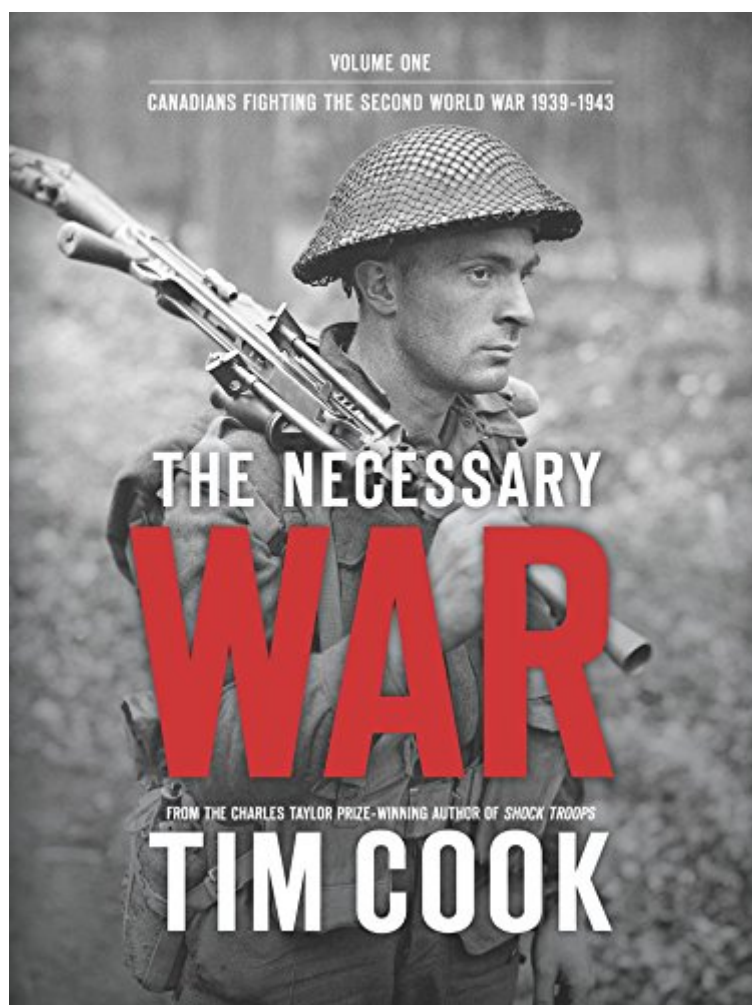


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The Necessary War, Volume 1



Synopsis

Co-winner of the 2014-2015 Charles P. Stacey Award Tim Cook, Canada's leading war historian, ventures deep into World War Two in this epic two-volume story of heroism and horror, of loss and longing, sacrifice and endurance. Written in Cook's compelling narrative style, this book shows in impressive detail how soldiers, airmen, and sailors fought the evolving tactics, weapons of war, logistics, and technology. It gauges Canadian effectiveness against the skilled enemy whom they confronted in battlefields from 1939 to 1943, from the sweltering heat of Sicily to the frigid North Atlantic, and from the urban warfare of Ortona to the dark skies over Germany. *The Necessary War* examines the equally important factors of morale, discipline, and fortitude of the Canadian citizen-soldiers. The war was an engine of transformation for Canada. With a population of fewer than twelve million, Canada embraced its role as an arsenal of democracy, exporting war supplies, feeding its allies, and raising a million-strong armed forces that served and fought in nearly every theatre of war. The nation was mobilized like never before in the fight to preserve the liberal democratic order. The six-year-long exertion caused disruption, provoked nationwide industrialization, ushered in changes to gender roles, exacerbated the tension between English and French, and forged a new sense of Canadian identity. Canadians were willing to bear almost any burden and to pay the ultimate price in the pursuit of victory. As with his award-winning two-volume series on WWI, Tim Cook uses original sources, letters from soldiers, rare documents, and maps of battlefields to illustrate the contributions and sacrifices made by what is often called the greatest generation. Magisterial in its scope, *The Necessary War* illuminates Canada's past as never before. From the Western Front to the home front, Canadians served many roles in a war that had to be fought and won.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is excellent from cover to cover. Tim Cook takes up right where he left off with *At the Sharp End* and *Shock Troops*, and delivers another invaluable account of Canadians at war. The genius of how Cook writes is he seamlessly blends scope and context so that the reader is both transfixed by the vibrant storytelling, as well as effortlessly brought through the complex events of the Battle of the Atlantic, the Italian Campaign, the war at home, and everywhere in between. This funnel effect to Cook's writing is best exemplified in his vivid account of the Battle of the Atlantic. The reader is carefully led through first the political and strategic implications of this titanic struggle, with grand goals and intimate discussions between admirals and political leaders being the focus, and then is brought down through successive layers of command until the gunner's story from the deck of a wave-lashed Corvette is told. That is the magic of Tim Cook's writing, where seamlessly the reader is informed of all levels of the story, from grand strategy right down to squad-level tactics – all brought to life by individual stories of regular Canadians doing their part in a gigantic war. The scholarship of this work, as is typical for Cook, is exemplary. For the historian reader, one will be pleased to see that Tim Cook backs his analysis with ample archival and secondary research. The breadth of material consulted for this book will impress any discerning historian. Serious analysis and criticism, as featured in Cook's discussion of the Bombing Campaign in Europe, or the failed raid at Dieppe, is balanced with occasional gems of wit and humour exemplifying the human side of the war.

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