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0521837448 - Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton, Second Edition

Martin van Creveld

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SUPPLYING WAR

Why did Napoleon succeed in 1805 but fail in 1812? Were the railways vital to Prussia's victory over France in 1870? Was the famous Schlieffen Plan militarily sound? Could the European half of World War II have been ended in 1944? These are only a few of the questions that form the subject matter of this meticulously researched, lively book. Drawing on a very wide range of unpublished and previously unexploited sources, Martin van Creveld examines the 'nuts and bolts' of war: namely, those formidable problems of movement and supply, transportation and administration, so often mentioned – but rarely explored – by the vast majority of books on military history. In doing so, he casts his net far and wide, from Gustavus Adolphus to Rommel, from Marlborough to Patton, subjecting the operations of each to a thorough analysis from a fresh and unusual point of view. The result is a fascinating book that has something new to say about virtually every one of the most important campaigns waged in Europe during the past two centuries. Moreover, by concentrating on logistics rather than on the more traditional tactics and strategy, Dr van Creveld is able to offer a reinterpretation of the whole field of military history.

In this new edition with a new postscript, van Creveld revisits his now-classic text, commenting on the role of logistics in high-tech modern warfare.

Martin van Creveld is a professor in the Department of History at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. His previous books include *The Rise and Decline of the State* (Cambridge, 1999), *The Sword and the Olive: A Critical History of the Israeli Defense Force* (2002), *Air Power and Maneuver Warfare* (2002), and *Transformation of War* (1991).

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MARTIN VAN CREVELD

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem



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To Louis and Francien Wijler

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PREFACE

This study owes its existence to a book, *The Blitzkrieg Era and the German General Staff, 1865–1941*, by Larry H. Addington, which first excited my interest in logistics. Professor Addington has also kindly answered some queries, as did Mr David Chandler and Mr Christopher Duffy, both of the Department of Military History, Sandhurst. I owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Laurence Martin and Mr Brian Bond, of King's College, London, for aid and encouragement. Material for Chapter 7 was made available on behalf of the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives by Lady Kathleen Liddell Hart, for whose kind hospitality I am most grateful. Some financial support during my stay in London came from the British Council.

Above all, however, I thank Rachel my wife; it was she who typed out some of the chapters, and suffered for the rest.

London, 28 July 1976

M. v. C.