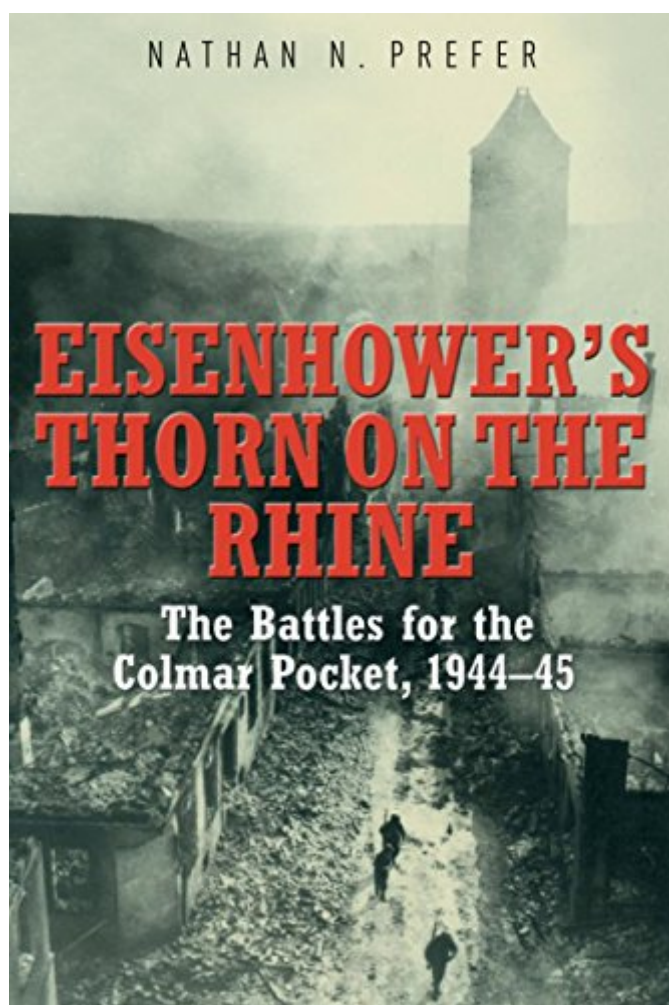


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Eisenhower's Thorn On The Rhine: The Battles For The Colmar Pocket, 1944-45



Synopsis

By the fall of 1944 the Western Allies appeared to be having it all their own way. The summer's Normandy invasion had finally succeeded and the Germans had been driven out of northern France and most of the Low Countries. In September the invasion of France's southern coast had met less opposition and Allied divisions had begun lining up along the Rhine. But while the Americans were about to meet a nasty surprise in the Ardennes, the Germans never did let go of the province of Alsace, and in a hard pocket around the city of Colmar continued to resist. On New Year's Eve they launched a counteroffensive, Operation Northwind, that nearly put Allied forces back on their heels. While the Allies were eventually able to take care of their Ardennes problem the Colmar one still remained. On January 12, 1945, Eisenhower could only tell George Marshall, "It is a very bad thorn in our side today." This is the story of the Sixth Army Group (7th US & 1st French Armies) which fought on the southern flank of the SHAEF front. The French had multiple problems during this campaign so that increasing number of US divisions needed to take part. In the process the 3rd and 28th Infantry Divisions, and 10th and 14th Armored, among others were able to cover themselves with heroism, though hardly less than the threadbare German 19th Army, which bravely resisted against enormous odds until finally the west bank of the Rhine was cleared. Amidst a horrific winter and rough terrain, interspersed by demolished towns, both sides traded blows in a ferocious campaign often neglected in histories of the war. This book informs us fully of the tremendous and costly struggle waged on that often-neglected sector of the front.

Book Information

File Size: 17429 KB

Print Length: 360 pages

Publisher: Casemate (October 19, 2015)

Publication Date: July 24, 2017

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B019EJVJRU

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #85,759 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #40

inÃ Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Europe > France #58 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > France #60 inÃ Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Military & Wars > Branches > Army

Customer Reviews

Excellent read on this book that covers a little known battle in World War II. Like the structure of the book shows both side of the battle and the make up of each formation in the battle. Book is easy to read and follow along with. Some pictures and maps make the book a plus for the reader. Interesting portion of the book is the amount of time and material consumed in this battle.

I knew little to nothing about this particular campaign in the winter of 1944-45. Now I do. The author did a great job describing the scope of the campaign against the Colmar Pocket. The reader gets the point of view of the senior commanders and the common soldier. My only criticism is the lack of sufficient maps that would help the reader get a better picture of the actions described in the text. I recommend it.

Excellent, but it would have been even better with a few more maps. The author throughout provides the amazing stories of many Medal of Honor winners, including Audie Murphy. My Dad served as a Forward Observer in the 6th Army Group, 7th Army, VI Corps, 103rd Division, 409th Infantry Regiment, 382nd Field Artillery Battalion, so I appreciate the veritas that books such as this one provides.

Very detailed, thorough. Interesting, more of a scholarly read that made the flow a little bumpy. The stories of Congressional Medal of Honor recipients were told excellently. High marks for this book. A great but little known story of French and American forces in World War II.

Well researched with so many details that it is slow paced and hard to follow.

Great writing -- fills some gaps in my WW II library...

Certainly covers the Colmar gap war. A bit too much on the listing of active units on an almost day-by-day basis.

A good book about an interesting, under-reported battle zone. Glad I read it.

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