

The Daring Dozen: Special Forces Legends of World War II

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IPMS # 42218

The Daring Dozen: Special Forces Legends of World War II

Author: Gavin Mortimer

Publisher: Osprey

Binding: Hardcover

Pages: 303

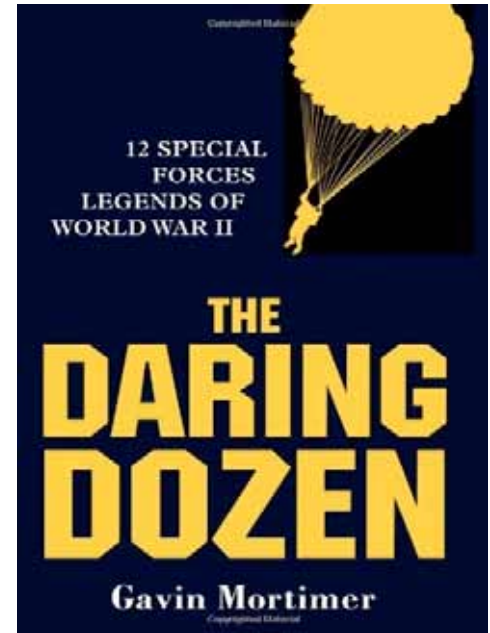
Summary

The Daring Dozen, the new book from journalist Gavin Mortimer, reveals twelve legendary Special Forces commanders of World War II whose tactical abilities and vision were to change the way wars were fought forever. Prior to the outbreak of the war the concept of 'special forces' didn't really exist. These twelve extraordinary men not only reshaped military policy, but they led from the front, accompanying their troops into the heat of battle from the sands of North Africa to jumping into Normandy on D-Day and operating far behind enemy lines. Evoking intense loyalty from their men, each leader embodies the true essence of leadership and courage, something Winston Churchill called 'the first human qualities'.

The Daring Dozen features some of the most famous names from both the Axis and Allied sides during the war. Mortimer offers a skillful analysis of their qualities as

military commanders and their true impact their own personal actions, as well as those of their units, had on the eventual outcome of the war and on the importance of the special forces in all modern armies today.

Looking into the book, one of twelve chapters follows Adrian Von Folkersam, the leader and inspiration behind the Brandenburgers - a German Special Forces Group created in the late 1930's. The chapter follows this man's exploits: from the capture of bridges over the Juliana Canal in Denmark during the invasion of the low countries in May 1940; through the capture (intact) of the Russian refinery in Maikop in the Northern Caucasus; to the bloodless capture of the head of the Hungarian State, Admiral Horthy, in late in 1944 while working in support of Major Otto Skorzeny. The chapter closes with a do-or-die mission during the Ardennes Offensive ("Operation Watch on the Rhine"). von Folkersam was placed in charge of operation 'Grief' by Skorzeny, involving the seizure of three critical bridges during the opening phases of the offensive, as well as the use of German units dressed and outfitted in American uniforms and equipment with the intention of disrupting communications and giving false orders. While both of



those operations ultimately failed, the courage and resourcefulness of von Folkersam remained an earmark of this relatively unknown figure in the annals of World War II history.

I've only read one chapter, but if it is indicative of what I will find in the other eleven, I look forward to making more time to finish this book. It's a pretty good read. I recommend this book to anyone who would like to learn more about the war's more spectacular successes, from both sides of the battle, an about the extraordinary men who achieved them.

I would like to thank Osprey and Stevens International for providing this book for review, and to Internet Modeler for giving me the opportunity to read it.