



Unlikely Warriors: The British in the Spanish Civil War and the Struggle Against Fascism

Richard Baxell

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When a Nationalist military uprising was launched in Spain in July 1936, the Spanish Republic's desperate pleas for assistance from the leaders of Britain and France fell on deaf ears. Appalled at the prospect of another European democracy succumbing to fascism, volunteers from across the Continent and beyond flocked to Spain's aid, many to join the International Brigades. More than 2,500 of these men and women came from Britain, Ireland and the Commonwealth, and contrary to popular myth theirs was not an army of adventurers, poets and public school idealists. Overwhelmingly they hailed from modest working class backgrounds, leaving behind their livelihoods and their families to fight in a brutal civil war on foreign soil. Some 500 of them never returned home. In this inspiring and moving oral history, Richard Baxell weaves together a diverse array of testimony to tell the remarkable story of the Britons who took up arms against General Franco. Drawing on the author's own extensive interviews with survivors, research in archives across Britain, Spain and Russia, as well as first-hand accounts by writers both famous and unknown, *Unlikely Warriors* presents a startling new interpretation of the Spanish Civil War and follows a band of ordinary men and women who made an extraordinary choice.

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