Military Aspects of Geology:
Fortification, Excavation and Terrain Evaluation
The Geological Society of London

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Geological Society books refereeing procedures

The Society makes every effort to ensure that the scientific and production quality of its books matches that of its journals. Since 1997, all book proposals have been refereed by specialist reviewers as well as by the Society’s Books Editorial Committee. If the referees identify weaknesses in the proposal, these must be addressed before the proposal is accepted.

Once the book is accepted, the Society Book Editors ensure that the volume editors follow strict guidelines on refereeing and quality control. We insist that individual papers can only be accepted after satisfactory review by two independent referees. The questions on the review forms are similar to those for Journal of the Geological Society. The referees’ forms and comments must be available to the Society’s Book Editors on request.

Although many of the books result from meetings, the editors are expected to commission papers that were not presented at the meeting to ensure that the book provides a balanced coverage of the subject. Being accepted for presentation at the meeting does not guarantee inclusion in the book.

More information about submitting a proposal and producing a book for the Society can be found on its website: www.geolsoc.org.uk.

It is recommended that reference to all or part of this book should be made in one of the following ways:


Military Aspects of Geology:
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EDITED BY

E. P. F. ROSE
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

J. EHLEN
formerly US Army Engineer Research and Development Center, USA

and

U. L. LAWRENCE
Capita Property & Infrastructure Ltd, UK

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Preface


The year 2016 was chosen to help mark the centenary of first deployment by the British Army of an engineering geologist to serve as such on a battlefield: Major (later Lieutenant-Colonel) T. W. Edgeworth David, who arrived in France with the Australian Mining ‘Corps’ in May 1916 to support the British Expeditionary Force on the Western Front. David was invited to give an account of his service during the ‘Great War’ of 1914–18 at a meeting of the Geological Society on 26 February 1919, after the close of hostilities – whilst he was detained in London for nearly two weeks by the delayed sailing of the troopship in which he was scheduled to return home to Australia. That account was not published, but David’s handwritten notes were discovered in the Society’s library archives many years later. They formed the basis of a re-enactment given at Burlington House on 10 July 2014 to help mark the centenary of the start of the war (for the UK, on 4 August 1914), and the core of a consequent explanatory article (Rose, E. P. F. 2015. ‘Abstract from Geology at the Western Front’ by T. W. Edgeworth David. Earth Sciences History, 34, 1–22).

Most of the papers presented at the 2016 meeting have been developed, and supplemented by additional papers, to generate the present book. They were published ‘Online First’ in 2018, to help mark the centenary of the official end of conflict between Germany and the Allies on 11 November 1918: the final armistice of the First World War. Hardback publication in 2019 marks the centenary of three of the following peace treaties; of David’s lecture to the Society; and of the first account by a British geologist of geological work in support of combat operations (King, W. B. R. 1919. Geological work on the Western Front. Geographical Journal, 54, 201–215). It was work for which ‘Bill’ King was awarded the Society’s Wolleston Fund in 1920.

After a historical introduction to the military use of geologists and of geology, the following chapters have been grouped into theme sets that focus on the particular aspects indicated in the book title: fortification, excavation and terrain evaluation. In accordance with standard Geological Society practice, each chapter has been peer-reviewed by at least two referees, anonymous to the authors (initially and, where requested, continuously). The following friends and colleagues assisted in this way (some for more than one paper) and, having allowed their names to be included, are thanked for their help and support: P. H. Banham, David Branagan, Martin Brown, Trevor Davenport, Peter Doyle, T. E. Eastler, F. A. Galgano, J. S. Griffiths, Hermann Häusler, S. W. Henderson, Nigel Hoad, Mike King, P. R. La Pointe, U. L. Lawrence, J. D. Mather, R. T. J. Moody, V. D. Moore, John Peaty, J. D. Priddy, M. S. Rosenbaum, Paul Stewart, Kevin Styles, Geoff Walton, Nick Walton and R. C. Whisonant. We also thank P. L. Guth of the US Naval Academy, Annapolis, and an anonymous reviewer, for their helpful comments on our initial book proposal, and the Society’s Book Editor for the volume, J. S. Griffiths, for reviewing our introductory chapter.

Edward P. F. Rose
Honorary Research Fellow, Department of Earth Sciences, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, UK

Judy Ehlen
retired from the US Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Alexandria, Virginia, USA; now at 3 Haytor Vale, Haytor, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 9XP, UK

Ursula L. Lawrence
Associate Engineering Geologist, Capita Property & Infrastructure Ltd, Capita House, Wood Street, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1UU, UK