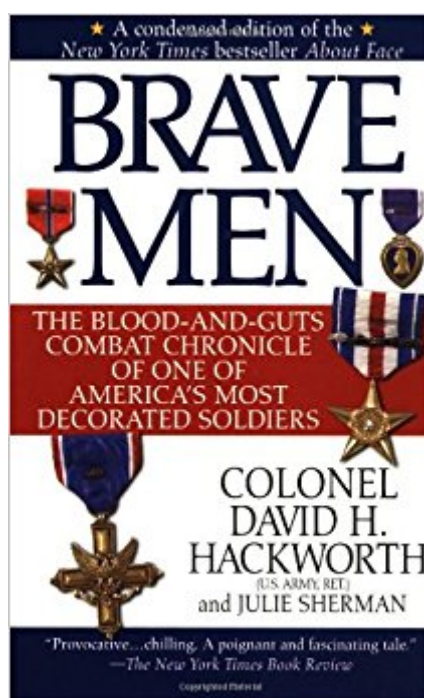


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# Brave Men: The Blood-and-Guts Combat Chronicle Of One Of America's Most Decorated Soldiers



## Synopsis

Odyssey of an Infantryman Condensed from Colonel David H. Hackworth's blockbuster New York Times bestseller, *About Face, Brave Men* is an explosive battlefield chronicle from one of America's most decorated soldiers. Vividly recalling his experiences as an infantry leader, Hackworth takes you to the steep, razor-backed hills and bone-chilling cold of Korea, to the steamy guerrilla-infested jungles of Vietnam, to the real wars fought in the chaos of close combat. Here is Hackworth himself, jumping onto tanks to fire .50 caliber guns...charging through the smoke of frag grenades to land in front of the enemy...taking prisoners at bayonet point with an empty rifle...revealing the brutal emotions of battle...and witnessing heroism of the highest order. Here is the hard-fought, hard-won legacy of one man, who in 25 years amassed more than 110 medals. *Brave Men* stands as one of the most extraordinary military memoirs of our time.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The New York Times Book Review Provocative...chilling. A poignant and fascinating tale. The Washington Post Book World An exceptional warrior...a soldier's soldier. Hackworth has written a fine and affecting autobiography.

Chapter One Bullets and Blood When I first saw them, about a thousand yards to our front, the enemy looked like little black ants racing from the village toward snow-covered hills, The sixth of February 1951 was a clear, cloudless morning; the temperature hovered around zero as the tanks kept rolling, closing on the ants and the hills set astride the road dead ahead. My squad was riding

piggyback on the lead tank. It was no honor being first in the grim parade. We'd already ravaged the tank's toolbox and knocked off some rations to eat on the way, and now our only comfort was the motor of the M46, which belched welcome heat over our near-frozen bodies. The tank commander relayed Lieutenant Land's order to dismount. I got the guys off like a shot and hit the ground running as the tank rolled on beside us. But when I looked behind me, I saw that the rest of the 3d Platoon had not dismounted. Maybe I'd heard wrong. Maybe I was just overeager. But it's damn near impossible for infantrymen to reboard a moving tank, so there was no choice but to keep running and hope I hadn't blown it too badly with our platoon leader. I didn't see the ants again for what seemed a lifetime, but I sure as hell knew where they were. In an instant the familiar roar of the tanks was drowned out by the deafening sound of incoming -- machine gun, mortar, artillery, and self-propelled antitank (AT) fire. There were at least a dozen enemy machine guns on the high ground on both sides of the road. Our tanks immediately moved out of the cross fire; my guys were totally shielded as we continued running along the east side of our maneuvering tank. The other squads, on the exposed decks of their tanks, were hard hit by the time we made it to the side of a rice-paddy wall and set Lip a base of fire, most of what was left of 3d Platoon was scattered across the frozen ground. Once the tanks pulled off the road and rolled into position, they froze. Earlier, in the assembly area, a tank commander had told me his unit, the 64th Tank Battalion, hadn't seen much hard combat, I believed him: as soon as they were fired upon, these tankers became paralyzed. They plumb forgot all their training and just sat there in those great big armored hulls while the enemy went on throwing everything at us but the mess hall wok. I jumped on the back of the tank platoon leader's vehicle and thumped on the hatch with the butt of my rifle. The lieutenant opened the hatch a crack. "Hey, Lieutenant," I yelled, "get some fire going at the enemy! Get the big guns going, ' Get the machine guns going!" The tank lieutenant was not with it. It seemed as though he had no comprehension of the fix we were in. Slugs were splatting hard on the side of the tank. The self-propelled AT fire, which was screaming down the valley, dug deep furrows all around us, and yet the tanks still sat there silently, like big, fat clay ducks at a shooting gallery. "Sergeant," the tank lieutenant finally said, in a shell-shocked kind of daze, "look...you see that out there on the ice?" Yes, I saw: it was a pile cap, a little fur ball on the ice amid my platoon's dead and wounded, the bullets and the blood. "That's my cap," he said. "Would you get it for me?" I considered shooting the sorry son of a bitch then and there, climbing inside his tank and taking command. Fortunately, reason prevailed: I just grabbed him and shook him until he looked as if he was back to the real world. Then I instructed him to have three tanks concentrate on the self-propelled AT fire to our front, and use the others to start placing main-gun fire on the hills. To give him a bit of

encouragement, I manned the tank's .50-caliber turret machine gun and blasted one of the hills myself, until I'd used up all the ammo and the commander got his men into action. Once the 90mm guns got going, we were on our way to gaining fire superiority. The amount of Incoming decreased as the tankers started to remember why they were there. But the tank commanders stayed buttoned up inside their turrets. No one was using the .50 calibers. I just couldn't believe it -eight inches of steel between them and the chaos outside, yet they didn't have it in them to help the sun come out for the guys stopping slugs with their field jackets. I went from tank to tank, pounding on the hatches and blasting away on each of the .50s until all the ammo was exhausted. This little exercise had its effect; the tank commanders got the word and started doing what they should have been doing all along. When no further spoon-feeding was required, I returned to my platoon. There were dead and wounded everywhere. Slugs were ricocheting off the ice; we could see sparks where they hit. Jim Parker's 2d Platoon had successfully silenced an enemy machine gun to our left, so the pressure was off enough for us to get our wounded behind the protection of the tanks and paddy walls, where they could be patched up. Our progress was hampered, though, because the tank crews kept moving their tanks. They didn't stop to think they were exposing our wounded all over again; they were too busy trying to save their own armor-coated skins. I told the tank lieutenant, whom I'd come to view -- and treat accordingly -- as a recruit at Fort Knox, that the next time a tank moved and exposed our guys, I'd fire a 3.5 bazooka right up its ass. There was no more movement. I saw a soldier prone on the ice. He'd been there a long time; I thought he was dead. But then I saw movement, and rushed out to get him. My God, I thought, it's Deboer. Private Henry C. Deboer had been with George Company since early in the war. He was one of the few survivors from the original 3d Platoon, basically because in those first hard months of combat, he had not seen one good firefight. He had an uncanny sixth sense; he could always tell when the platoon was in for a major bloodletting, and invariably he'd find an excuse to be somewhere else. Normally that excuse was going on sick call, which by regulation he was allowed to do, and you couldn't stop him even though you knew the only thing that was wrong with him was a chronic case of cowardice. Deboer himself even admitted he was a coward, and we hated him for it. He was an outcast from the platoon; we even had a little song about him, which we'd all sing in unison: "Out of the dark, dreary Korean countryside comes the call of the Deboer bird: sick call, sick call, sick call." He'd pulled his stunt only yesterday, as we were saddling up for this very operation. He'd sensed the bloodletting, all right, but hadn't figured that the foggy overcast covering the battlefield would not lift and the attack would be postponed. He'd returned from the doc last night (with a clean bill of health) most surprised to see us; the rest of the platoon took great pleasure in the fact that his malingering little ass would be in

the thick of things in the morning. Now Deboer was ashen-faced, hit in the chest or gut -- I didn't know, there was a lot of blood -- and well into shock. I knew he wasn't going to make it. "Come on, Deboer, you're going to be fine! You'll be all right," I said, giving him the old pep talk as I grabbed his jacket collar and started sliding him across the ice. But Deboer said, "No, Sarge! Just leave me ... you're going to get hit! Just leave me, Sarge..." Then suddenly he groaned: "Sarge, I shit my pants..." and that was it. He was gone. I left him and ran back. Deboer, in death, became one of the great heroes of our outfit. It was true he'd never been anything in his Army life but a coward, but he'd died right -- he died like a man. He didn't say, "Take care of me"; he said, "Leave me. Take care of yourself." And when I told the other guys the story, old Deboer became a legend in the platoon. The road ran north-south, and we were on the east side of it. First and 2d platoons -- the balance of G Company -- were on the attack, maneuvering to secure the high ground to the north and west. My platoon, or what was left of it, was the "fix 'em" element, tying down the enemy while providing a base of fire for Parker's and Phil Gilchrist's people. After we got organized, I had a moment to look around. I saw my platoon leader, Lieutenant Land, sort of crouched down, leaning against the rice-paddy wall, observing the whole action. John Land was a good man; a WW II vet and former G Company NCO, he was one of the few battlefield commissions in the 27th Infantry Regiment. Isn't he a cool customer, I thought to myself now, just watching this whole thing and taking it all in. Because really that was about the only thing you could do at a time like this: stay cool, stay down, and establish fire superiority as best you could. I examined what we had left in terms of a fighting force. "Tennessee" Mitchell, Delbert Bell, old Deboer -- there were seven dead altogether, and about a dozen wounded. The platoon sergeant was gone and the assistant platoon sergeant nowhere in sight. It seemed that all that was left of 3d Platoon was the balance of my squad, bits and pieces of the other two, and a light-machine-gun team. I ran over to the Lieutenant to ask for instructions. When I got there, I realized the reason Lieutenant Land was so cool was that he was dead. He'd caught a slug right between the eyes, The blood had poured down his face and chest, filled up the eyepieces, of his binoculars and frozen there. I took the binoculars and slipped the radio from his dead radio operator's back. I called Captain Michaely, our company commander, and gave him a situation report ("sitrep"). He said I was now in charge, that we were to continue tying down the enemy and to get the wounded out, in that order of priority. Lieutenant Gilchrist's 1st Platoon was having a hell of a time. Their attack was being held up by fire from a good number of well-concealed enemy automaticweapons positions on the high ground west of the road. Meanwhile, just as we'd gotten the wounded under control, one of the 3d Platoon guys who'd been doing some scouting spotted North Korean fighting positions directly in fr...

My career Army son requested this. He is a history buff and found this to be just what he wanted.

The finest infantry officer the US Army has ever produced. He knew a soldier's life from all perspectives enlisted through officers

I did not think it well written.

Brother in law loved it. That is all that counts!

This is an EXTREMELY ABRIDGED version of "ABOUT FACE", Col Hackworth's 836 page masterpiece. Don't get cheated out of the enjoyment. When I had finished the first chapter of "ABOUT FACE", I was all ready dreading the day there would be no more to read.

This book, "Brave Men," is pretty much just a reprint of his autobiography, "About Face." Save your money and buy "About Face." Otherwise, they are both good reads, factual, and realistic, if somewhat opinionated. One caution: Col. Hackworth does not hesitate to give strong opinions in areas in which he is not qualified, such as the Sherman tank.

Truly a American hero! David Hackworth was only 15 years old when he first went into the service. He later found himself having to fight in a deadly war with death and hurt all around him. Not only did he survive he came out as the most decorated man alive today. Read about Hackworth and learn how he had to fight to stay alive in a place where it's kill or be killed. I know it's a harsh term but it was true read this book and find yourself on the front line of a bloody and body/mind testing war. Worth the money any day of the week, good reading.

This is an outstanding book about one of the greatest soldiers ever! Read this book. It is excellent--gripping--full of great lessons on leadership and military techniques. If you're not in the military, but like military history, you would also like this book. It is stock full of war stories and great tales of feats that are just absolutely amazing! Read this book. It's a keeper. Hack's stories and lessons learned help me every day as I lead my platoon...2 miles from North Korea.

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