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Tanks in Hell: A Marine Corps Tank Company on Tarawa

Oscar E. Gilbert, Romain V Cansiere

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Tanks in Hell: A Marine Corps Tank Company on Tarawa Oscar E. Gilbert, Romain V Cansiere
Winner of THE GENERAL WALLACE M. GREENE, JR. AWARD for outstanding nonfiction

In May 1943 a self-described “really young, green, ignorant lieutenant” assumed command of a new Marine Corps company. His even younger enlisted Marines were learning to use an untested weapon, the M4A2 “Sherman” medium tank. His sole combat veteran was the company bugler, who had salvaged his dress cap and battered horn from a sinking aircraft carrier. Just six months later the company would be thrown into one of the ghastliest battles of World War II.

On 20 November 1943 the Second Marine Division launched the first amphibious assault of the Pacific War, directly into the teeth of powerful Japanese defenses on Tarawa. In that blood-soaked invasion, a single company of Sherman tanks, of which only two survived, played a pivotal role in turning the tide from looming disaster to legendary victory. In this unique study Oscar Gilbert and Romain Cansiere use official documents, memoirs, interviews with veterans, as well as personal and aerial photographs to follow Charlie Company from its formation, and trace the movement, action?and loss?of individual tanks in this horrific four-day struggle.

The authors have used official documents and interviews with veterans to follow the company from training through the brutal 76-hour struggle for Tarawa. Survivor accounts and air photo analysis document the movements –and destruction – of the company’s individual tanks. It is a story of escapes from drowning tanks, and even more harrowing escapes from tanks knocked out behind Japanese lines. It is a story of men doing whatever needed to be done, from burying the dead to hand-carrying heavy cannon ammunition forward under fire. It is the story of how the two surviving tanks and their crews expanded a perilously thin beachhead, and cleared the way for critical reinforcements to come ashore. But most of all it is a story of how a few unsung Marines helped turn near disaster into epic victory.

REVIEWS

"... unique study describes the battle of Tarawa as you've never seen it: from the tankers point of view..."
Tanks on Tarawa

The book is heavily laden with quotes, memories and stories of the men of Charlie Company. This book brought tears to my eyes in some instances where the authors and Marines remember their actions in one of the most fiercely fought battles of the Pacific. The first person accounts along with the historical narrative both flow together well to provide a gripping account of the battle for Tarawa from a tanker's point of view. This book adds a much-needed perspective on the Marine Corps operations on Tarawa. Get it and read it.

Highly Recommended, especially for those interested in the Pacific Theater and armor operations in World War II.
Armor Modeling and Preservation Society

Gilbert and Cansiere’s undertaking was noble and useful in understanding close combat in the Pacific Theater. The photos were helpful in envisioning the various combat situations and recollections from a large number of the men doing the fighting at ground level made for a vivid re-telling of the ...Aficionados of WWII will appreciate the attention to detail, the accounting of armored training and the context of the war leading up to the battalion’s action in the Central Pacific, but it takes nearly 100 pages to get to the fighting. Yet once you reach to the miserable slaughter on Tarawa and learn of the men’s valor and reactions to adverse situations, you’ll realize it was worth the wait.
The Spectrum 12.14.15

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From reader reviews:

Roger Dupre:

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Mary Gillon:

Reading can called head hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book specifically book entitled Tanks in Hell: A Marine Corps Tank Company on Tarawa your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe not known for but surely can become your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a reserve then become one contact form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get ahead of. The Tanks in Hell: A Marine Corps Tank Company on Tarawa giving you one more experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful information for your better life in this particular era. So now let us explain to you the relaxing pattern the following is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished studying it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

Francisco London:

This Tanks in Hell: A Marine Corps Tank Company on Tarawa is brand-new way for you who has intense curiosity to look for some information as it relief your hunger of knowledge. Getting deeper you on it getting knowledge more you know or you who still having tiny amount of digest in reading this Tanks in Hell: A Marine Corps Tank Company on Tarawa can be the light food for you personally because the information inside this particular book is easy to get through anyone. These books build itself in the form that is reachable by anyone, yeah I mean in the e-book type. People who think that in e-book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this publication is the answer. So there is no in reading a reserve especially this one. You can find actually looking for. It should be here for you. So , don't miss it! Just read this e-book sort for your better life and knowledge.

Martin Kelley:

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