

Railway Reconstruction Italy September 1943 January 1946

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a nation collapses revises the traditional understanding of a critical moment in the history of world war ii the collapse of the italian fascist regime and italy's unconditional surrender in september 1943 drawing on mostly unpublished documents the book analyses the secret negotiations between italy and britain before the overthrow of mussolini in july 1943 and finds that both parties negotiated in bad faith and with a great deal of duplicity the italians therefore both underestimated the extent of the allies strategic commitment in italy and promised their conquerors a degree of military assistance which they were in no condition to deliver the situation disintegrated into a civil war as the anglo american military government which controlled southern italy invaded the german occupied north

already traumatized by unconditional surrender Italy now endured a civil war waged by foreign powers on both sides for twenty long and brutal months

in September 1943 the German army marched into Rome beginning an occupation that would last nine months until Allied forces liberated the ancient city during those 270 days clashing factions the occupying Germans the Allies the growing resistance movement and the Pope contended for control over the destiny of the eternal city in the battle for Rome Robert Katz vividly recreates the drama of the occupation and offers new information from recently declassified documents to explain the intentions of the rival forces one of the enduring myths of World War II is the legend that Rome was an open city free from military activity in fact the German occupation was brutal beginning almost immediately with the first roundup of Jews in Italy Rome was a strategic prize that the Germans and the Allies fought bitterly to win the Allied advance up the Italian peninsula from Salerno and Anzio in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war was designed to capture the Italian capital dominating the city in his own way was Pope Pius XII who used his authority in a ceaseless effort to spare Rome especially the Vatican and the papal properties from destruction but historical documents demonstrate that the Pope was as concerned about the partisans as he was about the Nazis regarding the partisans as harbingers of communism in the eternal city the Roman resistance was a coalition of political parties that agreed on little beyond liberating Rome but the partisans the organized military arm of the coalition became increasingly active and effective as the occupation lengthened Katz tells the story of two young partisans Elena and Paolo who fought side by side became lovers and later played a central role in the most significant guerrilla action of the occupation in retaliation for this action the Germans committed the Ardeatine Caves massacre slaying hundreds of Roman men and boys the Pope's decision not to intervene in that atrocity has been a source of controversy and debate among historians for decades but drawing on Vatican documents Katz authoritatively examines the matter Katz takes readers into the occupied city to witness the desperate efforts of the key actors OSS undercover agent Peter Tompkins struggling to forge an effective spy network among the partisans German diplomats working against their own government to save Rome even as they condoned the Nazi repression of its citizens Pope Pius XII anxiously trying to protect the Vatican at the risk of depending on the occupying Germans who maintained order by increasingly draconian measures and the U.S. and British commanders who disagreed about the best way to engage the enemy turning the final advance into a race to be first to take Rome the battle for Rome is a landmark work that draws on newly released documents and firsthand testimony gathered over decades to offer the finest account yet of one of the most dramatic episodes of World War II

the 44th Bomb Group which flew the B-24 Liberator was the pioneer unit for what evolved from the mighty Eighth's 2nd Bomb Wing into a full scale Bomb and later Air Division the group amassed an impressive 343 missions and won two distinguished unit citations between November 1942 and April 1945 dropping nearly 19,000 tons of ordnance in the process including the legendary August 1943 Ploesti mission these statistics were achieved at a material cost of around 200 aircraft and a human cost of some 2,000 airmen MIA as the 8th USAF focused its strategic bombing campaign in the face of determined Luftwaffe opposition

as engaging as it is astonishing this book provides extremely important revelations and striking pen portraits etched in acid of the main actors certainly the sources are fabulous John Erickson author of *The Road to Stalingrad* a well written account filled with original material and documentation good reading for anyone interested in the

history of wwii intelligence publishers weekly starred review

in 1940 the us army signal intelligence service broke the japanese diplomatic code in 1975 oshima hiroshi japan s ambassador to berlin during world war ii died never knowing that the hundreds of messages he transmitted to tokyo had been fully decoded by the americans and whisked off to washington providing a major source of information for the allies on nazi activities

air raid sirens wail searchlight beams flash across the sky and the night is aflame with tracer fire and aerial explosions as allied bombers and german anti aircraft units duel in the thundering darkness such cinematic scenes played out with increasing frequency as world war ii ground to a close were more than mere stock material for movie melodramas as edward westermann reveals they point to a key but largely unappreciated aspect of the german war effort that has yet to get its full due long the neglected stepchild in studies of world war ii air campaigns german flak or anti aircraft units have been frequently dismissed by american british and german historians and by veterans of the european air war as ineffective weapons that wasted valuable materiel and personnel resources desperately needed elsewhere by the third reich westermann emphatically disagrees with that view and makes a convincing case for the significant contributions made by the entire range of german anti aircraft defenses during the allied air campaigns against the third reich well over a million tons of bombs were dropped upon the german homeland killing nearly 300 000 civilians wounding another 780 000 and destroying more than 3 500 000 industrial and residential structures not surprisingly that aerial armageddon has inspired countless studies of both the victorious allied bombing offensive and the ultimately doomed luftwaffe defense of its own skies by contrast flak units have virtually been ignored despite the fact that they employed more than a million men and women were responsible for more than half of all allied aircraft losses forced allied bombers to fly far abovehigh accuracy altitudes and thus allowed germany to hold out far longer than it might have otherwise westermann s definitive study sheds new light on every facet of the development and organization of this vital defense arm includi

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