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To Hell And Back



Synopsis

The classic bestselling war memoir by the most decorated American soldier in World War II, back in print in a trade paperbackOriginally published in 1949, To Hell and Back was a smash bestseller for fourteen weeks and later became a major motion picture starring Audie Murphy as himself. More than fifty years later, this classic wartime memoir is just as gripping as it was then. Desperate to see action but rejected by both the marines and paratroopers because he was too short, Murphy eventually found a home with the infantry. He fought through campaigns in Sicily, Italy, France, and Germany. Although still under twenty-one years old on V-E Day, he was credited with having killed, captured, or wounded 240 Germans. He emerged from the war as America's most decorated soldier, having received twenty-one medals, including our highest military decoration, the Congressional Medal of Honor. To Hell and Back is a powerfully real portrayal of American GI's at war.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Audie Murphy's To Hell and Back is one of the quintessential front-line soldier accounts of the Second World War. The book is not a memoir or autobiography, since Murphy wrote little of it himself and describes little of his life before or after his combat experiences. Nor does Murphy even mention any of awards, including the Medal of Honor, or the fact that he served the entire war in B Company, 1-15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division. The book focuses entirely on the period July 1943 to March 1945, with most of the emphasis on the Anzio, Southern France and Vosges campaigns. On the negative side, Murphy's account is extremely self-effacing and at times is more focused on

his squad members, whose GI Joe conversations appear fake and silly. Nevertheless, Murphy's comrades appear as real human beings and the reader will regret the death of each. To Hell and Back is not particularly well written - it is in fact a rather pedestrian account that wanders at times - but what it lacks in style it delivers in frank reality. Murphy's wartime account is often brutal - sometimes humorous - but it makes other more recent homogenized efforts like Band of Brothers seem contrived in comparison. Currently, the myth has been propagated that only highly trained specialists in peak physical and mental condition should engage in close infantry combat. Audi Murphy, the scrawny, orphaned teenager from Texas who was rejected by the marines and paratroopers, stands to discredit that myth. In combat, Murphy found his niche in life. With a carbine in his hands, Murphy became a real killer. Quick reflexes, common sense and a certain amount of luck gave him the edge and allowed him to survive all his original squad mates.

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