
World War II combat correspondent Richard Tregaskis, author of Guadalcanal Diary, called Maj. Gen. Merritt "Red Mike" Edson "the best soldier I ever knew". Fitting praise for a hardnosed general who earned an unmatched reputation for fearlessness in a Marine Corps career that spanned thirty years. Edson earned the Medal of Honor and lasting fame during a desperate, two-day defense of Guadalcanal's vital airfield. The battle immediately became known as one of the epic struggles in Marine Corps history, the Battle of Edson's Ridge. Edson first gained renown in the Marine Corps for his exploits during the "Banana Wars" in Central America during the 1920s. He became an authority on guerilla warfare and went on to create and command the 1st Marine Raider Battalion. After World War II, Edson demonstrated moral courage that matched his fearlessness under fire as he fought to preserve the Corps's identity during the service unification debates. In the political "jungles" of Washington, D. C., he used his unorthodox tactics to combat Army encroachment on Marine Corps turf, and even took on President Truman, who was intent on disbanding the Corps. Edson was a professional - the ideal fighting man with nerves of steel, devoted to his troops, dedicated to improving the Corps - but there was a dark side to this model military man. Hoffman explores Red Mike's personal life as well - his unhappy marriage; his morose, fatalistic outlook on life and death; his tragic suicide at the age of 58. Based on the general's recently unsealed personal papers, and interviews with family, friends, and fellow Marines, this is the first biography of the man described by former commandant Gen. Wallace Greene as "thepersonification of the great fighting tradition of our Corps".

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A Special Valor The U.S. Marines and the Pacific War, Richard Wheeler, 1983, History, 466 pages. Describes United States Marine action in the Pacific during World War II, including Wake Island, the Solomons, Bougainville, the Marshalls, Guam and Okinawa.
Iwo Jima legacy of valor, Bill D. Ross, 1985, History, 376 pages. Chronicles the United States Marines' thirty-six day assault on the Japanese forces at Iwo Jima and assesses the invasion's role and importance in the ultimate conquest of Japan.


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American Commando Evans Carlson, His WWII Marine Raiders, and America's First Special Forces Mission, John F. Wukovits, 2009, History, 337 pages. Provides an account of how Lieutenant Colonel Evans Carlson helped lay the foundation for Special Forces in the modern military through his leadership of the 2nd Raider.


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