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Landmines in War and Peace: From Their Origin to Present Day

Book Review

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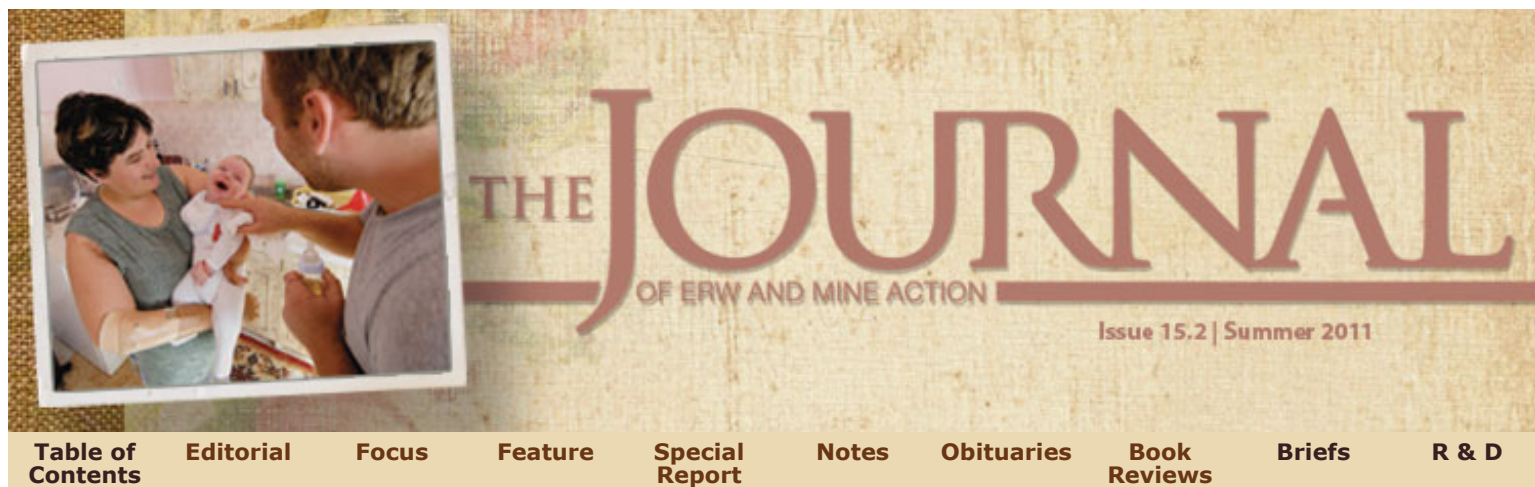
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Landmines in War and Peace: From Their Origin to Present Day

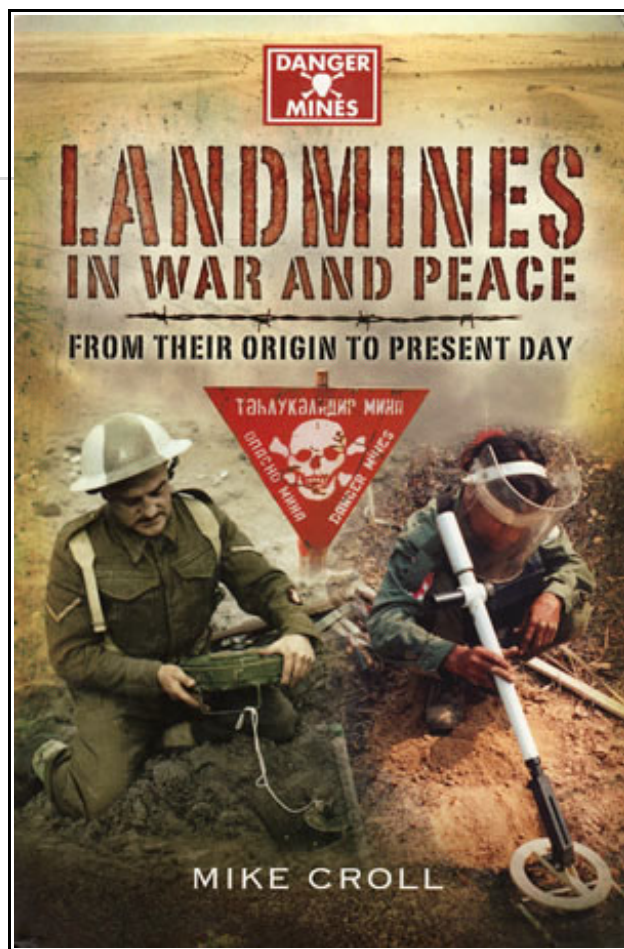
Written by Mike Croll
 Pen and Sword Military, 2008
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 US\$29.19

Ten years after the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and their Destruction* (also known as the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention or APMB) entered into force and the publication of his book, *The History of Landmines*, Mike Croll provides a sequel detailing the present condition of demining operations throughout the world. Croll updates his history of landmines by incorporating new information that has become available in recent years, as well as detailing the progress made in humanitarian demining and the impact of the APMB 10 years on.

Croll makes the daunting topic of landmines accessible to readers who have little previous knowledge on the subject. He avoids delving into unnecessary details and recounts the history of the creation and destruction of landmines in a concise way that engages the reader, instead of confusing them. All the while, Croll is pragmatic in his explanations, making it clear that he has no political agenda. It seems his interest lies in informing the reader about the issue instead of providing a personal opinion about what should be done or who is at fault.

The author contrasts the attention demining received post-World War II and the rapidity with which mines were cleared then with the significantly slower approach currently employed today in post-conflict areas. This is despite the fact that there are presently much fewer landmines globally than there were right after WWII. These facts raise important questions about the current status of demining and what can be done to improve it. The book examines the evolution of landmine use from a weapon of warfare to a weapon used on civilians by various groups that do not adhere to the rules of war. Croll examines the development of a growing humanitarian demining movement that works to clear landmines in civilian and post-conflict areas.

As a former British Army Bomb Disposal Officer, Croll's experience in the field is displayed in his deep knowledge and obvious curiosity and passion about the topic, all of which make for an engaging and informative read. ↴



~ reviewed by Carly Quaglio, CISR Staff

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