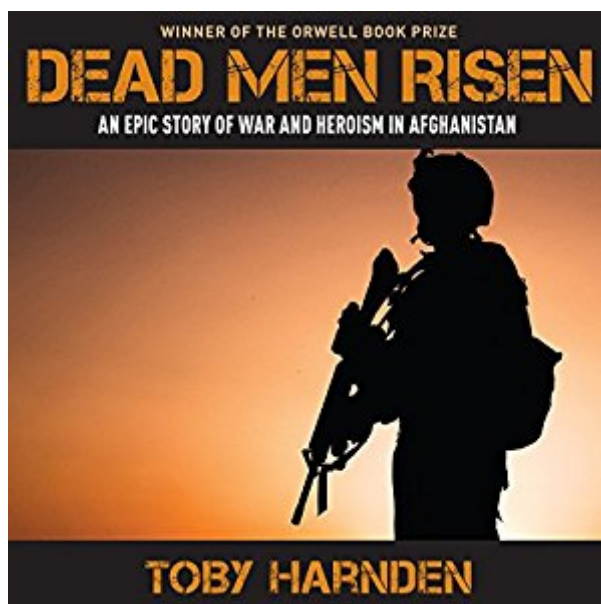


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Dead Men Risen: An Epic Story Of War And Heroism In Afghanistan



Synopsis

Dead Men Risen, winner of the prestigious Orwell Prize for books, is the epic story of a beleaguered British battle group fighting desperately to prevent the Taliban from seizing Afghanistan's Helmand province just as the US Marines arrive to take over. Best-selling author Toby Harnden describes how men from the coal mining valleys and slate quarry villages of Wales found themselves in the most intense combat faced by British troops for a generation. Underequipped and overstretched, the fighting prowess of the Welsh Guards in the killing fields of Sangin and Nawa awed the US Marines. NATO commander General Stanley McChrystal, who was awaiting a response to his urgent request to President Barack Obama for more troops, hailed their "burn-in-your-gut passion". Harnden was on the ground with the Welsh Guards in Helmand in 2009. He gained access to a trove of secret military documents and conducted nearly 300 interviews in Afghanistan, England, Wales, and the United States to produce this timeless and profound account of men at war. Commanding the Welsh Guards was Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Thorneloe, a passionate believer in the justness of the war who was dismayed by the military and political incompetence surrounding it. In chilling detail, Harnden reveals how and why Thorneloe - the first British battalion commander to die in action since the 1982 Falklands War - was killed by an IED during Operation Panther's Claw. By the time the fighting was over, almost no rank had been spared. The listener is transported from the searing heat of the poppy fields and the mud compounds of Helmand to the dreaded knock on the door back home. Harnden weaves the experiences of the soldiers, their historical forbears, and the flawed NATO strategy into a masterly narrative. No other book about modern conflict succeeds on so many levels. This is essential for anyone who wants to understand the reality of the Afghan war for the US and its allies.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Was excited to see that Toby Harnden's terrific book about the Welsh Guards in Helmand, Afghanistan is being released in the United States. I first read it upon my return from Iraq in 2011 and can't say enough about its honesty and realism. Its clear that the author spent a lot of time with these men and understood their mission. Kudos too to Regency for bringing this book (which received wide acclaim in the UK) to American readers. I noticed that this US edition has new material throughout and a new epilogue. Veterans and students of the GWOT era need to read this book to better understand British military culture and their own warriors. Having spent the bulk of my Army career in the infantry, the feel of the book is familiar, but the culture was alien. The British public is even more estranged from military people than even America, so their disconnect is even more profound. So too, Britain's military leaders are not often asked to make life and death decisions about equipment, tactics or rules of engagement. Their foibles, errors and missteps actually made me appreciate our problems. I was moved many times in reading this book. The challenges facing Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Thorneloe, Commander of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards (1WG) and their deployment to Afghanistan in summer 2009 forms the core of the story. Harnden does an excellent job of explaining the unit's history and its geography. Not unlike an American National Guard unit, the Welsh guards soldiers are mostly from the same towns and families. Multiple generations of young men have served in the same unit. It means that history lays a heavy burden on their families and their shoulders.

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