



# **GREAT WAR TO GREAT ESCAPE: The Two Wars of Flight Lieutenant Bernard 'Pop' Green**

## **MC**

*Laurence Green*

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Bernard Green managed to survive both the First and Second World War - just. In the first global conflict of the Twentieth Century he endured mud, destruction and death in the trenches of the Western Front; suffering serious injury yet serving with distinction, earning the Military Cross. Twenty-one years later, with another European war imminent, Bernard signed up to fight Germany once more, this time from the air. However in July 1940 his Hampden bomber was blasted from the sky. He survived and was captured, though two of his crew were not so fortunate and lost their lives. For the remainder of the war Bernard languished behind barbed wire, although he did manage to breakout from Stalag Luft III as part of the famous 'Great Escape' in March 1944, the oldest man to do so. Bernard was recaptured and, again, was extremely lucky to survive. Fifty of his co-escapers were not so lucky, murdered on the direct orders of Adolf Hitler. Based on family archives and original letters Bernard Green's grandson Laurence has pieced together his grandfather's extraordinary story of survival. Great War to Great Escape tells of Bernard's physical and mental struggles as he endures the appalling attrition of Ypres and the Somme during the Great War. Then there is the physical and psychological torment of years of captivity, for virtually all of the Second World War, with a focus on his involvement in the 'Great Escape'. Bernard's ordeal finally ends following a forced march in atrocious conditions as the European conflict draws to a close. Bernard Green's story is quite exceptional; an extraordinary man confronting extremes of war, and surviving. The vast majority of photographs, from both the First and Second World War, have never been published. Provides further insight in to the infamous breakout from Stalag Luft III and is essential reading for anyone interested in the Great Escape.

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