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ALMOST A SOLDIER

The 1945 Diary of a Hungarian Cadet

BY SIGMUND CSICSERY



Bamberg.

On December 29, 1944, Sigmund Csicsery embarked on an odyssey that would take him thousands of miles by foot, train, sled, and truck from Sümeg in western Hungary to near Stettin in the far north of Germany, then south through Berlin and the then-Sudeten part of Germany, and eventually to Bavaria. There, in the last weeks of World War II, he and the other cadets in his military school were captured by American forces. From April to October 1945, the arduous trek continued, as the Hungarian cadets endured the vicissitudes of life as prisoners of war in camps scattered around Germany and northern France.

This journey is described through the eyes of the 16-year-old author. Throughout the ordeal, Csicsery recorded meticulous accounts of daily events in a personal diary, presenting an unusual perspective on the last months of life in the crumbling Third Reich.

The harrowing portrait of conditions inside American prisoner-of-war camps after the war ended will be of special interest to military historians. Csicsery's attention to detail, enhanced by his original drawings, are revealing documents from a firsthand witness whose greatest contribution might well be the art of precise description.



Almost a Soldier: The 1945 Diary of a Hungarian Cadet draws on the original handwritten 1945 notebook diary, a typed enhanced version completed in 1946, and a Hungarian-language edition released in 1997. This English translation, published by Zala Films, is available in July 2011. (First edition, ISBN 978-09-7245-888-7, July 2011)

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ALMOST A SOLDIER

The 1945 Diary of a Hungarian Cadet

BY SIGMUND CSICSERY

What reviewers say about Almost a Soldier ...

“Sigmund Csicsery gives us a valuable gift in his diary of a tumultuous ten-month period that began in late 1944. During those days, he traveled from Hungary to Germany, and from there to two different prisoner-of-war camps. Written in the unaffected style of a sixteen-year-old, Csicsery’s diary has the unique quality of having been conceived by someone who was too young to be a soldier but who lived through the experiences of a grown-up. His is also one of the rare unbiased accounts of the harrowing misery of Axis POWs in U.S. and especially French captivity. This is worthwhile reading.”

—István Deák, Seth Low Professor Emeritus of History, Columbia University

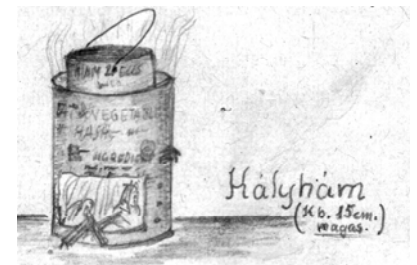


“*Almost a Soldier* is absorbing, a spellbinder.”

—Cecil D. Eby, retired professor of English, University of Michigan, and author of *Hungary at War: Civilians and Soldiers in World War II*

“Sigmund Csicsery’s wartime diary offers a gripping account of the survival of a teenage military cadet in the terrible winter of 1944–45, the collapse of the Third Reich, and the grim conditions of Allied POW camps. As World War II rapidly passes from living memory, it is vital that these unique personal stories in tattered notebooks be cherished and preserved for future generations.”

—Michael Markowitz, military historian



For more information about this book, visit www.almostasoldier.com.

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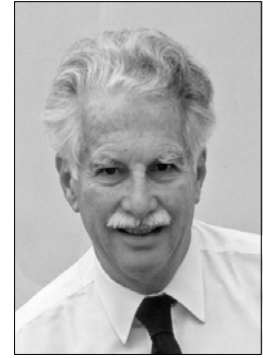
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About the author



Sigmund Csicsery, a retired chemist, emigrated from Hungary to the United States in 1956, and now lives in California.