

By Cdr. Peter B. Mersky, USNR (Ret.)

Simmons, Edwin Howard. *The United States Marines: A History, 3rd Edition*. U.S. Naval Institute, 118 Maryland Ave., Annapolis, MD 21402. 1998. 400 pp. Ill. \$32.95.

Republication of this little gem is like meeting an old friend. Originally published by Viking in 1976, this attractive edition has added 80 pages and three more chapters to bring the narrative up to date.

Filled with nuggets and written by a respected Marine Corps historian, this handy reference should be standard issue to new Marines. It includes a photo folio, illustrated maps drawn by retired reserve Colonel Charles Waterhouse—one of the Corps' most accomplished artists—and a foreword by former Commandant General Charles C. Krulak.

The previous edition stopped at the fall of Saigon in 1975, so there was much to cover. Brigadier General Simmons continues his tight, descriptive style in giving accounts of actions in Grenada, Lebanon, Panama, Somalia and the Persian Gulf, but his brevity occasionally short-changes some people. During his description of the October 1983 conflict in Grenada, I was surprised to see him forego a nod to *Cobra* pilot Captain Jeb Seagle, who received a posthumous Navy Cross—the first of only three since Vietnam. However, General Simmons certainly has a historian's flair and opinions that bring color and depth to his narrative.

To be sure, the Corps' most important post-Vietnam campaign was the 1991 Persian Gulf War. New tactics, equipment, goals and experiences encompassed the six-week conflict. Simmons admirably simmers the war down as he describes the buildup of Desert Shield and Desert Storm combat. For such a short war, the intricacies of the organization within and without the Marine Corps are laid out with an understanding that only a former Marine could provide.

This book belongs in any military library as a quick reference.

Wildenberg, Thomas. *Destined for Glory: Dive Bombing, Midway and the Evolution of Carrier Airpower*. U.S. Naval Institute Press, 118 Maryland Ave., Annapolis, MD 21402. 1998. 280 pp. Ill. \$34.95.

The premise of this book appears to be that the U.S. "earned" its tactical and strategic victory at the Battle of Midway in June 1942 because America had pushed the development of carrier-based dive-bombers and associated tactics. The resulting narrative is well-researched and scholarly; however, I occasionally got bogged down in the somewhat heavy writing.

The text sets the stage for America's entry into WW II after Pearl Harbor and, in the final chapters, the pivotal carrier battles at Coral Sea and Midway. The author's assess-

ment of Captain Miles Browning—who many considered an opinionated martinet, but who was also an experienced and dedicated senior Naval Aviator—is provocative and provides food for thought.

The photos are OK but contain a few errors in captioning, such as misidentifying aircraft displayed next to signs clearly naming them. Page 169 identifies the model of *Zero* in service before Pearl harbor as A6M5, which did not reach combat until two years later.

Destined for Glory is a serviceable treatise, but not intended as an easy read for the armchair historian.

Milligan, Sean Paul. *Quonset Point Naval Air Station, Vol. II*. Arcadia, 2 Cumberland St., Charleston, SC 29401. 1998. 128 pp. Ill. \$18.99.

We reviewed the first volume of this largely pictorial effort in 1996. This sequel repeats the format in presenting photos of Quonset Point, which had a full and varied 34-year career as one of the Navy's busiest eastern air stations. The second book covers the period from V-J Day to Vietnam. With little text, captions provide the information.

There are some fine images. The cover photo of an unidentified aviator posing on the side of a nicely marked FJ *Fury* of VF-73 is typical. By the Vietnam War, Quonset had been largely bypassed by newer sites, serving mainly as a terminal for the southern New England area. Nevertheless, the station's rich history is well displayed in this volume, and both books offer a nice trip down memory lane.

Book orders can be sent to the author at 137 Olympia Ave., Pawtucket, RI 02861-4209; include additional \$3.01 for shipping.

Shettle, M. L., Jr. *United States Naval Air Stations, Vol. 2, Western States*. Schaertel Publishing Co., PO Box 66, Bowersville, GA 30516. 1997. 284 pp. Ill. \$34.95.

We reviewed the first volume of this comprehensive look at naval air stations in 1996, and this book continues the fascinating display of photographs and history.

The format shows at least one major head photo of the subject airfield and often continues with several rare and intriguing shots of aircraft and people during the station's career. The size and population of many out-of-the-way fields illustrate the truly huge war effort. The pages describing Midway show its prewar Pan American Airways hotel, an unusual bit of trivia seldom mentioned when discussing the atoll's history.

Like its predecessor, this volume represents an obvious research effort borne of love for the subject. For reference or a pleasant browse, this book, like the first, can't be too highly recommended.