to the terms applied in the written records, the reader is left with questions: are the same people and families described as “sauvages” in one decade and “métis” in the next? Is the change in the Indigenous peoples, or in the priests? While we learn the names, ages and birthplaces of the clergy at Île-à-la-Crosse, we do not learn enough about their education, influences, and experiences from Foran to be able to understand why they write as they do. Might the Oblate use of the term “métis” in the 1870s be in fact influenced by the Canadian Government processes of sorting Indigenous peoples into categories during that time, as well as influencing the Government’s view of those people?

While Foran has produced a competent and useful volume of the history of the mission at Île-à-la-Crosse, the book does not systematically address the very interesting and important questions that he raises about identity ascription and historical document creation as it relates to the Indigenous peoples of this community, and by extension the other peoples across the country described in these voluminous missionary records.

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Independent Historian


Once, while leading a tour of an exhibition about the Afghanistan War at the Canadian War Museum, a woman who was present with her two middle school-aged children approached to apologetically (but firmly) explain that they needed to leave. Her husband, a Canadian Armed Forces member, was deployed to Afghanistan at the time, and the exhibition was hitting a bit too close to home for her and her children. I thought of that family when reading Growing up in Armyville.

The book takes a close look generally at the people of Canadian Forces Base “Armyville” (a pseudonym), with a specific focus on the experiences of a sample of students who attended Armyville High School between 2006 and 2010. During this period, 800 soldiers from the base prepared to deploy, separated from family to serve overseas in Afghanistan, and returned and reintegrated postdeployment. Some 1,000 students filled out the authors’ survey, based on questions from the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. The authors also interviewed 61 self-selected students and graduates from the community, whose open reflections about fear, withdrawal, stress, loss, and service are included at length in each chapter, expressing the advantages and stressors of military family life in their own words.

The effort undertaken by Harrison and Albanese’s team was not just academic. They engaged with the Armyville School District. Using a collaborative action research (CAR) approach, the team collaborated with the community
and administrators that would benefit from the end results of their study. As the researchers searched for insight into the impact of deployments on military family life, the school-affiliated participants sought information about how to improve supports for affected families during deployments (p. 4). The results of their research were communicated at a symposium following the surveys and interviews, leading to recommendations about how to better calibrate the school district and educators during high-stress periods such as the deployment to Afghanistan.

The book is very well organized, and structured so that even nonspecialist readers can access its findings. Beginning with a brief synopsis of the patterns of Canadian military operations overseas, including Afghanistan, the authors proceed to describe the key terminology used in the study and introduce the reader to “Armyville.” They then bring the reader through three chapters dedicated to the three stages of deployment as they affect families—the year or so leading up to deployment, the period during which a military member is separated from their family, and the longer postdeployment period, when military members and their families reintegrate with each other and settle into a new pattern of life. The concluding chapters focus on the recommendations made to the school district through the team’s symposium and the outcome of those recommendations.

The three chapters covering the predeployment, deployment, and postdeployment phases are informative and engrossing, thanks to the authors’ lively writing and generous use of excerpts from interviews with adolescents. Consider the following student insight into the limited effect of superficial supports coupled with an unwillingness or inability to address the root causes of anxiety and depression: “We all had Support the Troops stickers. We all wear red on Friday, and all that. But the real stuff that’s making these kids sad, it just gets pushed under the table…. Talking about it now makes me realize that there’s so many kids that still aren’t getting the support they need” (p. 129).

Harrison and Albanese’s findings provide valuable insights to military historians as well as historians of childhood, family, and gender. Their careful parsing of their findings reveals how boys and girls responded to stressors differently, how boys and girls responded to their own changing roles in the families as fathers or mothers deployed, and how they chafed against going back into the box of adolescence and childhood once their absent parent returned and tried to restore predeployment order (p. 141).

Another key finding was the importance children attached to extrafamilial support during periods of stress. Individual efforts, for instance from sympathetic teachers and peers, appear to have mattered as much or more to the youth as systemic comforts and supports such as school counselling programs or the Military Family Resource Centres (MFRCs) on base. Just as importantly, the children noticed when teachers and school administrators were not sympathetic or unwilling to provide the extrafamilial support they needed during a time of extraordinary stress (pp. 125-131).

Just as fascinating as the authors’ findings during the deployment is what happened afterwards. Recommendations were made about how to better prepare for and support children and youth through the school boards, MFRC, and
base facilities. However, events conspired in short order to work against these recommendations. Among other factors, provincial redistricting transformed the school district in question from one that had a high concentration of military families to a much larger one where they became a distinct minority, increasing the difficulty of developing specialized services and supports. Most notably, the very thing that gave Harrison and Albanese’s study urgency, the Afghanistan War, ended for Canada when the armed forces withdrew in 2014, and with the withdrawal came a corresponding drop in the military’s public profile.

The book is not without fault, as the first chapter contains a number of avoidable errors concerning dates and figures relating to United Nations and Afghanistan deployments. Yet the authors are correct when they underline that civilian leadership, on the one hand, did not sufficiently prepare Canadians for the nature of the war they would be joining and, on the other, took steps to manage information coming out of Afghanistan as much for partisan advantage as for national security. This, too, had a cost for families, and for students as they related to non-military peers during their parents’ deployments. Read *Growing up in Armyville*. It’s important.

Andrew Burtch

*Canadian War Museum*


E. A. Heaman’s *Tax, Order, and Good Government* has a very ambitious agenda, covering all three levels of government, the whole country, and a long period; and it rests on a massive body of research, particularly in the newspapers of the period and in numerous inquiries about taxation. With the partial exception of its chapters on Montreal, Toronto, and the single tax movement, its narrative covers familiar episodes, including the Confederation settlement, Nova Scotia’s quest for better terms, the politics of racialization in British Columbia, the national policy of tariff protection, the Liberals’ victory in 1896, the Reciprocity election of 1911, and conscription and the adoption of a federal tax on incomes in 1917. The main justification for calling it a “new political history” is its sustained focus on taxation, all but one chapter being addressed to what Heaman calls a “tax revolt.” The exception, “Income Tax: Progressivism Triumphant,” pictures the decision to establish a federal income tax as the outcome of a debate over, and campaign for, fairness in taxation, begun long before the war at the municipal level and working its way upward.

To understand what was actually taxed, how, and by whom, Heaman refers readers to J. Harvey Perry’s classic *Taxes, Tariffs, and Subsidies* (1955). What she aims at is “a cultural history of taxation” addressed to “the people’s reply to those [tax] demands: their desperate pleas and angry complaints, and their moments of