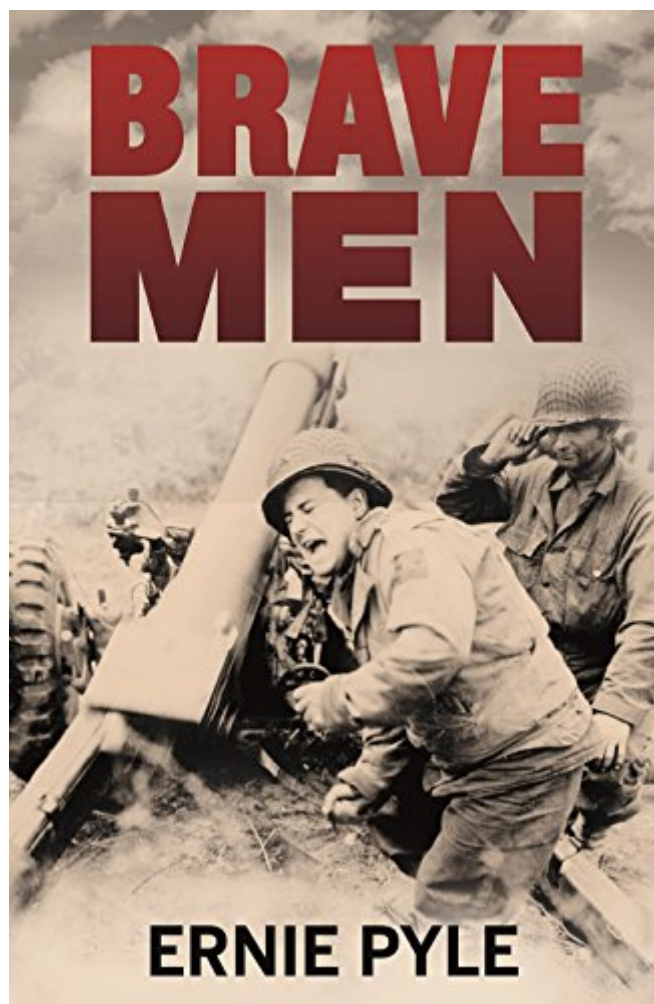


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Brave Men



Synopsis

Ernie Pyle was a Pulitzer Prize-winning American journalist. This is his first hand account of life on the European front-line during World War II. Written with touching sympathy and humanism, *Brave Men* offers a poignant description of the everyday experiences of American foot soldiers; their courage, humanism and unshakeable camaraderie. A must-read war memoir.

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Customer Reviews

A friend, knowing my interest in World War II history, bought an original "Brave Men" 1944 copyright Henry Holt & Co edition at a used bookstore for [\$\$\$]. My great luck to have such good friends and I get to read such a wonderful book. Any serious WWII history reader must read this book. Ernie Pyle's work is an American treasure. He wrote about the lives of the common soldier, sailor, airman. These are the "Brave Men". The guy that just does his job as best he can while trying to survive and get home in one piece. My father, a combat rifle platoon leader with the 9th division in France and Germany in 1944, once told me that he was no hero, and he wasn't brave, but he saw a

lot of guys that were. Funny how they all say that. Ernie's book is about guys like my dad and a million other anonymous guys like him that did the dirty work of war. They're my heroes.

Ernie Pyle was one of the most effective and well known battlefield correspondents of World War II. Pyle's on-the-spot reporting gave the American public a firsthand view of what war was like for their boys on the front lines he followed American service men into the trenches, battlefield combats, field hospitals, and war ravaged cities of Europe. What he witnessed he was able to vividly record and describe with clarity, sympathy, and grit to give his readership an immediate and accurate sense of the foot soldier's experience. *Brave Men* is a collection of Pyle's wartime newspaper columns detailing the 1943-44 fighting in Europe and endures as a fitting monument to both one correspondent's courage and journalistic expertise and the battlefield experiences of a generation of young American soldiers in the European theater. Tragically, when Pyle went to the South Pacific to continue his wartime reportage, a sniper's bullet took his life in 1945. *Brave Men* is an essential title for any personal, academic, or community library World War II collection.

Ernie Pyle was a man who loved his job. He takes us to the soldiers who were fighting for us, and lets us know what it was like through close calls, boredom, dreams and ambitions of those ordinary men thrust into war that he came in contact with. He brings the humor and the tears of war and tells stories that we can all relate to to help us understand what it was truly like. His love for the common soldier is apparent throughout the entire book. He was, without a doubt, the greatest war correspondent of all time. This book and *Here is Your War* are required reading for anyone even remotely interested in WWII, as well as for anyone who just wants a good story.

One of the first grown-up books I ever read was a tattered copy of Ernie Pyle's "Brave Men," derived from his articles written from Sicily to France, 1943-44. Pyle was a man's man of a journalist, and was loved by men and women of all ranks. People on the home front eagerly read his dispatches from fronts all over the world. Pyle wasn't interested in criticizing the government or military. He was man enough to realize that both make mistakes, but to harp on them was a disservice. His subject was the fighting man: low-ranking soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and officers who did the dirty work. Men who drove mule trains up the Italian mountains and flew dive bombers over France. Men who strung telephone wires across North Africa and stormed the shores of Pacific islands. Men who manned anti-aircraft guns on ships and led platoons through the French bocage. He reported on the war with his wonderful prose and gift for storytelling until a sniper's

bullet claimed him during the Okinawa campaign in 1945. Ike and his top brass, once they understood how Pyle operated and once Pyle gained their trust, let Pyle go wherever he wanted and talk to whomever he wanted. They knew Pyle would never agonize over German and Japanese civilian casualties in order to appear "objective" and "balanced." They knew Pyle would never be waiting on the beaches before the troops even landed. They knew if Pyle ever found out about a secret operation he would keep his mouth shut and not blab about it to the world. It's doubtful today's crop of media darlings will produce an Ernie Pyle. In the quest for ratings, advertising dollars and careers, most of today's mainstream media – especially the beltway crowd – is incredibly selfish, whining, arrogant, ignorant and, ultimately, unpatriotic. Pyle is proof positive that a journalist can tell it like it is and still love his country at the same time.

Brave Men is a message in a bottle from a world that no longer exists. The world of 1944 was at war and terrible things were happening on the battlefields of that world to perfectly average people. How they coped with it, overcame the ironic battlefield alternatives of horror and boredom, and marched on to victory is best recounted in the writings of Ernie Pyle. No one spans that range of experience with greater mastery than unassuming Pyle. There's no showing off here. He has one goal and one goal only: putting you right there with the American forces slogging through Italy and Normandy. His vivid dispatches preserves their fears and aspirations in a casual, offhand prose that charms you one minute and tears your heart out the next. No one loved the common soldier better nor observed his daily life with greater insight than Ernie Pyle. He recounts the whole of war, neglecting neither its horror nor its humor, neither the frontline nor the rear echelon. With deft care he selects the incidents that hit home, setting them against a background of individual soldiers going about their daily jobs. In doing so, Pyle conveys a sense of the scale of the great WWII military enterprise: from the lone soldiers huddling in foxholes to the great and complex machinery laboring behind the scenes to support them.

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