

War is Not Just for Heroes: World War II Dispatches and Letters of US Marine Corps Combat Correspondent Claude R. "Red" Canup

Linda M. Canup Keaton-Lima

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War is Not Just for Heroes: World War II Dispatches and Letters of US Marine Corps Combat Correspondent Claude R. "Red" Canup Linda M. Canup Keaton-Lima Winner of the 2012 Denig Award of the USMC Combat Correspondents Association

Filling a gap in the history of U.S. Marine Corps aviation history, War Is Not Just for Heroes rescues the incredible true stories written by one marine as a combat correspondent in the Pacific during World War II as shared through his dispatches, letters, diary entries, personal notes, and tapes.

At a time when the average recruit was a strapping, healthy eighteen-year-old male fresh out of high school, the U.S. Marine Corps began recruiting experienced reporters who formed the coalition of hard-hitting, frontline journalists known as Denig's Demons. These men combined their combat training with their years of newsprint experience, establishing the impregnable power and prowess of the U.S. Marine Corps and the portable typewriter. Armed with their rifles and skills, combat correspondents reported what was often the only news from Pacific islands. Writing about heroic missions and daily activities from war zones, marine combat correspondents linked marines back to their hometown communities.

Hailing from Anderson, South Carolina, and enlisting at the age of thirty-three, journalist and combat correspondent Claude R. "Red" Canup (1911-1999) was a prolific chronicler of the war zone. Canup recounted the startling, poignant, and at times surreal life of marines at war. Combining a dry sense of humor with a biting rhetoric and snappy intellect, his dispatches and letters juxtapose the good with the bad, life with death.

Canup joined Marine Aircraft Group 45 and spent several peaceful months on Ulithi, a tiny island transformed from a steaming jungle into a strategically located marine air base. In his homespun manner, Canup enthusiastically reports on every detail, from basketball games to outdoor movies to island culture. Without missing a beat, Canup describes the unfolding battle for Okinawa with the insight of a weathered marine. After joining Marine Aircraft Group 31 in April 1945, he experienced 185 red alerts in 131 days with a grit and haunting honesty that memorialize the sacrifice and bravery of his fellow marines. Reporting from Yontan and Chimu airfields, Okinawa, and Yokosuka naval base, and elsewhere in Japan, Canup offers a compelling firsthand perspective on the war's final years.

Written by Canup and edited with a preface and prologue by his daughter, War Is Not Just for Heroes--the only known collection of any World War II combat correspondent's writings--combines documentary and biography with humor and recovers the overlooked life of a representative combat correspondent during World War II.

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