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Clive Emsley

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- 1 The history of law-enforcement institutions used to be written, almost always, by people intimately connected with those institutions. These histories invariably described the steady progress of the institution from the perspective of the author's present. The institution and its aims were never problematic. Social, economic and political contexts were largely ignored, except where they impinged directly on the institution and encouraged legislative change or institutional reform, or where, for example, political events like a war or a revolution, directly and obviously involved the institution.
- 2 Louis Larrieu's *Histoire de la Maréchaussée et de la Gendarmerie* is a good example of the genre. Born in 1870 Larrieu was a career soldier. In 1904 he transferred to the Gendarmerie. After service as a provost during World War One he commanded a succession of Gendarmerie legions in the French provinces. He was promoted to general in 1929. During the 1920s he began his history, but only two volumes were ever published in book form: *Des origines à François I^{er}*, in 1927 and *De François I^{er} à la Révolution*, in 1933. He continued to work on the subject and published a series of articles in various Gendarmerie journals, much less well-known to historians. These articles took his chronicle up to the beginning of the 4th Republic, and have been brought together with the two earlier books to make this volume.

- 3 The volume, for obvious reasons, does not take account of the new directions of police and Gendarmerie history. It is rather a disappointment, however, that no attempt has been made to put a more modern bibliography in the book or to point to the exciting new work now being done under the direction of Jean-Noël Luc at the Sorbonne. Nevertheless, this new edition is to be welcomed. Larrieu's knowledge was, and this survey consequently is encyclopaedic. It is especially useful to have the articles on the Revolution, and on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought together in one place and united with his earlier work. Overall the text provides a ready and extremely useful guide to the institutional developments and the various regulations applicable to the force over time.
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