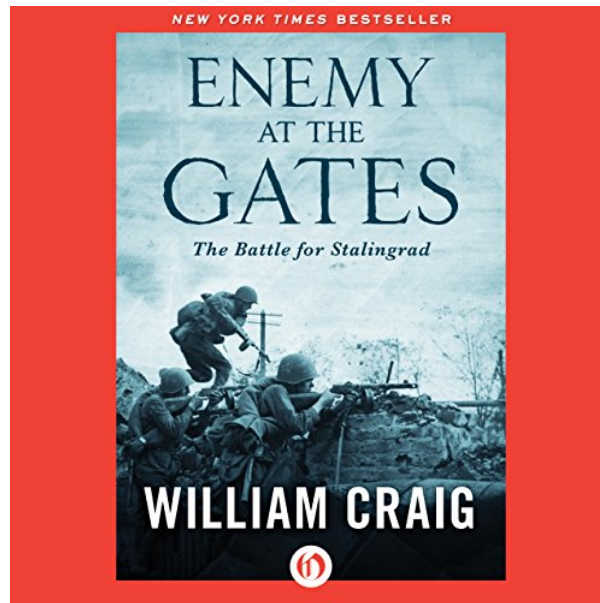
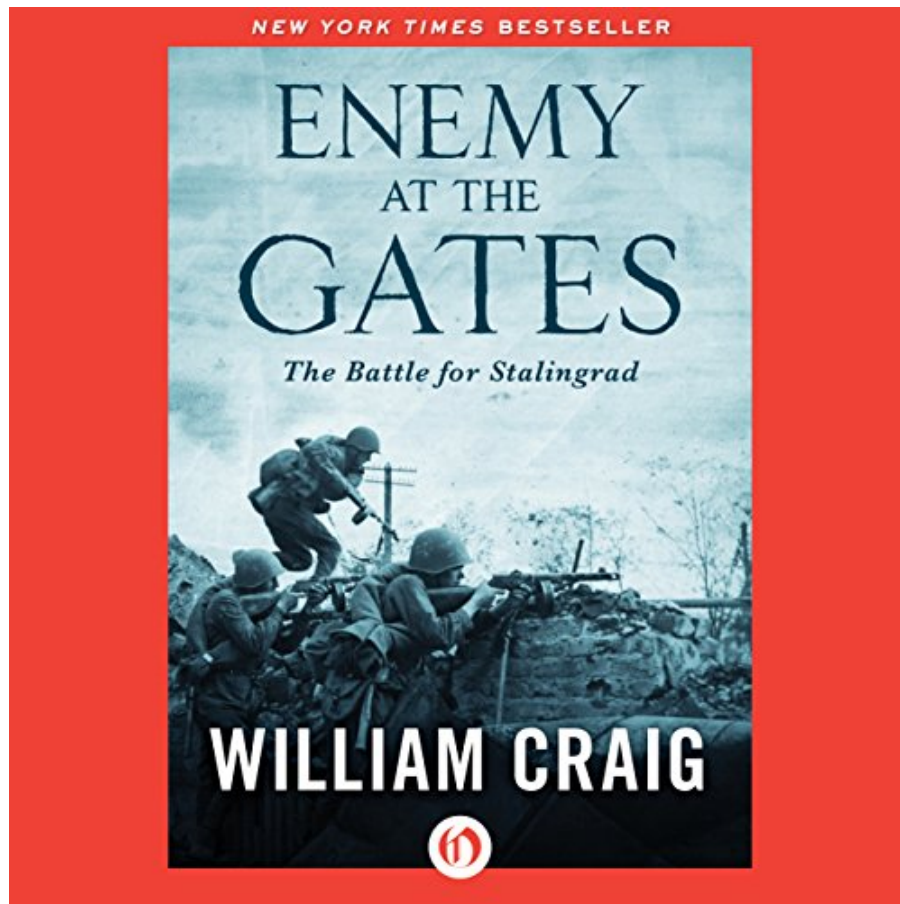


ENEMY AT THE GATES: THE BATTLE FOR STALINGRAD BY WILLIAM CRAIG



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ENEMY AT THE GATES: THE BATTLE FOR STALINGRAD

BY WILLIAM CRAIG PDF

A classic work of World War II history that brings to vivid, dramatic life one of the bloodiest battles ever fought - and the beginning of the end for the Third Reich.

On August 5, 1942, giant pillars of dust rose over the Russian steppe, marking the advance of the 6th Army, an elite German combat unit dispatched by Hitler to capture the industrial city of Stalingrad and press on to the oil fields of Azerbaijan. The Germans were supremely confident; in three years, they had not suffered a single defeat. The Luftwaffe had already bombed the city into ruins. German soldiers hoped to complete their mission and be home in time for Christmas.

The siege of Stalingrad lasted five months, one week, and three days. Nearly two million men and women died, and the 6th Army was completely destroyed. Considered by many historians to be the turning point of World War II in Europe, the Soviet Army's victory foreshadowed Hitler's downfall and the rise of a communist superpower.

Best-selling author William Craig spent five years researching this epic clash of military titans, traveling to three continents in order to review documents and interview hundreds of survivors. *Enemy at the Gates* is the enthralling result: the definitive account of one of the most important battles in world history. The book was the inspiration for the 2001 film of the same name, starring Joseph Fiennes and Jude Law.

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- Published on: 2016-01-05
- Released on: 2016-01-05
- Format: Unabridged
- Original language: English
- Running time: 807 minutes

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225 of 243 people found the following review helpful.

An interesting book, despite...

By Igor Biryukov

This is a book to read if you want to get a sense of the scope, intensity and human drama of the incredible battle between German and Russian armies on the banks of Volga. It was one of the most important battles of the WWII (if not the most important). It demonstrated the incredible heroism of both the Germans and the Russians. It also showed that Hitler made a mistake of underestimating ability of Stalin to regain control and learn from mistakes of disastrous summer of 1941 and determination of Russians to fight for each building in Stalingrad.

Written by the American author, the book for the most part describes events from the German point of view. I am Russian and admittedly it is not easy to stay totally objective about an account with slight pro-Axis

slant, but I am interested in Stalingrad battle and have read some other books on the subject. I also been to Stalingrad (now city of Volgograd) myself, and my main criticism is this: Mr. Craig, despite the fact that he spent five years researching for this book, unfortunately didn't quite familiarize himself with some aspects of Russian life and culture. I don't know, may be he didn't have an opportunity...But that would have made his book more balanced and more readable for the Russian audience.

For example, "Kazakhs" on page 321 aren't "Kazakhs" but Cossacks. There were no "Kazakhs" living on river Don, only Cossacks. Kazakhs live in Kazakhstan. These are two different peoples. "Kaytusha" throughout the text of the book is misspelled; it is really "Katjusha" - a Russian rocket launcher. I was surprised that it was misspelled, since it was not only famous Russian weapon of war, but also a woman's name, derivative of Katja (Russian for Katie). It would be equivalent for a Russian author to call German tank "Mark" as "Mrak".

Another example - on page 283 Mr. Craig assumes that December 24th was a Christmas Eve for both Germans and Russians. Close, but no cigar...The Christmas in Russia is celebrated due to Christian Orthodox tradition on January 7th, hence the Christmas Eve is January 6th. But during Communist times it was prohibited anyway.

Perhaps as a result of the author's lack of firm grasp of Russia's cultural context, the Russians in a book depicted a little bit like caricatures (despite the author's effort to do otherwise). Germans are more believable, better developed and likeable. To summarize, despite the fact that I thought the book was good, I have encountered many errors about the Russians that it made the book less enjoyable to read and sometimes even a little annoying. Otherwise the book is well written. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in history of WWII, military history, and German or Russian history.

68 of 71 people found the following review helpful.

One of the more readable accounts of the great battle

By A Customer

As a by-product of the Cold War, the subject of the Second World War as fought in Russia has been largely ignored, but the Battle of Stalingrad was so decisive, and so horrendous, that even general histories of the war cannot ignore it. The battle was fought out from August, 1942, until the surrender of the German 6th Army on January 31, 1943. Much of the fighting took place in the ruins of the city, which came to be known as, "Verdun on the Volga," among the German troops, and as, "the mass grave of the Wehrmacht," to the Soviet press. Today, the city of Stalingrad (subsequently re-named Volgograd after Stalin's official reduction in status in the Soviet pantheon), is rightly a shrine to Russian sacrifice, heroism and tenacity as well as a memorial to the thousands of soldiers and civilians who died there.

William Craig's account of the battle is one of the better, more readable histories of the epic of Stalingrad. Craig masterfully weaves eyewitness accounts to put a human face on a campaign and battle of such immense scope and horror that many other writers have failed to adequately compass the subject. This book treats the decisive battle of the Second World War in Europe with the dispassion necessary to form a solid appraisal of where the errors were made by the rival commanders. In this sense, Craig avoids the pat answer of blaming Adolf Hitler entirely for the catastrophic loss of the 6th Army after it was encircled but could still break out. Craig is one of the few authors who deals candidly and fairly with the plight of the Rumanian and Italian armies shattered in the encirclement battle.

Enemy at the Gates personalizes the battle with a montage of memories from the participants. Craig's effort is compelling, readable and very effective. Read in conjunction with such works as, Last Letters from Stalingrad, and Heinz Schroter's, Stalingrad, Craig's work fills out the gap in the historical lexicon of the Second World War.

72 of 77 people found the following review helpful.

The movie should have been based on this book!

By Chapulina R

"Enemy at the Gates" is out of print, but it shouldn't be a problem to locate a copy at a library. It is worth the

trouble! This was the first book to put a human face on the Battle of Stalingrad. Because the account was compiled from interviews and memoirs of participants, the book often reads like an exciting novel. In this respect, it closely resembles Andrew Tully's or Cornelius Ryan's accounts of the Battle of Berlin. When I learned of the upcoming film "Enemy at the Gates", I was ecstatic to think that this excellent book would at long last come to the big screen! Alas, only the title is taken from "Enemy at the Gates" -- the screenplay is based on David Robbins' novel "War of the Rats". The movie's focus will be on the historically dubious sniper battle and the hysterically bogus romantic interest. What a pity. For the real flavor of Stalingrad, get the real "Enemy at the Gates" and Antony Beevor's "Stalingrad: The Fateful Siege".

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