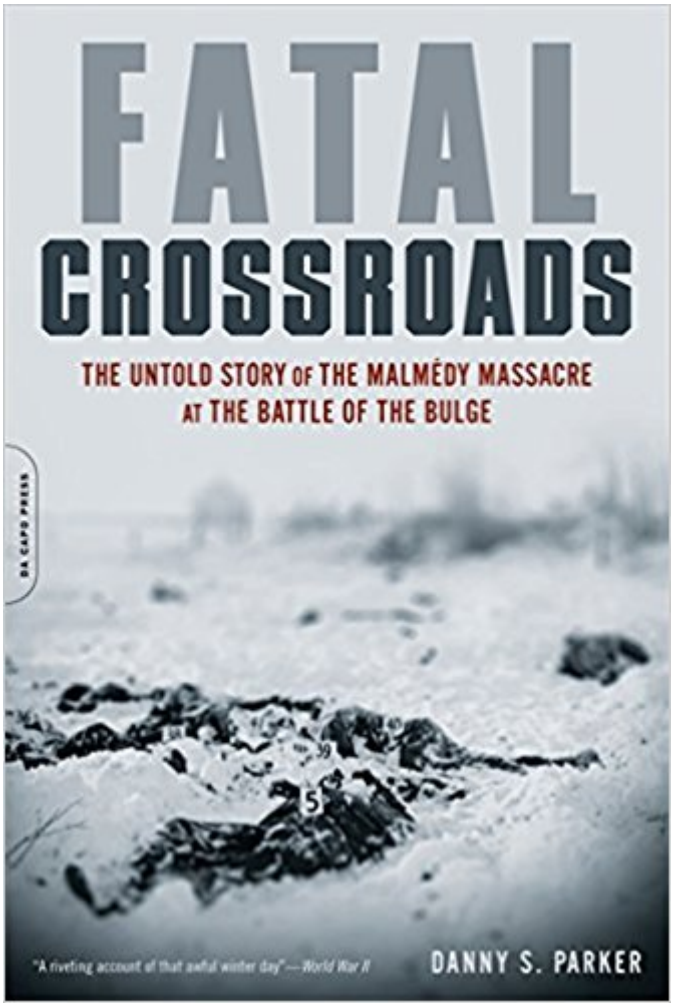
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Fatal Crossroads: The Untold Story Of The Malmedy Massacre At The Battle Of The Bulge



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Synopsis

On December 17, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, more than eighty unarmedAmerican soldiers were shot down after having surrendered to an SS tank column near the small crossroads town of MalmÃƒÂ©dy, Belgium. In vivid prose with revealing details, Fatal Crossroads reconstructs the previously untold story of the largest single atrocity committed against American POWs on the Western front in World War II.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Woman Around Town.com, 12/20/11"Danny S. Parker illuminates a conflict of the Second World War...the Germans claimed they fired at captives trying to escape; the Americans testified it was cold blooded murder. How the case was tried, and perhaps bungled, is a story in itself."World War II History, Winter 2012 "It was near the village of Malmedy, Belgium on December 17, 1944 that one of the worst atrocities of World War II took place against American soldiers...Historian Danny S. Parker gives a riveting account of that awful winter day from those who miraculously survived the horrendous ordeal."Poughkeepsie Journal, 9/4/11Ã¢â ¬Å“A riveting account.Ã¢â ¬Â• Kirkus Reviews (starred review), 10/15/11 Ã¢â ¬Å“A sharply focused look at a grisly 1944 incident, the massacre of more than 80 American prisoners outside MalmÃƒÂ©dy, Belgium. Assembling a massive amount of data (the back matter alone consumes more than 120 pages), the author views the tragedy from the perspectives of survivors, the Germans and the Belgian civilians, some of whom aided the wounded, some of whom did notÃ¢â ¬Â¦Comprehensive, definitive, grim and gripping.Ã¢â ¬Â•Roanoke Times, 1/1/12 Ã¢â ¬Å“Fatal Crossroads manages to bridge the often

uncomfortable terrain between in-depth details tailored for historians and brilliant, readable narratives appealing to lay readersÃ¢â ¬Â¦Parker not only sheds light on an oft-forgotten portion of the American experience in World War II, he rigorously dissects it, providing a benchmark for any future studies of the Malmedy massacre.Ã¢â ¬Â• --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Danny Parker has written the most detailed and reliable account yet of the most notorious atrocity inflicted on U.S. forces in Europe during World War II. Using an impressive array of sources, including interviews with many survivors and witnesses, he has constructed a gripping narrative that is both evocative of the horror of the massacre and restrained and balanced in its conclusions. This is a book that deserves the attention of World War II aficionados." -James J. Weingartner, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and author of "Americans, Germans, and War Crimes Justice. Law, Memory and the "Good War." --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

During the German counter-offensive in the Ardennes in December 1944 elements of the Waffen SS captured a convoy of American soldiers at Baugnez crossroads near the town of Malmedy, Belgium. After disarming the soldiers, they were herded into a field and machine gunned, killing most. The wounded that showed any signs of life were summarily executed with a pistol shot to the head. Some Americans who survived the initial storm of bullets and were able feign death, managed to escape to Malmedy to report the slaughter. While the story of the Malmedy massacre has been the subject of many articles and books since 1944, Danny Parker’s superbly crafted "Fatal Crossroads" is the most definitive account. He spent years researching archives, military court documents, walking the fields and farm paths at Baugnez, and interviewing surviving American and German soldiers as well as Belgian locals. Parker’s level of detail is astonishing, including the location of soldiers when they were captured, where they were shot, and for the few that escaped, their routes to freedom. Similar, he has been able to identify and map where the SS troops were positioned when ordered to kill the American prisoners. While Fatal Crossroads focuses on the carnage at Baugnez and its aftermath, Parker provides valuable insight into the mindset of the Waffen SS and the American soldiers who were reeling from the unexpected German advance. Unquestionably "Fatal Crossroads" is a brillantly written masterpiece and the final word on one of the most notorious incidents of WW II.

I applaud the effort and sentiment here, but the execution is appalling! Most books that deal with

multi-witnesses to the same event strive to keep some sort of chronological flow and avoid constant re-telling of the same details by judicious editing and selection. Not so this book! Again and again we are told how the men are gathered in the field, pistol shots ring out followed by a frenzy of machine gun fire, followed by 2, or 3 SS soldiers administering the mercy shots to those not yet dead. We hear this same story from several survivors, we are ready to move on, but suddenly (and with no warning), we are back to the beginning reading about it again! And yet again! The writing is fine, but the editing is atrocious, so bad, I began not to care about these guys. In fact, I got half-way and couldn't go on! There must be better accounts of this tragedy out there; I would not recommend this one to anyone...

Having a keen interest in the Battle of the Bulge and following in particular the offensive of Kampfgruppe Peiper (see my review http:Duel in the Mist 2: The Leibstandarte During the Ardennes Offensive), it was difficult to oversee the massacre at Malmedy.The book reads like a complete police investigation with an incredible amount to testimonies and details.We usually read about units fighting others (in this case 1st SS Liebstandard murdering Prisoners of Wars from 285th field artillery observation battalion), however many of the participants, shooters, survivors and victims are directly named, bringing the account to a whole different new level.What I liked about this book:-incredible amount of details-very clear context and background information (I learned for instance why the unit had little other choice but to surrender)-astonishing number of testimonies from both sides (the GIs have their own voice, as well as the numerous SS veterans)-rather than being justification on one side or another, the veterans recount the events minutes after minutes as they saw them)What I liked less:-the same scenes are described from different perspective again and again. In a way this is repetitive however so can be a police report and for someone interested in history, this gives one of the most exhaustive picture of events one can hope for-a couple of times the author shares his conclusion before letting the reader discover the events, from a narrative perspective this damages a bit how the story is recounted (a minor quibble).As a conclusion: some of the reviews indicating the "repetitive" nature of the book initially scared me from purchasing it. It is indeed repetitive at times as we hear the stories of dozens and dozens of people who where actually there describing what they saw and what they did. Quite often, by nature, the events remain the same. However, the picture that is slowly drawn becomes chillingly clearer and clearer.You can have a strong interest in military history, enjoy the information about what unit participate in what action (down to the individual vehicle number) and have an interest for german armor. You will have all this, with the name of the crew members, what platoon or squad they belonged to. But you will

also possibly have the most credible account of what happened these few hours of December 17, 1944.One star off because of the minor weaknesses (in my view) and because it is not a book for everyone, I am aware of that.History fans, it’s a buy.

Danny S. Parker’s book is about the German Nazi Massacre of about 140 American Prisoners of War at the crossroads of Malmedy, Belgium. The Malmedy Massacre happened on December 17, 1944 and afterwards to the survivors and perpetrators.Parker includes black and white photographs and illustrated maps to help the reader. Since there are so many people involved, the writing can be all over the place in examining the massacre as a war crime. There are so many people in the story that you have trouble keeping track of them.The author has done a considerable job in researching, interviewing survivors, and writing about a forgotten event during World War II. Until I read this book, I was completely unaware of the massacre. There was no need for the Nazis to kill American unarmed prisoners of war. They massacred over hundred men out of convenience because the Nazis had no place to imprison them or use for them.There are few problems with the writing such as organization and balance of actual accounts.

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