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Short Review

Michael L Burgoyne & Albert J Marckwardt *The Defense of Jisr Al-Doreaa* with E D Swinton's *The Defence of Duffer's Drift*, pp156 pbk University of Chicago Press 2009

For once, the blurb on the back cover of this little paperback pretty much sums up the content. Two US Army Armor officers have turned the lessons they learned during tours of duty in Iraq into a tactical primer based on the military classic *The Defence of Duffer's Drift*. Over the course of six dreams, a subaltern of infantry deployed in Iraq fights the same battle six times, learning each time – the hard way – which misconceptions to discard and which lessons to follow in order to achieve a lasting victory.

When I first read *Duffer's Drift* I often thought that deploying his 50 rifle armed soldiers in 1899 must have been a daunting task to a young subaltern brought up on tales of Waterloo and, even now (to him), '*the square that broke*'. How will his successor, another century on, deploy his 50 men, five M1114 wheeled vehicles, three M3 Bradley Infantry Combat Vehicles not to mention all the other radios, equipment and other personnel who come along in the later dreams?

I hope subalterns find this book useful. This retired Warrant Officer certainly did – and hankers still for the certainties of the Cold War more than ever!

Of course, nowadays a mass of additional material is to be found on the internet and it is at <http://www.defenseofjad.com/>. This cheap little book and the website are recommended to all who would learn more about modern warfare at the ever more complex sharp end.

Andy Grainger