



People's War: Original Voices Of The American Revolution

Noel Rae

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This is the story of one of history's great events, the Revolutionary War, told almost entirely in the words of the soldiers and sailors who fought it and the civilians who endured it. Drawing on thousands of original sources---diaries, letters, memoirs, newspapers, pension applications---the author has culled the most colorful and vivid passages and then woven them into a vibrant, eye-witness narrative that takes the reader from the peaceful days before the Stamp Act, through all the major events of the war, and ends with farewell accounts of what happened in later life to the people we have come to know along the way. Some of these, like Franklin, Washington, Adams and George III, are familiar figures, but most were ordinary people, little known to history, but here briefly emerging from obscurity to tell of what they did in those exciting and important times: a farm boy who ran away to sea at the age of twelve, a New England shoemaker who kept volunteering for further service to the dismay of his wife who wanted him home, a professor of divinity at Yale who took up his musket when the British raided New Haven, a pretty young widow who was roughed up when her plantation was raided by Tory ruffians and a cross-eyed termagant who gunned two such villains when they invaded her log-cabin, a German student of poetry dragooned into a Hessian regiment, a Quaker housewife trying to hold things together in British-occupied Philadelphia, an Indian warrior who seems to have relished his part in the Cherry Valley Massacre, a slave who escaped to the British after witnessing his mother being flogged, an aristocratic French officer enamored with the cause of liberty, a genial Englishman shocked at the baseness of the rebels---these are but a few of the people whose collective voices, drawn from all sides of the conflict, bring the Revolution to life in a way that is as unique as it is entertaining. It is also history at its most authoritative, for who better qualified to tell what happened than the people who were there?

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