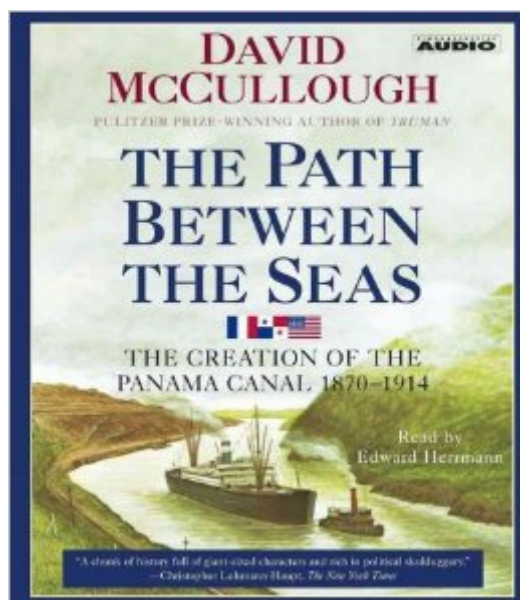


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The Path Between The Seas



Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Simon & Schuster (June 1, 2003)

Language: English

ASIN: B001I6W5Z8

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 5.1 x 1.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (1,629 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,207,232 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 inÂ Books > History >

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Customer Reviews

David McCollough is a heck of a writer -- a fact I already knew from reading his wonderful biography Truman. His skill does justice to an epic story of recent times: the building of the Panama Canal. This big book is necessary to tell a big tale. The effort to build the Path Between the Seas across the isthmus of Panama lasted from the 1870's through 1914. In a nutshell, first the French tried and failed to build a sea level crossing at Panama. This was in pursuit of a vision held by many national leaders in order to cut thousands of miles from the journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. The Americans picked up where the French left off, and after a decade succeeded in creating a crossing using locks and a man-made lake. What McCollough does so well is flesh out the above nutshell. It is a tale that would not be believed if written as fiction. The level of incompetence, misfeasance and malfeasance, wondrously peculiar personalities, engineering failures and brilliance, vision and size astound the reader and underscore how that age relied more upon enthusiasm, idealism and optimism in the pursuit of grand efforts than does our careful and measured era. The French followed the builder of the Suez Canal into the jungles of Panama. Tens of thousands of French families invested their life savings in the stock of a company that had no plans for the actual canal, very little good data of conditions on the isthmus, no idea of the amount of earth required to be removed, and no budget that would pay for the grand adventure.

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