

With My Own Eyes: Bror Erickson's Unforgettable Journey as a Prisoner of War in World War II

When we reflect upon the horrors of war, we often focus on the grand narrative—the battles, the strategies, and the political machinations that shape the conflict. Yet, it is the individual stories of those who lived through these harrowing experiences that truly bring the human cost into sharp focus. Bror Erickson's memoir, "With My Own Eyes," provides a deeply personal and unforgettable account of one man's journey as a prisoner of war in World War II.

This article delves into the extraordinary story of Bror Erickson, a young American soldier who was captured by the Germans during the Battle of the Bulge. Through his detailed and moving memoir, readers are given a firsthand glimpse into the hardships, horrors, and resilience he endured during his time as a prisoner of war.

Capture and Imprisonment



With My Own Eyes by Bror Erickson

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2155 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 314 pages



Born and raised in Minnesota, Bror Erickson was just 22 years old when he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943. After training as an infantryman, he was deployed to Europe in late 1944, eager to serve his country. However, his enthusiasm was quickly dampened by the brutal realities of war.

During the Battle of the Bulge, one of the most intense and bloody battles of the war, Erickson's unit was overrun by German forces. Amidst the chaos and carnage, he found himself separated from his comrades and alone behind enemy lines. Desperate to avoid capture, he attempted to evade the enemy, but his efforts were in vain.

On December 19, 1944, Erickson was captured and taken to a temporary German prisoner-of-war camp. From there, he was transported to Stalag IV-B, a notorious POW camp located in Mühlberg, Germany.

Life in the Prisoner-of-War Camp

Life in Stalag IV-B was a nightmare. The prisoners were housed in overcrowded barracks, with little food, inadequate sanitation, and constant fear of violence. Erickson describes the relentless hunger, the freezing cold, and the endless hours spent in forced labor.

Despite these appalling conditions, Erickson and his fellow prisoners found ways to maintain their spirits and resist their captors. They organized secret

educational programs, celebrated religious holidays, and supported each other through thick and thin.

The Death March and Liberation

As the war drew to a close, the Germans began to evacuate their POW camps. Erickson and his fellow prisoners were forced to endure a brutal death march from Mühlberg to Czechoslovakia. Along the way, they faced starvation, exhaustion, and the constant threat of execution.

Finally, on May 8, 1945, Erickson and other surviving POWs were liberated by the Allies. He had endured nearly seven months of captivity, witnessing unimaginable horrors and suffering profound physical and emotional trauma.

Return Home and Recovery

Upon his return to the United States, Erickson struggled to readjust to civilian life. He was haunted by nightmares, flashbacks, and the memories of his time as a prisoner of war. With the help of therapy and the support of his family and friends, he gradually began to heal his wounds.

Over the years, Erickson dedicated himself to sharing his story with others. He spoke at schools, churches, and community events, hoping to educate people about the horrors of war and the importance of peace.

Writing "With My Own Eyes"

In the 1990s, Erickson began writing his memoir, "With My Own Eyes." It took him several years to complete and was finally published in 1997. The

book received critical acclaim and has become a valuable resource for historians, educators, and anyone interested in the human experience during World War II.

"With My Own Eyes" is not simply a story of hardship and suffering. It is also a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. Despite the unimaginable horrors he endured, Erickson never lost his hope or his determination to survive.

Legacy and Impact

Bror Erickson passed away in 2008 at the age of 85. His legacy continues through his memoir, which has touched the lives of countless people. His story serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who fought in World War II and the importance of remembering the lessons of the past.

Bror Erickson's memoir, "With My Own Eyes," is a powerful and moving account of one man's journey as a prisoner of war in World War II. Through his firsthand experiences, he provides a unique and unforgettable glimpse into the horrors of war and the resilience of the human spirit. His story is a testament to the strength and courage of those who endured the unimaginable and a reminder of the importance of peace and understanding.

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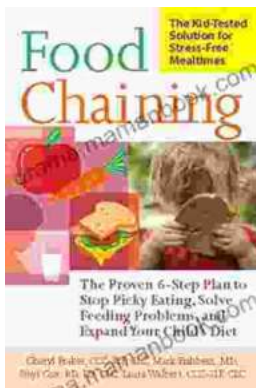
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