



Etched in Purple: One Soldier's War in Europe

Frank J. Irgang

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First published in 1949, Frank J. Irgang's personal record of his unforgettable experiences as a combat infantryman during World War II has its beginning on the dawn of that famous "longest day" when Allied troops set foot on Normandy beaches. We know the surface facts of that invasion—what was planned, how it was executed, and what happened—but what most of us don't know are the thoughts of those brave men who fought their way across France and into Germany. What were they thinking? How did they meet the terror of each new day?

In this revealing look at a young American soldier's European tour of duty, the inner facts we have wanted to discover are found. And they are revealed truthfully and with a freshness of reality that would be impossible to recapture unless the observations had been jotted down, as they were, soon after the events took place. Irgang's keen eye, his unliterary terseness, his sometimes blunt way of stating brutal truths—all these contribute toward making this book more than one man's record of the war. In its unpretentiousness, *Etched in Purple* says vividly and powerfully what hundreds of other soldiers would have said had they found a means of expression: that World War II would always be etched in purple in their memories.

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