

In sum, *Fortune's Fool* is a very readable, well-researched, balanced biography of a complicated person. Alford's 340 pages of text are probably too much for most undergrads, despite his readability, but his work is prime fodder for lectures and should be read by scholars of the period and those simply looking for an excellent book.

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Dominick Mazzagetti. *Charles Lee: Self Before Country* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013). Rivergate Regionals. Pp. 304. Notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$32.95.

Educated at both Rutgers and Cornell, Mazzagetti is a retired attorney and banker who now lectures and writes about local New Jersey history, and more broadly on the American Revolution and Civil War. In this volume he investigates enigmatic and controversial Revolutionary War general Charles Lee, with a critical eye toward modern biographer apologists.

Born in 1732 in the English county of Cheshire, which the author twice mistakenly refers to as in Wales (16, 26), Lee was the son of a British army officer who followed in his father's footsteps. Educated on the Continent, where he picked up a knack for languages and a taste for democratic political philosophy, Lee saw active military service, including French and Indian War (Seven Years' War in Europe) campaigns such as Braddock's March (1755), Fort Ticonderoga (1758), and Portugal (1762). After the war he was put on half-pay as a major (later lieutenant colonel) in the British army with little prospects for an active commission.

By this time he was an ambitious egoist who was also an accomplished letter writer and polemicist with a "blistering pen" (27). His political opinions made few friends so he left for Poland in 1765 where he was aide-de-camp to King Stanislaus II. He made several return trips to England, the longest being in 1766–68 after the death of his mother. His growing estrangement from the British establishment has induced some to claim he was the author of the mysterious and radical Whig "Junius" letters, but this is unlikely, though he had earlier stated America was the "one Asylum" on Earth for the rights of man (41).

He moved to America in 1773, eventually purchasing a farm in present-day West Virginia. His radical and colorful writings made him popular, though with his thin face and big nose he was described as an “oddity” by John Adams (55), with an excessive attachment to dogs and a lack of personal grooming. Lee was highly regarded for his military background and selected by Congress as a major-general in 1775, third in seniority after George Washington and Artemis Ward. Lee had still been a half-pay British officer so his transfer to American service was based upon Congress agreeing to indemnify him for loss of property in England, which compares poorly to George Washington forgoing even a salary.

Lee was resentful at not being given the top post, but nevertheless had early success defending Charleston in 1776, though he was foolishly captured at year’s end in a New Jersey tavern. Repatriated more than a year later, he famously plotted against Washington’s authority and mismanaged the American attack on the retreating British at Monmouth in June 1778. He was court-martialed and left the army, though he continued to attack Washington’s reputation, even fighting a duel with Washington’s aide-de-camp John Laurens. Lee died in relative disgrace and poverty in Philadelphia in 1782.

Mazzegetti observes that there were many foreign generals in the Continental Army, including Englishmen Charles Lee and Horatio Gates, Scotsmen Hugh Mercer and Arthur St. Clair, Irishmen Richard Montgomery and Thomas Conway, Frenchmen the Marquis de Lafayette and Louis Duportail, Germans Friedrich von Steuben and Johan de Kalb, and Poles Casimir Pulaski and Thaddeus Kosciusko. Most are remembered fondly in American history and Lee’s mixed legacy might have fared better but for his early death. Lee benefited, however, in not being reviled as a traitor, akin to Benedict Arnold, for his treason, while in captivity, in writing a plan (“Mr. Lee Plan—March 29, 1777”) suggesting how the British could win the war (by occupying Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia), which was not known until discovered by a British archivist in 1858.

George Moore, librarian of the New York State Historical Society, purchased Lee’s plan in 1858 and presented a paper titled “The Treason of Charles Lee” that closed the book on Lee for a century (145). Moore suggested that Lee’s actions at Monmouth were related to his 1777 decision to leave the American cause. It is at this point that Mazzegetti is most critical of Lee’s other modern biographers, specifically John R. Alden (*General Charles Lee: Traitor or Patriot?* [1951]), Samuel W. Patterson (*Knight Errant of Liberty: The Triumph and Tragedy of General Charles Lee* [1958]), and Theodore G. Thayer

(*The Making of a Scapegoat: Washington and Lee at Monmouth* [1976]). He would doubtless include Phillip Papas (*Renegade Revolutionary: The Life of General Charles Lee* [2014]) had the publication of this work predated his own.

Alden, Patterson, Thayer, and Papas have challenged Moore's opinion, portraying Lee as a complex political idealist sometimes blinded by ego and ambition. Patterson argues that Lee's plan was a trick, while Alden says it was a misguided effort to help the American cause. Lee may have written the plan to spite Congress for not supporting his offers to mediate a peace deal or he may have just feared being irrelevant in captivity. Even though the British were not impressed by Lee's plan, Mazzagetti argues it was a betrayal no matter how apologists portray it. Lee betrayed the commander who worked for his release and the country whose commission and financial largesse he had previously accepted. After his release, it must have weighed on Lee's mind, making him for the remainder of his life a man without a country living in constant fear of exposure.

This book suffers from a lack of photographs and other illustrations, although the index, endnotes, and bibliography are adequate. The four appendices are useful and include James Wilkinson's 1816 reminiscence of Lee's 1776 capture, the text of "Mr. Lee's Plan—March 29, 1777," conflicting accounts of Washington and Lee's confrontation at Monmouth, and miscellaneous facts about the battle. Despite minor errors, Mazzagetti convincingly critiques Lee's biographers and offers a legitimate portrayal of Lee as a quarrelsome opportunist who hypocritically betrayed the principles he constantly espoused.

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Rex Passion. *The Lost Sketchbooks: A Young Artist in the Great War* (Cambridge, MA: Komatik Press, 2014). Pp. 152. Paperback, \$21.95.

World War I is, along with the War of 1812, one of the most important, but least understood, episodes in American military history. Though scholars suggest the conflict was the most important event of the twentieth century, Americans generally fail to grasp the significance of the war in developing America's view of itself in the twentieth century. Decades before America lost its innocence at Pearl Harbor and the World Trade Centers, its sons and