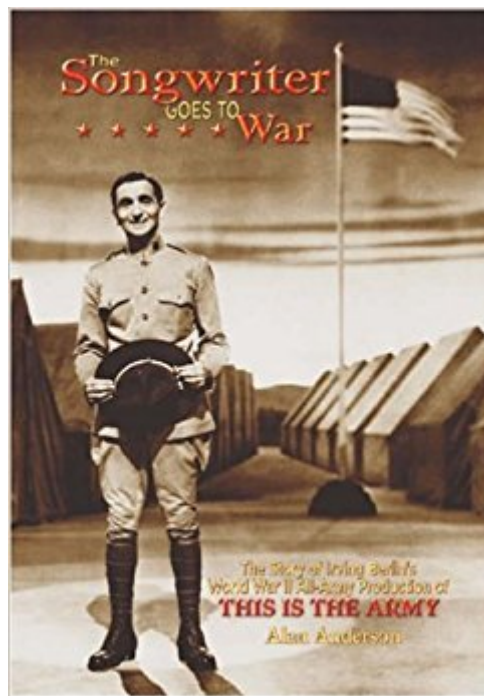


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# The Songwriter Goes To War: The Story Of Irving Berlin's World War II All-Army Production Of This Is The Army



## Synopsis

Irving Berlin marked the end of WWI with a show that opened on Broadway just before Armistice Day, 1918, and ran for all of 32 performances. Yip, Yip, Yaphank was notable for its company, made up entirely of servicemen. The idea of an all-service show resurfaced in the wake of the U.S. entry into WWII, and the cast of This Is the Army was rehearsing and preparing to open at New York's Broadway Theatre. Their story is recalled here by Alan Anderson, whose first assignment after induction into the service was to be production stage manager and first sergeant of the This Is the Army detachment. From this vantage point Anderson enjoyed a unique perspective on the show, on all the elements that went into it, and on all the personalities that in one way or another brought the elements to life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

THE SONGWRITER GOES TO WAR by Alan Anderson is a fascinating memoir about the Broadway Show THIS IS THE ARMY. The show had an all soldier cast and music by Irving Berlin. After playing its Broadway run and touring various cities in the United States the company went on to tour throughout Europe and the rest of the world wherever the regiments were. Anderson, the son of playwright Maxwell Anderson, was the stage manager for the tour. His book is very readable with great humor and pathos. One very interesting aspect is that this was the only integrated unit in the Army at that time and also had many "out-of-the-closet" gay men and they seemed to get along quite well. The relationship Berlin had with the members of the unit is also very touching. My one

complaint is that I would like more information. I would love to hear about the experience from others with different points of view as well. This book is great for anyone interested in Musical Theatre history or World War II. I highly recommend it.

The Songwriter Goes To War: The Story of Irving Berlin's World War II All-Army Production of This Is The Army is the long-lost true story of frontline show business - from the hustle and bustle of its large-scale production including the transportation of a full-scale Broadway musical revue to Great Britain during the blitz, to its premier at theaters, subsequent reception, and role in keeping up morale. Carefully researched by Broadway stage manager, television director, and five-year army serviceman Alan Anderson, The Songwriter Goes To War is enhanced with a handful of vintage black-and-white photographs, a roster of "This Is The Army" members and an index for easy quick referencing. A welcome contribution to both World War II era popular culture and American theatrical history, The Songwriter Goes To War is an enduring true story of a dyed-in-the-wool entertainer expertly applying his gifts to serve his country in its hour of need.

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