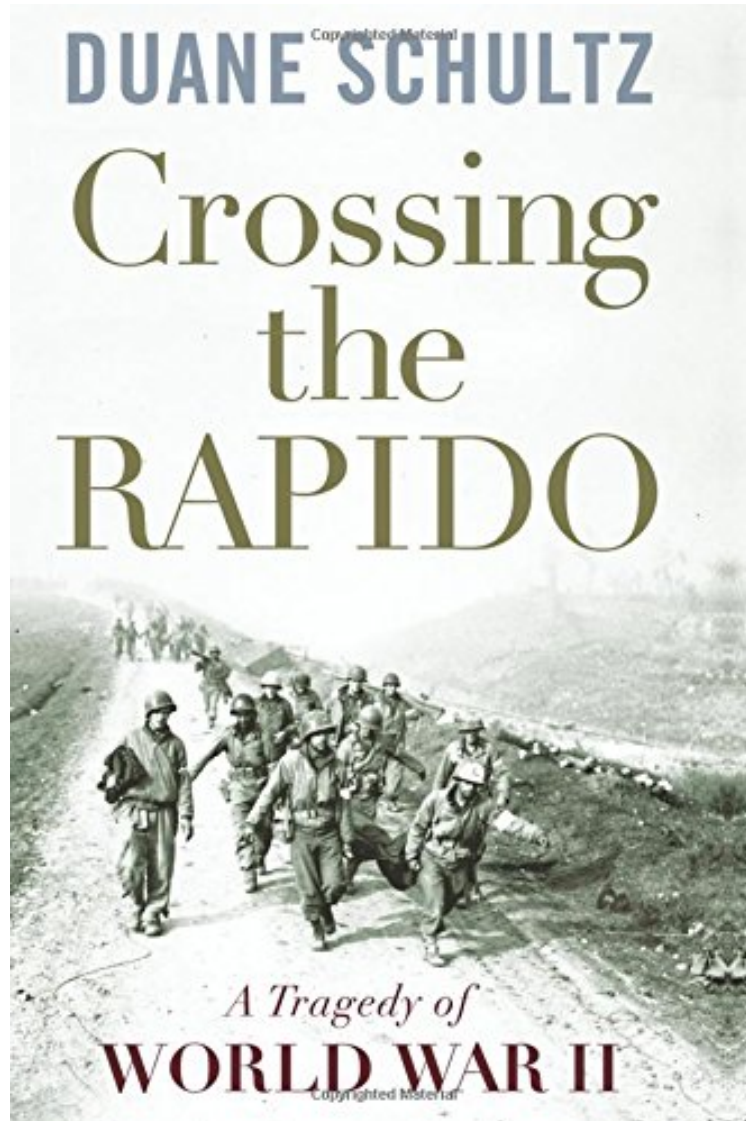


(Pdf free) Crossing the Rapido: A Tragedy of World War II

## Crossing the Rapido: A Tragedy of World War II

*Duane Schultz*

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**Duane Schultz : Crossing the Rapido: A Tragedy of World War II** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Crossing the Rapido: A Tragedy of World War II:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. 36th Infantry Division Wasted AwayBy CamelotThis is an excellent book that displays a bias by Schultz against Mark Clark. Whether or not you agree with Schulz, the book does well to explain some of the tactical elements and feelings about the Rapido. I do not think Schultz fully covered the strategic side of why this battle was fought. Whether or not you agree with Schultz, the battle was a disaster for the men of the 36th, and the book reinforces this. I recommend reading Martin Blumenson's book about the Battle of the Rapido as

well. There are a few other journal articles you could read to fully appreciate the battle and the decisions to fight the battle at this location. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A True Story that Will Make Your Blood Boil By exmptle The war in Italy was a bloody, often tragic, mess. This book takes a close look at one of the tragedies - a foolhardy plan by Mark Clark to attempt a frontal assault across a fast flowing river with very steep banks against a heavily fortified German position. Losses were horrendous as Generals Clark and Keyes ordered multiple suicidal attacks against a virtually impregnable position. It's as easily readable as a good novel, but sadly it's a true story that will make your blood boil. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Caveat emptor By KEVIN C. DELAHANTY "Buyer Beware." I purchased "Crossing the Rapido" because I was intrigued by this particular military action about which I was first made aware in an exceptional WWII memoir entitled "Recon Scout." I wanted to learn more. Unfortunately, the book fell far short of my expectation. Before the first chapter was over I had an uncomfortable feeling about this book. Before I was through with the second chapter I knew what the problem was: Mr. Schultz's writing style is on a level that would appeal to an American middle school level or younger audience. One could plainly see that the narrative is a cobbled mass, sometimes disjointed, of stories lifted from other works of history involving the Italian campaign and the 36th Infantry Division. There seemed to be no effort to present a clear chronology to the story of the 36th ID's actions in Italy, especially its failed attempts to cross the Rapido river. Mr. Schultz presented anecdote after anecdote in such a way that you felt that you were all over the battlefield and, as a result, had no idea what was going on at any one sector at any one time. You are never informed of how the plans were developed, what they were supposed to accomplish, how they failed, and how the units re-grouped and re-organized. And through it all you cannot miss Mr. Schultz's distracting bias in how he places certain generals in favorable or not-so-favorable lights. However, it all made sense when I read the author's acknowledgements at the end of the book. He admits that he's a psychologist and not an historian, and offers this as his excuse for not writing a proper history of a military action. He goes on to say that his true purpose is to focus on the personal stories of the men involved, how they responded in the moment as well as years after. While a laudable pursuit, Mr. Schultz efforts, and comments, seem superficial and... well... juvenile. I am familiar with the historical criticisms of Gen. Clark and his conduct of the war in Italy. Coming from a psychologist, I would have preferred a more balanced presentation of the personalities and conduct of the senior American officers: Keyes, Truscott, and Walker. In this, Mr. Schultz failed even his own profession. In my opinion, this book was a failure. I would not recommend it to anyone who wants to learn about the disaster of the Allied attempts to cross the Rapido river. I shall continue to search for such a book. If someone is looking for military history-lite, this may satisfy that craving.

"World War II history writing at its best." - Dallas Morning News "Schultz convey stories of individual courage and fear. He presents the Rapido crossing as part of an experience that changed lives utterly." - Publishers Weekly "Well written, superbly documented and containing many helpful illustrations and maps, this fine book will appeal to military history enthusiasts of all ages." - Read@MPL (Milwaukee Public Library) "Duane Schultz has written another powerful account of the Second World War." - Daily News, Iron Mountain, Michigan "A fast-paced, dramatic account of World War II combat." - Global War Studies "Crossing the Rapido is a fast-paced, dramatic account of World War II combat that provides a masterfully woven line-of-fire perspective in a vivid and compelling narrative" - ROBERT VON MAIER, Global War Studies "I have never seen so many dead as on that day." - JOHN HUSTON, Academy Award winning director during his wartime filming of The Battle of San Pietro "Those of us who were present will always remember the men of the 36th, climbing silently in the night behind the enemy, armed with little but their American competence and a personal faith in their quiet, retiring general who had never let them down. If Generals Alexander and Clark received the key to the city of Rome, it was General Walker who turned the key and handed it to them." - ERIC SEVAREID, reporting from Italy during World War II The Rapido River was the last natural barrier between General Mark W. Clark's Fifth U.S. Army and Rome. Ignoring intelligence reports that the Germans had significant forces protecting the opposite side of the river, Clark ordered the 36th Division to make a nighttime crossing on January 20, 1944. The division, already coming through some of the heaviest fighting in Italy, knew they could not succeed: they had to cross a fast-flowing river at night in bitter cold and face one of the strongest, most formidable German defensive lines in Europe, full of minefields, veteran troops, and withering artillery and mortar fire. Once in the water, men in full field gear were borne away by the current or vanished in massive explosions. The few who managed to reach the other side found themselves pinned down unable to move. Soldiers died by the hundreds, yet the stunned survivors who fell back to the launch site were ordered to attack again, this time in daylight. Of the 4,000 men who attempted the crossing, more than half did not return. General Clark never accepted blame for ordering the assault despite the numerous warnings he received from both British and American commanders. Although they were decimated, the division went on to lead a key surprise attack that opened Rome to Allied forces, and ultimately fought in France, where they had the distinction of capturing Hermann Goering and Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt. In Crossing the Rapido: A Tragedy of World War II, Duane Schultz follows the action at the ground level using survivors' interviews and army documents to tell the story of one division's sacrifice in war. In doing so, he demonstrates that the American soldier will face the greatest odds without protest, but expects those in command to

share any failure or success.

From Publishers Weekly The failure of the 36th Texas National Guard Division's attempted crossing of Italy's Rapido River in January 1944 remains one of the black spots of America's WWII effort. The division's numbers already decimated from earlier battles on mountainous terrain, the dead replaced by rookies, and with the river at its most impassable, Gen. Mark Clark still ordered the division to cross. The survivors never forgave him, writes Schultz. Nearly half the troops were killed, wounded, captured, or disappeared trying to cross the river. The 36th's members had enough influence to compel a postwar congressional investigation, but the controversies over the disaster continue. Schultz, a psychologist who also writes solid military history, depends more on interviews and memoirs than maps and documents to convey stories of individual courage and fear. He presents the Rapido crossing as part of an experience that changed lives utterly. A rifleman had to use another man as a decoy to draw German fire, someone he had known for years back in Texas. This book is a grim reminder that the way back for men left wounded in both mind and body was no less cruel than the way forward, across the Rapido. 40 illus.; 6 maps. (May 7) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "As author Duane Schultz makes starkly clear in this well-researched work, the soldiers and officers sent as T-Patch replacements came from across America with insufficient training and little sense of what they were supposed to do. . . . Crossing the Rapido is unnerving reading. It also is World War II history writing at its best." --Si Dunn, *The Dallas Morning News* "Duane Schultz has written another powerful account of the Second World War. . . . As with his previous work on Ploesti, 'Crossing the Rapido' is a poignant and unvarnished account of the senseless carnage of the Second World War, the greatest tragedy of the twentieth century." --*The Daily News, Iron Mountain, Michigan* About the Author Duane Schultz is author of many books of history, including *Into The Fire: Ploesti, The Most Fateful Mission of World War II*, also available from Westholme Publishing.