



PACIFIC WAR STORIES: in the words of those who survived

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In this new book by the authors of *Pacific Legacy: Image and Memory of World War II in the Pacific*, the history of the War in the Pacific comes vividly to life in the words of those who witnessed it first hand. The editors create for the reader, as the veterans themselves recall it, what that war was like—how it looked, felt, smelled, and sounded. The stories collected here are a unique portrayal of the mundane, exotic, boring, terrifying, life-altering events that made up their wartime experiences in World War II in the Pacific, a war fought on countless far-flung islands over an area that constitutes about one-third of the globe. What the veterans saw and lived through has stayed with them their entire lives, and much of it comes to the surface again through their vivid memories. The narratives, grouped into fifteen thematic, chronologically arranged chapters, are stirring, first-hand accounts, from front-line combat at the epicenter of violence and death to restless, weary boredom on rear area islands thousands of miles from the fighting. While their experiences differed, all were changed by what happened to them in the Pacific. These are not the stories of sweeping strategies or bold moves by generals and admirals. Instead, we hear from men and women on the lower rungs, including ordinary seamen on vessels that encountered Japanese warships and planes and sometimes came out second best, rank-and-file Marines who were in amtracs churning toward bullet-swept tropical beaches and saw their buddies killed beside them, and astounded eyewitnesses to the war's sudden start on December 7, 1941. This is an important book for military buffs as well as for the survivors of World War II and their families.

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