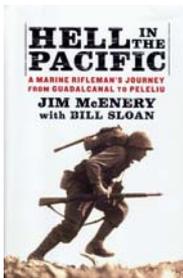


Books Tell of World War II Marines, Vietnam Battles, Anglo-Dutch Wars

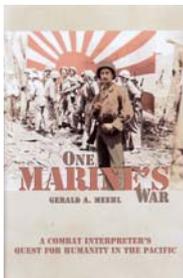
By RICHARD R. BURGESS, Managing Editor



HELL IN THE PACIFIC: A Marine Rifleman's Journey from Guadalcanal to Peleliu

By Jim McEnery with Bill Sloan.
New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012.
305 pp. \$27.00
ISBN: 978-1-4516-5913-9

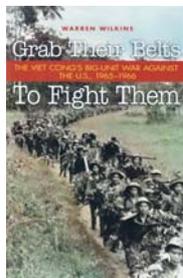
This book's title is appropriate to describe the combat conditions in the jungles and coral islands of the South and Central Pacific during World War II. Jim McEnery was a rifleman with the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester and Peleliu. McEnery's unit was depicted in the HBO miniseries *The Pacific*, based in part on the book "With the Old Breed" by the junior Marine in his unit, Eugene Sledge. Like Sledge's classic, this book candidly depicts the hellish combat, including hand-to-hand fighting and losing all too many fellow Marines. He writes of the Peleliu campaign as wringing the "last traces of humanity and all that's left is a blind urge to kill." McEnery echoes the opinion held by many Marines that the Peleliu operation was a "total-ly pointless" waste of lives.



ONE MARINE'S WAR: A Combat Interpreter's Quest for Humanity in the Pacific

By Gerald A. Meehl. Annapolis, Md.:
Naval Institute Press, 2012.
288 pp. \$34.95
ISBN: 978-1-61251-092-7

Robert Sheeks was a Marine officer and a linguist in Japanese during World War II who had observed Japanese military brutality against Chinese civilians before the war. His negative impressions of the Japanese later were modified by the kindness of his Japanese-American language instructors. During the invasion of Tarawa in 1943 he was frustrated by the inability to communicate with the Japanese defenders over the din of battle. He resolved to prevent needless casualties by devising various mediums of communication, including loudspeakers and leaflets to persuade the Japanese troops and civilians to surrender and employed these techniques during the invasions of Saipan and Tinian in the Mariana Islands, an effort for which he was decorated.



GRAB THEIR BELTS TO FIGHT THEM: The Viet Cong's Big-Unit War Against the U.S., 1965-1966

By Warren Wilkins. Annapolis, Md.:
Naval Institute Press, 2011.
312 pp. \$35.95
ISBN: 978-1-59114-061-3

Although usually thought of as a guerrilla war, the Vietnam War involved many large-unit (battalion-size and larger) actions during 1965 and 1966, even more than during the intensive fighting during the 1968 Tet Offensive and the May 1972 North Vietnam offensive. The communist Viet Cong (VC) actions were an effort to decisively defeat U.S. ground forces and Army of the Republic of Vietnam forces. The Army and Marine Corps units wanted the VC to stand and fight rather than melting into the jungle. The VC usually suffered far higher casualties in proportion to the U.S. ground forces and failed in their effort to achieve the victories they enjoyed as the Viet Minh against the French forces. The author makes good use of now-available sources from the communist side.



WARSHIPS OF THE ANGLO-DUTCH WARS 1652-74

By Angus Konstam. Oxford, U.K.:
Osprey Publishing, 2011.
80 pp. \$17.95
ISBN: 978-1-84908-410-9

England and Holland fought three wars in the North Sea and English Channel between 1652 and 1674. In the first, 1652-1654, Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth Navy bested the Dutch Navy. In the second, 1665-1667, with the English monarchy restored, the English fleet was burned by the Dutch in the Medway, forcing Charles II to plead for peace. In the third, 1672-1674, the Royal Navy's victory set the stage for ruling the waves for the next 250 years. The lavishly illustrated monograph describes the ships in the wars and includes an operational history. The author shows how warships matured into the ships-of-the-line that would dominate naval warfare until steam ships entered service in significant numbers. ■

Seapower does not review works of fiction or self-published books.