZNAŃ 2020

We would like to invite you again to participate in the Poster Session of the **ICHS-Shandong University Young Historian Award** during the XXIIIrd International Congress of Historical Sciences in Poznań in 2020. This competition is directed towards young scholars in any research area of history (post-graduate and PhD students). **The new deadline for the submission of abstracts is March 15, 2020.** Please send the abstract of poster to the Coordinator: Prof. Agnieszka Jakuboszczak (poster.session2020@gmail.com). The Organizing Committee of the Congress will preselect about 50 applications and the list of the **selected candidates will be announced on March 25, 2020.** Both representatives of Shandong University and ICHS will jointly award certificates and bonuses to the winners.

The \$US 10,000 award will be divided among five recipients:

- 1st place – \$US 3,500
- 2nd place – \$US 2,500
- 3rd place – \$US 2,000
- Honorable Mention – \$US 1,000
- Special Distinction (\$US 1,000) for the author of the best poster dealing with the Chinese history

More
<https://ichs2020poznan.pl/en/poster-session/>

News from the National Commissions

Dr. Kris Quanten – Secretary General

PhD Colonel (Res) Benny Michelson

We received the excellent news that Colonel (Res) Benny Michelson, the head of the Israeli Commission for Military History, obtained his PhD Degree.

Col Michelson a former Intelligence officer, was heading the IDF military History Department 30 years ago, and is the President of the Israeli Commission for Military History for the last 10 years. Benny complete his study, under the title *'The Division*

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Concept in IDF and it's First Combat Challenge: Sinai 1956 Campaign' in Haifa University last month. His study examines the evolution of the IDF's UGDA (The IDF term for the Division level) concept since the establishment of this mission-oriented HQ in 1954, until its establishment as a permanent fighting echelon, based on lessons learned from the 1956 Sinai War. Training IDF's forces in UGDA exercises after the Sinai War contributed significantly to the IDF's organization and build-up towards the Six-Day-War.

Obituaries

Major-General Prof Dr Reinhard Brühl

The President of the German Commission informed us of the death of Major-General Prof Dr Reinhard Brühl.

"I have to announce you that Major-General Prof Dr Reinhard Brühl sadly passed away in Potsdam on 2 July 2018.

General Brühl used to be the director of the former Military History Institute of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) between 1961 and his retirement in 1989. The Military History Institute was part of the former National People's Army and held the status of a university. General Brühl was also the president of the Commission for Military History of the GDR and represented it within the International Commission of Military History (ICMH) since 1973. From 1978 to 1989 he was a member of the Bibliographical Committee and from 1985 to 1990 even a board member of the ICMH. After German reunification he was confirmed as a member of the German Commission for Military History, but did not play an active role and withdrew his membership at some point. With General Brühl's death the chapter of the GDR within the ICMH has finally closed."

Dr Jörg Hillmann

President of the German Commission for Military History

In the name of the ICMH community, we present our sincere condolences.

Professor Sir Michael Howard

The President of the British Commission informed us of the death of Professor Sir Michael Howard, 1922-2019.

"It is with sadness that I have to report the death, aged 97, of Professor Sir Michael Howard, a long-standing and in later years honorary member of the British Commission for Military History. Sir Michael was the foremost military historian of the second half of the twentieth century. After wartime military service in the Coldstream Guards in Italy and studies at Oxford University, he embarked on an academic career at King's College London. Here he founded the War Studies Department in the early 1960s, from which root grew the expansion and

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diversification of military history in British universities over the last sixty years. An advocate of what he called ‘total history’, he believed that the history of strategy and military operations could not be properly understood separately from the history of the societies that went to war. This philosophy was reflected in his scholarly output, such as his masterful history of the Franco-Prussian war published in 1961. An official historian and translator of Clausewitz, generations of students will best know his work from his short but seminal textbook, War in European History, which I was encouraged to read in the 1980s and which is still recommended today. He had the gift of summarising the complexities of history in short, erudite and readable texts: two published collections of lectures, War and the Liberal Conscience (1977) and The Continental Commitment: The Dilemma of British Defence Policy in the Era of the Two World Wars (1971) remain widely read and cited. After leaving King’s Sir Michael was Chichele Professor of the History of War and Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University. His final academic post was Robert A. Lovett Professor of Military and Naval History at Yale University.

Sir Michael educated several generations of military history scholars at King’s and Oxford. I myself had the good fortune to be taught by him as a final-year undergraduate shortly before his retirement from Oxford – his special subject on British strategy in the First World War era directed me onto the path which I have followed as a scholar – and thereafter he supported my application for doctoral studies and took a kind interest in the development of my career. Many other BCMH members will have had similar experience of his warmth and encouragement to students and scholars. Those who had the chance to hear him speak, which he did with verve well into his 90s, will remember his engaging, witty and thought-provoking lecturing style. To an older generation he was a colleague and mentor, to the younger generation an inspiration or legend. I commend to you his autobiography, Captain Professor (Continuum, 2006). The modern military history profession has lost its creator and colossus.”

William Philpott

President, British Commission for Military History

The International Commission of Military History presents its condolences for the death of Professor Sir Michael Howard. Sir Michael gave a keynote speech to our XXVI Congress in Stockholm in 2000 on the topic ‘Total War – Total Defence’, the text of which is published in the Acta.

Changes in the composition of the National Commissions

We were informed of the changes in the composition of the following National Commission:

- Swiss Commission
President
Lt Gen (Ret.) Dominique Andrey