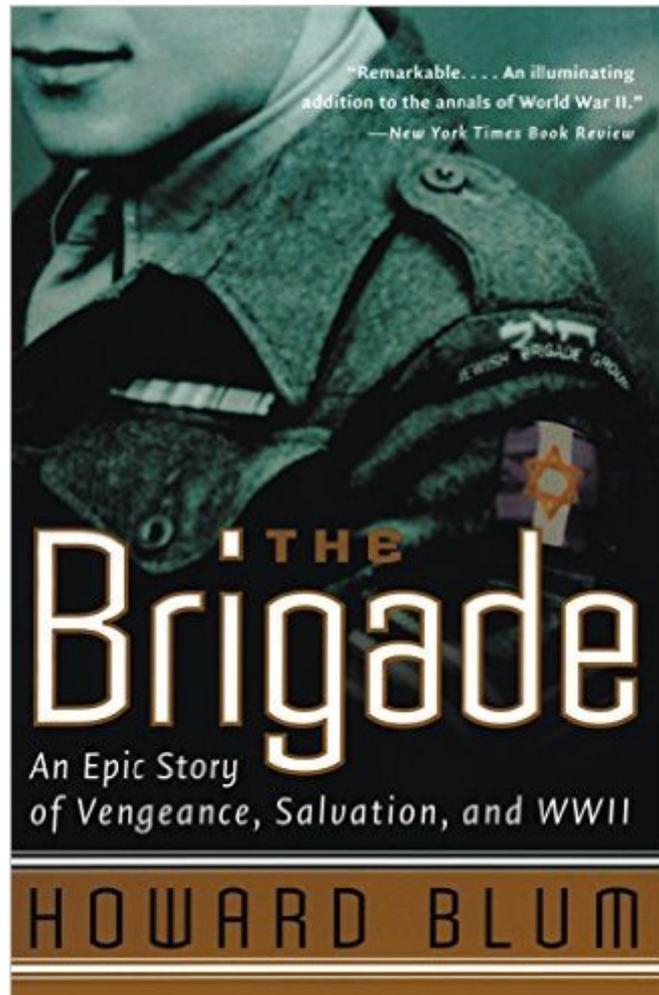


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The Brigade: An Epic Story Of Vengeance, Salvation, And WWII



Synopsis

November 1944. The British government finally agrees to send a brigade of 5,000 Jewish volunteers from Palestine to Europe to fight the German army. But when the war ends and the soldiers witness firsthand the horrors their people have suffered in the concentration camps, the men launch a brutal and calculating campaign of vengeance, forming secret squads to identify, locate, and kill Nazi officers in hiding. Their own ferocity threatens to overwhelm them until a fortuitous encounter with an orphaned girl sets the men on a course of action—rescuing Jewish war orphans and transporting them to Palestine—that will not only change their lives but also help create a nation and forever alter the course of world history.

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Customer Reviews

Rarely does a history interweave compelling personal histories and enormous social/moral themes as does Howard Blum's moving and convincing "The Brigade." This work does far more than describe the formation, engagements and ultimate triumphs of the first organized Jewish armed forces in two millenia; it firmly places the five thousand Jewish Palestinian volunteers who fought with the Star of David proudly placed on their shoulders in the center of Jewish history. The men who would don British uniforms would fight for a myriad of purposes: out of anger against the unspeakable evil of the Holocaust, from an awareness that they were living rebukes to the notion that Jews served as deserving recipients of passive suffering, with a sense of their historical purpose of establishing a Jewish homeland and becoming ironic adversaries of the very nation (Britain) which enlisted their service. Though "The Brigade" nobly treats the themes of Jewish armed

resistance, vengeance and ultimate salvation, this memorable history above all signals the profound development of a renewed Jewish identity, forged in battle against the background of genocide and ruin, tested by personal sorrow and fortified by a messianic vision of a Jewish homeland for the shattered remnants of European Jewry. The Jewish fighters are proud, heroic and consecrated to their vision; they become increasingly aware of their role in a Jewish future. Initially consumed by rage and the obvious need to crush their German enemy, the three members of The Brigade on whom this history focuses evolve morally. From murderous avengers of the crime of mass murder, these men ultimately perceive their role as guardians of those Jews who survived the Holocaust, especially the children, as central to their lives' meaning.

An Israeli "Band of Brothers" All those who loved the recent HBO miniseries (and Stephen Ambrose book) "Band of Brothers" will also enjoy "The Brigade" by Howard Bloom. "The Brigade" is the story of the Jewish Brigade Group, a unit made up of Jews - mostly from the then-British mandate of Palestine. Also known as the Jewish Fighting Brigade, it was formed in 1944 and played a critical role in the defeat of the Nazi armies in Northern Italy in 1945 as integral part of the British 8th Army. Like "Band of Brothers", "The Brigade" not only gives us a history of the unit as a whole, but also allows us to get a better understanding of some of the individual members. In place of Dick Winters, Lewis Nixon, Carwood Lipton, etc. we have Sgt. Israel Carmi, Cap't Johanthan Peltz, and Lt. Arie Pinchuk. And while "Band of Brothers" reaches its anticlimax in May of 1945 (or even in earlier in '45, after the victory at Bastogne), the story of the Jewish Brigade only gets more interesting after the war "officially" ends. Though nominally part of the British army, the loyalty of most members was to the Jewish people. Service in the British army was seen merely as a means to an end. It was in this spirit, that the Brigade (aided by elements of American intelligence) started to carry out a campaign to identify and eliminate Nazi war criminals that had evaded Allied arrest. Their efforts as infiltrating and destroying a secret Nazi cabal that was spiriting former SS officers into hiding in South America was as exciting and as filled with intrigue as anything that could come out of the imagination of John Le Carre. The adventure, however, doesn't stop there.

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