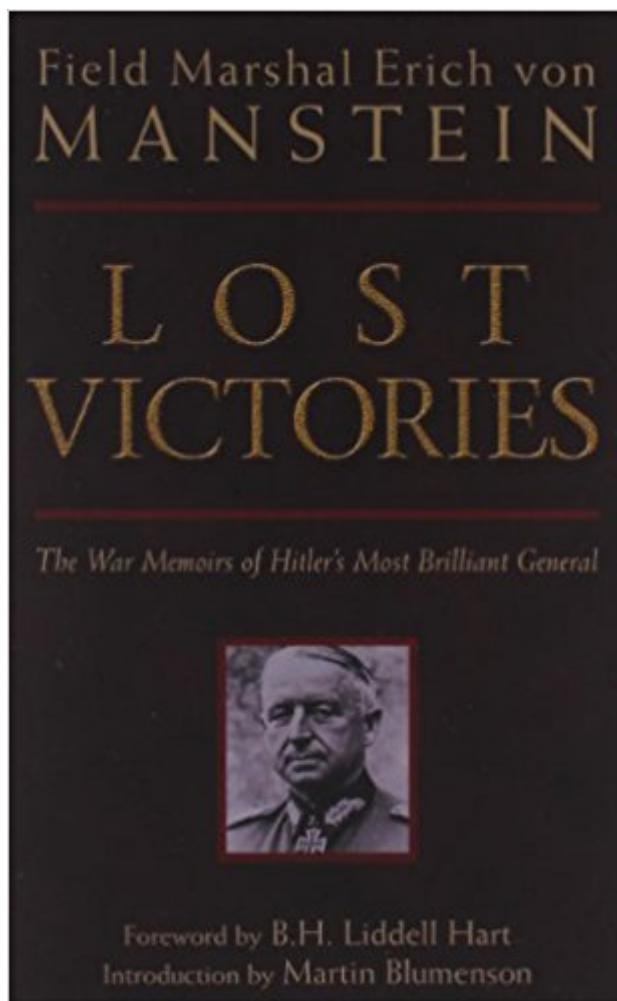


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Lost Victories: The War Memoirs Of Hitler's Most Brilliant General



Synopsis

Originally published in Germany in 1955, and in England and the United States in 1958, this classic memoir of WWII by a man who was an acknowledged military genius and probably Germany's top WWII general, is now made available again. Field Marshal Erich von Manstein described his book as a personal narrative of a soldier, discussing only those matters that had direct bearing on events in the military field. The essential thing, as he wrote, is to "know how the main personalities thought and reacted to events." This is what he tells us in this book. His account is detailed, yet dispassionate and objective. "Nothing is certain in war, when all is said and done," But in Manstein's record, at least, we can see clearly what forces were in action. In retrospect, perhaps his book takes on an even greater significance.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Wall Street Journal, October 7, 2006 "Generals don't make the best memoirists, mainly because they embellish while writing for posterity; the higher the rank, the worse the tome. The exception is the breathtaking autobiography of Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, the brilliant author of many Germany victories against the Soviets in World War II. Dismissive of oft-cited 'turning points,' such as the German defeat at Stalingrad, von Manstein contends that the war was never winnable for Germany because of the leader prosecuting it. As for Hitler's once much-vaunted kinship with regular soldiers, he says the Fuehrer had as little in common with the thoughts and emotions of soldiers as had his party with the Prussian virtues which it was so fond of invoking. Coming from Hitler's greatest general, it's a most effective filleting. • WWII

History, December 2005 – “Manstein’s Lost Victories is definitely one of the more interesting and informative German autobiographies to emerge from World War II. New publisher Zenith Press is to be commended for republishing it.”

Text: English, German (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

An incisive, well-written view of important WWII battles from the front row, this book is importantly balanced and enhanced by the accompanying commentary providing needed context about the author and his point of view. Manstein’s role in forming post-war judgments on the Wehrmacht was significant, and the commentary helps place this book in its historical context. I found that the unit-by-unit battlefield detail could be wearying, as it was difficult to follow and Kindle does not do maps particularly well. Some of this was aimed, no doubt, at acknowledging the efforts of comrades in arms. The larger assessments were far more interesting to me, including those of Hitler as a military commander/strategist and the Wehrmacht’s command, war and political issues. There is an unmistakable defensiveness to the narrative, certainly influenced by post-war and post-hoc concerns. Some of this seems to stem from Prussian military pride and tradition, offended by Hitler’s direct involvement in military decisions and operations. But there is also a great silence about the political units operating within his jurisdiction. Both the Wehrmacht and the Red Army fielded political authorities tasked with carrying out ideological warfare. These units on both sides were responsible for an appalling array of crimes against humanity. Tellingly Manstein describes the work of the Red Army’s political commissars in influencing military decisions and operations, but says nothing at all about the work of their counter-part German political units, whose crimes he was ultimately made to answer for after the war. Taken in context, this is an informative and, at times, fascinating read of significant battles by an important commander. However, it is not by any means a full and frank record of those events.

for the record, I have only finished reading the first third of this book so far; but, from what I have read so far, I can honestly say that this book is one of the most informative and detailed writings about how, strategically, modern warfare should be conducted. manstein is, indeed, a very skillful and intelligent war commander. he teaches you that wars are fought (and won) primarily by intellect and careful planning, not by sheer strength, trench warfare, and availability of weapons only. my personal advice here? just try to withstand the intensity of the information in the first third of the

book, and then hopefully you can enjoy benefitting from the richness of the information in the rest of it less intensely. history would be different if more kinds of a unique book like this were disseminated more...

A great book for anyone who studies WW2. Manstein's book covers many interesting topics including what he thought of the German military organizational structures, different military strategies that he suggested to the staff and Hitler to employ which some were followed and others were not. The author also gives interesting insights into what it was like to work with Hitler and what he was good at and where Hitler got in the way. The only thing I felt was lacking in this book was perspective of What was going on in the other theatres

This book is excellent if one likes personal memoirs. Manstein explains war from the German perspective and cites numerous military strategy, troop movement, logistics, tactical plans, victories and, defeats, while providing the reader a personal account of war. This book touches minimally on the politics of war and, there is no mention of the holocaust...the focus is on war waged by Germany. Lost Victories is well written and transcribed from the German language. Manstein provides an unvarnished picture of war and, engagement with the Russians on the eastern front. Why and how Stalingrad was lost is clarified, albeit through Manstein's view of world war II. Hitler is also described (not in depth) from Manstein's personal view, which, will intrigue the reader. Manstein who was arguably Germany's best general shares a glimpse of his personal bias, prejudice, allegiance to Germany, and, duty as a German Officer. As one who reads historical well researched military text, books, biography, and memoirs I highly recommend this book.

Great book. One can gain insight into both the mind of Hitler and that of his greatest generals. This will be useful to anyone but a complete novice on the subject of WWII. It is probably a bit heavy for a first time student of WWII, e.g., most teenagers. Manstein was both able to exploit advantages his side had and blunt advantages the enemy had; he was a true military genius. Having studied WWII in great depth from many angles, mostly strategic angles, this book provided new insight for me as to the inner workings and constraints of Hitler's army that I didn't find elsewhere. It is also interesting for those who like to ponder, "What if...?"

An even-tempered and too-forgiving professional. He hardly berates the cowardly Italians, Rumanians, and Hungarians who broke and ran when facing more manly Slavs.

I don't know whether they still read Caesar's "Commentaries" at West Point. "Lost Victories" seems almost in the same category. Neither the legions of the Empire nor the Wehrmacht will be seen again. Another global conflict would, thanks to technical "progress", destroy what we call civilization. If one wants a feeling for how terrible the conflict in the Soviet Union was, books by lower ranking soldiers are more to the point. Still, Von Manstein was the master of his art, and it is not pleasant to think of the possibilities that would have arisen if he and his fellow professionals had had full control of the German forces. His counteroffensive after the Stalingrad catastrophe was amazing. Whatever his moral failures were, Von Manstein is one of history's great captains. Those interested in the military history of WWII, the book is, of course, required reading.

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