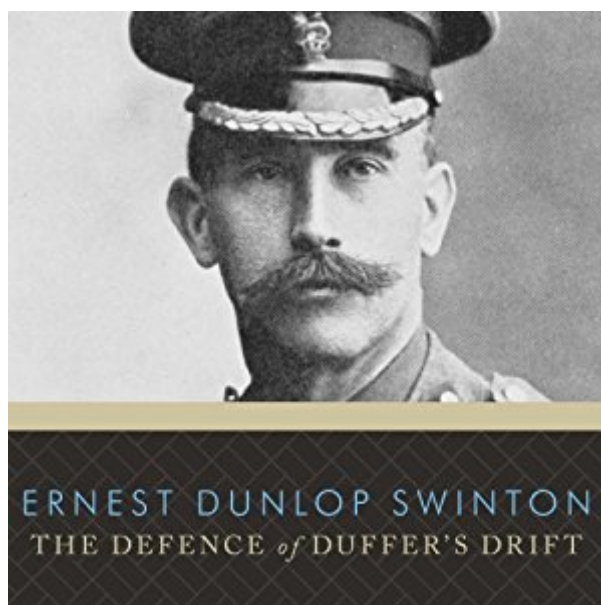


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# The Defence Of Duffer's Drift: And The Battle Of Booby's Bluffs By Major Single List



## Synopsis

First published in 1907, *The Defense of Duffer's Drift* is a classic essay on small unit tactics based on author Ernest Dunlop Swinton's experiences in the Boer War in South Africa.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I had the pleasure to serve with both authors from 1999-2001 in the only heavy Cavalry Regiment still serving the U.S. Army. As a young infantry soldier, I was tasked with reading "Defense of Duffer's Drift" by my company commander in Korea. I was thrilled to learn that Mike and Jim had written "Defense of Jisr Al-Doreaa" in the style of *Duffer's Drift*. The reader must understand that the mission given to the platoon leader in the book is very different from the type of mission faced by the typical Cavalry platoon leader. It is through his critical thinking, compassion for the citizens of Jisr Al-Doreaa, and learning via a series of mistakes, that the young Lieutenant is able to successfully accomplish his mission. This book should be a part of the curriculum of Army schools from the Primary Leadership Development Course to Branch Basic Officer's Courses. Our country should be proud to have Mike and Jim wear its uniform. I am proud to call Mike and Jim my friends. Jeffrey BrownTiger MEDO (Ancient)

This novella should be required reading for leaders deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan. Marckwardt and Burgoyne live up to their model in the classic penned by Swinton. Having been deployed to Iraq myself a few times, the lessons learned by LT Conners reflects the lessons I and countless other leaders learned in 8 years of war, all distilled into 70 pages. You can read the book on the plane and

still have time for six dreams of your own and will have been an infinitely better counter-insurgent for it.

In 'The Defense of Jisr-Al-Doreaa' the authors - relatively junior yet experienced company-grade officers of the US Army - have sought to update the Boer War vintage *The Defence of Duffer's Drift* to reflect modern military operations. While the modern version doesn't quite match the wit and flair of the original (which is included as an annex), this is a quick and easy read that closely follows the format of the original and imparts useful lessons/reminders for junior readers ranging from fundamental leader responsibilities to basic COIN conduct. This modern day 'Duffers Drift' has considerable potential as a training tool and catalyst for professional discussion for junior leaders, and will be of potential interest to any laymen interested in the theoretical and broad responsibilities of a junior officer in a COIN or security operation.

THE DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT has now inspired a third tale (that I'm aware of) which is included as the first half of this two-part volume. DUFFER'S DRIFT features Lieutenant N. Backsight Forethought who is left, along with his men and a scattering of equipment, to guard a key geographical location (Duffer's Drift) during the Boer War. The story is told in a series of dreams, where in each dream, he arrives on location and has to set up, prepare defenses, scout, react and hold out until relieved. He fails each time but learns a bit more and applies what he learns to each subsequent dream, until he succeeds at his task. THE DEFENSE OF JISR AL-DOREAA is a similar tale with applications on the U.S. Army's experience in Iraq. The book also mentions the second story (again, that I'm aware of) inspired by the original, THE DEFENSE OF HILL 781 by James R. McDonough, disparaging it as being no longer useful to today's Army. A mistake, I feel. The lessons of DUFFER'S DRIFT can be applied to the large mechanized force scenario outlined in HILL 781 as easily as they can be applied to AL-DOREAA. McDonough's PLATOON LEADER is cited as a better work; but I'd argue that the lessons that McDonough learned that lead to the writing of *Platoon Leader* are seen as well in *Hill 781*. This is an excellent pairing of the old and the new. I'd recommend this, along with the two by McDonough and a third (*RIFLEMAN DODD*, C.S. Forester) by any officer candidate or NCO school-bound NCO as well as for any NCO or officer deploying overseas.

Back in 2010, a friend of mine gave me, "The Defense of Jisr al-Doreaa: With E. D. Swinton's "The Defence of Duffer's Drift," just before I headed off to Army Officer Candidate School (OCS). I used

the book for the company book report at OCS although if you try and do the same, you'll have to first get it approved by the cadre. I enjoyed reading the book and it is the kind of book I would have read on my own. A lot of qualities covered by the book apply to both the Military and Civilian side. The book touches on a lot of things, including but certainly not limited to, leadership, respect, responsibility and attention to detail. The sooner you realize how ignorant you really are, the safer the lives of your men will be...

READ THIS: Anytime you think you know it all ... which I have been guilty of on occasion ..... this will definitely change your mind. It is well worth reading. The different scenarios will make you stop and think. I've been told that this is required reading before graduating from Officer's candidate school.

The Author has done a sound job of adapting the original to a modern (though not necessarily different) conflict. The author covers off on considerations for operating within an asymmetric environment and presents it in a style that is easy to understand. As an Army Officer I would recommend this book to any young LT/NCO about to deploy to Afghanistan or similar theatre.

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