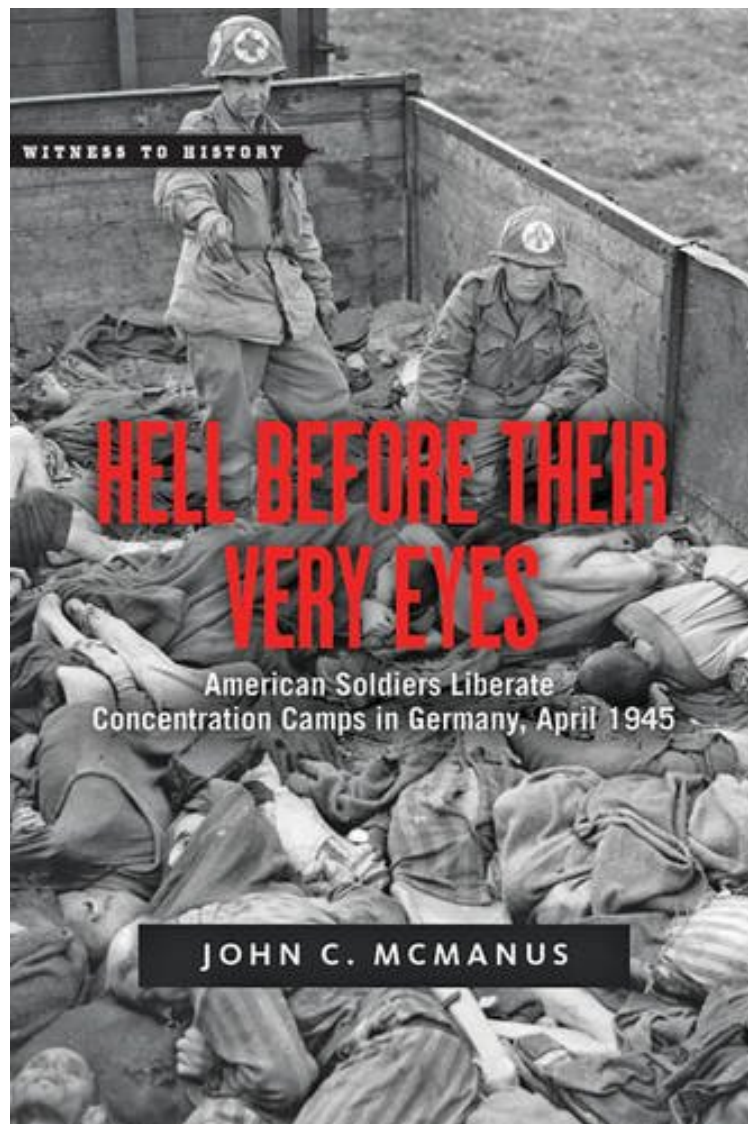


(Download) Hell Before Their Very Eyes: American Soldiers Liberate Concentration Camps in Germany, April 1945 (Witness to History)

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John C. McManus

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John C. McManus : Hell Before Their Very Eyes: American Soldiers Liberate Concentration Camps in Germany, April 1945 (Witness to History) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hell Before Their Very Eyes: American Soldiers Liberate Concentration Camps in Germany, April 1945 (Witness to History):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A small book with history
By M. Miller
The author has once again produced a well written book on a awful subject area during WW II. As with his other books concerning that war it is well researched and composed for the reader to understand the subject matter. Yes it is "smaller", but contains a great amount history in it size.
3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Powerful.
By Michael R. Riter
Firsthand accounts of the liberators' experiences. Gripping and powerful. Add this to your library, it is worth it.

On April 4, 1945, United States Army units from the 89th Infantry Division and the 4th Armored Division seized Ohrdruf, the first of many Nazi concentration camps to be liberated in Germany. In the weeks that followed, as more camps were discovered, thousands of soldiers came face to face with the monstrous reality of Hitler's Germany. These men discovered the very depths of human-imposed cruelty and depravity: railroad cars stacked with emaciated, lifeless bodies; ovens full of incinerated human remains; warehouses filled with stolen shoes, clothes, luggage, and even eyeglasses; prison yards littered with implements of torture and dead bodies; and perhaps most disturbing of all the half-dead survivors of the camps. For the American soldiers of all ranks who witnessed such powerful evidence of Nazi crimes, the experience was life altering. Almost all were haunted for the rest of their lives by what they had seen, horrified that humans from ostensibly civilized societies were capable of such crimes. Military historian John C. McManus sheds new light on this often-overlooked aspect of the Holocaust. Drawing on a rich blend of archival sources and thousands of firsthand accounts including unit journals, interviews, oral histories, memoirs, diaries, letters, and published recollections *Hell Before Their Very Eyes* focuses on the experiences of the soldiers who liberated Ohrdruf, Buchenwald, and Dachau and their determination to bear witness to this horrific history.

"This is a history that demands to be published. The use of personal witness accounts is the only way to capture the essence of the traumatic experience the American soldiers had to deal with." (Daniel D. Holt, editor of *Eisenhower: The Prewar Diaries and Selected Papers, 1905-1941*) "Describes the history of the camps with scholarly clarity while revealing the immediacy of the emotional horror witnessed by the American liberators. Full of vivid quotations, this book will capture the interest of general readers while engaging undergraduates and grounding them in the subject." (Michael C. C. Adams, Northern Kentucky University, author of *The Best War Ever: America and World War II*) "It is not a book for the faint of heart... however, I feel it is a must-read for anyone interested in the Holocaust, and particularly, those who question its occurrence." (Examiner.com) "This is the most powerful book I've read in decades." (John Greenya *The Washington Times*) "The author excels at telling the story without sensationalizing the emotional turmoil the soldiers faced. He illustrates his scholarly integrity by including in his narrative the reprisal killings against Germans perpetrated by emotionally distraught GIs." (Choice) "McManus [captures] the shock, anger, dismay, and other emotions of the soldiers who discovered what had been going on in the so-called 'Thousand Year Reich.'" (Journal of America's Military Past) "McManus skillfully uses oral histories as a counterweight to other sources..." (Michigan War Studies) "McManus has produced a fine brief survey of the American liberation of the Nazi concentration camps that is truly a compelling read." (European History Quarterly) "An absolute must read!!!" (War Diary) "Hell Before Their Very Eyes is a succinct, well-written book on an under-studied topic." (Oxford University Press Journals: Holocaust and Genocide Studies) "Overall, John McManus's *Hell Before Their Very Eyes* provides a good and important introductory resource for those unfamiliar with the true horrors of the Holocaust and a good reminder for those who may have forgotten... In a field full of excellent histories, McManus points toward some new directions for further research." (Marine Corps History) About the Author John C. McManus is a Curators Professor of History at Missouri University of Science and Technology. He is the author of *The Deadly Brotherhood: The American Combat Soldier in World War II* and *Grunts: Inside the American Infantry Combat Experience, World War II Through Iraq*.