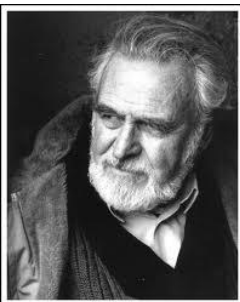


Books of the Twilight War

As with any war, the Third World War generated a fair amount of literature. Much was as ever of dubious quality but some has stood the test of time.

“But it’s MY Turn!” Johan Schmidt (translated by David Bell) Kinder Books, Hanover (2006) and Scholastic, London (2009)

An illustrated children’s story of how two monsters can’t play together and eventually set fire to the board and break all the pieces. Ends with them ominously getting out a smaller game but with matches and fuel already to hand. Schmidt has gone on to become the mayor of Hannover and as a result the book has become popular with British families in the area who have brought the story back to the UK. It was one of the first books to deal with the war, especially for children when it was first published in 2006.



"I'm Not Supposed to be Here" William Tell Sackett, Lone Star Press (2007)

Autobiography of a civilian photojournalist and a handful of survivors from the U.S. Army's 5th Infantry Division and their epic tale of being stranded behind enemy lines for over 6 months. This book also chronicles their return to the United States in Operation Omega and their involvement in the early days of the creation of the Texan Republic. Hundreds of colour and black and white photographs, in particular portraits.

Illustration 1: Sackett's portrait of an unnamed Vistula River pilot



Illustration 2: William Sackett in Texas 2003

"Across Europe with Rod and Shotgun" Squadron Leader Alasdair Forston-Smythe RAF Ret. Vanity Press, Ipswich (2008 edition), Guild Books, Birmingham (2014 expanded edition)

The epic story of one man's escape and evasion across war torn Europe. Forston-Smythe was a Tornado pilot shot down on a raid on Gdansk. Over the next three years he successfully journeyed across Europe to friendly forces. Widely applauded for its realistic depiction of the difficulties of surviving on your own wits. The expanded edition includes further details of his time in the Danish militia.



Illustration 3: Danish Home Guard and local civilian officials (Squadron Leader Forston-Smythe is centre front row bareheaded) - Courtesy of Guild Books

"Assassinations and War Crimes," the Fellowship of Reconciliation Organisation Gdansk (2009)

A graphic and damning chronicle of atrocities committed by NATO soldiers behind Soviet lines in the latter half of 2000. Written from accounts of witnesses and survivors of such events as the razing of Tarnobrzeg, massacre of Zwolen, assault on Otwock, ambush of Wislinka, and many more

terrible incidents inside the city of Gdansk during the Polish governments August 2000 attempt to bring humanitarian aid and support to it's citizens suffering under the iron rule of the so called "International Brigade". While some have claimed that it is entirely fabricated, independent research by the Japanese author Ishiro Karashi has shown at least some of the allegations are true.

"Barbed wire love" Henry Cluney, Peace Books, Belfast (2010)

Allegedly a true story of love across the divide in civil war Belfast. Now held up as a positive light for the future, this book was originally serialised in an underground news sheet produced by the Peace People during the darkest days of Ulsters history. Although clearly fictional in some areas the author insists that the lead characters are real people who still live in Belfast although some details have been changed to protect them.

"Final Flight" Alison Holland, Clark Books, Norwich (2010)

The story of a B52 crew on a long mission to drop a nuclear weapon on an unknown target. As they head there mysterious voices on the radio turn out to be historical characters making the crew reflect on how history will see them and makes them confront their own natures. Voices include a young Adolph Hitler on the following of orders in the trenches, Trueman on the decision of using atomic weapons against the vast casualties expected in an invasion of Japan, a worker who died of radiation poisoning at Chernobyl after willingly staying exposed longer than was safe to stop more leaking and Robert Oppenheim on the possibility the atmosphere would have ignited in a chain reaction during the Manhattan Project. Written by the wife of a USAF pilot of a B52 who went missing on a raid over Poland in 1998.



"The Death and Rebirth of Hope" Bobbie Lee Stanton, Lone Star Press (2011)

The story of a platoon of survivors describing the confused disintegration of the 5th Infantry Division, and how they strike out across Europe to eventually make it back to the US. Pieced together as an history by the author who was a participant and wrote to all the surviving platoon members she could trace.

"Alpha through to Omega" Julio Ramirez, Critic Press, New York (2012)

A novel of US troops in Europe and the horrors they inflict during Operation Omega. It ends with the lead character turning in her rifle and wishing never to see it or use it again. This became a popular best-seller and forced the US to face up to what had occurred during the operation. It was first published in 2012 and has not been out of print since. It is often used as a school text. The author is believed to be writing a sequel entitled "The Return" about the character's life after the war haunted by her dreams.

"Our Lady" Pawel Jankowski, Jagiellonian University Press (2018)

Thought lost during the early part of WWII, "Our Lady", otherwise known as the Black Madonna, became the rallying point for the nationalists of Poland as they recovered their country in the

aftermath of the war. Jankowski blends known facts with historical myth in his tale of the icon that catalyzed the recreation of the Polish state.

“Plains of dust” Rebecca Mitchell, Raid Press, Chicago (2018)

The story of a suburban family living on the outskirts of Chicago during and after the war. The first part deals with the family's flight from the nuclear blasts that destroyed Chicago and their plight in the freezing refugee camps that barely kept them alive. One by one members of the family are torn away from the group through conscription, cold and starvation. Eventually the heroine and two younger siblings join the trek from the drought-ravaged plains to a safe zone in Oregon. Mitchell was hailed as the Twenty-First century's Steinbeck, dealing with lives of little people in hugely adverse circumstances. Mitchell was a minor organizer in FEMA who eventually became a Senator for Oregon.

“In the Shadow of Death’s Cloud” Sean Goulding, Boston Free Press, Boston (2020)

Anti-war novel of US soldiers in Europe by a draftee ex-serviceman of 1st Armoured first published in 2020. Deals with the fate of a platoon of Mech Infantry through the war. This book is less studied than the others at a junior level but is often at least mentioned at university level as the author makes frequent allusions to classical and renaissance literature. Pre war he was a post-graduate student of literature in Boston and after the war has returned to the new university there as a professor.

"Making the Rubble Bounce: the Dogfight for Warsaw's Bones" Kannave and Danko, Baldwin Press, Harrisburg (2028)

Chronicles the city's fiery death, its painfully slow rebirth, and the unending assaults on the pioneers who literally scraped a new life for the city out of the "prairie of ruins". Contains the results of piecing together thousands of hours of interviews, fragmentary military records, and cullings of EMP-damaged recordings. Includes the testimony of participants in the "Black Legion" war crimes trials and the only existing photographs of "Baron" Czarny's execution.

“Private Zhukov’s War” The Unknown Soldier (really Boris Dosavich)

The war told in two parallel accounts. The first on the left page is a soldier’s diary. The second on the right page are the letters he writes to his mother, wife and unborn child. The novel ends with a letter addressed to all 3 from a friend telling how Piotr Zhukov dies in action followed by the soldier’s own diary carried on in Zhukov’s book giving the truth that Zhukov committed suicide. Popular in typescript format passed from friend to friend. Published in the West by Penguin Books in 2033 to popular acclaim under the author’s real name. Many critics have praised it as the Third World War's answer to All Quiet on the Western Front from the First World War. Dosavich never lived to see the fame of his work spread, he died of lung cancer in 2011 caused from exposure to nuclear explosions during his service in the Red Army.