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Gottlob Herbert Bidermann

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Gottlob Herbert Bidermann : In Deadly Combat: A German Soldier's Memoir of the Eastern Front (Modern War Studies (Paperback)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Deadly Combat: A German Soldier's Memoir of the Eastern Front (Modern War Studies (Paperback)):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A real gem!By CustomerI found Lt Bidermann's accounts of the 132

Infantry Division and participation with the 436 Inf Regiment as informative as it was entertaining. I must admit I had little historical knowledge of the Wehrmacht on the Eastern front aside from Von Paulus' 6th Army in Stalingrad. I found this more personal "soldier's" account to be humanizing. As I began to understand their loyalties to Germany and to each other my respect for their professionalism grew. My thoughts often drifted between Lt. Bidermann and his comrades; of the sacrifice that they had made and the anticipation of those yet to come. I came away with a deeper understanding of the bravery and commitment from originally fighting Bolsheviks to eventually attempting to protect Germany. From seemingly indefensible position in the Courland Pocket they managed the unthinkable against overwhelming odds. And as a Professional Soldier Bidermann seems to bear no ill will towards his adversaries on the field. Of course his dislike for political types regardless of nationality was entirely a different matter. . Excellent Read! I appreciate Derek Zumbro's efforts in bringing this "soldier's story" to light. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Common Soldier By Matthew Brennan Unlike so many memoir writers, the author does not exaggerate his role in a war or compliment himself. If the reader didn't know the background, he or she would find it hard to believe that Bidermann was an oft-decorated, five times wounded soldier. He served in a straight infantry division on the Eastern Front throughout the Russo-German War. Early in the memoir, he describes passing by a large German war cemetery from the Eastern Front of World War One. Perhaps it was a harbinger of things to come. This fellow was not in a flashy unit, but his well told story is valuable precisely for that reason. He fought from Crimea to Leningrad and places in-between. east and west. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting and detailed Eastern Front story By Roland W. This memoir is well written and does not compare to some of the more gory eastern front memoirs that I have read in the past. Lt. Biedermann often shares his beliefs and also political explanations as well as his assessment of the history of how the war evolved through the years. It is detailed, but does not go into some of the more graphic explanations of other eastern front memoirs that make you visualize exploding bodies etc. It is a good read and structured. It does not always go straight into actions, but also explains the life of a German soldier and the comradeship through the early and later years of the war. As with all memoirs you have to ask yourself if all memories are fresh enough in his mind when he wrote about his accounts. But sometimes details are necessary to throw you into the action and to make the reader understand the hardship that these guys went through.

In the hell that was World War II, the Eastern Front was its heart of fire and ice. Gottlob Herbert Bidermann served in that lethal theater from 1941 to 1945, and his memoir of those years recaptures the sights, sounds, and smells of the war as it vividly portrays an army marching on the road to ruin. A riveting and reflective account by one of the millions of anonymous soldiers who fought and died in that cruel terrain, *In Deadly Combat* conveys the brutality and horrors of the Eastern Front in detail never before available in English. It offers a ground soldier's perspective on life and death on the front lines, providing revealing new information concerning day-to-day operations and German army life. Wounded five times and awarded numerous decorations for valor, Bidermann saw action in the Crimea and siege of Sebastopol, participated in the vicious battles in the forests south of Leningrad, and ended the war in the Courland Pocket. He shares his impressions of countless Russian POWs seen at the outset of his service, of peasants struggling to survive the hostilities while caught between two ruthless antagonists, and of corpses littering the landscape. He recalls a Christmas gift of gingerbread from home that overcame the stench of battle, an Easter celebrated with a basket of Russian hand grenades for eggs, and his miraculous survival of machine gun fire at close range. In closing he relives the humiliation of surrender to an enemy whom the Germans had once derided and offers a sobering glimpse into life in the Soviet gulags. Bidermann's account debunks the myth of a highly mechanized German army that rolled over weaker opponents with impunity. Despite the vast expanses of territory captured by the Germans during the early months of Operation Barbarossa, the war with Russia remained tenuous and unforgiving. His story commits that living hell to the annals of World War II and broadens our understanding of its most deadly combat zone. Translator Derek Zumbro has rendered Bidermann's memoir into a compelling narrative that retains the author's powerful style. This English-language edition of Bidermann's dynamic story is based upon a privately published memoir entitled *Krim-Kurland Mit Der 132 Infanterie Division*. The translator has added important events derived from numerous interviews with Bidermann to provide additional context for American readers.

From Publishers Weekly Firsthand perspectives of German WWII infantrymen are rare, as respected historian Dennis Showalter (Tannenberg: Clash of Empires) points out in his excellent introduction. Bidermann, who is an 18-year-old private in the 132d Infantry Division at the beginning of this memoir, takes us through the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, passage across the Dnieper and southern steppes, battles in the Crimea, engagements in northern Russia and retreat through Riga to the Baltic. He retrospectively reviews historical records and sketches the daily happenings and ambience of his unit in a matter-of-fact and unpretentious--yet invariably proud--tone. The translation is direct and generally graceful, sometimes lyrical. Retired Navy SEAL Zumbro, who has translated German accounts for the Eisenhower Center of the University of New Orleans, has translated and expanded Bidermann's 1964 private German publication, utilizing the same preserved documents and retrospective interviews from other members of the 132d. Before war's end, the unit was cut off in Courland, though Bidermann claims it was "never defeated in open

battle." After surrender in 1945, the remnants of the division were held in extended captivity. The Wehrmacht subculture, which Bidermann describes but does not connect back to the Reich's atrocities, was compulsively "professional," with loyalty to fellows its all-consuming central ethic. This ethic seemingly sustained these soldiers through continual dire peril of body and soul. Some did survive. BW photos. History Book Club selection. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Since 1945, the front-line realities of Germany's Russian war have been submerged under so much myth that a book like this represents a welcome reality check. The 132nd's story, and Bidermann's, are part of the 'master narrative' of a 'demodernizing' Wehrmacht, whose men held against unbelievable odds and in the end were sacrificed to one of history's most purely evil causes. It is a story worth making available to American readers."—Dennis Showalter, author of *Tannenberg: Clash of Empires* "Stands head and shoulders above the many other books in this genre. Bidermann's style is crisp, succinct, and lucid and Zumbro has done a great job of translating."—David Glantz, coauthor of *The Battle of Kursk* and *When Titans Clashed* Language NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: German