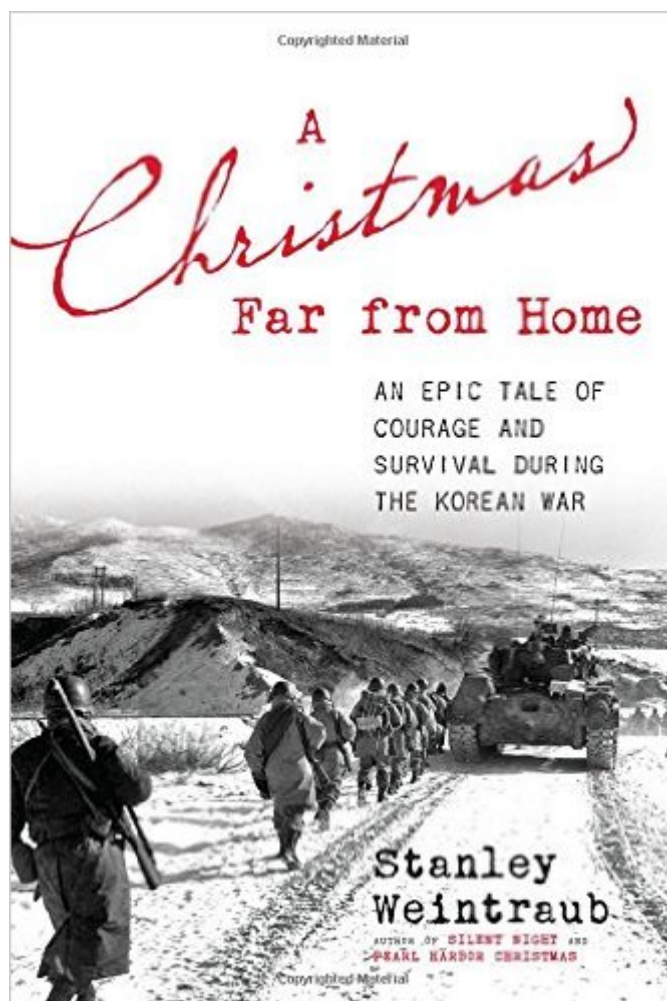


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A Christmas Far From Home: An Epic Tale Of Courage And Survival During The Korean War



Synopsis

The day after Thanksgiving, five months into the Korean War, General Douglas MacArthur flew to American positions in the north and grandly announced an end-the-war-by-Christmas offensive, despite recent evidence of intervention by Mao's Chinese troops. Marching north in plunging temperatures, General Edward Almond's X Corps, which included a Marine division under the able leadership of General Oliver Smith, encountered little resistance. But thousands of Chinese, who had infiltrated across the frozen Yalu River, were lying in wait and would soon trap tens of thousands of US troops. Led by the Marines, an overwhelmed X Corps evacuated the frigid, mountainous Chosin Reservoir vastness and fought a swarming enemy and treacherous snow and ice to reach the coast. Weather, terrain, Chinese firepower, and a 4,000-foot chasm made escape seem impossible in the face of a vanishing Christmas. But endurance and sacrifice prevailed, and the last troopships weighed anchor on Christmas Eve. In the tradition of his Silent Night and Pearl Harbor Christmas, Stanley Weintraub presents another gripping narrative of a wartime Christmas season. A Military Book Club main selection

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Korean War is often called "The Forgotten War" for several reasons, two of which I will mention here. First, the Korean War came in the immediate wake of WWII in which tens of millions of people died in places all across the globe. WWII involved more than twenty countries and resulted in more civilian casualties than military casualties. At the time the Korean War began, the memory of WWII and its aftermath was fresh in the minds of most. Second, the Korean War was never a

declared war. Although the Vietnam War was undeclared with the "Gulf of Tonkin Resolution" offered up by President Johnson and then passed by Congress as legitimizing justification for military action, the Korean War lacked a legitimizing equivalent. To wit, the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, DC was created long before a Korean War Memorial was authorized. In "Christmas Far From Home," author Stanley Weintraub describes the events of November and December, 1950 when at the beginning of a very harsh winter, General Douglas MacArthur in his role as Supreme Commander authorized troops north to the Chosin Reservoir along the Hungnam-to Hagaru-ri Road. MacArthur had brazenly forecast that the troops "would be home by Christmas," a proposition obviously unrealistic but largely disregarded because of his reputation. At the time, no one dared to call out MacArthur on this. Weintraub's work is a one-month story in which he documents troop movements and military units, along with the actions and casualties that occurred in this area during that time. To that end, it will be largely students of military history to whom "A Christmas Far From Home" will appeal. However, Weintraub does broaden this book by offering up more.

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