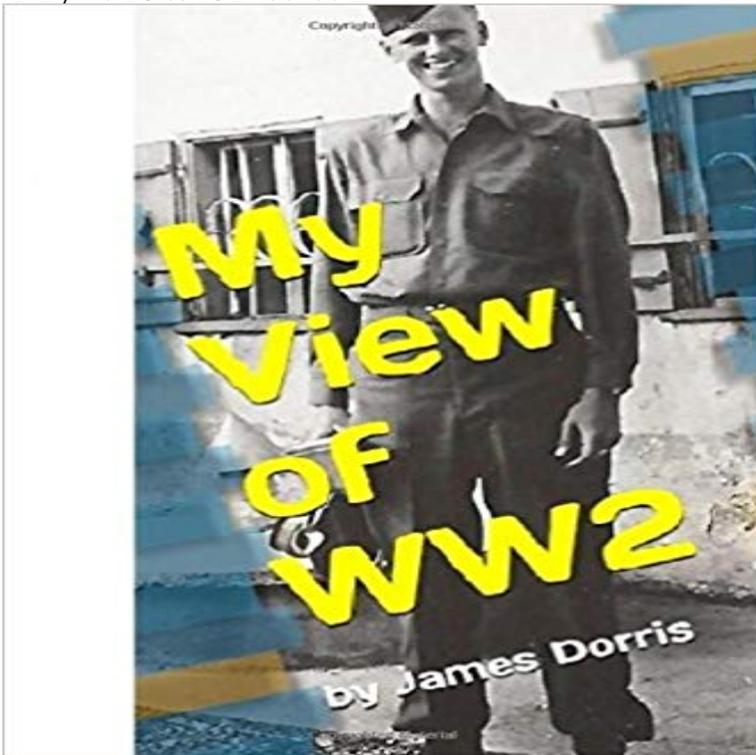


My View of WW2



My father began writing this book six years ago, when he was 84. He wanted to document his experiences for future generations of the Dorris family to share. He gave a copy to each one of his children and grandchildren. Since then copies have passed around to other family members and friends who continued to suggest a wider circulation. His story shows the depths cruelty can descend when civility is replaced with fear. Yet, even in the midst of the horror of war, compassionate acts can inspire bonds of humanity. His short book lets us know we all can overcome the fear and anger of war. This book gives a face to the real enemy. In a world increasingly polarized along national, political, or religious boundaries, his stories give a frank reminder that we should be cautious before making moral judgments about those with whom we disagree. He reminds us ones moral courage defines character. Neither cruelty nor compassion was limited to just one side of the war. My father never claimed that he was more courageous than the man fighting alongside him. He did not singlehandedly win a battle, nor did he receive any recognition beyond what many received after the war. The extraordinary acts of courage and compassion described in this book were performed by ordinary people, from both sides of the war. They send a powerful message that the potential for such acts is not restricted to just a few heroes. We all have that potential and we all must believe in the potential of others. We all must believe we can create bonds to cross enemy lines. The challenges dad faced during WW2 helped define, and test, his character. His stories of courage and of failure in the midst of the chaos have served as moral guideposts and cautionary tales for me throughout my life. My brothers, sisters, and I were undoubtedly shaped by the way he would punctuate his fatherly advice with many of the stories

recounted in this book. Even as a child, I could relate to the many life challenges his wartime predicaments would illustrate. As I began writing this introduction it occurred to me that while these stories had an impact on us, we rarely discussed them. This made me wonder how many others have relatives who fought in war have been similarly shaped by their stories. How many other people can find their core values rooted in similar war stories they heard growing up?

While my father participated in the Veterans History Project to document his experiences, there are undoubtedly many others who did not have the chance to document their experiences and valuable life lessons. My hope is that the families of those silent soldiers will find their voice in these stories.

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