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David Brown, Michael Wereschagin
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David M. Brown and Michael Wereschagin

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David Brown, Michael Wereschagin : Gone at 3:17: The Untold Story of the Worst School Disaster in American History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gone at 3:17: The Untold Story of the Worst School Disaster in American History:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Gone At 3:17. By Kim This book is well written. It told many details at what really happened that day in Texas. I can't imagine the horror of it all. I was a firefighter for many years and I can't say that I ever saw anything like what I read in this book. I don't know how anyone could not be touched by this tragedy. Parents were finding their own children and carrying them out of the hole that was left after the blast leveled

the school. One little boy begged his father to kill him. It was like he knew he was going to die. I was so upset with the school board and the superintendent who decided to save money by having the janitor fix the main gas line to the school so that they could save money. The janitor didn't know what he was doing and the gas leaked into the school for God knows how long, and it caused the explosion that killed the shop teacher when he turned on the sander. I understand that it was in the depression but West Texas was an exception with the discovery of oil which put men to work. This beautiful new school gone in a second, killing so many innocent children ranging in age from 10-18. These people have died in the prime of life but not one of them will ever be forgotten at least not by me or anyone who reads this book. I strongly urge anyone who reads this review will buy a copy of this book and read it for yourself. I have finished the book and I can tell you that I cried. I can't imagine how these parents picked up the pieces of their lives and continued to go on. I don't think anyone could top this book. The authors did a good job on researching the history of this tragedy. I don't know how these parents dug through the rubble of this school to find their own children. As the families went to the different places looking for their children some of them got to the destination to hold their child's hand while they were dying. You send your children to school thinking they are safe, this book lets you know that this isn't always the case. My heart went out to the teachers who also lost their lives that day. May God Bless The Children And Teachers Who Lost Their Lives On March 18, 1937. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Exceptional By LACARI grew up hearing from my dad about "that school in Texas that blew up in the gas explosion." He worked for the local natural gas company and repeatedly talked about how foolish people were with how they were not cautious enough with such a dangerous product. And years ago when the company added an odor to their gas so it could be detected if there was a leak he reminded us that the industry had learned a lesson because of "that school in Texas." I never really knew the whole tragic story but reading this book helps me understand even more why he was so disturbed by it. I also had several relatives living and working in the Texas panhandle and when visiting saw rows and rows of pipes shooting flames in the sky where the gas was being burned off. The writers did an exceptional job of research. The characters came to life and made the event even more tragic. I can't even imagine what it would have been like, especially to those parents who lost ALL their children. Because there were so many people involved I appreciated the authors reminding us of who they were. I read a lot of "tragedy" books, because I like to know about the heroic efforts of those who survive, and this may be the best. I understand how it happened and appreciate the measures that were enacted so that it will never happen again. God bless those families that still suffer. 28 of 29 people found the following review helpful. Incredibly told, like I was there By j74I preordered this book in December because I knew it was going to be published in January. I work in the East Texas area and have had the privilege of meeting three survivors of the explosion and I was captivated by their stories. I knew that this book, after 20 years of research, would be the best way to learn about the story and put the pieces together I had already gathered. This book did NOT disappoint. From the first page, I felt like I was there, in 1937, with all of the sounds and emotions of so many involved. The chapter about the explosion itself was like there were cameras capturing everything and I was able to watch it unfold, not just read about it. Whenever I am close to the towns where everything happened: from passing the location of Daisy Bradford #3, driving by the school and monument, or slowing down as Pleasant Hill Cemetery appears, I can't help but feel like I am on hallowed ground. There have been several pictures drawn by children after the explosion depicting the victims as angels. I feel like those angels continue to draw people to that place to help them understand what happened, to tell their story. I believe that Mr Brown, and later, Mr Wereschagin, were drawn into Pleasant Hill cemetery by those angels so their story could be told by the best people who could possibly tell it. My sincerest appreciation and respect to the authors and their staff for the time, energy, and devotion that produced a tremendous book telling a wrenching story that should never be forgotten.

At 3:17 p.m. on March 18, 1937, a natural gas leak beneath the London Junior-Senior High School in the oil boomtown of New London, Texas, created a lethal mixture of gas and oxygen in the school's basement. The odorless, colorless gas went undetected until the flip of an electrical switch triggered a colossal blast. The two-story school, one of the nation's most modern, disintegrated, burying everyone under a vast pile of rubble and debris. More than 300 students and teachers were killed, and hundreds more were injured. As the seventy-fifth anniversary of the catastrophe approaches, it remains the deadliest school disaster in U.S. history. Few, however, know of this historic tragedy, and no book, until now, has chronicled the explosion, its cause, its victims, and the aftermath. *Gone at 3:17* is a true story of what can happen when school officials make bad decisions. To save money on heating the school building, the trustees had authorized workers to tap into a pipeline carrying waste natural gas produced by a gasoline refinery. The explosion led to laws that now require gas companies to add the familiar pungent odor. The knowledge that the tragedy could have been prevented added immeasurably to the heartbreak experienced by the survivors and the victims' families. The town would never be the same. Using interviews, testimony from survivors, and archival newspaper files, *Gone at 3:17* puts readers inside the shop class to witness the spark that ignited the gas. Many of those interviewed during twenty years of research are no longer living, but their acts of heroism and stories of survival live on in this meticulously documented and extensively illustrated book.

"The 1937 New London explosion was a great American tragedy that once again demonstrates the courage, basic decency, and resiliency of American citizens. Gone at 3:17 will bring tears to your eyes, followed by a sense of pride, as you read this well-documented, absorbing, and poignant story." Dr. Cyril Wecht, past president of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and the American College of Legal Medicine