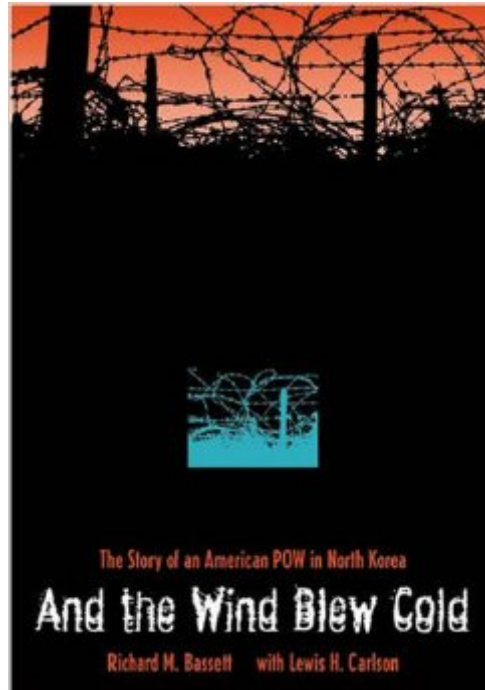


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And The Wind Blew Cold: The Story Of An American Pow In North Korea



Synopsis

When Richard Bassett returned from Korea on convalescent leave in 1953, he set down his experiences in training, combat, and captivity. More than 20 years later, hospitalized for acute Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, he once again faced his personal demons. This work expands the memoir to include his post-war struggles with the US government and his own wounded psyche. He describes the shock of capture and ensuing long march to Pyokdong, North Korea, Camp 5 on the Yellow River, where many prisoners died of untreated wounds, disease, hunger, paralyzing cold, and brutal mistreatment in the bitter winter of 1950-51. He recounts Chinese attempts to mentally break down prisoners in order to exploit them for propaganda. He then takes the reader through typical days in a prisoner's life, discussing food, clothing, shelter, and work; the struggle against unrelenting boredom; religious, social, and recreational diversions; and even those moments of terror when all seemed lost. It refutes Cold War-era propaganda that often unfairly characterized POWs as brainwashed victims or even traitors who lacked the grit that Americans expected of their brave sons.

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book to learn how the POWs were treated and what they did to them. I never knew my biological Dad who I do have most of his medals who did fight in Korea. He had lost some of them and I know he wanted me to have them. I have heard so many stories what the abuse the solders were subjected to. I can relate with them as I have been told in the book by just releasing them and sending them home. It is so sad we did not know what Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome is or how it

affects people. I now understand why he never came around and was a wonderer-hobo. Oh how I really enjoyed the book for it was a good learning lesson. I liked the way the author goes into detail painting the picture and puts you in the middle of it without going overboard. It is well written and enjoyed reading.....Lets not forget " The Forgotten War"

This was a good book based on a true story of a man who finds himself fighting in one of the most horrific wars of our time. He is captured by the Chinese and becomes a POW for over 2 years. This writing gives a good description of what a POW to the North Korean and Chinese was like for our men. He includes information on his last great battle during that War; his capture, the death march, the 1/2 way camp in Suan called The Mining Camp, and his long imprisonment as a POW. As this author points out, most of our troops were good men doing the best they could to survive and abide the oaths they had taken as a members of our military. Read this and look for others books like it based on this topic. Remember that each soldiers story is unique in his own. But again, who should know this story better than those who were the fighting soldiers and captured POWs?

It is refreshing to read a first person account of his experiences as a POW which is characterised by "telling it as it was". It is also noteworthy that there was an absence of bitterness towards his captors. His Christian faith was also significant in the book and it came through as something that sustained him throughout his captivity. His story also tends to strengthen the perception that veterans from the Korean war (as with the Vietnam War) were not treated as well as they should have been by the US Government. There was an initial warm welcome of the returning POWs but a less than satisfactory acknowledgement by the Government of the effects of their internment.

This is a must read if you want to understand the POW experience in the Korean War. Bassett gives a very detailed account of the conditions at Camp 5, a major camp holding thousands of prisoners. He describes the day to day life-food, housing, clothing, medical care, and more. He also explains a part of the Korean POW experience most people know nothing about. The Chinese put extreme pressure on the prisoners to re-think their entire outlook on life. The POWs were to learn "the glories of communism" whether they wanted to or not. Bassett explains these efforts to re-educate the POWs and how the POWs fought back. He also discusses how the efforts by the POWs to resist the Chinese attempts to change their thinking led to senseless investigations of many returned POWs by the FBI. While giving a detailed and thorough explanation of his experiences Bassett points out he was captured long after the majority of POW deaths occurred. He explains how conditions at

Camp 5 in the year prior to his capture led to the death of half of the prisoners held there. And the Wind Blew Cold will help you understand the horrific experience of our POWs in Korea. By trying to understand what they endured we honor those who sacrificed so much.

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