

Never Home: Remembering the Military Heroes Who Never Returned

Richard Sherman

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Richard Sherman Photography

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Never Home is a sensitive photographic homage to those who died in World Wars I and II.

Photographer and navy veteran Richard Sherman's moving photography collection *Never Home* is about the sacrifices of US citizens and allies who died in World War I and II, including soldiers, doctors, nurses, and chaplains. Lost in battles, accidents, or because of illness, they are here honored in a reverent montage.

With subjects both famous (such as former Olympic gold medalists) and obscure, this book honors those who went to war, gave it their all, and never came home. Photographs are the book's primary vehicle; the prose around them is direct, akin to a journalistic guide to the aftermath of the wars. The book begins with maps showing where American military cemeteries are located; the grounds themselves are represented in long rows of fallen soldiers. The graves of a select few are zoomed in on; their single-page biographies make up the rest of the book.

The images are clear and vibrant, used to accentuate individual stories with humanizing respect. Rows of markers representing soldiers from across the US pair with text emphasizing those losses—a narrative map of the deceased. People from all walks of life are represented among the dead, as well as those of various races, backgrounds, religions, and professions. Stories of those left behind also peek through, as of parents who lost all of their enlisted children.

The ranks of the lost include include General George Patton; the first American killed in Europe during World War II, whose return home to be married was approaching; the three Tester brothers, who died on various battlefields during World War II; Helen Fairchild, an energetic nurse who died in World War I; and the Miyoko brothers, Japanese American siblings who were buried in different cemeteries in different countries. Kurt Gruber, "a native of Westphalia" and a spy, is recalled for having "press[ed] for coal miners' rights" with his brother Karl; in the wake of his brother's death, he "stiffened his resistance" to fascism in Germany. And Carlie Dial, whose parents were Lumbees, is recalled for having said "Lower the wheels, skipper" in the bombardment that cost him his life. In a few words, the book covers these subjects' hobbies, loves, careers, and families alongside the colorful photographs of each burial site.

A sensitive homage to some of those who died in World Wars I and II, *Never Home* is a touching, somber photography collection.

ALEXANDRA KITTY (December 20, 2024)

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