

expresses himself. He was, as Capeci suggests, a decent, even well intentioned man. But he dreamed no great dreams for his city or for himself. He was, simply, a local politician who loved the camaraderie and competition of city hall and who was willing to call on the most dangerous of impulses to maintain his place in that world.

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Ernie Pyle's War: America's Eyewitness to World War II. By James Tobin. (New York: The Free Press, 1997. Pp. 312. Illustrations, appendix, notes, note on sources, index. \$25.00.)

Indiana-born Ernie Pyle brought World War II home to the American people. His dispatches captured the life and death of the G.I. from North Africa to the Pacific. Besides being America's most famous war correspondent, Pyle was also one of the nation's most admired citizens. When he was killed by a sniper's bullet on a Pacific island in April, 1945, his passing was compared to the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which had occurred a few days before.

While newsreels showed battles and invasions, and while Edward R. Murrow brought to America the sounds of the bombs falling over London, Pyle gave America a straightforward yet emotional account of G.I. Joe and his war. To tell the soldiers' heroic tales, Pyle squatted in their foxholes, ate their K rations, and saw them die. If he held back a little about the more horrible aspects of war, it was because he felt that their families could take just so much. The troops loved Ernie and considered him one of their own; even the generals said there was no finer soldier than Pyle and that by his stories he even aided the war effort.

Born on a farm near Dana, Indiana, in 1900, Pyle hated farming. In order to escape that confining life he enrolled at Indiana University in 1919. Although he majored in economics, it was journalism that held his attention. Soon he worked his way up to become editor of the Indiana University *Daily Student*. Before he graduated, Pyle left the university to work briefly as a reporter on the La Porte, Indiana, *Herald* and then moved on to a job on a Washington, D.C., paper.

Pyle began writing a successful column on aviation and then was made a roving reporter to write about life in America. In his stories one can detect the development of his style—his succinctness, the choice of the right word, and his ability to explain Americans to themselves. He was able to identify with the people about whom he wrote. He became an American Everyman, who described common men doing uncommon deeds.

As Pyle captured the pain and suffering of Depression America, he was suffering from a marriage that was failing, doubts about himself, and constant ailments. Thus for Pyle the war was both a new challenge and an escape. From 1942 until his death three years later, his columns became one of the most important links between the home front and the boys overseas. As he had earlier in describing the brave mail pilots and the frightened farmers of Indiana, Pyle wrote about the G.I. with understanding and compassion. Similarly James Tobin in *Ernie Pyle's War* writes with feeling and comprehension on this fascinating subject. A prizewinning reporter himself, Tobin began his research on Pyle over a decade ago while writing a dissertation on World War II.

By reading this useful, scholarly book along with some dispatches from Pyle's book *Brave Men*, one will have a better understanding of World War II and the G.I.'s who won it.

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Abraham Lincoln in Print and Photograph: A Picture History from the Lilly Library. Edited by Cecil K. Byrd and Ward W. Moore. (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, Inc., 1997. Pp. vii, 118. Illustrations, index. Paperbound, \$13.95.)

Drat that Ken Burns. Ever since his series, American Civil War publications, always more prolix and profitable than profound, have mushroomed exponentially. Gresham understood the likely results, and, alas, this book is one more proof of his law.

As the American Christ, Lincoln is the Great Icon, and this volume provides many familiar portraits of him, along with cartoons, photographs of famous documents, and pictures of his friends, enemies, assassins, and children, as well as several takes of the always unattractive Mary Todd Lincoln. Interestingly enough, the earliest known photograph of Lincoln, included here, was taken in 1846, and the next came in 1857. One therefore never sees the youthful man, although the full gallery of images from the last eight years of his life is, of course, a fair representation of Lincoln's meteoric rise to fame.

Many of Lincoln's portraits show the ravages of depression. Indeed he was at times quite gaunt, an indication, perhaps, that during his deeper bouts of what he called the "hypo," and described as a helpless, desperate condition, he could not eat. None of Lincoln's countervailing humor shines through the photographs, for which Lincoln, in common with all sitters of his day, were trained to sit motionless and be solemn.