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Proud Warriors: African American Combat Units in World War II. By Alexander M. Bielakowski. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2021. xiv, 335 pp. \$29.95.)

Building on the work of the historians Ulysses Lee, Bernard C. Nalty, and Bryan D. Booker, among several others, Alexander M. Bielakowski suggests Proud Warriors “will be a one-stop-shop to find out everything you need to know about African American combat units during World War II” (p. vii). He provides a detailed, if sometimes uneven, treatment of combat divisions in all branches of the military, army, marines, navy, and air force (p. vii). His underlying theme is how service by African Americans challenged (or reinforced) the prejudice and discrimination engrained in the U.S. military and so paved the way for eventual desegregation. Following a survey of African American military service prior to 1941, Bielakowski opens with a chapter on the infantry and a detailed discussion of the controversial performance of the 92nd Infantry in Italy followed by an examination of the 93rd Infantry’s more limited combat role in the Pacific. Several Black regiments used in labor or support duties are discussed briefly before a fuller treatment of the volunteer platoons that successfully fought alongside white troops in the Battle of the Bulge and that, the author suggests, “exploded many racial myths” (p. 96). A brief chapter looks at the participation of African Americans in depot and ammunition companies in the U.S. Marine Corps, where their success in the Pacific campaigns ensured their place in the postwar corps. In the field artillery Black regiments were often redesignated several times to prevent their use in combat, but several did see use in Europe, and, as detailed here, they also acquitted themselves well. A chapter on coast/antiaircraft artillery lists the various African American regiments, their many movements, designations, and redesignations before briefly looking at the two antiaircraft battalions that were involved in the D-Day landings and saw successful service in Europe. A similar pattern is followed in the chapter on cavalry that focuses primarily on the 92nd Cavalry Recon-naissance Troop in Italy and the 93rd in the Pacific, giving details of particular combat missions and their results, including several awards for valor. The chapter on armored force concentrates most on the 758th, 761st, and 784th Tank Battalions, the success of which “did more to dispel racist notions . . . than anyone else in the Army during World War II,” other than the Tuskegee Airmen (p. 179). A less positive note was struck by the treatment of Jackie Robinson, who was court-martialed after challenging segregated bus seating in Texas; he was acquitted of behavior unbecoming of an officer but subsequently requested and was granted an honorable discharge. The following chapter recounts the roles of tank destroyers, primarily the 614th, 679th, and 827th Tank Destroyer Battalions, giving examples of particular battles and individual acts of heroism. The U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard each have a chapter: the first summarizes the role of African Americans in naval construction battalions (“Seabees”), the two all-Black vessels USS Mason and PC-1264, the few Black commissioned naval officers, and concludes with the Port Chicago explosion and subsequent “mutiny” by African American sailors; the second examines the successful integration of two vessels, USS Sea Cloud and USS Hoquiam, the role of the few African American commissioned officers and, oddly, the career of the author and journalist Alex Haley in the U.S. Coast Guard. The history and experiences of the Tuskegee Airmen are outlined in a single chapter on air corps/air forces, assessing criticisms of the 99th Fighter Squadron, the overall achievements of the 332nd Fighter Group, and some of the myths about the Tuskegee Airmen. The final chapter briefly outlines the evolution of postwar military racial policies and the implementation of President Harry S. Truman’s Executive Order 9981, which ended segregation in the military, but without quite linking this to the wartime military service.