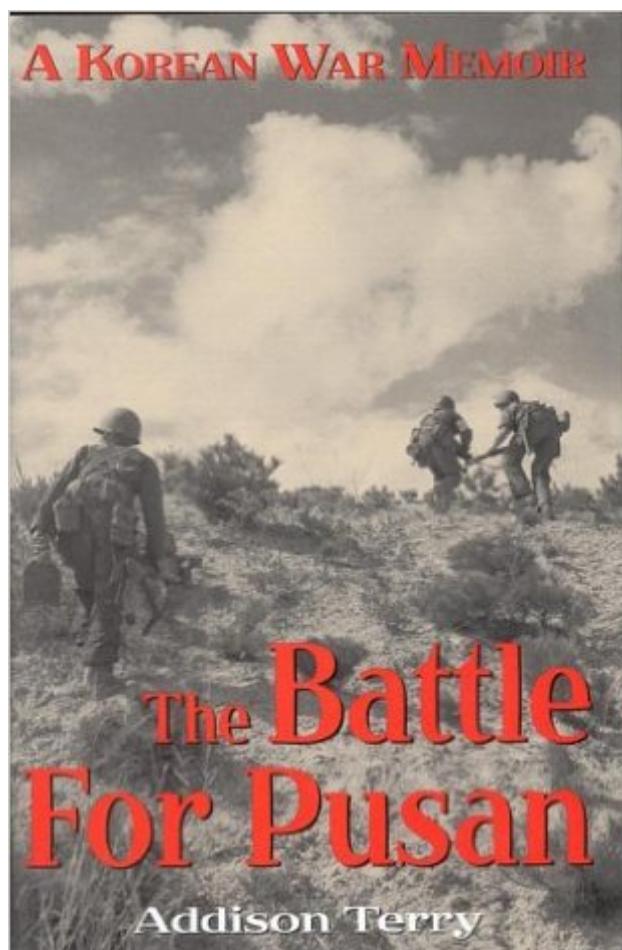


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The Battle For Pusan



Synopsis

His memoir of these perilous times makes for exciting reading, replete with the drama and sacrifice of men in combat.

Book Information

Hardcover: 256 pages

Publisher: Presidio Press; 1 edition (March 15, 2000)

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Customer Reviews

TERRY'S BOOK IS SO good I'm at a loss to give it all the praise it deserves in the framework of a brief review. He has an engaging style of writing--cuddle up with this book in an easy chair. The description of the battles is crisp; of the lulls, languid. His honesty is touching and much like Tom Sawyer ("I cried a little bit when I covered up his face") he doesn't smother you with descriptions of casualties. You respect Terry's dignity (and that of the wounded or dying) for this brevity. He only asks that you never forget. On those few occasions where he is tempted to write a bit of an epitaph ("Able had lost a good platoon leader, I had lost....") his words get in the way. Everybody loves Terry for his stories of battles and combat. Why? Again, he lets the story tell the story. The effect is fantastic. If you are wondering why everything suddenly falls apart at Sachon Pass [earlier that morning his men were "red hot-- an untouchable force"], well you can keep wondering because Terry doesn't know, either. As you get the sense the whole situation is slipping out of control with an NKPA roadblock behind them and the flanks crackling with encircling fire, you get just as angry as the author does when he finds an artillery battery that doesn't even have a defensive perimeter in place. So the whole book goes. The fog of war becomes fog in the text. The words become Terry's eyes and ears, through which the soul of the drama enters the soul of the reader. The truth is the only way we can learn from the mistakes made in the Korean War. His Haman chapter handles the

issue of the 24th ID's dereliction of duty with honesty and candidness. His disgust of 'civilian bureaucrats' in Washington is justified and palpable.

First, let me say that I was stationed in S. Korea and am familiar with and interested in its history. It was an unusual experience reading about cities and locations that I had visited or that I knew of. Terry describes a Korea that was still reeling from the effects of the Japanese occupation. I was there in the late 70s, and it is amazing how different S. Korea was just 25 years after the devastation of WW II and the Korean War. It is a tribute to the Korean people. Terry's experiences in the Korean War are not only glimpses into the life of a grunt, but are also a look at the Korean War specifically. While reading this very easy-to-read memoir, I was struck by the foreshadowing of how the troops would be treated in the Vietnam War. In both wars, the troops were the victims of political power struggles, poor training, and a lack of supplies and equipment, including weapons and ammo. Of course the two wars differed in that the Korean War vets were not demonized; however, they were ignored and forgotten by the country at large. The Korean War is truly the forgotten war, and its veterans, the forgotten vets. Terry was an artillery forward observer, and his memoir is a thrilling story. It effectively conveys the brotherhood that forms among soldiers under constant threat of death. In addition, the memoir spectacularly demonstrates how war can be boring beyond belief one minute, and terrifying the next. Terry also shows that, for the grunt, war can be ridiculous, infuriating, disgusting, and even funny at times - - sometimes all within a few hours. Note: There is racism in the book; it is directed at the Korean people and the "all-negro" 24th Regiment. It reflects the attitudes of the 40s and 50s and will disturb modern readers.

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