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# Brave Men



## Synopsis

Europe was in the throes of World War II, and when America joined the fighting, Ernie Pyle went along. Long before television beamed daily images of combat into our living rooms, Pyle's on-the-spot reporting gave the American public a firsthand view of what war was like for the boys on the front. Pyle followed the soldiers into the trenches, battlefields, field hospitals, and beleaguered cities of Europe. What he witnessed he described with a clarity, sympathy, and grit that gave the public back home an immediate sense of the foot soldier's experience. "There were really two wars, John Steinbeck wrote in Time magazine: one of maps and logistics, campaigns, ballistics, divisions, and regiments and the other a "war of the homesick, weary, funny, violent, common men who wash their socks in their helmets, complain about the food, whistle at Arab girls, or any girls for that matter, and bring themselves through as dirty a business as the world has ever seen and do it with humor and dignity and courage—and that is Ernie Pyle's war." This collection of Pyle's columns detailing the fighting in Europe in 1943 and 1944 brings that war—and the living, and dying, moments of history—home to us once again.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Brave Men is a collection of journalist Pyle's newspaper columns from 1943 and 1944, in which he details the fighting in Europe primarily from the perspective of the common U.S. G.I. This angle of reporting brought the front-line war back to the families of those serving in the armed forces and endeared Pyle to the troops. An essential piece of Americana for all collections. Copyright 2001

"Brave Men is a collection of journalist Pyle's newspaper columns from 1943 and 1944, in which he details the fighting in Europe primarily from the perspective of the common U.S. G.I. This angle of reporting brought the front-line war back to the families of those serving in the armed forces and endeared Pyle to the troops. An essential piece of Americana for all collections." — Library Journal (Library Journal) "In his fine introduction to this new edition, G. Kurt Piehler (History/Univ. of Tennessee at Knoxville) celebrates Pyle's 'dense, descriptive style' and his unusual feel for the quotidian GI experience — a personal and human side to war left out of reporting on generals and their strategies. . . . Kirkus, at the time [of the original edition in 1944], noted the hoopla over Pyle (Pulitzer, hugely popular syndicated column, BOMC hype) and decided it was all worth it: 'the book doesn't let the reader down.' Pyle, of course, captures 'the human qualities' of men in combat, but he also provides 'an extraordinary sense of the scope of the European war fronts, the variety of services involved, the men and their officers.' . . . [A] classic of modern journalism." — Kirkus Reviews (Kirkus Reviews)

Ernie Pyle had a great talent for writing about the men involved in fighting the war from the vantage point of actually being with the men. For me, it took longer to read this book because of Ernie Pyle's approach of giving the names and home addresses of the soldiers he met. As a result, I felt the urge to look up the homes of these men on Google Maps. For me it made these men seem to be a little more than just names on a page. Some of the home addresses have since become either stores, condos, parking lots or even abandoned lots. And yet many others are still homes belonging to new owners who, I suspect, have no clue as to the nature of the prior owner. This book on Kindle is in need of some editing as there are many errors. And yet despite this lack of editing, I found the book to be so profound in style that I gave it a five star rating.

I had often heard of 'Ernie Pyle' from people who had been around to read his newspaper columns during 'The War' and — more often — from those whose parents had done so. But it was not until a solemn stroll through Honolulu's National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific brought me unexpectedly upon Pyle's gravesite that he became a real human being to me. Ironically, for me he was humanized in his death. It is a sentiment that Pyle might have been expected to appreciate, for he humanized the American fighting man and woman precisely in their deepest extremis. I immediately ordered this remarkable collection of Pyle's columns, filed from a

very mobile front. It took a bit of time for Pyle's writing to grow in me. His vocabulary, his pacing come after all from a different generation's English. But grow on me it did. By all accounts a complex man and by some accounts a troubled one, Pyle shines no light on himself. His singular focus is on the American GI and sailor. The title of this compilation might suggest a romantic touch. Yet romance is not what Pyle brought to war, and certainly not to his supreme lay empathetic picture of the American warrior in a war that not one of them had invited to interrupt his life. I am tempted to say that every American school child should be required to read this book. But that will never happen, and is hardly worth the words. The good news is that some of us, more often than not those who have grown to appreciate the citizen soldier with all his warts, will pick up and read this extraordinary collection of journalistic snapshots. Some of us will pause quietly at the end of one or more of the book's 35 chapters. To wonder how we would have performed under similar duress. To honor those who endured. To grieve those who did not.

Ernie Pyle was a journalist, initially in England in 1940, and then covering the American armed forces as they fought their way up the length of Italy. His language is recognisably American but is not dated and his writing is focussed on what the men in the artillery group he was with had to go through and how they coped. If I was an American I'd want to read this, and though British, it was a helluva read for me too. His story of life in Blitzed England is pretty stirring too. If you can (still) read about the true horrors of WW2 and what all those in confrontation with the Germans had to put up with you can read Ernie Pyle and get it straight from a decent caring man.

A superb book on the daily life of navy, army and airforce men in the various battlezones in Europe during WW II. The author is a typical product of his time when the US mainstream wouldn't tolerate expletives even by frontline soldiers nor critical descriptions on the way it fought its way up towards Berlin. Mr Pyle who was embedded in the fighting units and shared the hardships of sleeping with the troops in rainsoaked bivouacs and frontline hospitals avoids the cruel extremes of how it must have felt when lying for hours under artillery bombardment as we read in books on the fronts of WWI. And yet reading *Brave Men* makes one feel the grime, filthy clothes and not using a razor for weeks with only the occasional helmet of water to wash in. And how it must felt to remove boots and socks from rotting flesh after standing in soaked foxholes or crossing streams without the chance of drying one's feet.

How can anything written by Ernie Pyle rate anything but five stars? How could I possibly "rate"

Ernie Pyle? The best compliment one could give to a war journalist is, "He's almost as good as Ernie Pyle." Bill Mauldin and Ernie Pyle, the last truly great war writers and commentators. If you are even remotely interested in the heroes who saved the world from totalitarianism this is a must read and should be in your permanent library.

very realistic look at what the greatest generation did in their lifetime to preserve our country for future generations. My Dad was one of those 19 year old kids who was drafted from the family farm, and was sent overseas. He was in a mortar Co. and was in Germany for 2 years right up to the end of the War. My older sister myself and 2 younger brothers are all of the baby boomer generation. Like so many other G.I.'s who came home went back to their jobs, raised a family, he very rarely spoke of his time in the war. My nephew did an interview with my Dad about 10 years ago and I learned more of what he went through from that than anything he ever told us. My Dad passed away 2 years ago and I still miss talking to him terribly. I drive truck and I would call and talk to him for hours, many times missing an exit or two on the interstate, But I recall those memories talking to my Dad with great fondness of a quiet man who answered his country's call and returned home to become most assuredly "the Greatest Generation of Americans ever",

Outstanding reading. Fascinating, the inside view of the war. How he never writes about big heroes. Just the reality. The persons. The daily grind. This was my Memorial Day gift to myself. Spent it reading Ernie. I had to find out in this book that I am definitely not related to Ernie. Even though we have the same last name. Had to find out from him.

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