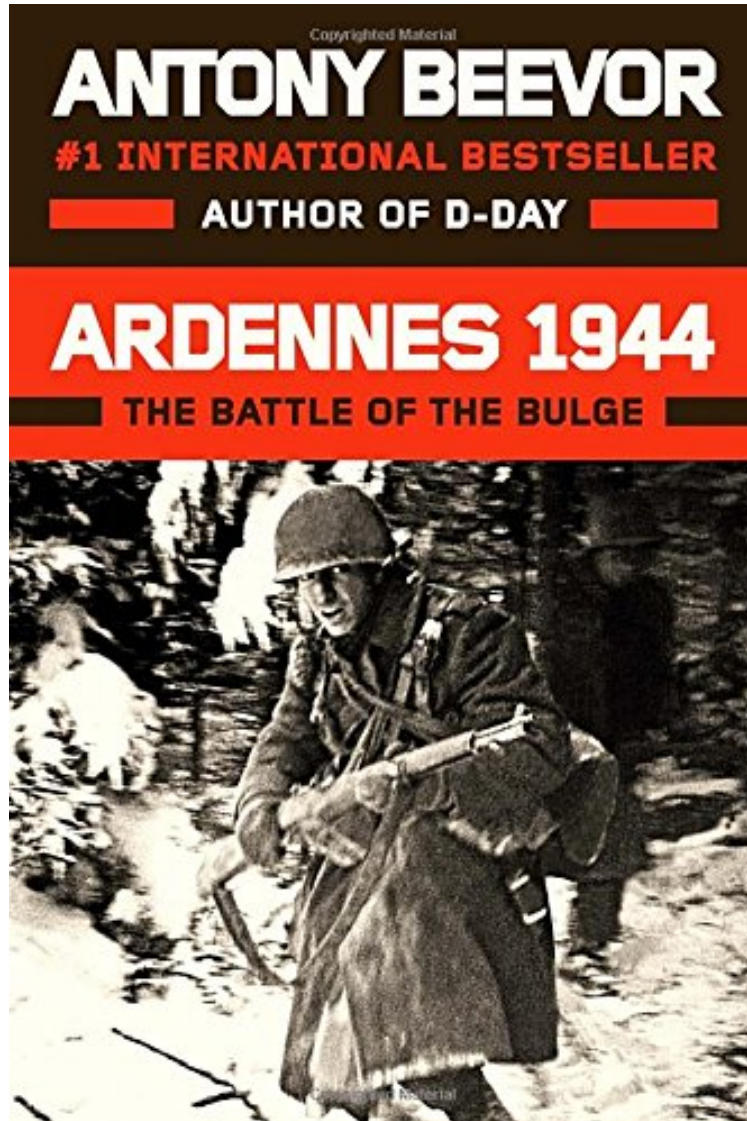


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## Ardennes 1944: The Battle of the Bulge

*Antony Beevor*

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#63343 in Books Beevor Antony 2015-11-03 2015-11-03 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.25 x 1.50 x 6.251, 1.00 #File Name: 0670025313480 pages Ardennes 1944 The Battle of the Bulge | File size: 59.Mb

**Antony Beevor : Ardennes 1944: The Battle of the Bulge** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ardennes 1944: The Battle of the Bulge:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. i'd gotten used to hearing personal stories from Hitler and the Wehrmacht and SS point of view with books like The Fall of Berlin 1945 By Aiex Halomore of what I expected from Antony Beevor's writing. He is extremely detailed on military matters without going too deeply into a shot-by-shot coverage. The scope in this book is much more compressed than any other of his I've read, with at least 1/3rd of the

chapters covering individual days between December 21st to December 26th, before resuming the usual thematic scheme rather than strict chronological coverage. I'd gotten used to hearing personal stories from Hitler and the Wehrmacht and SS point of view with books like *The Fall of Berlin 1945*, and was slightly disappointed that there was a lot less of that in this book. Instead, there's a focus on a great deal of US generals and commanders, sometimes with highly similar or unremarkable names, and almost no pictures of them among the picture-sections to be able to distinguish between them. Meanwhile, Wehrmacht and SS generals Sepp Dietrich, Hasso von Manteuffel, Model, Kokott, and Peiper all get pictures. Unfortunately, (perhaps as a result of the highly compressed nature of the offensive) there is a lot of repetition and overlap in several of the chapters, including some pseudo-spoilers about the fates of certain regiments and divisions being completely wiped out, only to have them show up a hundred pages later fresh into battle. Descriptions of certain army groups and movements start to blur together and it becomes impossible to keep track of what's happening. At least the SS and Wehrmacht divisions are fewer in number or have nicknames attached to them like "Führer Begleit", "Hitler Jugend", "Das Reich", "Hohenstaufen", while the same handful of German divisions are constantly in use, like the 3rd Panzergrenadiers, the 26th and 560th Volksgrenadiers, and the 2nd SS Panzer division. Some situations seem to not be given the appropriate coverage or tone by the author, such as the incident with Montgomery's assuming direct control over US armies in the northern shoulder and the ensuing backlash, which is treated as just another series of events by the author, yet is later described as being somehow the most catastrophic incident to the Allies, which some people believed would've caused the Western Allies to completely split apart. Another minor issue I have is with the map placement. Since so many chapters go over individual days, you are always having to go back several dozen, then several hundred pages to find the maps, separated by location and sometimes by different army movements. The worst part is some of the maps cover events unfolding over a period of 5 or more days, and are placed right at the beginning of a chapter well before you're even aware of what the map is depicting. There are two such maps devoted solely to the encirclement and destruction of a single US division which is here and gone in the first half of the chapter, and then only one map covering the Kampfgruppe Peiper advance and the locations of places like Stavelot and St Vith, which is then referred to dozens of times for the next 200 pages. Much more than his other books, this is one where you have to pay lots of attention and most likely take notes since you're unlikely to read through it all in one session.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beevor delivers another excellent history on WWII! By Andy Glass  
Beevor delivers another excellent history on WWII! I've always been a fan of WWII history and this one particularly interested me because I had an uncle who was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge. Antony Beevor delivers the story with an outstanding mix of the human side of the events - commanders, infantry and civilians - and the tactics of the battle. And without bogging things down in an academic study of the strategy. He brings the story to life through the people on the ground, what the commanders were dealing with, what it was like to be in a bunker during a shelling and how the civilian population dealt with the ever shifting lines. After reading this book, I was better able to appreciate what my uncle's experience must have been like. I've read several of Beevor's books and he always delivers!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good Read  
By Haggard I enjoyed this book very much and I have over the past years read several accounts of the "Battle of the Bulge". The anecdotal information along with the personal observations of so many of the participants really brought out the human dimension. I agree with some other reviewers that the inclusion of more maps would have been helpful. The battlefield was huge and the action difficult to follow without more detailed maps. I did find two errors that surprised me. First of all, it is extremely grating when a renowned military historian such as Anthony Beevor still refers to Patton's pistols as "pearl handled". As any historian of World War II knows, or at least should know, the pistol grips were ivory. If you want to know Patton's opinion of "pearl handled" pistols go watch George C. Scott in the 1970 movie "Patton". The second error was a bit more egregious. In Chapter 7, entitled "Intelligence Failure" Mr. Beevor states; "A German spoiling attack before Christmas was also considered to be quite likely, but hardly anybody expected it to come from the Eifel and through the Ardennes, even though the Germans had used this route in 1870, 1914 and 1940." Actually, the Germans (or more specifically the Prussians) did not come through the Ardennes in 1870. During that war both the Germans and the French were very careful not to infringe on Belgian neutrality. The German invasion came south of Luxembourg. The Germans did come through the Ardennes in 1914. They sent two field armies into the Ardennes where they were met by two French armies. The main German invasion came through Belgium north of the Ardennes when the Germans launched a three-army assault in an attempt to turn the Franco-British left flank. And of course the armies that fought in those early August battles in the Ardennes were non-mechanized infantry. The only time the Germans made the primary assault on France through the Ardennes was 1940 and in that instance the battle took place in May and the Ardennes itself was undefended. The French sought to stop the German advance on the Marne after the German mechanized units were clear of the Ardennes itself. And that battle was fought in the warm weather of May with the Germans having clear air superiority. The December 1944 battle in the Ardennes saw the US Army in position on the eastern border of the forest ensuring that the battle would take place in the rough terrain and limited road network of the Ardennes. It was winter and the Allies had overwhelming air superiority. Given those parameters and the eventual outcome of the battle it would seem that the intelligence estimate that such an assault made no military sense was correct.

The prizewinning historian and bestselling author of *D-Day* and *Stalingrad* reconstructs the Battle of the Bulge in this riveting new account. On December 16, 1944, Hitler launched his last gamble in the snow-covered forests and gorges of the Ardennes in Belgium, believing he could split the Allies by driving all the way to Antwerp and forcing the Canadians and the British out of the war. Although his generals were doubtful of success, younger officers and NCOs were desperate to believe that their homes and families could be saved from the vengeful Red Army approaching from the east. Many were exultant at the prospect of striking back. The allies, taken by surprise, found themselves fighting two panzer armies. Belgian civilians abandoned their homes, justifiably afraid of German revenge. Panic spread even to Paris. While some American soldiers, overwhelmed by the German onslaught, fled or surrendered, others held on heroically, creating breakwaters which slowed the German advance. The harsh winter conditions and the savagery of the battle became comparable to the Eastern Front. In fact the Ardennes became the Western Front's counterpart to Stalingrad. There was terrible ferocity on both sides, driven by desperation and revenge, in which the normal rules of combat were breached. The Ardennes involving more than a million men would prove to be the battle which finally broke the back of the Wehrmacht. In this deeply researched work, with striking insights into the major players on both sides, Antony Beevor gives us the definitive account of the Ardennes offensive which was to become the greatest battle of World War II.

Praise for *Ardennes 1944* One of the finest narrative military historians now writing... What makes *Ardennes 1944* so effective is not just the vividness of the prose, the clarity of the author's presentation of tactical events or his skill at evoking through description and careful quotation the look and even smell of the battlefield. Beevor also does a brilliant job of weaving together the grand operational and the tactical narratives, showing how the decisions of generals do, or do not, shape circumstances on the ground. *The New York Times Book Review* A panoramic and intricately detailed account. *USA Today* [A] searing account A salutary reminder of that thin veneer detected by Freud between the civilized and the primitive in each of us. *Ardennes 1944* ought to prompt some careful reflection on our modern age. *The Wall Street Journal* [Beevor] has become one of the most respected, as well as globally popular, chroniclers of the struggle . . . Beevor's books have hitherto gained less celebrity and sales success in the US than they deserve, but *Ardennes 1944* may be the one to change that. *New York of Books* Award-winning military historian Beevor examines the Battle of the Bulge in-depth. The result is a panoramic and remarkably frank treatment of the German attack, ordered by Hitler as a last-ditch attempt to reverse the momentum of battle in Western Europe. Beevor skewers the pretensions and weaknesses of generals and details atrocities and mistreatment of both civilians and surrendering enemies by both sides [T]his is a treasure of memorable portraits, striking details, fascinating revelations, and broad insights likely to be the definitive account of the battle for years to come. Essential reading for anyone interested in World War II. *Kirkus* (Starred) Even readers well-versed on the war in Europe will welcome this book. It is exhaustively researched and full of fresh insights and thoughtful explanations. Those who want to understand how the attack unfolded and why it failed will not find a more valuable addition to the literature on World War II. *The Christian Science Monitor* "Beevor (*The Second World War; D-Day*), who has won numerous awards for his works, demonstrates here why he is a celebrated historian and writer. *Ardennes 1944*, or 'The Battle of the Bulge,' is squarely focused on this critical World War II battle spanning August 1944 to April 1945. The author tracks troop movements and positioning throughout the long conflict, while accounting for decisions made on the field, in the war room, and all the way up the chain of command to Gen. Dwight Eisenhower. The writing is both intense and gripping... a wonderful read." *Library Journal* Beevor paints a searing portrait of a world weary of war . . . Beevor's battle descriptions crackle with you-were-there authenticity. *Boston Globe* To write the history of war is above all to tell its story. No one tells it better than Antony Beevor. He combines wide-ranging archival research, published sources, personal accounts, and firsthand knowledge of the terrain. He moves easily among discussions of policy and strategy, the personalities and interactions of commanders, and the viewpoints and standpoints of the people at the sharp end not only those in the tanks and the foxholes but the civilians caught in the mesh of modern war. And *Ardennes 1944* is arguably his best book to date. *MHQ magazine* "Beevor has the art of preserving the individual perspective on the battlefield while placing it among the perspectives of platoon, regiment, division, commanders, politicians and civilians... Beevor cares about the soldiers and the truth, an old-fashioned set of concerns that is balanced with modern literary skill. This book clarifies, without simplifying, the human experiences and political stakes of the battle for the Ardennes, bringing realism to the battlefield and coherence to the larger history of the war." Timothy Snyder in *The Guardian* Indispensable. David Aaronovitch in *The Times* *Ardennes 1944* is a book that plays very much to Beevor's strengths, combining the view from the top with the view from below and vividly portraying the dark realities of military combat. . . Beevor has delivered another perfectly judged episode of the second world war, a worthy companion to the works that made his name. Yet again, he has shown that he has the gift of alchemy. Roger Moorhouse, *The Financial Times* "What builds up is an exemplary picture of the misery and horror of this most appalling conflict, in which more than a million men fought in conditions comparable to those on the Eastern Front." Clare Mulley, *The Australian* No one has recounted it better than Beevor. His gripping, beautifully written narrative moves seamlessly from the generals' command posts to the privates in their snow-covered foxholes, and confirms him as the finest chronicler of war in the

business. Saul David, *The Observer* Beevor weaves a brilliant narrative out of all this drama. As in his previous books, his gifts are strongest in focusing on telling details from different perspectives. . . a vital historical insight. Mark Urban, *The Sunday Times* The best military prose of our era. El Pas, Spain If there's one thing that sets Beevor apart from other historians beyond his gifts as a storyteller it's because he is not afraid to look at the most uncomfortable, even frightening subjects, but does so in a way that does not threaten the reader. There's rarely a judgmental note to his writing. It's like having Virgil there to lead you through the underworld: he doesn't leave you stranded amid the horror, but leads you back out again, a wiser person for having undergone the journey. Keith Lowe in *The Daily Telegraph* The Master of War . . . The Ardennes is the latest of Beevor's books on the campaigns of the Second World War. It is a superb addition to the canon which has taken us from Stalingrad to Normandy in 1944 and the final gruesome battle for Berlin, not forgetting the masterly single-volume history of the entire war. It is written with all of Beevor's customary verve and elegance. His remarkable and trademark ability is to encompass the wide sweep of campaigns yet never forget the piquant details of what happened to the individual. . . He focuses brilliantly on the key moments that turned the battle. Robert Fox in the *Evening Standard* Beevor weaves a brilliant narrative out of all this drama. As in his previous books, his gifts are strongest in focusing on telling details from different perspectives. . . a vital historical insight. Mark Urban in *The Sunday Times* Beevor is as good on the rows behind the front lines as he is on the battles themselves . . . A sweeping, sobering read, written with all the confidence and aplomb that Beevor fans expect. Marcus Tanner in *The Independent* Exemplary. . . as ever, Beevor writes with an eye for the personal that keeps the narrative flowing. . . Also admirable is the way Beevor addresses both German and Allied courage and war crimes. Allied crimes have sometimes been underplayed or presented solely in terms of hot-blooded revenge. Beevor is braver, rightly exposing the open approval of a number of Allied generals for a policy of retaliatory execution of German prisoners. This is history as it should be written. . . Hitler's greatest mistake, Beevor argues, was that he misjudged the soldiers of an army [he] had affected to despise. This is above all the story of those soldiers, and for that alone it deserves the widest audience. Clare Mulley in *The Spectator* About the Author Antony Beevor is the bestselling author of *D-Day: The Battle for Normandy*, which received the Royal United Services Institute Westminster Medal; *The Battle for Spain*, which received the La Vanguardia Prize; *Paris After the Liberation 1944-1949*; *Stalingrad*, winner of the Samuel Johnson Prize, the Wolfson Prize for History, and the Hawthornden Prize for Literature; and *The Fall of Berlin 1945*, which received the first Longman-History Today Trustees Award. He is the recipient of the 2014 Pritzker Military Museum Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing. Beevor lives in England.