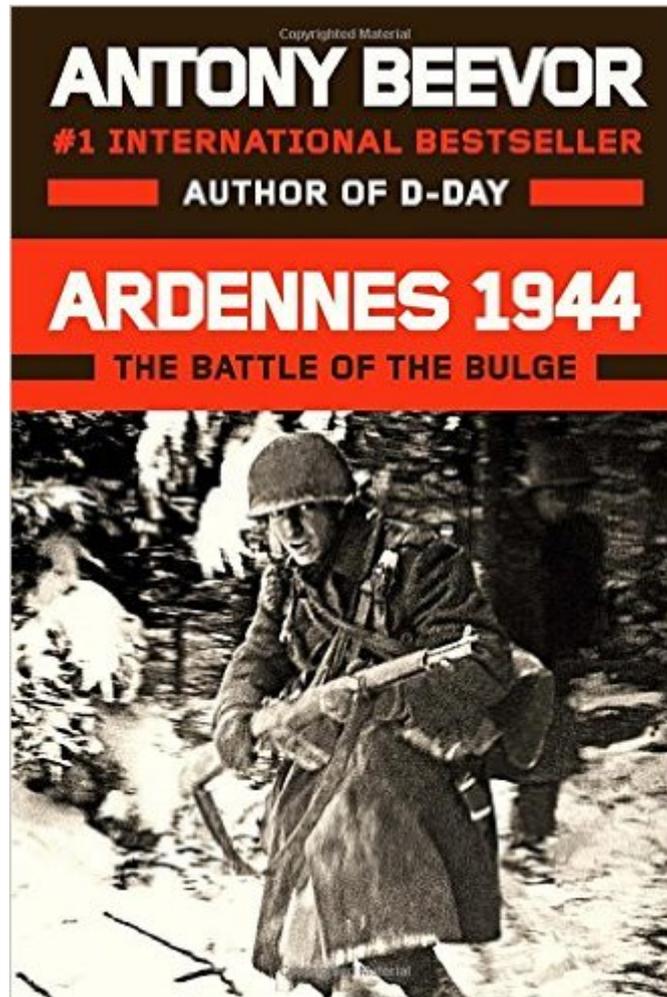


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Ardennes 1944: The Battle Of The Bulge



Synopsis

The prizewinning historian and bestselling author of D-Day and Stalingrad reconstructs the Battle of the Bulge in this riveting new account. On December 16, 1944, Hitler launched his "last gamble" in the snow-covered forests and gorges of the Ardennes in Belgium, believing he could split the Allies by driving all the way to Antwerp and forcing the Canadians and the British out of the war. Although his generals were doubtful of success, younger officers and NCOs were desperate to believe that their homes and families could be saved from the vengeful Red Army approaching from the east. Many were exultant at the prospect of striking back. The allies, taken by surprise, found themselves fighting two panzer armies. Belgian civilians abandoned their homes, justifiably afraid of German revenge. Panic spread even to Paris. While some American soldiers, overwhelmed by the German onslaught, fled or surrendered, others held on heroically, creating breakwaters which slowed the German advance. The harsh winter conditions and the savagery of the battle became comparable to the Eastern Front. In fact the Ardennes became the Western Front's counterpart to Stalingrad. There was terrible ferocity on both sides, driven by desperation and revenge, in which the normal rules of combat were breached. The Ardennes "involving more than a million men" would prove to be the battle which finally broke the back of the Wehrmacht. In this deeply researched work, with striking insights into the major players on both sides, Antony Beevor gives us the definitive account of the Ardennes offensive which was to become the greatest battle of World War II.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been a fan of Antony Beevor since reading his book on Stalingrad some 20 years ago. I've always felt that Beevor has a knack of being able to take the black and white of historical events and splash it with the color of personal accounts. This manner of telling a story not only brings history to life; it makes the history hard to forget. While I do not feel that ARDENNES 1944 is on par with his book on Stalingrad (or the Battle for Berlin, for that matter), Beevor still manages to deliver an entertaining and engrossing read on a well-known, but often misunderstood/misinterpreted event in World War II: the Battle of the Bulge. Unfortunately, Hollywood has a knack of (mis)educating people on historical events. Its depiction of Hitler's Ardennes offensive (the Battle of the Bulge) has been presented from a general perspective (1949's "Battleground"), a narrow perspective (HBO's excellent "Band of Brothers") or ineptly (the 1965 movie "Battle of the Bulge"). The problem is that the battle is far too intricate to accurately summarize in a 2 hour movie (or mini-series) - so much of the story is left untold and unfortunately, misunderstood. ARDENNES 1944 manages to convey the complete story of the battle in a succinct and colorful manner that reads like watching a movie. Beevor does a good job prepping readers by detailing several critical events that contributed to the course of the battle to come, like the wasteful battle of attrition in the Hurtgen Forest, the onset of winter, logistics and Allied intelligence failures. This combination of events contributed greatly to the initial success of the German attack and the rather inept Allied reaction to the attack. After Beevor "sets the table", he delves into the German attack on Dec.

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