



Up Close and Personal: The Reality of Close-Quarter Fighting in World War II

David Lee

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All major theaters are covered and each action is analyzed in this detailed look at what it was really like to fight at the sharp end during World War II. While some authorities maintain that only twenty-five percent of all combat soldiers fired their weapons at the enemy because of the innate human reluctance to take another's life, and others take the view that soldiers enjoy killing, the author of this book argues that combat is far more complex than either of these statements imply.

David Lee contends that a unit's success in battle is the result of the type of training it received. His analysis includes a careful examination of the weapons and tactics of each action. He describes what happened, for example, when a battalion of ordinary British soldiers trained in the traditional manner came up against the Waffen SS, whose training was formidable and bore close resemblance to the Commandos. Then he looks at how a rifle battalion held the sniper position against overwhelming odds in the desert war but was nearly wiped out when it went to Italy. Finally, using material gathered by General Marshall and his team of combat historians, he tells the story of a U.S. infantry regiment on D-Day. This revealing and absorbing account of the terror and excitement of close-quarter combat takes the reader directly into the heat of battle.

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