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Dark Horse Six: A Memoir Of The Korean War, 1950-1951



Synopsis

"For two miserable weeks, with temperatures hovering between 20 and 40 degrees below zero, the outnumbered allied ground troops held off a Chinese army that had been ordered to annihilate them. When the running fight ended on Dec. 11 (1950) nearly 7,000 allied troops had been killed or wounded, and many of the casualties were victims of frostbite. The Chinese suffered an estimated 30,000 casualties. Historically, only the battle of the Alamo and Custer's Last Stand matched such seemingly hopeless odds. Like the Alamo, Chosin produced its own famous battle cry. According to a Time magazine account From Dec. 18, 1950, Major Gen. Oliver P. Smith, Commander of the First Marine Division, (the very same Marine Division fighting in Iraq today), set the tone for the battle by snapping, "Retreat, hell! We're not retreating, we're just advancing in a different direction!" Dark Horse Six, is the combat memoir of Colonel Robert D. Taplett. He was the commander of one of the USMC's most famed battalions, the 3rd Battalion of the 5th Marine Regiment, during the first year of fighting in Korea. His battalion's radio call sign during the bitter fighting against the Chinese was Dark Horse. After 50 years he has decided to tell his story. He wants the deeds of his Marines put into the record. The mistakes of combat, planning and egos are here as well. His experience was on the front lines, not theorizing behind some desk. THIS IS A WARRIOR'S STORY!

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Customer Reviews

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Dark Horse Six is a remarkable book. Written by a fighting Battalion CO, the book gives insights into our Korean War Marines from rifleman to Regimental commander, from planners to assault troops, from grunt to MAG close air support. I was on Wantuck, APD 125, when we picked up I/3/5 at Pusan and took them into the assault at Green Beach at Inchon. The book gave me insights into many questions I have had for 57 years. One thing that always bothered me was why I/3/5 seemed to be conducting a little Boot Camp during the 5 days we had them aboard. Another was why, over the years, I've met many veterans from G/3/5 and H/3/5, but never any of the troops that I helped carry into the assault on our LCVPs. I now realize I/3/5 badly needed their basic weapons re-familiarization. They had been in the reserves, driving buses or pumping gas only two months before being thrown into an infantry company and facing and defeating NK veterans on Wolmi-do. And they continued to face and defeat them at the Han and at Seoul. And they went on to face 12 Chinese divisions at Chosen. About 76 days after we assaulted Inchon, a bare 20 of those 200 Marines we debarked were still standing. Dark Horse Six gives similar insights into the ordeal of G/3/5 and H/3/5; into the battle for survival of Division Recon Company; into the desperate seconds when Corsairs flew just overhead, pouring supporting fire and napalm on almost overwhelming enemy forces only yards away; into the crisis moments when life or death decisions were made and paid for by the lives of ordinary men. We are so fortunate that Col. Taplett managed to get Dark Horse Six printed before he died. If you care about our magnificent Marine Corps, if you care about any of our sons and brothers in any of our military services who defend our nation with their lives,

you will be entranced by Dark Horse Six. If you can find a copy.Semper Fi and GO NAVY!Bert Kortegaard[...]

I WAS PART OF THE 3RD BATTALION 5TH MARINES IN 1950 & LOVED MY C.O. WHO WROTE IT. I FOUGHT IN MANY OF THE BATTLES DESCRIBED IN THIS BOOK! I REALIZED BY THE PRICE THAT THERE WAS NOT MANY BOOKS PUBLISHED WHICH WAS TOO BAD. I BELIEVE THIS BOOK WILL BE A COLLECTORS ITEM IN THE FUTURE. SO I PLAN ON LEAVING THIS BOOK TO MY SON & GRANDSON WHO WILL ALWAYS HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY & SPIRIT OF THEIR FAMILY & THAT GENERATION THAT SERVED THEIR COUNTRY & THE CORP. SEMPER FI TO COL. TAPLETT & THE 3RD Bn 5TH MARINES

Great book. A must have in the Korean war collectors book library.It is the ultimate first hand account of the key first battles the Marines engaged the invading NKPA in and the epic fighting free of the Chinese trap that was meant to destroy the 1st Marine Division. Taplett sets the record straight on what happened

being a marine veteran of the Korean war , { I went over as a part of the 1st Marine Prov Brigade} taking part in & being there during the battle of the Pusan Perimeter thru the battle of the Chosin Reservoir I find Col. Taplett's book depicts his experiences in an honest, factually brutal way:
Semper Fi, Jim Westendorf

I am planning to review this book with my uncle who was one of the marines that fought in this battle. His take is that this book was very accurate.

A great first hand account by one who was there! Filled with insights and action. No punches pulled and told as it really happened.

I bought this book as a gift for someone who loves war history, it was hard to find. He will be delighted with it.Thank You.

The forgotten war told in all its gritty truth. If you ever heard the term "snatched victory from the jaws of defeat" then once you read this book you will always match the two together. As a US Navy veteran I have always had the highest respect for the Corps and if I had to do it all over again I

would have joined this elite band of men. This book is an eyewitness account of a brave battalion commander, Col. Robert Taplett and his men as they scored victory after victory in Korea under the worst circumstances by holding the defenses (and bailing out the US Army) on the Pusan peninsula, the Inchon landing and capture of Seoul and the famous fighting withdrawal from the Inchon reservoir where a depleted division of Marines held off annihilation by 100,000 Chinese in the worse possible conditions one can imagine. Taplett is brutally honest about his mostly incoherent or incompetent superiors including General MacArthur and equally effusive in his praise of the brave men serving under him. I was given this book by a survivor of all these battles..a retired mustang Major.....he was the one out of ten who survived from the landing at Pusan to the the safety of the Hungnam harbor. 65 years later he still suffers from PTSD and after you put this book down you will understand why. He told me that Col. Taplett has problems walking for the rest of his life due to frostbite. Everyone who receives the Medal of Honor has performed great deeds but you cannot finish this book and not believe that many more men are deserving of this honor. Semper fidelis!

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