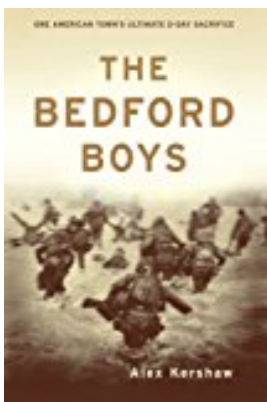


[PDF] The Bedford Boys: One American Town's Ultimate D-day Sacrifice

Alex Kershaw - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Bedford Boys: One America
Author: Alex Kershaw
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly This accessible and moving group biography portrays the men of Company A, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, who were part of the first wave at Omaha Beach in WWII. Initially, 103 of them left the small town of Bedford, Va.-now the site of the national D-Day memorial-when the local National Guard was called up in 1940; 34 were still with the company on D-Day. Of these, 19 died in a matter of minutes and three more perished in the

Normandy campaign. Men lost ranged from the company commander, Captain Taylor N. Fellers, from a wealthy Bedford family, to Frank Draper Jr., a fine athlete and soldier from the wrong side of the tracks. Long-time National Guardsman John Wilkes died as the company's top sergeant, while Earl Parker left behind a daughter he never saw. Both Holback brothers and Ray Stevens died, while Ray's twin Roy Stevens was one of the handful of survivors. Kershaw (Jack London) includes combat sequences that give a vivid private's- eye view of the particular hell that was Omaha Beach, while one of the most moving portions of the book is the simultaneous arrival in Bedford of nine "We regret to inform you..." telegrams. A capsule history of Bedford before the war, its role as part of the home front during it and its current place as (controversial) memorial site are all covered, but the book's central focus is on the town where a good many survivors remain whose memories have not faded and whose emotional wounds have not healed.

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From On June 6, 1944, Allied armies launched their massive invasion of Europe--D-Day, in other words. Among the thousands of soldiers headed for France were 34 men from the town of Bedford, Virginia, aboard *Empire Javelin*, a British troopship. Nineteen of them were killed in the first minutes of combat, when their landing craft dropped them into the water off Normandy. Two more were killed later in the day from gunshot wounds. No other town in the U.S. endured a greater one-day loss. Kershaw's book is more than just another war story; here is an in-depth account of this blue-collar town and its 3,000 people. The soldiers included three sets of brothers, a pool-hall hustler, husbands, farmers, and a couple of "highly successful Lotharios." Kershaw describes in painful detail how the next of kin were notified of the soldiers' deaths via Western Union telegrams and how the news devastated their lives. Drawing on interviews with survivors and relatives, newspaper clippings, letters, and diaries, Kershaw has chronicled one community's great sacrifice.

George Cohen

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