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In a world desperate for authentic heroes, the story of Alvin C. York reminds us of the true meaning of heroism. York's bravery on the battlefield made him famous, but it was his decision to turn down the easy riches of celebrity that secured his position as one of history's greatest Christian patriots. Based on new interviews with all of York's living children, and York's own diaries, this exhaustive biography follows the young soldier from the hills of Tennessee to the battlefields of France, down Broadway in a triumphant ticker-tape parade, and back home to his family farm where he spent the rest of his life in service to his community and his God.

Sgt. York: His Life, Legend Legacy: The Remarkable Untold Story of Sgt. Alvin C. York Details

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From Reader Review Sgt. York: His Life, Legend Legacy: The Remarkable Untold Story of Sgt. Alvin C. York for online ebook

Charles Crawford says

Great book

The book tells the story of a truly great man . Reminds me of my father also a truly great man . He was born and raised in East Tennessee, Washington county. He spent most of his adult life serving his Lord and saviour Jesus Christ. Also for. His family, both his and his Alabama wives, last but not least his church. Reading the book brought back many wonderful memories of my family. The book all so have me insite into one of my early hero s again great book. God bless the author!!!!!! Keep up the good work!!!!!

Richard Bennett says

The first few chapters of "Sgt. York" told of the growing up and wild background of Alvin C. York, who finally gave his life to Christ as best as he understood, which meant NO KILLING. He became involved in his church and song director and a Second Elder, then WWI started, and he was drafted. He tried to be a conscientious objector, but the bureacracy wouldn't accept his reasons, until finally he was convinced that Peacemakers are approved by God ... in which case, he decided to fight in order to become a PEACEMAKER. In October of 1918, Sgt. York killed 24 German Soldiers, capturing 35 Machine Guns and 132 of the enemy, marched them back to the American lines in France, and a month later the war ended. Sgt. York became an instant War Hero and WWI Celebrity.

The rest of the book deals with the fact that Sgt. York would not capitalize on his celebrity status, except to make speeches in order to raise funds for a school he wished to have built in the hills of Tennessee, his home. He only had a third grade education, but he spent the remainder of his life raising funds and supporting the two school he build, so other children wouldn't be hampered by a lack of knowledge. He also married and raised a family, worked the farm, owned a store, and some land, but did not have much financial success, and was in fact just barely getting by, until he finally sold his story to Hollywood, for the WWI Gary Cooper movie, "Sargeant York". It was a hit and made Alvin some money, which he spent directly on his schools. Then the U.S. Government hounded Sgt York for 20 years for back taxes he owed, and after he became bedridden from strokes the people of the U.S. raised the funds to get the collection agencies of the I.R.S. off his back. I rated this a "4" because it's not for everybody, but it is the whole story of the life of Sgt. York, one of America's heroes.

Kevin Bowser says

What a great hero this man was. Full stop.

But I struggled to get through the story of his life. The author did an amazing job of detailing his life and demonstrate great and authentic research. However, there just may have been too many details and too little story line.

I plan to use several Sgt. Alvin York quotes in some of my own writing. But I think this book took me the longest elapsed time to read than any of the other books in my memory.

Maybe I will find the movie with Gary Cooper portraying Sgt. York. That may help a little.

Thomas Wictor says

This extremely engaging biography transforms the legendary mountain-man warrior into a human being. It answers the question, "What happens when your personal code says one thing, but your heart says another?"

Above all it's a book about a man, not a war.

J Layne says

A large section of pictures at 50%. Too small to read captions on Kindle. At end a section on what a hero is. Also a list of sources and a Biblio. A good book to read, although long and sometimes drags out. York faced legal and financial problems his entire life. He never gave up on his dream of a school for his people. The Bible Institute failed but the York Institute is still going strong according to note at end of book.

Scooter says

I had heard of Sgt York before reading, but had no idea how impressive this guy was. This isn't a story just about his war heroism. In fact Sgt York downplays and doesn't like to talk about WW I much. However, he loves to talk and talk he does about his big project of bringing schools to the Tennessee Mountain children. It is a life-long pursuit and it is surprising to hear of the opposition he faces. A great read and a great man. Wish I had met him.

Mike (the Paladin) says

I grew up in the mountains of East Tennessee. From Daniel Boone's Wilderness Road to David (Davy for my generation) Crockett the next hero to take up the mantle of sharp shooting (sharp shootin') mountain hero is Alvin York. He is a surprisingly little remembered figure when his stature at the time of his exploits is considered. Most who know of him probably do so because of the Gary Cooper movie. I've had one other book about York's life (from my local library) some years ago, but this one with its source material including many letters written in the hand of the participants (including York and Gracie) is far superior. I'd say 4 to 4.5 only backing away a little due to a few rough spots.

York was a typical man of his day, farming, blacksmithing, and doing whatever he could to make a living for his widowed mother, sister and younger brothers (9 not the one shown in the movie). He'd worked with his father doing these things and hunting the mountains from his very early youth. When his father died however Alvin, being the oldest boy still at home had to take on the task of caring for the family. Alvin did this...but he also developed a "great thirst", for whiskey. Whiskey had/has always been a big part of mountain culture.

It wasn't drunk in the presence of "women or children" but when men sat together to talk or whatever a jug came out. Alvin had undoubtedly taken his first 'taste as a "very young man" (probably early teens). In Alvin's case his taste for drink became immense. He was known a local trouble maker and was in many fights only narrowly missing big legal trouble at times. He'd work all day and drink late into the night running with the rowdies at a "Blind Tiger" (illegal bar) north of his home. The movie portrays this and one incident in the movie happened as Alvin broke up Sunday worship services shooting up the area outside the church. His mother never despaired and continued to pray for her son.

In the movie there is a dramatic scene of York on his way to kill a man who'd cheated him spared from death when a lightening bolt strikes the rifle from his hand. he rises from the ground outside the same church he'd disrupted as a revival service is in progress, looks at the hand that held the gun, picks up a shoe that has apparently been blown from his mules foot...and burns himself on it because it's still hot..then goes into the church where he's sung to the front (as the congregation sings That Old Time Religion) and at Pastor Piles gesture kneels. From that moment on he was a dedicated Christian.

Alvin's actual conversion was a bit less violent but no less through. Coming home one night very, very late he found his mother sitting, sewing and waiting her bed empty. Alvin asked why she hadn't gone to bed and she replied that she couldn't not knowing what had become of him, if he were alive or dead, so she waited for him. Then she reportedly asked him when he was going to be a "good man like his father and grand father". Alvin says that he suddenly thought of his life up till then and the life of his father and grand father in comparison. He knelt with his head in his mother's lap, repented and promised he'd give up drink and serve God.

And he did.

The best known part of York's story is that he was a Conscientious Objector who upon reflection went to fight. The story of that and his life after are laid out well here. The movie is a pretty good one and I have no gripe with it (York was able to be involved). There are places where it actually doesn't cover all that York went through. The movie moves from York's silencing of the machine guns and the capture of 132 Germans (including 4 officers) directly to his promotion and medals. There were actually months of fighting in between. The actions of York took a while to be noticed "up top" as it were.

One incident that was in the movie didn't cover all that actually happened. In the incident he was decorated for York at one point fired his rifle until he used all his available ammunition. A group of 6 German soldiers charged him with bayonets in a slightly ragged single file. He drew his Colt. (in the movie they presented a variation on this incident with York attacked and he used the captured German officer's Luger. This was because it was discovered during the making of the movie that the Colt 1911 wouldn't function with blank cartridges.) Starting from back to front York shot each one never missing a shot. It was only after this (in actuality) that York noticed the German officer among the prisoners still had his pistol (Luger). York took it from him...and it was hot. As York had been stopping the attack, the German officer had been shooting at him from behind, and missed.

The story of York's life, his marriage, his refusal to profit from his actions, his good works, his monetary troubles (including IRS problems) all make a good story of an American citizen, a common man who always looked at the deeds the rest of us call heroism as simply his duty.

Jacqueline Layne says

A large section of pictures at 50%. Too small to read captions on Kindle. Better on iPad. At end a section on what a hero is. Also a list of sources and a Biblio. A good book to read, although long and sometimes drug out. York faced legal and financial problems his entire life. He never gave up on his dream of a school for his people. The Bible Institute failed but the York Institute is still going strong according to note at end of book.

Greg says

Outstanding biography of the WWI Medal of Honor recipient who went on to a life of service. He made a tremendous difference for the good in his Appalachian community. If you've seen the movie about Sgt. York (starring Gary Cooper), it is a reasonably good representation of Alvin York's life through his return from the war. The book was inspiring, and well worth the read.

Garry Bell says

This was actually a re-read of this work by Perry. Had originally read back when came out. While still have the first copy, I ran across this copy at my favorite HPB store on the clearance shelf for two bucks. Couldn't pass it up. And, chose to re-read at the same time.

As engrossing and interesting as it was several years ago. Definitely recommend to others.
