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After Stalingrad: Seven Years As A Soviet Prisoner Of War



Synopsis

The battle for Stalingrad has been studied and recalled in exhaustive detail ever since the Red Army trapped the German 6th Army in the ruined city in 1942. But most of these accounts finish at the end of the battle, with columns of tens of thousands of German soldiers disappearing into Soviet captivity. Their fate is rarely described. That is why Adelbert Holl's harrowing and vivid memoir of his seven-year ordeal as a prisoner in the Soviet camps is such an important record as well as an absorbing story. As he moves from camp to camp across the Soviet Union, an unsparing inside view of the prison system and its population of ex-soldiers emerges. He describes the daily life in the camps — the crowding, the dirt, the cold, the ever-present threat of disease, the forced marches, the indifference or cruelty of the guards — in authentic detail. The Soviets treated German prisoners as slave laborers, working them exhaustively, in often appalling conditions. The prisoners could only struggle to survive, to support each other, and hope against hope to return home.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Pen and Sword (May 24, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1473856116

ISBN-13: 978-1473856110

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (33 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #109,476 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #103 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Russia #120 in Books > History > Military > United States > Veterans #134 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Germany

Customer Reviews

This book, written from the perspective of a German Soldier captured by the Russians at Stalingrad, is an incredible adventure story told by the actual soldier—how anyone could have survived such an ordeal is beyond me. Alber Holl writes in a descriptive, intense but believable manner. His story is heartbreaking but gives one hope to tackle any situation. I enjoyed this exciting read. I recommend it to anyone.

I have just finished reading this book and I could not believe all this man endured along with his fellow German prisoners. But what really shocked me was the number of his fellow Germans who turned against their fellow comrades and sided with the Russians!!! They stood by and watched their fellow comrades suffer and even die just to save their skins!!! The Russians treated the Germans worst than dogs without any remorse or compassion. Yes I knew what the Germans did to Russians during war and yet I still felt pity for them. One day in that hell hole was more than enough punishment. The sadness he had to endure when some of his fellow friends died from illness, disease or just the lack of food was very painful to read. And conditions in which he had to live and work are just painful to imagine. This book puts you the reader in his shoes as a POW in ways I can not explain.

I have read most of the Eastern Front books starting in 1967.... This is a detailed account and a good read.... Read it and weep.

This is an interesting book I did not expect to find. The reason is pretty clear. The author had previously published the work *Infantryman at Stalingrad* about his experiences on the Eastern Front, in particular in Stalingrad. This book ends with the author being captured. For some reason I thought that was the end of the story. In reality it was the end of one book and the start of a newer one. This book is the follow up as to what happened after being captured by the Russians as written by one of the few Germans who were sent home nearly ten years after the war ended. The book is well written and contains a lot of information about general conditions of the German POWs and about life in general post World War Two in Russia. What's clear is that nation was nearly destroyed by the war effort. Needless to say care of keep of the POWs was not something that was a priority among Russians. Conditions were harsh and many of the Russians were not exactly interested in anything other than exploiting the situation to various ends. Over all I enjoyed this book. It provided an interesting perspective on what it was like in post-war Russia and the endurance of the German POWs. Clearly the author's story was one of thousands of men who were held captive after the war. Men who, to a great extent, were not intended to come home after the war. Many of whom, are still, in Russia's cold earth.

First time I had the opportunity to read the fate of all those German prisoners after their capture by the red army. Extraordinary account of their ordeal and experiences. No question war is the worse tragedy humans can endure. After a while the reading became monotonous but nonetheless, it

depicts a brutal account on the faith of prisoner of war. I am sure the faith of Russian prisoners by the Germans was a cruel as the one described here.

This memoir is a brutal glimpse into what German POW's endured in the Soviet Union during and after WW II. It's definitely an interesting story for WW II buffs who have read extensively about combat during this period and have wondered what the POW experience was like for captured Wehrmacht soldiers on the Eastern Front.

I've always welcomed firsthand accounts of the Ost Front that cover experiences beyond the battlefield, especially those delving into the POW experience and the mass deportations and ethnic cleansing. Holl's recounting of his seven year captivity provides considerable detail of the conditions POWs faced, but the accounts are somewhat inconsistent in depth and detail at times. As one might expect, his capture and the events leading to his release receive the most attention. Another point is that while the author regularly shares that he kept true to his personal and professional ideals, to me he didn't particularly explore how he coped inwardly with the events. Put another way, while recounting events received considerable detail, personal feelings seemed a comparative afterthought and that perseverance remained a given throughout. This is not to question Holl's steadfastness, but learning from what depths his unwavering drive came from would have been the step further this title needed. In closing, it's a valued look into the German POW experience in the Soviet Union and it mesmerizes by providing but a peek into the enormity of the struggle and vast numbers of individuals it affected.

Remember this book was written in 1965 and the author evidently had an eye for minute detail and memory to boot. Appears he focuses on special holidays and events in order to recall specifics of the time in question. Plus he mentions the brutal, professional Russian criminal gangs in detail that only one who was there could know! I would have liked a few sentences about his life post 1950 upon his lucky release from The Gulag...

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