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M Evan Brooks


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military history's most **wanted**



by m. evan brooks

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#665070 in Books M Evan Brooks 2002-05-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.08 x 1.06 x 5.181, .80
#File Name: 157488509X288 pagesMilitary History s Most Wanted The Top 10 Book of Improbable
Victories Unlikely Heroes and Other Martial Oddities | File size: 19.Mb

M Evan Brooks : Military History's Most Wanted: The Top 10 Book of Improbable Victories, Unlikely Heroes, and Other Martial Oddities before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all

praised *Military History's Most Wanted: The Top 10 Book of Improbable Victories, Unlikely Heroes, and Other Martial Oddities*:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Reasonably entertaining/interesting to newcomers to military history.....By Trollcifer I'm not sure if it's a simple lack of objectivity or the author's desire to appeal (predominantly) to American readers that inspired him to include several undeserving (of top 10 standing) officers in the earlier categories. Dupuy and Dupuy would have a few words to say about many of the selections. The second half of the book is mainly uninteresting, non-relevant trivia. The book would have benefited from longer, more in-depth entries in the interesting earlier sections and simply cut the pulp of the second half out completely. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Lots of list of short items By James B. Pogue There are lots of lists so each item is quite short. Not enough detail to really get into. Think of as bathroom reading. 30 of 31 people found the following review helpful. Informative, Challenging, and Witty History By Karl Normally I find top ten military lists like those on MILHST-L fun to read, but not very informative. This book is superb because it combines insightful commentary and fun lists. What Brooks has done is assemble 70+ top ten lists, but each entry has one or more paragraphs of explanation. And it is clear that he has thought very carefully and researched his choices on his lists. More specifically, why is this such a good book? First, the author is well-read and informed. You may not agree with his opinions, I know I have more than a few disagreements, but they are based on a solid understanding of military history and the literature. (BTW, the author is a decorated veteran of the Gulf War, so he has first-hand knowledge of war.) Second, he has created great categories, not just the obvious ones, like the Great Captains of History, Overrated Commanders, Underrated Commanders, and Decisive Battles. Here are some of the 70+ ones that I found quite fascinating: Military Myths, Chaplains, Murder (and Death) Most Foul, Retrograde Operations, Mutinies, Entertainers, Cavalry Charges, POW Camps, Courts-Martial, Military Web Sites, Lopsided Victories (more than 30,000 casualties), Lopsided Victories (less than 30,000 casualties), and Last Stands. I love his four War Movie categories: Operational, Nonoperational, Testosterone, and Estrogen. Also, his suggestions on the ten books with which to begin building a military library are quite sound, especially when combined with his four other military book categories. Finally, Brooks has a great category that will challenge the serious historian -- he canvasses several thousand years of history to create the greatest Command Staff in History. Third, Brooks has a good sense of wit. The book is fun to read! Again, the seriousness of the book is not compromised by his witty and at times, sarcastic, comments, rather it is enhanced. This book does challenge the serious historian to think about his own opinions. Fourth, the book is a useful reference. He has some top ten lists that are straight reference, e.g., air aces, sub aces, Marshal-Generals of France. And for each person in the book, he has their dates of birth and death (when known). There is a twelve-page bibliography and an index. Informative and fun, and a great way to get a conversation amongst historians going -- what more can you ask for in a book?

In 1944 U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Leslie J. McNair was accidentally killed by USAAF bombers that dropped their bombs short of the target, thus becoming the highest-ranking American casualty of World War II. Union Gen. Daniel Sickles was the first person to be successfully acquitted of murder by pleading temporary insanity after he shot and killed the son of Star-Spangled Banner composer Francis Scott Key in cold blood. Ten years before Custer's infamous last stand, U.S. cavalry Capt. William J. Fetterman disobeyed orders and led his eighty-man detachment in pursuit of a band of Sioux Indians. Neither he nor his men returned. In the United States, Benedict Arnold's name is synonymous with treason, but in Russia Andrei Vlasov holds that dubious distinction. After being captured by the Germans during World War II, he led an army of former Soviet POWs against the Red Army. Famous men of the arts and letters, such as Maurice Chevalier and Jean-Paul Sartre, openly collaborated with the Axis during World War II yet managed to escape punishment after the war. Entertainer Martha Raye was so beloved by the troops that she earned an honorary commission as Colonel Maggie and was allowed to be buried in Fort Bragg's military cemetery. James Bond creator Ian Fleming graduated from Sandhurst and was a naval intelligence officer in World War II. During the Thirty Years War, Count Tilly lost control of his troops after capturing Magdeburg. After three days of looting, they had killed 25,000 of the city's 30,000 inhabitants. *Military History's Most Wanted* chronicles 700 of the most outlandish commanders, battles, and accomplishments in military history. Its seventy lists include warfare's top ten winners, losers, traitors, entertainers, war novels, and movies. Military historians, buffs, and enthusiasts will enjoy this often irreverent and controversial look at the profession of arms.

From Publishers Weekly British Revolutionary War general William Howe was so obviously distracted from the campaign by the charms of his mistress that American Tories wrote a song about it. More gravely, as the Red Army invaded and triumphed over Finland in WWII, Finland ended up losing 25,000 soldiers; the Russians lost 250,000. These and other facts are showcased in *Military History's Most Wanted: The Top Ten Book of Improbable Victories, Unlikely Heroes, and Other Martial Oddities*. Written by M. Evan Brooks, who served in the U.S. Army and National Guard for more than 30 years, the book gathers 10 brief, encyclopedia-style entries apiece on such topics as

Mercenaries, Literary Soldiers, Amphibious Operations and Decisive Battles. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. About the Author M. Evan Brooks is an avid wargamer who recently retired with more than thirty years of service in the U.S. Army and National Guard. He is a contributor to numerous war-game and professional military publications. He lives in the Washington, D.C., area.