



## D DAY Through German Eyes 2

*Holger Eckhertz , Sprech Media (Translator)*

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The first book of 'D DAY – Through German Eyes' has fascinated readers around the world with its insight into the German experience of June 6th 1944. Now, Book 2 contains a completely different set of astonishing German testimonies from the same archive.

These newly translated eyewitness statements by German veterans show the defenders to be determined but psychologically insecure, often deluded in their thinking and all too human in their shock at the onslaught which they faced.

These unique interviews with German soldiers are a historical treasure trove of new insights, heart-stopping combat stories and glimpses of wartime psychology which will absorb anyone with an interest in WW2.

### D DAY Through German Eyes 2 Details

Date : Published July 23rd 2015 by DTZ History Publications

ISBN :

Author : Holger Eckhertz , Sprech Media (Translator)

Format : Kindle Edition 168 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, War, World War II, Military Fiction

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## **From Reader Review D DAY Through German Eyes 2 for online ebook**

### **Paul says**

Interviews with ex Nazis, about their experience during D day. Very interesting perspectives.

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### **Ira Therebel says**

The second book includes interviews that were considered not good enough to be published in the first. I can't really tell why. I found the second book more interesting because it had a greater variety of interviews. In this book German veterans interviewed also answer the questions I had after the second one regarding their idea that they were protecting Europe. We get to know more about their relationship with French civilians as well as about Russian soldiers fighting on their side.

Very interesting. It is true that their voices should also be heard. The history should not only be written by the winner. It is only understanding what happened on both sides that makes history complete. Would love to read more books of this kind.

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### **Charles Richard. First of his name. says**

#### **Truly a must-read**

As with the first book, the reader is presented with a diverse set of interview transcripts that have been produced many decades ago when the memories of D-Day were still fresh to German servicemen. The accounts provided in this book will move the reader and shock them with strands of history that have seldom been examined. History is so often delivered through the eyes of the victor and moulded by a subconscious bias, where undesirable facts are filtered away until the perspective drifts to a shallow point. This book gives the reader profoundly enhanced insight into the entirely human thoughts & feelings of those on the receiving end of the Allied invasion of France.

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### **Anil Swarup says**

What a remarkable book on D Day. Very rarely do you get to know the other side of the story, specially from the losing side. History, in general, is written by those that win the war. This is the first hand account of some of those that were on the losing side.

"The British are the most calculating and cynical people on earth" is the view of one of the combatants from the other side. They are also critical of their own leaders as well : "Ribbenthrop, that damned foreign minister of ours, the one who got us into the war" and that " Goering himself dies of heroin overdose".

One may disagree with what gets stated but these indeed are different points of view on a variety of aspects of the war that shook the world. There is a candid admission of the mistakes committed : "Everything I believed during the war was a mistake". There was also that mistaken belief that "Western allies were in the pay of the Bolsheviks".

## Noah Goats says

The second volume of D Day Through German Eyes is every bit as good as the first. The troops manning the Atlantic wall were not, for the most part, the elites of the German army. They were a rag tag bunch who just wanted to survive. And what they suffered was absolutely hellish: naval bombardment, white phosphorus rockets, relentless attacks by hardened allied troops. With the assistance of Eckhertz, who was a skilled interviewer, they tell their harrowing stories very well.

In addition to the stories of the action, the book provides an interesting glimpse into the mindset of these men, both at the time of D Day and ten years later when these interviews were conducted. Some have clearly not reconciled themselves to the end of the war and complain about allied "atrocities" like the bombing of the French navy by the British (which is ridiculous, the French gave the Brits no choice) while ignoring the holocaust. One German soldier talks about watching a film about the holocaust while he was interned in a POW camp in the US, and how crushing that experience was for him and the other POWS, to realize they had been fighting for a regime that committed such horrors.

And the final interviewee has an insanely weird mad scientist story to tell about an explosive gas wonder weapon he was in charge of that he believes would have changed the course of the war if he had been able to use it (frankly, he sounds like a nut). He inadvertently admits that the weapon was tested on Russian prisoners, killing them.

Fascinating reading.

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## Paige Ellen Stone says

I wrote about my attraction to this fascinating book in my review of the first volume. At the age of 12 or so I was fascinated, even obsessed with how this war had happened, especially since it effected my father so profoundly.

I became fascinated with WWII and how it happened and how did this one diminutive man almost achieve world domination? I read so many books on WWII but never had the chance to read things from the German side. This book is the 2nd of two volumes of interviews with soldiers who were on the German front during D Day. The actual interviewer was the father of the man who edited these books.

He did an excellent job. If you are a student of history, this is a must. They say the history books are written by the victors, but this book and its companion volume present a compelling view of what it was like to suddenly see this enormous armada coming onto the beach, to hear of the terror that offshore shelling by Allied battleships and cruisers unleashed for hours before and during the assault. Many of the interviewees are quite honest in how frightened and confused they were. In volume one, some even speak of what happened when they were captured and taken as prisoners. It turns out that many were sent to England and/or the United States, were treated very well, and some even stayed! In volume 2, the few who spoke of being captured were not captured on D Day, but later in the war and say they were not treated very well. I have no reason to doubt them.

No bones about it, as with the 1st volume this is not a book for the squeamish. There are very graphic descriptions of the damage done to humans and even animals as a result of the assault. There is also, from some, a begrudging admiration for the creativity and tenacity of the Allied forces. The interviews were conducted in 1954, and at that time, a small few of those interviewed still held that "only if" certain things had happened they would have repulsed the assault. I read this book and its companion volume very quickly.

It is well organized and is not edited down to make it a "nice" read. This book is about the horror of combat, the confusion of war and the bravery of men on both sides. The reader can almost hear the explosions, smell the cordite and sweat in the bunkers. Highest recommendation, but not for the squeamish.

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### **Paul Carr says**

Like its predecessor, this e-book has eye-opening insight into the German mindset and strategy around D-Day. Through first-person interviews, several German soldiers reveal the motivational stories/propaganda their leaders fed them, their thoughts about Allied aggression on a military and personal level, and much more. The most amazing interview is last, as an officer explains that the Germans were minutes away from unleashing a devastating weapon that may have turned the tide of the European theater. It's a jaw-dropping story that is a superb finale to a book that's a must-read for WWII buffs.

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### **Jon Koebrick says**

Very interesting first person German narratives on their experiences during D-Day and surrounding times. A must read for WWII history buffs and a great companion read to *The Good War* by Studs Terkel. Very nearly a 5 star book.

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### **Nicole says**

I've been looking for a book that gave insights into the German mindset of the war for some time and stumbled across this one. The interviews were conducted in the 1950s by the author's grandfather. He has translated and assembled them but offers no analysis - letting interviewer and subject speak for themselves. There are some interesting themes esp that they considered this a fight for a united Europe against the forced of communism. The comments about relations with the French were interesting as well and varied from they were collaborators to they were all in the resistance. Definitely worth a read. I am going to read the first one now.

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### **Bev Walking says**

I borrowed this book using Kindle Unlimited and had not read the previous book in the series. Holger Eckhertz, the editor of the book came across transcripts of interviews that his father had carried out with German veterans who had been in service in Normandy or surroundings at the time of D-Day. The interviews had been held ten years after the fact, and his father had been a propaganda writer for the Germans during the war so had some knowledge of what was happening at the time. When his son found the transcripts he felt they were important as they gave another viewpoint to the allied landings than most readers typically are exposed to. He had them translated into English for publication.

The interviews in this volume (8 in total) were with veterans in different jobs varying from men in Panzers, Military Police, Infantry, Airborne troops and Luftwaffe pilots to name a few. I found them very interesting as I did not know much about the average German soldier or his thoughts and perspectives on the war. There were several themes that came out from the interviews - one of these was the understanding that these

German soldiers had that they were "protecting France" and helping maintain a United Europe. They also all seemed overwhelmed with the firepower of the Allies and the aggression that they showed towards the Germans. One of the men interviewed suggested that all Russians serving in the German army who were captured on D-Day were immediately handed over to the Russians who later had them shot. There are no footnotes that back this up or further research on the matter, but these were intended to be straight transcriptions of interviews and not to go beyond that.

I read one interview on Amazon that was extremely negative and accused the author of faking these interviews. I don't have the background knowledge to know if there was any truth to that (and the reviewer didn't support his comments) but I felt that I learned a lot from reading these interviews. I would recommend them to anyone who would like another viewpoint of what it was like to survive D-Day.

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## **David Eppenstein says**

This book is actually a continuation of the first book and deserves the same 4 star rating. The first book only used 5 interviews while this one uses 8 and I can see why these interviews were not used until after the success of the first book was demonstrated. Much of the same ground is covered in this book as was done in the first but the second book reveals matters not generally known and which may have proven embarrassing to people, peoples, and nations. One thing some of these German veterans repeat is that popular information about D-Day is incomplete and that there is another story to be told. The veterans in these interviews used this opportunity to tell at least part of that other story. While the ordeal of Allied troops on D-Day is well known and documented I couldn't help but sympathize with some of these soldiers that were just trying to do the job their government demanded of them after filling their minds with propaganda that they were not equipped to question.

To begin with it was clearly revealed that duty on the Atlantic Wall was regarded as a cushy assignment in the German Army and certainly preferable to the Eastern Front. There was no combat, living conditions were ideal, and food was both plentiful and delightful. Consequently, Germany sent their least able-bodied troops to man the beach defenses. These troops were part of the Static Infantry and were composed of burned-out vets from the Eastern Front, disabled and unfit for regular duty people, and surprisingly a large contingent of Russians that switched sides after being captured in the East. This Russian contingent is mentioned several times and only speculation is offered as to their fate after they were captured and returned to Russia. The general opinion was that the Allies returned them to the Russian military who then took them home to be executed. These were the types of soldiers that the Allies faced on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day. While their weapons were devastating their general ability and morale was questionable. The German Army clearly regarded them as expendable and knew that they would be overrun when an invasion came. Their job was simply to slow down the invasion, warn of the invasion's commencement, and give the regular Mobile Forces time to plan and execute the counterattack. The interviews used in both of these books is primarily with these Static Infantry expendables and what they endured on June 6, 1944 and it was just as horrific as what was endured by the soldiers storming the beaches and maybe worse.

The scale of the invasion was clearly unanticipated as was its location. The German Army assumed that for an invasion to be successful the Allies needed to capture a port city to insure the necessary chain of supply an invading force would require. For this reason the beaches of Normandy were never regarded as a likely invasion point and much of the defenses there were incomplete and lacking planned for guns or guns at all. Most of the major defenses were distributed to the primary invasion sites around the Channel port cities like Calais. The troops at Normandy were therefore lacking in expected support and reinforcements but there is even a question if such support was ever intended since the beach forces were only needed to delay the invasion and not to stop it. Stopping the invasion was going to be the task of the Mobile Army in a counter

offensive which ultimately faltered and failed because of the massive scale of the invasion and the resources devoted to it. Clearly these German soldiers are correct in stating there is another story or at least another side to the story of D-Day.

Now why these particular interviews were initially omitted in the first book is interesting because the reasons add another facet to the story of that day and, indeed, to that war. Some of these soldiers reveal how cooperative the French civilians were with the German forces. The French had no problem selling the Germans food, wine, etc and then socializing with them. The French were also helpful with giving the Germans information. The German soldier was under the misunderstanding that they were in France to protect it and the notion of Unified Europe from the corrupt forces of England and the U.S. who were being manipulated by Stalin. Under this belief the average German soldier viewed the cooperating Frenchman as a believer in this concept of a Unified Europe and didn't question the motivations of these French. Of course as an occupied people that didn't know when or if liberation would come it can be understood why these civilians would do what was necessary to survive the war. Nevertheless, such revelations could have proven rather shameful to a French reader of the book so these interviews were omitted. It is also revealed in these talks, however, that some of these old soldiers still harbored traces of National Socialism and national superiority to their conquered populations. None of these soldiers ever questions Germany's assumption of the position of Guardian of "Unified Europe" or the fact that neither France nor any other conquered nation asked Germany for this protection. These were enlisted personnel and junior officers and not upper echelon members of the German Army or government so their opinions and beliefs lack a depth of understanding and experience. These opinions, however, could certainly have hinted at an undercurrent of beliefs held by the German people at the time of the interviews and thus not helpful to Germany's war recovery. The reasons for their omission is understandable but reading them is certainly interesting and enlightening and does add a different perspective to a pivotal event of Western history.

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## **Bou says**

*The second book, with experiences with some German soldiers during the D-day landings*

Compared with the first part, this book clearly contains some interviews that were not deemed to be good enough for the first part. There are interviews with soldiers that were on the beaches itself, but also some other soldiers, such as the military police (*Feldgendarmarie*) and pilots. The book ends with a bizarre interview with a member of an experimental unit, that claims that he was prevented of blowing up a complete Allied armoured division, assembled as preparation for operation Cobra, with an experimental weapon called "Taifun B" ("Typhoon B").

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## **John Luzier says**

**Fascinating read about D day.**

So many things in this that I would never have expected: the fact that at the time of dday most ordinary German troops thought of themselves as the protectors of France, that the scale and ingenuity of the Allied invasion (time and time again there is mention of how the Germans couldn't conceive of landing so many tanks on the beaches directly), and the observation that the English and German troops would attempt to first repair something that broke during the war whereas the Americans would simply get a new one. Great and quick read if you're interested in WWII history.

## **Brenda says**

### **Fascinating!**

Another great book that is a collection of interviews of German soldiers who fought in France in D-Day. The absolute frankness and raw honesty of how these men perceived their role in the war, Germany's objectives, and the actions that took place is enlightening, at times shocking, and even repugnant at times.

This is a book that will linger in my thoughts, and will deserve a re-read.

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## **Jim says**

This second volume of recently discovered interviews with German soldiers who participated in the battle of Normandy on June 6, 1944, is as illuminating and fascinating as the first volume. It contains verbatim interviews with 8 German fighting men (one of them a Luftwaffe pilot) about their experiences on D-Day as the Allied forces invaded France. As with the first volume, some surprises are found. German propaganda had done a good job of inculcating in its Wehrmacht troops (though probably not in the Waffen SS) the fantasy that Germany was not the aggressor but the defender of France and a united Europe, and that the Allies, comprising American and British banking interests and Russian Bolsheviks, were in an aggressive war to overthrow the democracies of Europe. That so many soldiers on the German side seemed to believe this (during the war; most of the men interviewed revealed that they now understood the truth about their country's lies and atrocities) is remarkable. Also surprising are the reports from these soldiers that the French populace was primarily allied with the Germans in many ways, often (in the weeks following the invasion) spying on Allied positions and reporting back to German forces. Perhaps most surprising, though, are reports of a remarkable super-weapon known as Taifun 2 (Typhoon 2) which supposedly was capable of massive (though definitively less than atomic) destruction, and the fact that while German prisoners of war were shipped to England and the U.S. and treated well, Russian defectors who joined the German forces were, when captured, apparently turned over to the Russians for mass execution. Each man interviewed speaks straightforwardly about the terrors of combat, the shock at the overwhelming force and resources of the Allies, and each reveals an aspect of World War II history that has been known by comparatively few students of history in the Allied nations. This, like its predecessor, is a genuinely remarkable book.

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