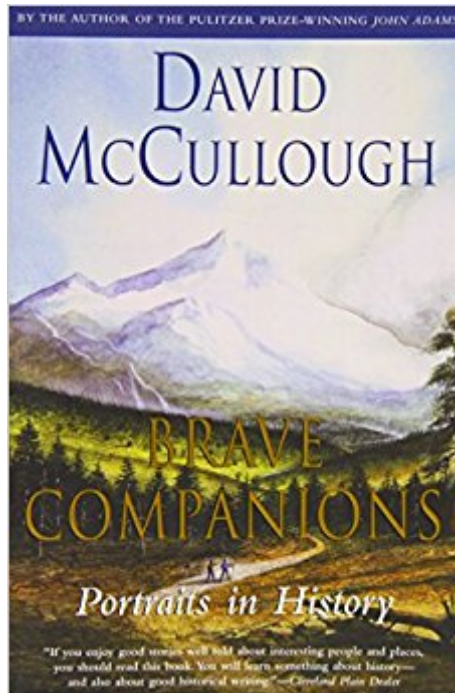




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Brave Companions: Portraits In History



Synopsis

From Alexander von Humboldt to Charles and Anne Lindbergh, these are stories of people of great vision and daring whose achievements continue to inspire us today, brilliantly told by master historian David McCullough. The bestselling author of *Truman* and *John Adams*, David McCullough has written profiles of exceptional men and women past and present who have not only shaped the course of history or changed how we see the world but whose stories express much that is timeless about the human condition. Here are Alexander von Humboldt, whose epic explorations of South America surpassed the Lewis and Clark expedition; Harriet Beecher Stowe, "the little woman who made the big war"; Frederic Remington; the extraordinary Louis Agassiz of Harvard; Charles and Anne Lindbergh, and their fellow long-distance pilots Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and Beryl Markham; Harry Caudill, the Kentucky lawyer who awakened the nation to the tragedy of Appalachia; and David Plowden, a present-day photographer of vanishing America. Different as they are from each other, McCullough's subjects have in common a rare vitality and sense of purpose. These are brave companions: to each other, to David McCullough, and to the reader, for with rare storytelling ability McCullough brings us into the times they knew and their very uncommon lives.

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster; Reprint edition (November 1, 1992)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0671792768

ISBN-13: 978-0671792763

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 414 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #11,834 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Reference & Collections #62 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Travelers & Explorers #142 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > United States

Customer Reviews

Despite the diversity of their interests and achievements, the men and women profiled in this collection of 17 essays by bestselling historian McCullough (*The Great Bridge* ; *The Path Between the Seas*) had a lot in common. Whether scientist (Louis Agassiz, Alexander von Humboldt),

engineer (John and Washington Roebling), writer (Harriet Beecher Stowe, Conrad Aiken) or artist (Frederic Remington), each had a special perspective that continues to influence us. A skilled portraitist, McCullough vibrantly captures these viewpoints as he relates their impact on his own thought. Produced over 20 years, the essays unfold seamlessly to reveal the uniqueness of individuals whose "work and interests are inspiring forces." History Book Club and QPB alternates. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

YA-- McCullough's compendium of fascinating mini-biographies is a sheer delight, and will hold the attention of many history and science students. In this distillation of over 20 years of his shorter essays, the author chose individuals who are distinctive for their contributions to culture. The 17 biographies highlight the fields of social work, etymology, architecture, literature, and history, all of which are interconnected in memorable ways. The book maintains strong reader interest because of an intelligent, practiced, precise style combined with a wise and rich choice of subject. Familiar figures such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, Miriam Rothschild, and Teddy Roosevelt share space with lesser-known individuals--but all are people who merit admiration. Superb storytelling with a unique slant makes this work a strong acquisition for all collections.- Carol Beall, Immanuel Christian School, Springfield, VACopyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

If you want to learn something about lesser known historical figures this is the book for you. As one would expect from McCullough the writing is excellent. I guarantee it will induce you to learn more about the people he profiles, e.g., Beryl Markham, a woman who had the guts and courage of a junkyard dog. Read her fantastic memoir, *West with the Night*, certainly one of the best books I have ever read. McCullough also includes an speech which he gave to a college graduating class that should be required reading for every literate person. Highly recommended.

This is a book of "soft" historical events in the past. For instance did you know Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote a book a year? Or, the background of TeddyRoosevelt's days in the Badlands?. How about the human cost in building the Panama Railroad?These are only a few of the stories about the background of our human history. The Arthur has adrouly presented these stories which have been told in this book. It is an enjoyable read!

So many mostly unknown people whose lives have shaped the world and world history are told in

this fascinating book with a chapter dedicated to each individual. It is a favorite of mine that I will go back and reread some of my favorite chapters. David McCullough is a wonderful and talented storyteller who weaves a powerful story and yet informs with history, culture and insights at every page. I loved this book.

The first part of this book was excellent in that it described people and stories that I had never heard. But the book became less interesting as it continued. McCullough is a great writer and I enjoy his books immensely. This one did not measure up to his others for me.

Since reading my first David McCullough book, *MORNINGS ON HORSEBACK*, I was delighted and impressed by the author's depth of research and his easy style of writing. I loved his book, *JOHN ADAMS* and also *TRUMAN*. The author can be trusted with the facts and although the books are long, the reader doesn't want them to end - they are that interesting! I plan to read all of David McCullough's books. *BRAVE COMPANIONS* is a wonderful easily readable book of interesting in depth portraits of people with a purpose. The author makes his portrayals come alive in a unique way. You will learn how history was shaped by ordinary people who did amazing things. I was familiar with only a few such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Charles and Anne Lindbergh, and was so pleasantly surprised to read about many others such as Miriam Rothschild and David Plowden. I am happy to have met all of these different and exceptional folks. The last chapter, Simon Willard's Clock is just plain great! Be warned - when you begin reading this informative book, you will not stop until completing it and you will want to know even more about each subject - it's that good! And, like me, you will buy a few copies to give as gifts.

I love David McCullough, but this is my least favorite of his books. His magic is developing characters and making you feel you're there in the room. These short stories don't quite get you there.

Already a fan of David McCullough's work? This is a must read. Always wanted to read his books, but never had the nerve to tackle their length? This is a great place to start. Never heard of David McCullough? Shame on you. And read this book. Less than 300 pages in length, this is a collection of Mr. McCullough's shorter works--magazine articles, lectures, etc. It paints vivid portraits of a wide variety of people--some famous, others rather obscure, but all fascinating. It was just enough to whet my appetite to learn more about these people. Over the course of reading this book, I jotted

down the titles of 22 other books I'd like to read. The section I found most interesting was entitled "Pioneers." It includes an article about the building of the Panama Railroad--yes, railroad. As in, before the canal. Forty-seven and a half miles of track, and 170 bridges of more than 12 feet in length. Next is an article about the building of the Brooklyn Bridge. I had no idea how interesting pneumatic caissons were! This is followed by a lovely vignette about the man who discovered and helped to preserve the thousands of intricate hand-drawn plans for the Brooklyn Bridge. The section closes with an intriguing look at the aviation pioneers of the 1920s, many of whom were also prolific writers. I've read and loved many of the works of pioneer aviator Antoine de Saint-Exupery, but was inspired to look up some of the others. There's something for everyone in this collection: science, photography, architecture, history, exploration, ecology. All written in David McCullough's spare, ringing style, these portraits of people and places will spark the imagination and make you want to read more.

I really enjoyed this book. David McCullough is the real history. He weaves a great story as he draws you into the subject matter.

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