

A Morning in June: Defending Outpost Harry

Mr. James W. Evans



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By June 1953 the Korean War, marked at the outset by extremely fluid advances and retreats up and down the peninsula, had settled into position warfare very near the original pre-war demarcation line between North and South Korea. At this point both sides were fighting to win a peace, to achieve incremental advantages that could be translated into gains at the peace negotiations in Panmunjom. These last days of the war saw savage battles for control of important local terrain features, and in the trench warfare of the Chorwon Valley a young U.S. Army lieutenant was assigned to lead an infantry company charged with holding Outpost Harry against a determined Chinese assault.

The battle devolved into hand-to-hand combat during a period of constant, intense fighting that lasted two days. The author, although seriously wounded that night, refused evacuation and remained on the hill to successfully lead his company in defense of the outpost. It wasn't romantic; it wasn't chivalrous; and many died or were badly wounded. Some of the survivors never fully overcame the mental and physical damage they suffered during the nightmare.

With this book, one of those scarred by that experience recounts the events of the battle and his lifelong efforts to deal with the residual horrors. The Korean Conflict may be called "the forgotten war" by some, but not by those who were on the front lines.

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