

The Untold Story of the Winter War: How Russia Invaded Finland in 1939-1940

The Winter War between Russia and Finland, which took place from 1939 to 1940, remains one of the lesser-known conflicts of World War II. While the invasion by the Soviet Union is often overshadowed by other major events during this period, the Winter War holds significant historical importance and deserves our attention. In this article, we will delve into the details of the invasion, its causes, the battles fought, and the outcome.

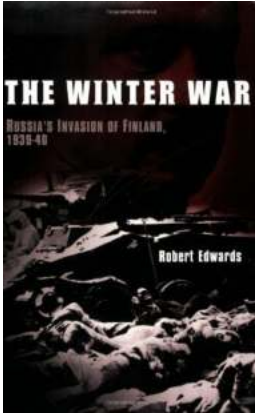
The Background

In order to understand the Winter War fully, we must first explore the circumstances that led to Russia's invasion of Finland. In the late 1930s, tensions between the Soviet Union and Finland escalated due to various territorial disputes and ideological differences. The Soviet government, under Joseph Stalin, sought to extend its sphere of influence and secure its borders. Finland, a small but fiercely independent nation, became an obstacle in their path.

The Invasion

In November 1939, the Soviet Union launched a surprise invasion of Finland. The attack initially caught the Finns off guard, as they were not expecting a full-scale assault. The Russians swiftly advanced into Finnish territory, aiming to capture strategic locations and ultimately force Finland into submission.

The Winter War: Russia's Invasion of Finland, 1939-1940 by Alexander Hamilton (Kindle Edition)



★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Print length : 336 pages



The Battles

The Winter War was marked by numerous intense battles fought in extreme weather conditions. The Finnish forces, though vastly outnumbered and outgunned, displayed exceptional resistance and ingenuity in their defense. One of the most famous battles of the conflict was the Battle of Suomussalmi, where the Finns successfully halted the Russian advance and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy.

The Tactics

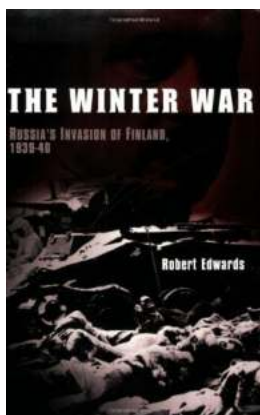
Despite their disadvantages, the Finns used their knowledge of the terrain and the harsh winter to their advantage. They employed guerrilla warfare tactics, initiating hit-and-run attacks and cutting off supply lines. The Russians, on the other hand, struggled with the unfamiliar conditions, leading to logistical challenges and difficulties in maintaining their offensive operations.

The Aftermath

The Winter War ended in March 1940 with the signing of the Moscow Peace Treaty. Despite their valiant efforts, Finland had to cede some territory to the

Soviet Union, including the valuable Karelian Isthmus. However, the war had a lasting impact on both countries. Finland's resistance and resilience during the conflict garnered international respect and highlighted the Soviet Union's aggressive expansionist policies.

The Winter War between Russia and Finland during 1939-1940 may have been a relatively short conflict, but its significance cannot be understated. It showcased the determination of a small nation against a larger aggressor and exposed the vulnerabilities of a powerful empire. By remembering and understanding the events of the Winter War, we can gain insights into the complexities of World War II and the impact it had on the countries involved.



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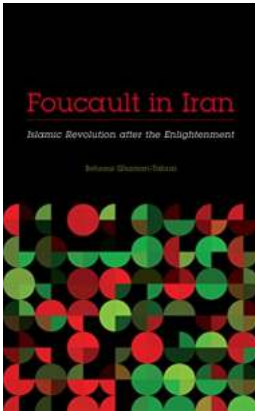
On November 30, 1939, the Soviet Union's Red Army invaded the young nation-state of Finland, in the full expectation of routing the small, ill-equipped Finnish army and annexing the former Russian territory by the end of the year. But

Finland held out for 105 bitterly cold, fiercely combative days, until March 15, 1940, when a peace agreement ended the short, savage Winter War.

At the stirring center of the story lie the resourcefulness and resolve of the Finnish people, who against all military odds—in want of ammunition, food, sleep, and troops—fought a blundering, ineptly commanded Red Army to a standstill. On March 15, they ceded to the Soviet 11 percent of their territory and 30 percent of their economic assets, but none of their national pride.

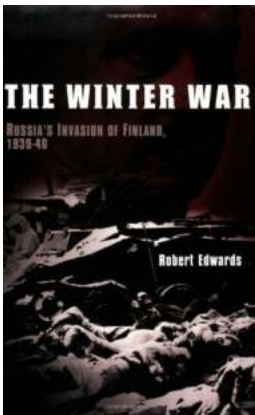
The Russians meanwhile had markedly damaged their international standing and effectively ruined their military reputation—to such an extent, as this probing chapter in World War II history demonstrates, that Germany, with proud-blooded Finland as an ally, dared to launch its 1940 invasion of Russia. At the same time, though, the fiasco of the Winter War forced Stalin to acknowledge the shortcomings of the Red Army and to reform it: Germany would fall at Stalingrad in 1941.

With authority, this skillfully narrated military history unfolds its story of the four-month Soviet-Finnish war and explores its consequences from London to Moscow, from Helsinki to Paris, to Washington, DC. 20 black-and-white illustrations



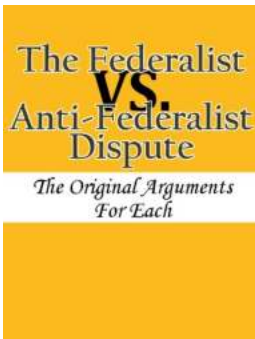
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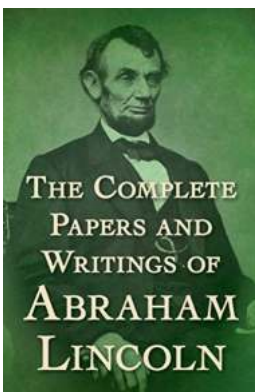
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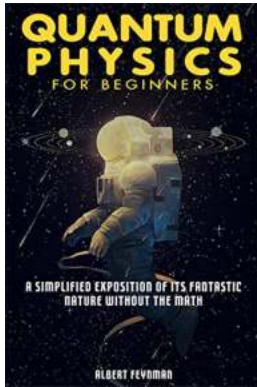
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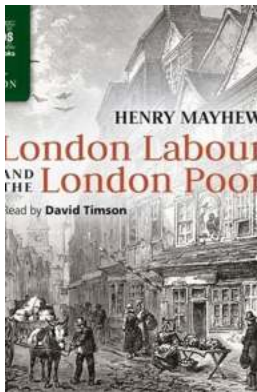
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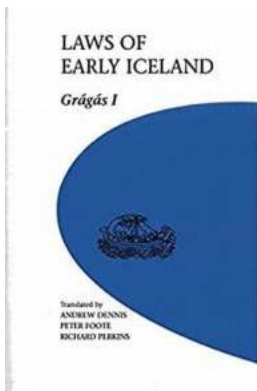
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