



Breakout and Pursuit (United States Army in World War II: The European Theater of Operations)

Martin Blumenson

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(Includes maps) The campaign in the summer of 1944 related in this volume included some of the most spectacular ground action of the U.S. Army during World War II. It began with the slow and costly hedgerow fighting against determined German efforts to contain the Normandy beachhead; it entered its decisive stage when the breach of German defenses permitted full exploitation of the power and mobility of U.S. Army ground troops; and it reached the peak of brilliance with successive envelopments of principal German forces and the pursuit of their remnants north and east to free, most of France, part of Belgium, and portions of the Netherlands. By late August the war in the west appeared to be almost over, but the tyranny of logistics gave the enemy time to rally at the fortified West Wall and delay surrender for another eight months. In the European Theater subseries the backdrop for this volume is "Cross-Channel Attack", which carries the story to 1 July. "Breakout and Pursuit" follows the U.S. First Army through 10 September (where "The Siegfried Line Campaign" picks up the narrative), and the U.S. Third Army through 31 August (where "The Lorraine Campaign" begins). The logistical factors that played so large a part in governing the pace and extent of combat operations are described in much greater detail in Volume I of "Logistical Support of the Armies." The tremendous scope of this campaign, and its partially improvised character, have left a heritage of controversies to which no final answers can be given. The author has had free access to the records and to many of the leading players in the drama, and his account should have wide appeal to the general reader as well as to the serious military student of grand tactics.



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