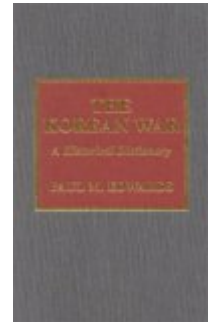


**Paul M. Edwards.** *The Korean War: A Historical Dictionary*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2003. xxxix + 367 pp. \$75.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8108-4479-7.



**Reviewed by** Kenneth Werrell

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It is clearly an understatement to write that Paul M. Edwards is a prolific author, for few authors have thirty or so books to their credit. These include four novels, thirteen books on religion and philosophy, and this, his tenth volume on the Korean War. His works on the Korean War include a guide to films, a documentary history, four bibliographies, a book of poetry, a monograph on how the war is remembered, a narrative history, and now this historical dictionary--or perhaps more clearly, this historical encyclopedia.[1]

Edwards is the creator and director of The Center for the Study of the Korean War, which is located at Graceland University in Independence, Missouri. It was established in 1989 by Edwards after his retirement from Temple School where he taught philosophy and religion. He also was dean of the graduate school at Park College, and it might be added, served in the army in Korea during the Korean War.

Any scholarly work on the Korean War is most welcome as this conflict has been completely overshadowed, first by World War II, and more recently by the Vietnam War. While it may be a

click to call this "The Forgotten War," this is in fact an accurate description. The irony of this situation is that while the world has moved on from the World War II and Vietnam conflicts (enemies there are now either allies or trading partners), this is not the case in Korea. U.S. troops remain on the peninsula a half-century after that war's end, and militantly communist North Korea remains a conventional threat and appears to be a nuclear one as well. Both this historical neglect and present peril cry out for scholarly attention.

A quick perusal of this work indicates how much we do not know about this war. For Edwards has cast a wide net and snared a number of interesting and little known aspects along with the more common items. The book contains a number of features that make it very useful. These include a 14 page chronology, a 12 page essay that sets up the context of the war, a 7 page listing of abbreviations and acronyms, a 2 page listing of United Nations commanders of the major units, and a 65 page bibliography. The latter includes a brief but useful prose essay. The bibli-

ography that follows is neatly divided into almost ninety categories which work quite well.

A number of his writeups are quite good, as they are accurate, interesting, and brief. I can only hope to give a taste of the flavor and scope of what is here. For example, I thought his coverage of film, brainwashing, and defectors was very well done. He appears to have named and discussed every warship of every nation that served the UN cause in the war. He addresses Nogun-Ri, which recently received attention as an American atrocity early in the war, with a steady hand. His coverage of UN resolutions and major figures is very good. There are many other entries of this caliber.

There are of course criticisms of this ambitious work. One might nit pick on what is, and is not, included, but this is unfair considering the very wide scope of this book. Edwards does well on this issue. But as one might expect, the author does better in some areas than others. For example, Edwards includes eight maps, which could be useful. But with the exception of one that shows the Inchon operation, the others are basic, crude, and limited. None show the Pusan Perimeter, and the depiction of "MiG Alley" is inaccurate as it indicates a portion of China in "MiG Alley." Nine photos are included but with little context. His appendix on casualties omits the soldiers missing in action, Communist losses, and sources. Edwards was not well served by his copyeditor and publisher who allowed a number of factual and typographical errors to mar this work. At one point he used the incorrect term "Congressional Medal of Honor" and then four pages later the correct term, "Medal of Honor." He has problems with aircraft, clearly not his strong suit. He connects the F-86A with the Sidewinder air-to-air missile, a weapon that did not see action in Korea, but rather were used to arm Sabres after the Korean War. (The first combat use of guided air-to-air missiles were Sidewinders fired by Chinese Nationalist F-86s in 1958.) He describes the FH-1/

FH-1 Phantom [I], but identifies it as the F-4 Phantom II--an entirely different aircraft that flew in the Vietnam War. He also confuses the Douglas B-26 Invader (which was the A-26 in World War II) with the World War II Martin B-26 Maurader; the former was important in Korea, the latter was by then only a memory. While both of these can be blamed on the confusing military aircraft designation systems, other miscues are less excusable. Ivan Kozhedub, the top Russian ace of World War II, served in the Korean War, but did not fly in combat as Edwards writes. The British Meteor 8 was armed with 20mm, not 29mm guns. There are enough of these errors to question the book's credibility, surely more than might be expected from this experienced author with considerable expertise on this subject and especially in a book designed for reference purposes.

Nevertheless, in balance, this is a valuable contribution and should be in every undergraduate library. Paul Edwards is to be complimented for this detailed work that will prove useful to students of the Korean War.

#### NOTE

[1] *A Guide to Films on the Korean War* (Westport: Greenwood, 1997); *The Korean War: A Documentary History* (Malabar: Krieger, 2003); *General Matthew B. Ridgway: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood, 1993); *The Inchon Landing, Korea, 1950: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood, 1994); *The Korean War: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood, 1998); *The Pusan Perimeter, Korea: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood, 1998); *The Hermit Kingdom: Poems of the Korean War* (Dubuque: Kendall Hunt, 1995); *To Acknowledge a War: Remembering Korea* (Westport: Greenwood, 2000); *The Korean War* (Hove, UK: Wayland, 1988).

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