ordinary story. However, herein also may lie its weakness because in attempting to combine a genealogical history and a popular Aboriginal history it requires too much of the reader to recall all the members of the (large) family tree at various times introduced into the story. Nevertheless, the author does succeed in capturing her mother’s remarkable resilience and enterprise.

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IAN DUCKHAM


*No Ordinary Determination* is no ordinary book. As well as containing a foreword by the Governor of Western Australia, Lieutenant-General John Sanderson AC, and a tribute on the back cover from the Leader of the Federal Opposition, Kim Beazley, the book is well presented, carefully researched and written in a competent style.

Hatwell relates the lives of two ordinary Australians who made an enormous contribution to the Anzac tradition. Percy Black was born in Victoria in 1870 and moved to the Western Australia goldfields around 1903. Henry ‘Harry’ Murray was born in Tasmania in 1880 and arrived in Western Australia a few years after Black, where he became a woodcutter. Their lives began to entwine and to an amazing extent parallel when World War I began. They were both quick to enlist and soon found themselves at Blackboy Hill training camp in Perth as members of the same machine gun section of the newly formed 16th battalion, AIF. After a period of extensive training they were ready for war.

On the afternoon of 25 April 1915, as part of the 4th Brigade, the two by now firm friends landed together on the beach at Gallipoli. Both men fought bravely and demonstrated outstanding natural ability in the terrible months ahead. Their dedication was rewarded with quick promotions—Black was commissioned as a second lieutenant on 7 May, and Murray was commissioned soon after. When the AIF evacuated Gallipoli in December 1915, Second-Lieutenant Murray, and the now Captain Black, were among the last to leave. They had been chosen for this rearguard role because Brigadier-General Monash had wanted the most gallant and capable men in the brigade to cover the evacuation. For their bravery at Gallipoli both men had been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, the second highest gallantry decoration after the Victoria Cross that could be awarded to rank and file soldiers.

However, this was not the end of the war for Percy Black or Harry Murray. Like thousands of others they were sent to the horror of the Western Front in Europe. Again they distinguished themselves in this bloody slaughter, with Harry Murray being awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery at the battle of ‘Stormy Trench’ in 1917.
Eventually the two friends from the Western Australian bush ended up as Lieutenant-Colonel Harry Murray VC CMG DSO DCM Croix de Guerre, the highest decorated infantryman of the entire British and Empire armies of the war, and Major Percy Black DSO DCM Croix de Guerre. C.E.W. Bean in his *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918* referred to them as two ‘men of no ordinary determination’, hence the title. He also called Murray, ‘the most distinguished fighting officer in the AIF’. Monash wrote in a letter home ‘there are few finer infantry leaders than they’.

Hatwell, an ex-soldier, brings not only the two protagonists to vivid life but he describes in expert detail the conditions faced by all the men who fought in the trenches of World War I. There is no attempt to glorify war; on the contrary the book demonstrates the horror and futility of the slaughter.

Unfortunately the author attaches too much blame for the Gallipoli fiasco to the then first lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, when he declares that ‘it was largely [Churchill’s] influence which would decide the future movements of the Australian Imperial Force’ (p.48). This was a common error for many years, but relatively modern historians now dispute this. Leaving aside the fact that it was Lord Kitchener who suggested the use of Australian troops, Robert Rhodes James has observed that ‘no single man, can, or should, bear responsibility for the series of decisions, half-decisions, and evasions of decisions that marked the initiation of the Gallipoli campaign’.

It is to be hoped that this book, and many like it, are read by new generations in order that they can understand the sacrifice that was made. Maybe one day, when they are walking down St Georges Terrace in Perth they will stop to read the bronze-inlaid tile set in the footpath as a tribute to Murray, which describes him as ‘the archetypal defiant tenacious bushman-soldier, rising through the ranks’.

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IAN CHAMBERS

Penelope Hetherington, *Settlers, Servants and Slaves: Aboriginal and European Children in Nineteenth-Century Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, 2002, pp.246.

Penelope Hetherington has a long career in writing the histories of gender, race, sexuality and childhood in relation to the impact and development of imperialism and colonialism. In this study she applies her expertise to the history of childhood and work in nineteenth century Western Australia. Hetherington has structured the book in two parts, the first addressing European and the second Aboriginal children and work, thus highlighting the differences in experience and ultimately the construction of the racial divide which pre-dated the policies of twentieth century ‘white’ Australia.