

**Личные и семейные воспоминания как часть истории:
пример Крымской войны 1853–1856**

**Personal and family memoirs as history:
the case of the Crimean War, 1853–1856**

*Фрэнсис Кирквуд
Компания Kirkwood Professional,
Оттава, Канада*

*Francis T. Kirkwood
Kirkwood Professional,
Ottawa, Canada*

Важным и часто пренебрегаемым ресурсом для военной истории являются личные и семейные мемуары участников, часто записанные много лет спустя и в странах, лежащих далеко от театра военных действий. Крымская война 1853–1856 годов является как раз таким случаем: воспоминания участников войны из Крыма или петербургских генералов в отставке, истории, передаваемые в семейных рассказах потомков военных, участвовавших в конфликте, могут содержать ценную информацию даже сто лет спустя. Комитет по генеалогии и местной истории ИФЛА (IFLA GENLOC) стремится сохранить эти воспоминания, поддерживая программу этого года на Крымской конференции по мемуарам российской и местной стороны конфликта, а также и будущую программу по мемуарам французских и британских участников и воспоминаниям российских и западных дипломатов.

An important and often overlooked resource for military history is the personal and family memoirs of the participants, often recorded years later and in lands far away from the scene of the conflict. The Crimean War of 1853–1856 is a case in point: memoirs of local Crimean participants, of retired generals in St. Petersburg, stories passed on in the family memoirs of the descendants of troops on the ground as much as a century later may all contain valuable information. The IFLA Genealogy and Local History Committee wants to help rescue such memoirs, through sponsoring this year's Crimea conference program on memoirs from the Russian and local side of the conflict, as well as a future program on memoirs from the French and British participants and from Russian and Western diplomats.

An important and often overlooked resource for the study of military history is the personal and family memoirs of the participants. These are often recorded only years later, and in lands far away from the scene of the conflict. But they record the unique personal experiences of leaders and of ordinary soldiers in the heat of battle, the movements of troops as seen on the ground, details of strategy and tactics and reasons of state to which the general historian of the campaign may otherwise not be privy. Memoirs of local participants, of retired generals in the faraway capitals, as well as stories passed on in the family memoirs of the descendants of troops on the ground as much as a century later may all contain valuable information.

The Crimean War of 1853–1856 is a case in point. It involved not only the Russian, British and French generals and troops on the ground, but local Crimean Tatar auxiliaries, admirals and sailors, statesmen and diplomats in many of the capitals of Europe. Each man or woman (we must not forget the heroic nurse Florence Nightingale) who recorded experiences connected with the conflict gives us a different perspective on the complex kaleidoscope of military and diplomatic events in this first modern war, where artillery tactics collided with cavalry and mass slaughter became the new norm.

The causes of the conflict were not simple, though a pair of British humorists later summed them up nicely by declaring that:

The French thought that the Holy Places [in Palestine] ought to be guarded [...] by Latin Monks, while the Turks (who owned the Places), thought that they ought to be guarded by Greek Monks. England therefore quite rightly declared war on Russia, who immediately occupied Roumania. The war was consequently fought in the Crimea.¹

¹ W.C. Sellar and R.J. Yeatman, *1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England*, London: Methuen, 1930, and Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960, p. 110.

For this reason, the memoirs not just of the combatants in the Crimea but of diplomats, bureaucrats and ecclesiastics from all over Europe and the Near East may turn out to be relevant to the study of the Crimean War – a vast field indeed to mine for original source material, and from many languages.

The IFLA Genealogy and Local History Committee (IFLA GENLOC) wants to help rescue such materials, through sponsoring Crimea conference programs on Crimean War memoirs from various origins. This year a program on memoirs from the Russian and local side of the conflict is being presented, as well as a parallel program on 20th-century conflicts in the Crimea. In the future we hope to sponsor further sessions on memoirs from the Crimean War's French and British participants and from Russian and Western diplomats, as well as Balkan and Turkish sources.

For next year we are already planning papers on the Crimean War memoirs of soldiers from York, England's second city, a paper on the writings and medical activities of Florence Nightingale and perhaps other relevant English papers from Britain's rather active Crimean War Research Society. We might also have some commissioned French papers, for example on the history of photography in the Crimean War, or on the Crimean War memoirs of Marshal MacMahon, later president of France.

This afternoon's first program contains Russian papers by military historians on old myths and new views of the Crimean War of 1853-1856, as well as on the military formations of the Crimean Tatars which participated in it. We will also have a special presentation of a book on the Crimean Tatars in the military service of the Russian Empire. Then Mikhail Afanasiev from the State Public Historical Library of Russia will speak on the Russian context of the Crimean War. Ms. Kuznetsova from the Military Historical Library of the Russian General Staff will give us a front-line view of the fighting, based on materials in her library. She is also bringing us an exhibition of rare books on the Crimean War. And we shall have another exhibition on the Crimean War as seen through the eyes of its participants. I look forward to a fruitful and enjoyable program.