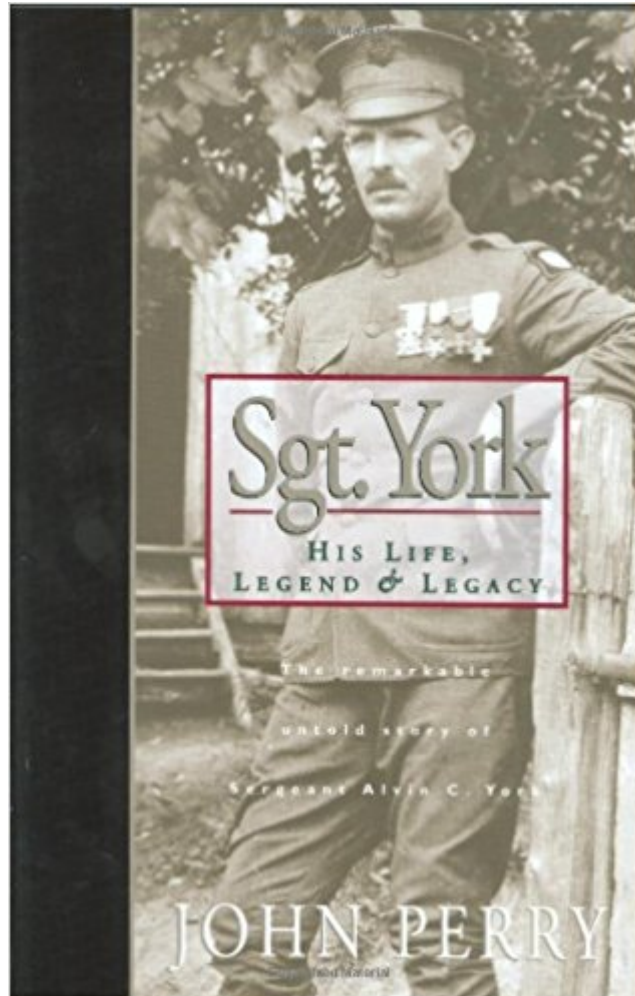


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Sgt. York: His Life, Legend & Legacy: The Remarkable Untold Story Of Sgt. Alvin C. York



Synopsis

In a world desperate for authentic heroes, the story of Alvin C. York reminds us of the true meaning of heroism. York's bravery on the battlefield made him famous, but it was his decision to turn down the easy riches of celebrity that secured his position as one of history's greatest Christian patriots. Based on new interviews with all of York's living children, and York's own diaries, this exhaustive biography follows the young soldier from the hills of Tennessee to the battlefields of France, down Broadway in a triumphant ticker-tape parade, and back home to his family farm where he spent the rest of his life in service to his community and his God.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After reading his life of Mary Custis Lee, which was quite impressive and turned up many unique insights into a tragically misjudged lady, I sought out other books by Tennessee's own and only John Perry. I found a copy of UNSHAKABLE FAITH, but it had mildewed badly and was nearly unreadable. But faith must have led me to a path of light because on a dark shelf in an East Bay bookstore my hand crept down past a row of Elizabeth Peters books, and landed almost by a miracle on this earlier book by Perry. I knew very little about Alvin York, except that my grandfather, whose name was Alvin, always blamed the remarkable fame of Sgt York on the popularity of this previous unknown name. He said when he went to school there were thirty-four boys in his graduating class called Alvin. John Perry addresses this amazing renown. His exploits in the Argonne Forest became the stuff of legend, and the Gary Cooper biopic in 1941 muffed the facts a bit to give York more of a country background than actually he had. Many members of his extended

family were quite erudite, and my grandfather always used to say that one of York's aunts had written the very first home economics textbook in English, predating Boston's Fannie Farmer by some years. Perry has a sincere way of writing, and the excitement doesn't let down when York comes back home a hero. You see him doing good works in the name of the Lord and, although many politicians and lawmakers were ever ready and anxious to buy up a piece of his ass, hoping to enlist him into one or another misbegotten crackpot scheme. To his credit York paid them no mind and just continued on his humble way.

Alvin York spent 19 months of his 76 years in the United States Army during World War I (WWI) and 20 minutes to an hour in the action which made him America's greatest hero of that war. In writing a book about Alvin York, then, the author had to make a decision. Should he write about those 19 months, about that hour, or about the man's entire life? For any other man, the answer would be fairly simple: write about that hour. For Alvin York, however, the answer is quite different, and this author rightly chose to write the complete story of his life both before, during, and after his heroic military service. When I began reading the book, however, I didn't realize this, and, as a result, I was somewhat disappointed. It seemed to me that all the action, the interesting stuff, was up front and then the book slowly transitioned into the more mundane story of York's later life. But I persisted and gradually came to realize that that was the way York, himself, would have wanted it. After all, as he said many times throughout his life, "Uncle Sam's Army is not for sale." I must agree with some of the previous critics that this book is almost too detailed, particularly in the middle chapters, as York, with his third grade education, struggles against entrenched politicians to fulfill his dream of building a Christian school in the Tennessee mountains so the backwoods children could have the education he never had. But if you persist, you will likely come to realize, as I did, that his actions after the war and the manner in which he lived his life are much more heroic than anything he or anyone else did in the Great War or in any other war.

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