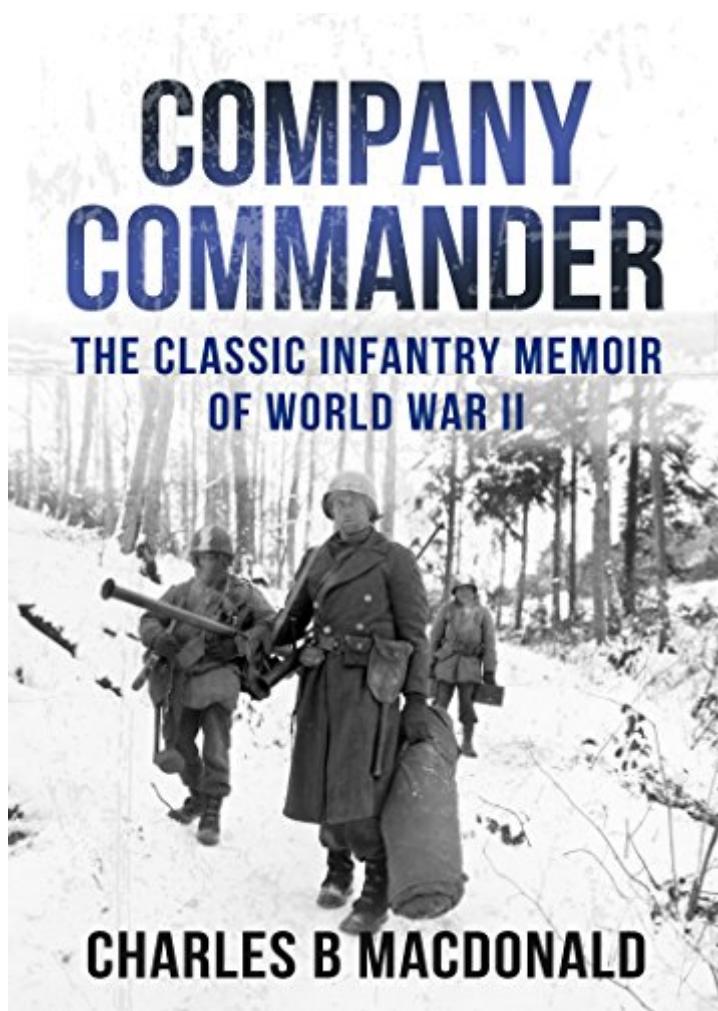


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# Company Commander: The Classic Infantry Memoir Of WWII



## Synopsis

Many great books have been written about World War Two - but Company Commander describes the war at first hand. As a newly commissioned Captain of a veteran Army regiment, MacDonaldâ™s first combat was war at its most hellish â” the Battle of the Bulge. In this plain-spoken but eloquent narrative, we live each minute at MacDonaldâ™s side, sharing in all of combatâ™s misery, terror, and drama. How this green commander gains his menâ™s loyalty in the snows of war-torn Europe is one of the great, true, unforgettable war stories of all time. The book comes with an introduction by Ronald H. Spector, author of *Eagle Against the Sun*. Company Commander is a stark view of one of the most brutal battles of the Second World War. Praise for Charles B. MacDonald: 'Nowhere is there a more honest, unassuming portrayal of the hopes and dreams and fears of a young infantry captain.' â” *Saturday Review* 'Impressive.' â” *New York Times* Charles B. MacDonald also wrote *A Time for Trumpets* and other books. In the war, he rose to the rank of Captain of the 23rd Infantry of the 2nd Division. After the war, in which he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Silver Star, he became an official Army Historian, retiring as Deputy Chief Historian in 1979.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've always been a fan of military history and I think Company Commander is one of the best. I originally got this in paperback many years ago and was recently delighted to find it for my Kindle Paperwhite. Happily, it is still just as good now as it was many, many years ago. It's one of the best in describing Company sized action in World War II. I feel MacDonald should rate right up there with Cornelius Ryan, Robert Leckie, Rick Atkinson, Stephen E. Ambrose, etc. This one is highly recommended.

What I enjoyed most was the frankness in the story. Captain MacDonald is sent to relieve the current CO of company on the Siegfried Line. He is informed that the last group who were quartered in the bunker were blasted out by a half-track German flamethrower. He vows to not let this happen to him and his men. His main concern is being a newly minted Captain, will the battle-weary veterans accept him into their confidence? After a few skirmishes and shellings, his fears subside. His unit is caught up in the Battle of the Bulge where his group is part of the hastily assembled force that thwarts the efforts of Deitrick's Sixth Panzer Army from breathing through. I enjoyed this description as it only centered on their struggle rather than the grand strategy. The second part of the story follows Patton's Third Army drive into Germany. Some might not enjoy the nonchalance of the treatment of German prisoners or lack thereof. Remember, these men were watching their bodies being killed by men who brought a lot of death and destruction to Europe. Many today would vilify their actions, but then, we weren't there to judge them. His recounting of capturing Leipzig is great. How many would love to lay claim to accepting the surrender of Germany's fifth largest city. At first he's quit excited about the prospect, but as the negotiations drag on he decides, never again. A great addition to any WWII library. Five Stars

I'm a student of World War II, especially the European Theater, where my dad served with the USAAF. I first read Company Commander many years ago, and it's still one of my favorite books written by an American soldier who was in the war. MacDonald entered the war in September, 1944 as a captain commanding a rifle company. The book is his personal account of the war from his experience, including the gut-wrenching fear during artillery barrages, which included everything from small mortars to huge railway guns; the confusion and chaos during German counterattacks; going weeks without a shower; eating K-rations for days on end; and the heartbreak of "friendly fire" casualties. He describes the excitement and elation of seeing US planes hit the Germans.

MacDonald was a natural-born observer and writer, and *Company Commander* is one of the best written and most vivid journals of the war, and highly recommended for any reader who's interested in World War II.

This is, without a doubt, one of the best books written about men in battle and it has withstood the test of time. Now, with the Kindle version available, "*Company Commander*" will touch new generations. I obtained my first copy in the early 70's and have carried that edition with me as a Marine officer, including in combat - it has been a constant companion. I had an occasion to take Marines on a staff ride of the Battle of the Bulge in the 90's and "*Company Commander*" was one of the books that the young Marines read prior to walking the ground, which included the company defensive position that MacDonald details where they were overrun. MacDonald's description of actual ground matched the mental image I had developed over the years. To me, this is the most compelling evidence of the simple beauty of this book.

This book describes how infantryman fought the final thrust into Germany starting with the Battle of the Bulge. The author relates how attack orders were poorly thought out leaving the infantry to fight their way out. Mentioned also is the disconnect between infantry and support; tanks, artillery and airplanes and the shortage of ammunition and winter clothing. Kudos to the American infantry who improvised and doggedly pursued victory.

Absolutely one of the most enjoyable books I've read. None of the bravado of so many accounts, but loaded with the emotion that war brings, not only in personal safety, but for that of the men he commanded. I don't think I have read such a complete account of small unit actions in WWII. What may turn others off, was perfect in my mind; that was the moment by moment accounts of what occurred, including the irrelevant, incorrect thoughts that can happen in emergent circumstances, the mistakes he made in judgement, and the contributions he and his company made to events we've heard of in other histories, yet from the big picture. This really has the small picture embedded, and it's a page turner as a result.

Charles MacDonald's unvarnished, detailed and honest account of his life as a Captain commanding two different companies of infantry in Europe from late 1944 through war's end is deservedly deemed a classic. Sharing his insights and often internal monologue based on excellent notes and written only two years after the war, his unabashed affection for his men and basic

decency comes through in each page. Useful for both officers and historians, readers will find it a rich resource which brings the war to life in a way the work of professional historians written decades later simply can't. Of course, the irony is, MacDonald went on in civilian life to become a professional historian for the U.S. Army. I look forward to reading his later work--you will too.

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