



Writing the War: Chronicles of a World War II Correspondent

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As expansive as it is personal, this chronicle of World War II is a firsthand account by a journalist and the woman he would marry of the dramatic events that engulfed the world in the middle of the twentieth century. The correspondence between Charles Kiley and Billee Gray also tells the poignant tale of two young people in love but forced apart by the circumstances of war. Edited by Charles and Billee's daughter, son, and son-in-law, this never-before-published compilation of letters is a striking example of the heroic, call-to-duty spirit that characterized "the greatest generation."

Charles was a soldier-journalist for the U.S. Army's *Stars and Stripes* newspaper and reported on the war from London, Normandy, Paris, Reims, Belgium, and Germany. As the sole reporter allowed direct access to Eisenhower's staff, he was the only reporter on the scene when the German high command was negotiating its unconditional surrender on May 7, 1945. Among his army newspaper friends and colleagues was Andy Rooney, later CBS correspondent and *60 Minutes* commentator. Billee, like many young women of her time, witnessed the war years from the home front and filled vital civilian roles--defense-industry plant worker, Red Cross volunteer, war bonds salesgirl, and civil defense plane-spotter--and wrote about it all in her letters to Charles.

Peppered with fascinating details about soldiers' and civilians' lives, and including *Stars and Stripes* articles and personal photographs of the era, *Writing the War* is both important history and a tribute to two remarkable people as well as their extraordinary generation.

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