



World War Novels for Adults and Teens

World War I

Anthony, Patricia. *Flanders*, 1998. In Flanders Fields, where so many died so horribly during WWI, a Texas sharpshooter finds that he can talk with the dead. First mainstream novel by an award-winning science fiction author.

Barker, Pat. *Regeneration* (1992), *The Eye in the Door* (1993), *The Ghost Road* (1995 Booker Award winner). Trilogy explores the wartime experiences of characters drawn from real life: William Rivers, a psychologist who pioneered the treatment of shell shock; his patients, poets Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon; and the fictional Lieutenant Billy Prior, a bisexual whose life as an officer is complicated by his working-class origins.

Biggins, John. *A Sailor of Austria*, 1994 and *The Two-headed Eagle*, 1996. A 101-year-old sailor recounts his life as a submarine captain for the House of Hapsburg during World War I.

Boyd, Thomas. *Through the Wheat*, 1923. U.S. Marine William Hacks is an average soldier who slowly loses his sanity as the war progresses.

Brittain, Vera. *Testament of Youth*, 1933. Memoir of young British woman whose life is shattered by the outbreak of World War I, but who survives to become a prominent author, pacifist and feminist. BBC Television production in 1979.

Cobb, Humphrey. *Paths of Glory*, 1935. Story of the fate of the members of a French battalion.

Ephron, Amy. *A Cup of Tea*, 1997. In the turbulent days of 1917, the war disrupts the lives of a New York socialite, her fiancé, and a homeless woman she befriends.

Faulks, Sebastian. *Birdsong*, 1993. A English man falls in love with a French woman, then meets her again during World War I.

Fisher, Alan. *The Rage of Angels*, 1997. A young British aviator from the wrong side of the social tracks tries to survive the last year of the war.

Graves, Robert. *Goodbye to All That*, 1929. This dramatic, poignant, and often wry memoir depicts all the horrors and disillusionment of the Great War.

Helprin, Mark. *A Soldier of the Great War*, 1991. A septuagenarian war hero and scholar recalls his most terrible adventure: World War I, a surreal parade of horrors that devastated and defined his existence.

Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*, 1929. The unforgettable story of an American ambulance driver on the Italian front and his passion for a beautiful English nurse.

Johnson, Guy. *Standing on the Scratch Line*, 1998. African-American King Tremain is forced to flee his Louisiana home and trained to kill in the WWI army.

Kennedy, William. *Rules of Encounter*, 1992. The sinking of the Lusitania: a tragic culmination of poor judgment -- or a highly placed British plot to draw in the United States as an ally?

Lawrence, Iain. *Lord of the Nutcracker Men*, 2001 (YA title). An English boy believes the battles he enacts with his toy soldiers control the war his father is fighting on the front.

MacNeil, Robert. *Burden of Desire*, 1992. A vivid love triangle set in Halifax, Nova Scotia, during the First War.

McKay, Sharon E. *Charlie Wilcox*, 2000 (YA). Newfoundland fourteen-year-old Charlie, anxious to disprove his parents' belief that his club foot makes him unfit for fishing and seal hunting, stows away on a sealing vessel only to find himself on a troop ship headed for the war in Europe.

Morpurgo, Michael. *Private Peaceful*, 2003 (YA). From England's Children's Laureate, a searing tale of two young brothers at the front.

Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 1929. Considered one of the classics of antiwar literature, the story of young Paul Baumer, who enlists in the German Army in World War I and takes his place with his comrades in the trenches.

Saunders, Kate. *Night Shall Overtake Us*, 1994. In the tumultuous years before World War I, four young girls vow their eternal friendship. In the desperate years that follow, their bond remains unbroken--until one of them betrays the others.

Shaara, Jeff. *To the Last Man*, 2004. The "Great War" through the frightened eyes of a common British soldier.

Trumbo, Dalton. *Johnny Got His Gun*, 1939. An American youth survives the war armless, legless and faceless, but with his mind intact. Winner of the National Book Award.

Willard, Tom. *The Sable Doughboys*, 1997. Two African-American brothers, the sons of a great "buffalo soldier" of the Western Indian wars, withstand vicious racial attacks in order to endure the first Negro officer training program.

World War II

Allington, Maynard. *The Fox in the Field*, 1994. As war rages across the European continent, followers of an Indian militant fight the British in India--and join its enemy, Japan, to defeat the colonial master. An amoral, half-British gambler is recruited by the British to uncloak a subversive operation called China Blue.

Anonymous. *A Woman in Berlin*, 1954. For eight weeks in 1945, as most of the world cheered the demise of Nazism, a young German woman kept a scribbled daily record of the horrific experiences of herself and her fellow apartment dwellers in newly liberated Berlin. A shocking testimony to the brutal aftermath of war.

Beach, Edward Latimer. *Run Silent, Run Deep*, 1955. Classic tale of the U. S. Submarine Service.

Berg, Elizabeth. *Dream When You're Feeling Blue*, 2007. Through their letters, sisters Kitty and Louise tell their tales after the boys leave for battle during World War II and Kitty joins the USO as a dancer.

Bernau, George. *Black Phoenix*, 1994. Two American agents must find a way to destroy a German superweapon during the last days of World War II.

Boyne, Walter. *Eagles at War*, 1991 (YA). The story of the buildup and growth of the airplane industry and the Air Force, told through thrilling combat scenes and tales of behind-the-scenes scandal.

Brady, James. *Warning of War: A Novel of the North China Marines* (2001). In November 1941, Marine Capt. Billy Port must evacuate isolated Marine detachments from Japanese-occupied China and lead them over the Great Wall into icy Siberia.

Bruchac, Joseph. *Code Talker*, 2005 (YA). After being taught in a boarding school run by whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue.

Bunkley, Anita. *Wild Embers*, 1995. The adventures of an African-American nurse after Pearl Harbor.

Chambers, Aidan. *Postcards from No Man's Land*, 1999 (YA). Winner of the Carnegie Medal. As 17-year-old Jacob Todd visits contemporary Amsterdam to learn about his grandfather's wartime death there, a parallel story is told of 19-year-old Geertrui, who hides a British soldier named Jacob Todd during the Allied retreat of 1944.

Cook, Nick. *Angel, Archangel* (1990). In early 1945, a cabal of Soviet officers is on the verge of launching Operation Archangel, an all-out offensive against not the Wehrmacht but Russia's Western allies. Exposing the plot may incite a new world war.

Davis, Don. *Appointment with the Squire*, 1995. Hitler launches a desperate, top-secret mission in this absorbing "what-if" thriller set in 1944, dispatching assassins to Washington, London and Moscow to murder Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin.

De Bernieres, Louis *Corelli's Mandolin*, 1994. The remote Greek island of Cephalonia is only beginning to enter the twentieth century when the tide of World War II rolls onto its shores. This is the lyrical, heartbreaking, and hilarious chronicle of the days and nights of the island's inhabitants over fifty tumultuous years.

Denny, Robert *Aces* (1990), *Night Run* (1992). Adventures of B-17 pilots, written by a former pilot and journalist.

Eden, Marc. *The Spy*, 1993. Young widow and mother Valerie Sinclair is recruited to spy for the British due to her photographic memory. Based on a real-life memoir.

Faulks, Sebastian. *Charlotte Gray*, 1998. A young Scottish woman travels to London in order to contribute to the war effort, but instead falls in love with an RAF pilot shortly before his plane is lost over France. Determined to learn his fate, she too undertakes a mission to France as a courier for British Intelligence, then stays on to work for the resistance.

Finney Jr., Ernest. *Words of my Roaring*, 1993. Set in the small town of San Bruno, this is a compelling picture of the confusions, the dislocations, and the brutality of war as they affect the home front.

Fleming, Thomas. *Time and Tide* (1987). Accused of cowardice under fire, the men of the USS Jefferson City fight to prove their valor at Guadalcanal and Okinawa.

Furst, Alan. *The Polish Officer, The World at Night, Red Gold, Blood of Victory*. One of the pre-eminent spy novelists alive today, Furst specializes in espionage before and during World War Two.

Gobbell, John J. *The Last Lieutenant*, 1995. On Corregidor Island, the last American outpost in the South Pacific, Navy Lt. Todd Ingram refuses to give up the fight when Corregidor is surrendered to the Japanese.

Harris, Robert. *Enigma*, 1997. Tom Jericho desperately tries to crack the Nazi Enigma code before German U-boats sink American convoys bringing supplies and munitions to Europe.

Heller, Joseph. *Catch-22*, 1961. The groundbreaking black comedy about war and authority.

Huth, Angela. *Land Girls*, 1996. Prudence, Ag, and Stella arrive in Yorkshire in 1941 to work as "land girls," young women trained by the government to replace the male farmhands who are off fighting for their country.

Iles, Greg. *Black Cross*, 1994. A physician from Georgia and a German Jew try to forestall Hitler's use of poison nerve gas during World War II by destroying a secret laboratory hidden in a Nazi death camp.

Jones, James. *The Thin Red Line*, 1962. Classic from the author of *From Here to Eternity* follows the men of Charlie Company on Guadalcanal.

Kerr, Philip. *Hitler's Peace*, 2005. It is 1943, and Hitler, as he is losing the war, is desperate to sign a separate peace with either Roosevelt or Stalin, leaving him free to fight the remaining ally.

Lawrence, Iain. *B for Buster*, 2004 (YA). Sixteen-year-old Kak lies about his age to enlist in the Canadian Air Force and finds himself part of a crew flying bombing raids over Germany. A Junior Library Guild selection.

Leavitt, David. *While England Sleeps* (1993, revised 1995). A romance between English writer Brian Botsford and Communist activist Edward Phelan is complicated by war and politics. The poet Stephen Spender (then in his 80s) sued Leavitt for plagiarizing Spender's 1951 memoir *World Within World*. The case was settled out of court, and the English edition was revised. Leavitt's afterword defends himself against Spender's accusations.

Lefebure, Molly. *Thunder in the Sky*, 1993. The destruction of Lorna Washbourne's East Anglian home to build an airfield represents the first of many changes she experiences after the Americans arrive in 1942.

Mailer, Norman. *The Naked and the Dead*, 1948. Many consider this the finest American combat novel. Written in gritty, journalistic detail, the story follows an army platoon of foot soldiers who are fighting for the possession of the Japanese-held island of Anopopei.

Matthews, Greg. *The Wisdom of Stones*, 1994. Three friends in a nonstop odyssey of adventure set in Australia's bush country and in the battle sites of the southwest Pacific.

Mazer, Harry. *Boy at War*, 2001 (YA). While fishing with his friends off Honolulu on December 7, 1941, teenaged Adam is caught in the midst of the Japanese attack and through the chaos of the subsequent days tries to find his father, a naval officer who was serving on the U.S.S. Arizona when the bombs fell.

McCormick, John R. *The Right Kind of War*, 1992. Told from a private's viewpoint, the novel follows a company of U.S. Marine Corps Raiders across several Pacific islands as they fight the Japanese as well as their other enemies--disease, fear, and boredom.

McCutchan, Philip. McCutchan's 10 years at sea have resulted in nearly 90 naval adventure tales, including the Commander Shaw, Lieutenant Halfhyde and Commodore Kemp series. His Donald Cameron series follows the adventures of a Lieutenant-Commander in the Royal Naval Reserve.

Ondaatje, Michael. *The English Patient*, 1992. This Booker Prize-winning novel traces the intersection of four damaged lives in an Italian villa at the end of World War II. Hana, the exhausted nurse; the maimed thief, Caravaggio; the wary sapper, Kip: each is haunted by the riddle of the English patient, the nameless, burned man who lies in an upstairs room.

Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*, 2002 (YA). A poignant novel about the

Japanese occupation of Korea, when even Korean names were forbidden. Kim Sun-hee and her older brother Tae-yul must cope not only with the rigors of occupation but their own family secrets as well.

Peet, Mal. *Tamar*, 2005 (YA). When her grandfather dies, Tamar inherits a box containing a series of clues and coded messages. Out of the past, another Tamar emerges, a man involved in the terrifying world of resistance fighters in Nazi-occupied Holland half a century before. Carnegie Medal winner.

Reeman, Douglas. *A Ship Must Die*, 1979. January 1944 in the Indian Ocean: British ships are sinking due to a German armed raider, disguised to deceive unwary merchantmen. In Australia, HMS Andromeda is put to sea to seek and destroy the raider.

Robbins, David L. Many well-reviewed WW2 titles including *War of the Rats* (1999, battle of Stalingrad), *The End of War* (2000, the fall of Berlin), *Last Citadel* (2003, the battle of Kursk), *Liberation Road* (2005, the Red Ball Express).

Russell, Maria Doria. *A Thread of Grace*, 2005. Told through the experiences of one fictional family, the little-known but true story of the network of Italian citizens who saved the lives of forty-three thousand Jews during the war's final phase.

Shaara, Jeff. *Rising Tide*, 2006. The launch of Shaara's proposed WWII trilogy focuses on the brutal desert warfare of 1942 and 1943.

Shreve, Anita. *Resistance*, 1995. In December 1943, a downed American fighter pilot is rescued and hidden by a young Belgian woman who falls in love with him.

Taylor, Theodore. *To Kill the Leopard*, 1993. A riveting account of the hunt for the elusive leopard U-boat as told from both the Allied and German points of view.

Trotter, William. *Winter Fire*, 1992. While on duty in Finland, German intelligence officer Erich Ziegler meets the composer Jean Sibelius and learns that Sibelius's long-awaited eighth symphony may exist. But after angering his superiors, Ziegler is sent to the Russian front.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five*, 1969. Billy Pilgrim is unstuck in time. We follow Pilgrim simultaneously through all phases of his life, concentrating on his (and Vonnegut's) shattering experience as an American prisoner of war who witnesses the firebombing of Dresden.

Wesley, Mary. *Part of the Furniture*, 1997. Seventeen-year-old Juno Marlowe is caught in a London air raid where she is sheltered overnight by a dying stranger, who then asks her to deliver a letter to his father. Juno is launched on a defiant journey through the blacked-out English countryside to his eccentric but nurturing family.