



Dying for the News: Honoring Tom Treanor and the Other Reporters Killed Covering World War II

Gary G. Yerkey

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More than 50 journalists working for U.S. news organizations were killed covering World War II, including 35-year-old Tom Treanor of the Los Angeles Times. This is his story. It is also, in many ways, the story of the others who were killed on the battlefield in Europe and the Pacific between 1940 and 1945 — of their quest for adventure, their passion for the news despite the risks, and their constant longing for home. Like the others, of course, Treanor knew what he was doing. Yet he and the others were unable resist the tug of war. “Always,” he wrote, “there is this hypnotic drag pulling you toward battle.” He returned home to Los Angeles to rest — but only briefly. Then, in mid-May 1944, he returned to Europe to cover the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied France. Three months later, just west of Paris, he was killed. His friend and fellow reporter Don Whitehead, of the AP, called Treanor one of the most colorful figures who covered the war and one of the most courageous. Damon Runyon, the legendary American newspaperman and author, said he was “one of the best.” This is his story -- and a tribute to him and the others who gave their lives for the news during World War II.

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