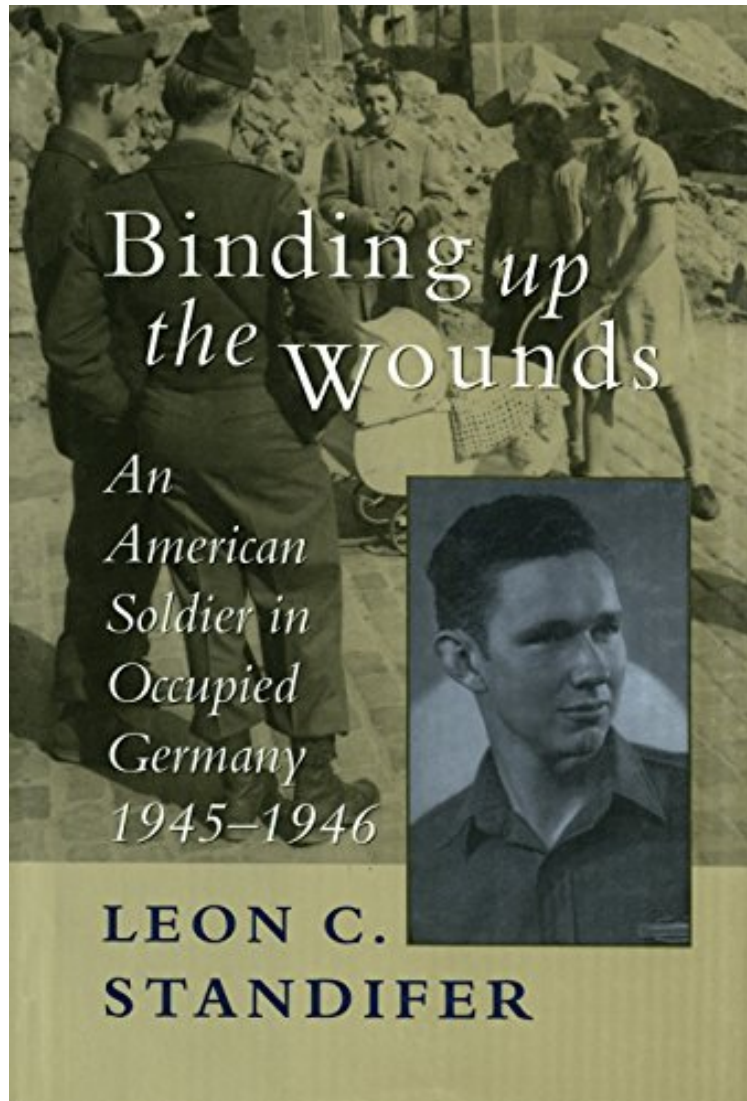


(Free) Binding Up the Wounds: An American Soldier in Occupied Germany, 1945--1946

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Von Leon C. Standifer

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Binding Up the Wounds: An American Soldier in Occupied Germany, 1945--1946:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Blue-eyed GI in Germany: 1945 Von Ein Kunde I give the author credit for trying to recreate his life at age 20. He has done an admirable job in vignetting his life in Munich as an occupation soldier. His memory is accurate. However: he went

through this experience with a song in his heart and no connection to the actual landscape. He makes no real effort to meet those he occupies, And when he does, he usually blushes. I guess that is to be expected from a 20-year-old from rural Mississippi. The edict against fraternization is no excuse - nobody really obeyed it anyway. Did he never wonder why there was no civil government, police, etc. in Bad Aibling? Because the Military Government forbade any kind of political structure. Why did his German acquaintances never mention relatives or friends in other parts of the country? Because the Military Government did not allow mail or any other part of communication until the end of 1946. Why did he hitchhike into Munich instead of simply taking the train? Because there was no transportation, the Military Government having forbidden people to leave their community. What about those Polish Displaced Persons(DP)? They were offered cash and a Care parcel if they would return to Poland. They took it, and a few weeks later they were back in Munich. What about the black market? In early 1947 a unit of the USArmy, armed with machine guns, stormed a housing block in Munich given over of DPs. The black market cigarettes they carried out were measured not in packages or cartons, but in tons! Why were those German students not studying? Not only was the university bombed out, but it belonged to the State of Bavaria, that did not exist anymore. What about food? General Lucius D, Clay in Berlin determined by fiat the number of calories every German got - no matter what was on the rationing card. The author is dead-right about general Muller, though, who came into the Munich railroad station on Goering's special train and insisted on a red carpet. Did the Germans like the Americans? Those GIs kept completely to themselves and were rarely seen. But a military occupation is always rough on the occupied. And they never understood that this is the price to pay for losing a war. It would have been psychologically easier if the USGovernment had not insisted on calling it an "education towards democracy". It is to the author's infinite credit that he maintained his basic values and humanity. The green recruits who came after the combat soldiers went home were the real horror.

Kurzbeschreibung In his highly acclaimed *Not in Vain*, Leon C. Standifer recounted his experiences as a small-town Mississippi boy who at age nineteen found himself fighting as a combat infantryman in World War II France and Germany. *Binding up the Wounds* carries the story beyond V-E Day to describe what the author saw, heard, felt, and learned as a member of the American occupation army in the homeland of its defeated enemy. Standifer, who served in the 94th Infantry Division in western Germany, the Sudetenland, and Bavaria in the first year of occupation, chronicles that unique and chaotic time from the viewpoint of a typical GI. Germany was an epic landscape of human need, and cities lay in ruins. But the war was over, light and laughter were once again possible, and, as Standifer recalls, "we had a ball during that first year." Among the things he experienced or witnessed were black-market operations large and small (American cigarettes served as a universal currency, and a few ounces of mess-hall grease or used coffee grounds were valuable commodities); the spectacle of gung-ho officers attempting to turn combat troops into spit-and-polish paraders; the exploitive games played between American soldiers and German women; a gut-wrenching visit to a displaced persons camp; and the difficulties involved in guarding captured soldiers who were no longer the enemy. Perhaps most revealing, and often surprising, are the attitudes Standifer discovered among ordinary Germans toward the war, the Nazis, the "Hitler times" in general-not only during the occupation, but also decades later when he revisited Germany and spoke with elderly survivors of those times. For there are really two voices telling the tale of *Binding Up the Wounds*. One is that of the combat-hardened but otherwise naive twenty-year-old who lived the experiences. The other is that of the author as retired college professor looking back over half a century and puzzling out what those experiences meant for himself, for America, and for humankind.

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experiences meant for himself, for America, and for humankind. Synopsis Writing with the split vision of a young American soldier (94th Infantry Division) participating in the post-World War II occupation of enemy territory, and a retired professor who admits that "part of me would always be Bavarian," Standifer (Louisiana State U.) offers a tour of this history-resaping era and insight into changing attitudes. Like t