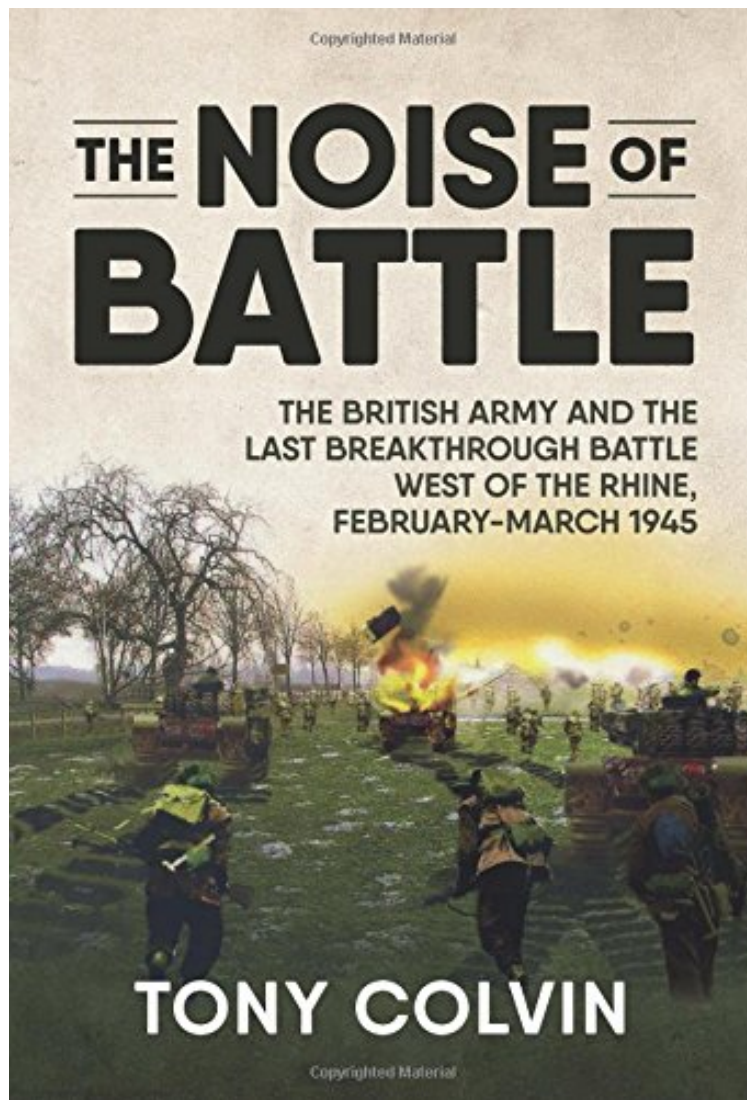


[Library ebook] The Noise of Battle: The British Army and the last breakthrough battle west of the Rhine, February-March 1945

## The Noise of Battle: The British Army and the last breakthrough battle west of the Rhine, February-March 1945

*Tony Colvin*

*\*Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#588636 in Books Helion Company 2016-08-05 2016-08-19Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.70 x 1.70 x 7.00l, 3.55 #File Name: 1910777110824 pagesHelion Company | File size: 17.Mb

**Tony Colvin : The Noise of Battle: The British Army and the last breakthrough battle west of the Rhine, February-March 1945** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Noise of Battle: The British Army and the last breakthrough battle west of the Rhine, February-March 1945:

3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The book contains interesting information but it severely lacked a ...By Howard L. SanduskyThe book contains interesting information but it severely lacked a strong editor. Mr Colvin's coverage of the battles are detailed and interesting especially his skill in consolidating the participant's accounts of the battles. In the second half of the book the author digresses into regimental backgrounds that could have been summarized basically as: The social stratifications in the British army hindered its consistent performance on the battlefield. Likewise Mr Colvin's views on Churchill, Montgomery, the tank divisions, and the RAF's pigheadedness towards battlefield support could likewise have been condensed. As a result, his arguments and analysis flow into diatribes.9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, a Bit Unconventional for my Tastes, and Way OverpricedBy Writing HistorianOK, so where can I start. I guess I can begin by stating that I waited for it to become available through third party sellers because I did not want to spend 80 dollars on a kind of obscure topic by an author I hadn't heard of before. I waited until it became available at half price, rationalizing that I could always return it if need be. I am going to keep THE NOISE OF BATTLE, although this book turned out to be nothing like I expected.For one, it is not written by an academic - which I imagined it would be. Tony Colvin is the son of the Battalion 2iC of one of the British infantry units that fought with the 3d British Infantry Division in early 1945 as the 21st Army Group pushed out of Holland into western Germany. His father took him to several of the battlefields described in the book when the author was only eight years old.Colvin's interest in the topic began well over three decades before this book was published. He decided to write this account after reading the British and Canadian official histories who didn't even acknowledge the contributions of the British 3d Division when describing events during this period. From his own father's own stories of the fighting that took place during this period, Colvin knew that the soldiers of that division had been done a great disservice by the official historians. Bit by bit, Colvin began collecting information and interviewing veterans from his father's battalion, brigade, and supporting units such as the 6th Guards Tank Brigade.For reasons unexplained, the manuscript then lay dormant for several decades, though I suspect it might have been because it questioned the events behind several officers receiving allegedly undeserved medals. Those individuals have since passed away.What can you expect from three decades of research? Detail, lots and lots of detail. Perhaps too much in some instances. It is precisely for this reason that the book is 824 pages in length. That said, not all of the detail is associated with the main subject of the book - namely the performance of the 9th British Infantry Brigade in several battles over a multi-week period in February through March 1945.Some of the positive points of having so much information is that tank - infantry cooperation between the 3d Infantry Division and 6th Guard Tank Brigade, as well as several other infantry - armor pairings, is extensively examined. In addition, the author provides very useful material on the late war German airborne forces.Only half of the book, however, deals with the above mentioned subjects. Colvin devotes the remainder to chapter sized sections covering varied topics, to include comparing the Churchill tank with the Sherman, looking at examples of good and bad tank-infantry cooperation in the British Army, bashing British senior generals - both Army and Royal Air Force, casting doubt on the performance of 2d Tactical Air Force and the Hawker Typhoon/Tempest series of aircraft, and a number of other subjects. Sometimes his arguments are well organized and objective, while at other times he is cherry-picking facts and providing his opinion vice reasoned analysis.It all makes for a very interesting book crammed full of good research. You just have to be able to discern where the good research starts and his opinion begins. For the most part, Colvin makes it easy for readers to do just that.In a nutshell, I liked it even though its one of the more eccentric presentations focusing on the late war British Army. There is a lot of fresh, primary source material that a serious reader would find of interest, though the scope is somewhat limited by Colvin's interest in one brigade of a single British division plus its supporting tank unit.Normally I would give an general overview of how the book is organized, but there isn't a contents page up front so I didn't feel like flipping through the entire book attempting to identify where sections began and where they ended. Recommended with reservations.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. using highly unsuitable aircraft in the role like the TyphoonBy mariandavidThe most interesting and controversial part of the book is its second half in which the author takes on some of the long-hidden issues that bedeviled the British Army. Not entirely its fault that it lacked equipment - as the author pointed out making heavy bombers alone for the Royal Air Force used up more production and cost more than was spent on the entire Army, which at least explains if it does not excuse the failure to invest adequately in land warfare technology. He also casts a critical eye on the tactics (speed is all) and the leadership of the British armoured force. And it needs attention - I was not aware that the very generals and brigadiers that failed to support infantry in the desert war, leading to the capture of far too many New Zealand, Indian and British brigades were still in authority in 1945 - serving unbelievably as the senior commanders of armour. Of course it helped that they had connections with both the apostles of mobility (Churchill, Montgomery and Hobart) and with the Court and the Guards. In passing Colvin has mixed feelings about the Guards that were supposed to support the infantry he clearly associates with - courageous, even foolhardy - Guard troop commanders somehow felt that they had to be in the lead tank, unfortunate since the loss of an officer had greater impact in guard units - but also prone to insistence on doctrine.He also has nothing but contempt for the utter inability (or unwillingness) of the Royal Air Force to accept the importance of Ground Support (I am reminded of the current issue of the US Air Force attempting to eliminate the A-10 Thunderbolt II); incapable of accepting specially designed aircraft, notably dive bombers, using highly unsuitable

aircraft in the role like the Typhoon, endlessly claiming credit where nothing had been achieved (again Typhoons but with reference to their useless rockets - the statistics showed it took an entire squadron of 16 Typhoons to achieve one hit on a tank, and in the interim 2-4 would be shot down) and above all failing to allow any degree of subordination whatsoever of air units to land commanders. As I say - provocative (and I have passed over the role of Montgomery and his generals) but as said elsewhere harmed by some careless editing and a tendency to ramble - which may also be true of this review.

Half of the book is a detailed description, mainly told in the words of participants, of three battles fought over four days in the Rhineland south of Goch between 27 February and March 2 1945. The battles were between 3rd Division supported by 6 Guards Armored Brigade, and 8. Fallschirmjäger Division. For the first time the combined actions of over 50,000 men during 96 hours have been analyzed from the ground up in an unprecedented attempt to provide understanding of a significant military event. 3 Scots Guards said of Winnekendonk, "It is suggested that this will surely rank as one of the finest small scale tank/infantry battles ever executed and well worthy of more close study." The fighting was bloody and heroic, and some controversial aspects are explained for the first time. The other half of the book is an analysis of the units and people involved in the two divisions and their supporting armor and aviation. An answer is provided as to why only two months before the end of hostilities, 21 Army Group could manage only quite slow and costly progress. The answer comes from the analysis, and is tested through comparison with the contemporary Canadian Operation Blockbuster, and with two battles in the Hitler Line. Evidence is provided that there is no truth to recent claims that Montgomery's generalship was efficient and saved lives. Instead, it is shown that the military hierarchy, including Churchill, ignored the all-arms operational methodology under unitary command which Sir John Monash had developed to bring victory in 1918. In the Second World War, by contrast, the Royal Armored Corps and 2 TAF never integrated with the infantry and artillery, and were never suitably equipped, being bound to the cultic pursuit of mobility. General Elles required that the Infantry Tank be immune to all German antitank guns, and his Matilda II was a major reason for the deliverance from Dunkirk and for the success of Operation Compass in North Africa. Compared with the Hundred Days of 1918, the author suggests that the British Armed forces in 1945 were relatively less efficient in all respects except that of killing German civilians in area bombing. This book's fully documented and researched conclusions provide a new and controversial interpretation of 21 Army Group.

"He makes extensive use of personal accounts, as well as documentary materials, which not only illustrate the fighting, but helps the reader identify with the troops... While apt to be controversial, this is one of the most important recent works on the British Army in the war." (NYMAS )  
About the Author Born in 1939, Tony Colvin moved with his family from Lincoln to Germany in 1946, when his father left 3rd Division and joined the Frontier Inspection Service. Tony visited Winnekendonk in 1947, the first of thirty visits over the years and the source of his fascination with the place. Living in Ratheim on the uncleared battlefields, and visiting destroyed Julich, Aachen and Krefeld, he was forcibly struck by the anomaly of the contrast between the destructive effects of overwhelming Allied might and the large number of 2 Lincolns' graves at Winnekendonk. This demanded an explanation that no military historian has until now provided. Schooled at Prince Rupert School Wilhelmshaven and Lincoln Grammar School, Tony read PPE at Trinity College, Oxford. He then had a career in marketing with Massey Ferguson. This involved moving to Ontario in 1985, which provided an opportunity to study the Canadian military and to take dual Canadian citizenship. In 1982 he started to research this book, interviewing all the veterans he could find before he emigrated, starting with his father's colleagues. The book was finished in about 1995, but the final chapter took until 2010 to complete, after the writing of an article about Wilhelmshaven for publication in After The Battle Magazine. Tony lives in Topsham, England.