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J. D. Sainsbury *Hertfordshire's Army Cadets* Hart Books, Welwyn, 2010 306pp. Illus. A4 paperback. £25 or £20 if bought from the publishers direct.

Colonel John Sainsbury, a member of the Commission, has been chronicling the Army's presence in Hertfordshire for over forty years. This latest volume is a welcome addition to his body of work, which has included studies of the Hertfordshire Yeomanry (and its successor Royal Artillery units in the Second World War), the Hertfordshire Regiment prior to 1922 and the Home Guard. This book clearly shows the dedication and use of extensive primary source material which marks the other titles. 2010 was the 150th anniversary of the Army Cadet Force; 2011 is the same for the establishment of the cadet movement in Hertfordshire.

At first, this book may seem to have a narrow and parochial interest base, but far from it. Col. Sainsbury modestly declares that this work is not intended to be a full history either of the Cadet movement in Hertfordshire, nor in general. Unlike the very few other publications which appeared last year to mark the anniversary, this is more of that than any of them.

The six chapters and eight appendices cover both the establishment of the Army Cadet Force and the Combined Cadet Force, although the latter is restricted to the Army contingents. By a detailed examination of the development of Hertfordshire's units, Col Sainsbury also reflects the constant pressures upon cadet contingents over funding, facilities and their central purpose. This reviewer recalls a debate in the early 1990s where ACF senior leadership sought to reduce the emphasis on its military aspects. This was rebutted by an article in the Cadet Journal written by a detachment commander entitled 'Trucks and Guns' – two main attractions for cadets to join; without them there would be little to distinguish from other uniformed voluntary organisations. This is clearly not a new debate as this extensively researched book shows.

Col. Sainsbury has made comprehensive use of local authority and school archives to support and illustrate this work and the use of primary sources is exemplary. There is something in here for all; social and military historians, even collectors of insignia. However, he does record that any historian seeking to prepare a broader work on the Cadets will be hampered by the apparent lack of any official policy papers before the 1970s, a considerable omission. Of course, it is hazardous to draw wider conclusions from a work intended to be specific, but the discussion of the role and form of cadet organisations carries many messages overall – especially at a time when the purpose of voluntary organisations in society is a source of such debate. It is also ill-advised for any reviewer to use the word 'definitive' for a work of history, as this either curses the work, or is a lazy term. Not here. Any future author who seeks to examine the Cadet movement locally or nationally, and do it properly, should refer to this book.

Phil McCarty