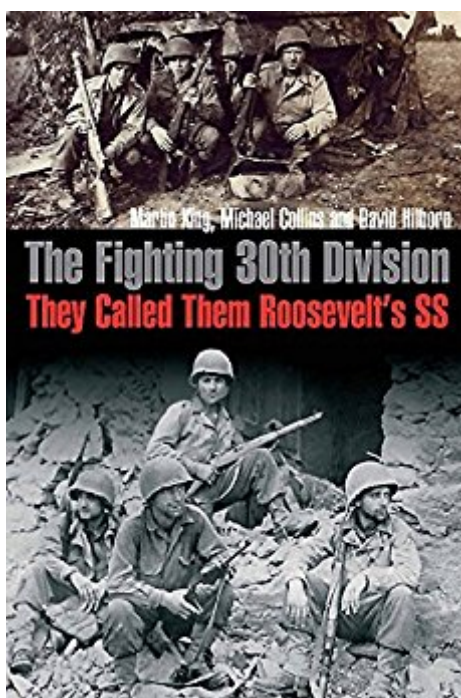


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The Fighting 30th Division: They Called Them Roosevelt's SS



Synopsis

In World War I the 30th Infantry Division earned more Medals of Honor than any other American division. In World War II it spent more consecutive days in combat than almost any other outfit. Recruited mainly from the Carolinas and Georgia and Tennessee, they were one of the hardest-fighting units the U.S. ever fielded in Europe. What was it about these men that made them so indomitable? They were tough and resilient for a start, but this division had something else. They possessed intrinsic zeal to engage the enemy that often left their adversaries in awe. Their U.S. Army nickname was the "Old Hickory" Division. But after encountering them on the battlefield, the Germans themselves came to call them "Roosevelt's SS." This book is a combat chronicle of this illustrious division that takes the reader right to the heart of the fighting through the eyes of those who were actually there. It goes from the hedgerows of Normandy to the 30th's gallant stand against panzers at Mortain, to the brutal slugs around Aachen and the Westwall, and then to the Battle of the Bulge. Each chapter is meticulously researched and assembled with accurate timelines and after-action reports. The last remaining veterans of the 30th Division and attached units who saw the action firsthand relate their remarkable experiences here for the first, and probably the last time. This is precisely what military historians mean when they write about "fighting spirit." There have been only a few books written about the 30th Division and none contained direct interviews with the veterans. This work follows their story from Normandy to the final victory in Germany, packed with previously untold accounts from the survivors. These are the men whose incredible stories epitomize what it was to be a GI in one of the toughest divisions in WWII.

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Customer Reviews

This is another critical hidden history of WWII. The book is about a National Guard Division during WWII from North Carolina and Tenn. I was astonished at what I read. This division deserves to go down in history as one of the premier units of the US Army during that time along with the 1st, 101st, 82nd, and others. I am not sure why history has forgotten them. Their contribution in various battles was the thing that separated victory and defeat. This unit was at the right place several times in the European theater. The authors combine a mix of standard narrative and veteran accounts to paint the picture. It really makes for a unique way to look at the history. Now more onto why this unit is immortal. They were called "Roosevelt's SS" by the Germans and the name struck. The name was a way of honor. This division helped punch a hole in the German line in July 44 during Operation Cobra. Then they held two critical hills in Mortain during the German Counter Offensive. If the 30th would have broke then Patton would have been cut off in the Middle of France. Then the war would have been a different event. Their grit and determination secured victory. The division held out for six days. This was done at a cost. At times the fighting was hand to hand. One of the critical hills was hill 314. The defending Bn suffered 50% casualties in the fight. The unit wasn't finished after that. They continued across the European front. They were one of the units that captured the German City of Aachen. That was the first major city to be captured by any allied army. The fighting was house to house. After that the division fought in the battle of the Bulge. They went up against the lead unit of the Germans during the offensive, and succeeded. Their hard innovative work in constructing a defense went a long way to thwarting the German offensive. I think everyone needs to read this to realize that many heroes of WWII have their stories yet to be told.

This was the precise history of the 30th Division that I was looking for. I was a member of the 30th Division when it was deactivated in December 1973 and have been so interested in its history. The unit numbers were even the same then as in 1973 except some that were medical/supply and

transportation were reversed upon deactivation than what they were in WW2. It was a great read for what I wanted it for.

A lot of detail is in this book. However, it is very difficult to follow as it jumps from one unconnected incident to another.

Good account of a "lesser" known US Army unit in WWII. Many books about WWII tend to focus on "Elite" units in the war: 82nd Airborne, 101st, US Marines etc., which is fine but it's nice to read about lesser known units like the 30th Division, some of which actually spent more days in combat than the elites.

High time the 30th "Old Hickory" Division got some attention for massive accomplishments of those citizen soldiers during World War 2. It's a good book and well worth the price. It gives a lot of information and background on the unit that was chosen as THE best US Division in the ETO, along with the reasons that even Axis Sally referred to them as "Roosevelt's SS."

Great story about one of the premier infantry divisions in the European Theater. Their stand at Mortain saved the breakout from the Normandy beaches and hedgerows. They were also part of the northern shoulder of the Battle of the Bulge, preventing the Germans from widening their front to the north and forcing the German attack to be much more narrow than planned.

The book gave an infantryman's personal view of the fighting with many first person account of their experiences in combat in Europe. More unit histories should take this approach when writing their story.

At first I thought this was not going to be my "cup of tea". But as I waded into the book I began to appreciate the clipped writing style. There are many, many first hand accounts by the men who were there, and this book is a fitting tribute to them. Through their accounts I picked up tons of history that had escaped me before now. Get a sample of the book to see if the style works for you. If it does, you are in for a treat.

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