

and machines was the defense of this road — the only one open between these two points — that it became known to those fighting there as Hell's Highway. It was aptly named. The near constant fighting that took place in this relatively small arena was intense and costly. The German forces contained a variety of troops in, from heavy armor to Hitler Youth, some barely sixteen years of age. Prior to reinforcements arriving from the Arnhem sector, many of the German troops were so disheartened by the surprise assault that they gave up almost without fighting. That situation soon vanished, however, with the arrival of more regular Wehrmacht troops and armor. In most villages, the fighting was street-by-street and house-to-house. Inevitably, the fighting took a toll on both soldiers and civilians. Tragedies, like the Dutch family that took shelter in an abandoned German foxhole, where the older son was killed waving a white flag and a grenade took out the other five children were rare, but tragic none the less. Civilian losses from shelling and bombing also mounted as the battles went to, through, and from their home villages. The road was controlled alternately by the Americans, with British armor support, and their German counterparts. The towns through which the road passed — Eerde, Veghel, Son, and St. Oedenrode — saw most of the heavy action and suffered the most losses. Although in the end, the German occupation of this zone was ended, the ultimate goal of the entire operation, the capture of the bridge at Arnhem was not.

Much of the author's information comes from interviews with veterans of the units and nearly ninety Dutch participants. He was also on hand for much of the fighting, being Maj. Gen. Maxwell Taylor's radio operator, and he was thus in a position to know many of those involved and what their tactics were. What held this reviewer's fascination was how Koskimaki used these sources to make each one blend with the narrative of the campaign. The reader gets to meet and know so many fascinating individuals at a crucial juncture in their lives. You also get to know, albeit too briefly, many of those who did not survive. The bravery exhibited by these men and women under great duress makes the stories come alive. Men who knew their time had come, still had the presence of mind to joke about their condition and pass on information, radios, bazookas, and other weapons to their comrades in arms. The intrepid attitude of nurse Koos van Schaik of the Dutch Red Cross tending to the wounded on both sides and bringing men back from the battle front (after one was established) is just one of the book's remarkable stories. Her tale and others are beautifully intertwined with the account of the fighting in and around St. Oedenrode. Also

highlighted is the incredible leadership provided by the non-commissioned officers after their officers were either killed or wounded. Time and again, when the officers fell, these men picked up the role and led their soldiers onward, as if they had been in charge all along. These actions alone speak volumes on the initiative and training of the American soldiers. As others have noted in recent writings, this was not a common trait in the German Army, and it had a decisive impact on the war's outcome. Koskimaki's account provides nearly all the documentation one would need to make that argument.

One might think that a book of this length would drag on because of the seemingly endless battle situations covered and documented. This is not the case with *Hell's Highway* (and its companion volumes). The reader is carried along with the troops with an intensity that is as good as most movies. It is a study of humans under the greatest pressure responding as only the best can. It gives the reader plenty to think about and reflect upon for some time afterward. This reviewer would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in World War II and state that this book should be on your book shelves sometime soon. As this is a paperback reissue of the original, the lower price gives you no excuse for not having it in your library.

Joe Knetsch

***One Marine's War: A Combat Interpreter's Quest for Humanity in the Pacific*, by Gerald A. Meehl. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2012. 244 pp., \$34.95.**

During the fighting in the Pacific during World War II, the United States found itself needing language experts who could read, speak, and write Japanese, so that enemy prisoners could be interrogated and captured documents translated. Robert B. Sheeks was a young Marine officer who possessed this talent. His fascinating story is told in *One Marine's War*, by Gerald A. Meehl, a senior scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, in Boulder, Colorado.

Born in China in 1922, Bob Sheeks's father was an American businessman in Shanghai, and Bob grew up in the privileged environment that was enjoyed by that city's international community. His dealings with servants and other Chinese enabled him to develop some competency in their language. In 1932, after the Japanese invaded China, Bob witnessed scenes of extreme brutality that caused him to develop a hatred of the Japanese military. In 1935, after his mother had died, his father decided the time had come to move him and his brother back to the United States. Bob eventually

graduated from high school in Spokane, Washington, and he was studying at Harvard University when Pearl Harbor was attacked.

Learning that he had grown up in China, the Navy quickly recruited Bob to enter a Japanese language program that was being conducted at the University of California's Berkeley campus. If he succeeded in graduating from the demanding program, he would be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. In June 1942, shortly after the executive order directing the internment of Japanese-American citizens on the West Coast went into effect, the Japanese Language School (JLS) was moved to the University of Colorado, in Boulder.

Bob graduated from the JLS in January 1943 and became a Marine officer. After completing basic training near San Diego, he was shipped across the Pacific and assigned to the headquarters of the 2d Marine Division in time to participate in the bloody assault on the island of Tarawa in November 1943. Bob was able to interrogate a few captured Japanese soldiers and Korean laborers, but he quickly realized that he needed to develop an effective means of encouraging enemy soldiers to surrender, since they considered this to be a dishonorable act and generally preferred to die fighting or to commit suicide.

After Tarawa was secured, the 2d Marine Division returned to Hawaii to prepare for more combat. Bob tried to convince his fellow Marines that they should try to take prisoners, which was a tough sell. He also developed "patrol cards" with information in Japanese that could assist Marines in taking prisoners. When the 2d Marine Division attacked Saipan in June 1944, Bob again had a chance to use his language skills in action. This time, he used loudspeakers to successfully broadcast surrender appeals. His final combat experience came when the nearby island of Tinian was attacked in July, and he again called civilians and military out of hiding using jeep-mounted loudspeakers and handheld amplifier megaphones. After completing its operation on Tinian, the 2d Marine Division returned to Saipan, and Bob spent the rest of the war working with civil affairs personnel to restore agriculture and fisheries. His achievements on both islands were recognized with the award of a Bronze Star.

After the war, Bob returned to Harvard, and he graduated magna cum laude in 1946. He later utilized his language skills to work in a variety of jobs throughout Asia, and he also remained in the Marine Corps Reserve and retired as a major. He currently lives in California.

One Marine's War relates a remarkable story that is well told. All those CAMP members who are interested in the War in the Pacific will find the book to be a most rewarding read.

Roger D. Cunningham

***Virginia at War, 1865*, edited by William C. Davis and James I. Robertson Jr. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012. 237 pp., \$40.00.**

Any reference to the American Civil War would be incomplete without a mention of William C. Davis and James I. Robertson, Jr. This dynamic duo represents two of the finest historians of the modern era, with numerous books and articles, and awards received, to their credit on a variety of subjects within Civil War historiography. To those accomplishments must be included the "Virginia at War" series, of which they are the editors, on behalf of the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies. The current volume is a compilation of eight essays on topics covering the concluding months of the war in Virginia, from the last days of military operations leading to Appomattox, women and families, music and entertainment and the economy to the last days of the Confederate government, the demobilization of the surrendered Confederate veterans of Lee's army, the *fin de guerre* attitudes of Afro-Virginians, Virginia in the aftermath of the war, and an annotated excerpt from refugee Judith Brockenbrough McGuire's diary, an excellent primary source detailing the struggles, feelings, and hopes of the population suffering behind the lines in the Commonwealth.

The editors employed the services of such well-known figures as Chris Calkins, currently manager of the Sailor's Creek State Battlefield Park, who writes on the final days of the Army of Northern Virginia; Dr. E. Lawrence Abel, an acknowledged authority on Civil War music; Dr. Ervin L. Jordan Jr., whose writings have emphasized the efforts, actions, and plight of African-Americans during the war; Danville, Virginia, resident F. Lawrence McFall Jr., whose essay focuses on the last days of the Confederate government in that city; Kevin Levin, whose contribution on the demobilization of the Army of Northern Virginia corrects what the editors believe is an omission on the subject in Civil War historiography; Ginette Aley who covers women and families and was a contributor to *Virginia at War, 1864*; Jaime Amanda Martinez on the Virginia economy and its devastation by Union armies, greatly assisted by the lack of coherent financial and economic policies on the part of the Confederate government, massively inflated paper currency and the loss and destruction of livestock and foodstuffs; and finally John L. McClure, who provides an overview of the aftermath of the war in the Commonwealth. Each author has delved, as deeply as one can in an essay, into his or her subject and provides an excellent portrayal of the events leading up to, and through, the end of the war. The authors'