



The Fifth Field: The Story of the 96 American Soldiers Sentenced to Death and Executed in Europe and North Africa in World War II

By Colonel French L. MacLean

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Unnamed Graves, a Secret Cemetery, Files Closed to the Public and Stored in, The Vault. During World War II, in the North African/Mediterranean and European Theaters of Operation, 96 American soldiers were convicted by Army General Courts-Martial and executed for desertion, murder and rape. Their victims were 26 fellow American soldiers and 71 British, French, Italian, Polish and Algerian civilians. The executions were not ad hoc killings. General Eisenhower, or another theater commander, approved every proceeding, but the Army did not trumpet the crimes. After the war, the Army searched for a suitable site to inter the remains of all 96 men. It chose a plot of land adjacent to but technically outside of the World War I American cemetery of Oise-Aisne. The area is separated from the main cemetery by a high stone wall, concealed from view, and is closed to casual visitors. Called, Plot E, by the staff, others refer to it as, The Fifth Field. The judicial files on the 96 were even harder to find until now.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

For over thirty-four years, Colonel French L. MacLean, United States Army, (Ret.), served with many of the leading lights of the United States Army in the latter half of the Twentieth Century Generals with the names Shinseki, Abizaid, Dempsey, Petraeus, Meigs, Saint, Joulwan, Hendrix, Maddox, Wallace, Rodriguez, Brown, Campbell, Jordan, Anderson, Riggs, Goff, Funk, Blackwell and many others. Born in Peoria, Illinois, he graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1974, the second class that, The stars shined on. Commissioned in the Infantry, he served four tours of duty in Germany, commanded two companies and a battalion, attended the School for Advanced Military Studies, fought as a battalion operations officer in a mechanized infantry battalion during Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait and Iraq and served as the historian for the U.S. Army Fifth Corps during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 in Iraq. He additionally served as the Inspector General for the U.S. Army in Europe, and as a course director and professor at the National War College in Washington, DC, where he taught military strategy to many of the military's future leaders of this century. Knowing countless officers and non-commissioned officers, growing up as a scout platoon leader, armored cavalry troop commander, military historian, and one of the Army's senior Inspector Generals, Colonel MacLean knows where to look to find the keys to the Army's historical secrets in this case literally where all the bodies were buried. In addition to the acclaimed, Custer's Best: The Story of Company M, 7th Cavalry at the Little Bighorn, he is the author of ten books on World War II. He recently wrote a fictional EBook on Nazi war criminals. He has received the following comments on his work: Sir John Keegan ...A most valuable study of the German Army in the Second World War, which I guard with care in my study. Simon Wiesenthal, The result of your meticulous and surely not always easy efforts of collecting and analyzing data has turned out impressive indeed. Moshe Arens, I have been very impressed with your book. Rear Admiral Michael Mahon United States Navy, Retired With Dönitz's Crews, French MacLean has captured the very essence of U-boat warfare. Every Submariner needs to read this book to learn from those who have gone before him; every Anti-Submarine Warfare officer must read this book to understand the deadly and tenacious nature of his foe. The author lives in Decatur, Illinois, with his wife Olga and their dog Benji, in an eighty-five-year old Tudor home perfect for an author. When not writing, he can be found traveling to Montana, Washington, DC, Europe or wherever a mystery, which needs to be solved, is located.

Users Review

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