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The Oxford Book of Military Anecdotes

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If anecdotes are marginal notes on the pages of history, these will delight any reader who has ever been moved or entertained by the condition of the soldier. Few fields of human endeavor have inspired so many memorable anecdotes as warfare, from the Bible and Livy through Gibbon and Froissart, to the imperial wars of the nineteenth century and the world conflicts of the twentieth.

This collection of is principally concerned with American and British conflicts, with, as the author says, "occasional forays among the ranks of foreign armies"--notably the Greeks, the Romans, and Napoleon's veterans. Hastings has sought stories that illustrate the military condition through the ages, both on the battlefield and in barracks: comic, eccentric, heroic, tragic. Here are Caesar at the Rubicon and the revolt of the Praetorian Guard; Alexander's horse and Prince Rupert's dog; the legendary Mother Ross enlisting in search of her lost husband in 1693; Evelyn Waugh as the least plausible of commandos; General George S. Patton's good luck charm "Charlie," a lump of lava rock carved into a Hawaiian warrior; and much more. Some of the stories will be familiar to students of military history while others are less well known, but all provide fascinating sidelights to history.

Great war stories by Max Hastings, a leading military historian and war correspondent

About the Author:

Max Hastings is a well-known author specializing in military history. His most recent books include Bomber Command, Battle for the Falklands, and Overlord.

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