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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 labourers, 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.

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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.

Great book. People look at Stalingrad and think only about Nazis getting what they had coming but these guys were just men following orders in an army like any other men. Over 100,000 men were captured and only 5000 made it home after the treatment by the Russians.

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.

Well written and its unbelievable that any German prisoners survived.

90,000 marched out of Stalingrad ----5000 made it home

Uplifting and cheerful. A laugh riot. Seriously, a gripping story of life as a German POW in the Soviet Union. Grim and somewhat depressing, though I believe it's a valuable look at the experience of a German captured at Stalingrad who lived to tell about it. His POW experience is interesting as, for most combatants, the war ended when the shooting stopped, while for people like the author it lasted far longer.

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.

I often wondered about the German pows. This book gave an insight of just what they went through. Some of the memories felt a bit inconsistent but that may be just my problems following the story. I would recommend this book for the author's ability to keep his focus on survival honorably and as an inspiration to anyone who may find themselves in a similar situation in the future.

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