



International Stars at War: Movie Actors in Service to Their Countries

By James E. Wise Jr., Scott Baron

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The last in a popular series on movie stars in the military, this handsome book provides readers with a guide to film actors of many nations who served in various branches of their own military forces. Because they appeared in Hollywood movies, many of these figures will be familiar to Americans.

A few even won Oscars. Others worked closer to home but are still readily recognizable. Most of them date their service to World War II, and the preponderance is British. Among the more than sixty stars featured are the British actors Richard Attenborough, Richard Burton, Michael Caine, Royal Navy gunner Sean Connery, Alex Guinness, Rex Harrison, Anthony Hopkins (who spent a year with the Royal Artillery during the Cold War), Ray Milland, Roger Moore (a first lieutenant with the Royal Army in occupied West Germany after World War II), David Niven, Michael Rennie, and Peter Ustinov. Those from Canada include Lorne Greene, Raymond Massey, and Walter Pidgeon. The Frenchmen include Maurice Chevalier and Charles Boyer. Also featured are Laurence Harvey of South Africa, Peter Finch of Australia, Oskar Werner of Germany, Toshiro Mifune of Japan, and Audrey Hepburn, who as a child was a courier for World War II resistance fighters in Holland.

While the book focuses on the stars' military experiences, it also provides information about their earlier lives and screen careers after their service. Like the other books in the series, it will have wide appeal.

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Editorial Review

Review

INTERNATIONAL STARS AT WAR is the fourth - and last - in James Wise's 'Star' series. The first three (STARS IN BLUE, STARS IN KHAKI, STARS IN THE CORPS) dealt with U. S. actors/actresses who served in the military and/or saw combat. This time around, Wise looks at international stars and the result is as interesting, if not moreso, than its three predecessors. Most of the 60+ stars featured in this book are British. There are several Canadians, Frenchmen, Germans, Japanese and Australians along with the occasional South African and even Rin Tin Tin! The list of actors covered is mind-boggling: Richard Attenborough, Richard Burton, Michael Caine, Maurice Chevalier, Sean Connery, Stewart Granger, Alec Guinness, Cedric Hardwicke, Hardy Kruger, Christopher Lee, Patrick Macnee, David Niven, Terry-Thomas, etc. The "At War" title though is a bit misleading since only a small portion of the 60 saw combat. Most served during WWII but in a non-combat situation. And a small number served in the post-war years. Be that as it may, the stories found in this volume are quite interesting, sometimes surprising and occasionally humorous, such as the military mis-adventures of blithe spirit Peter Ustinov. It might surprise readers to discover that mild-mannered Alec Guinness had an incredible combat record as did Donald Pleasance, who served in the RAF and ended up in a German POW camp. And then - deja vu - twenty years later, Pleasance starred in "The Great Escape!" Other combat vets included David Niven, Kenneth More, Anthony Quayle and Richard Todd. Peter Sellers, Trevor Howard and others served in rear area units. Among the men who served post-war were two future James Bonds (Sean Connery and Roger Moore), Anthony Hopkins, Richard Burton and Peter O'Toole. Film buffs and historians will enjoy this book. Well-written and well-researched, it offers a seldom seen glimpse into the lives of some very famous people. --By Michael O'Connor

If you enjoy learning about your matinee heroes and idols this book is a fun read. For all of the history of our military and warfare that I have read, this book was full of facts that I was unaware of. --By Gordon Rohn

About the Author

James E. Wise Jr., a former naval aviator, intelligence officer, and Vietnam veteran, retired from the U.S. Navy as a captain. His books include *Stars in Blue* and *U-505*, among many others.

Scott Baron, a U.S. Army veteran of the Vietnam War and former law enforcement officer in California, is the author of *They Also Served: Military Biographies of Uncommon Americans* and coauthor, with Wise, of *The Navy Cross and Women at War: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Conflicts*.

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