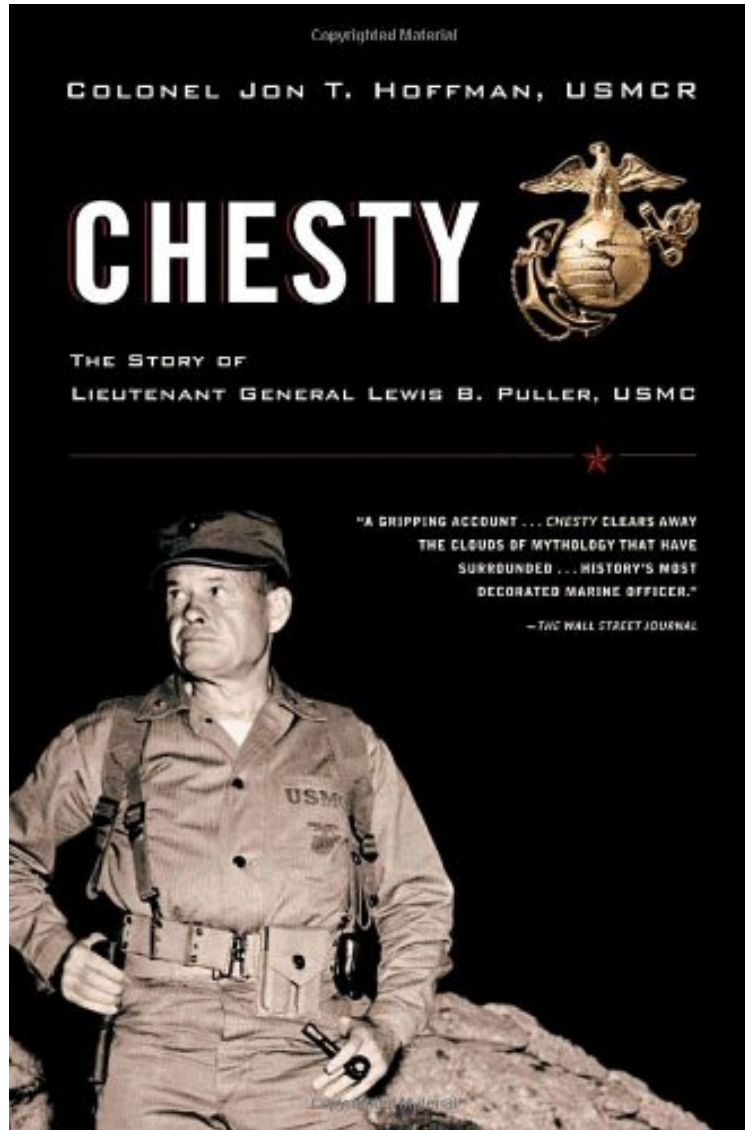


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Chesty: The Story of Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller, USMC

Jon T. Hoffman

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#120881 in Books Jon T Hoffman 2002-08-13 2002-08-13Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.20 x 1.40 x 6.00l, 1.64 #File Name: 037576044X672 pagesChesty The Story of Lieutenant General Lewis B Puller USMC | File size: 78.Mb

Jon T. Hoffman : Chesty: The Story of Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller, USMC before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chesty: The Story of Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller, USMC:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The interesting life of a true Marine legend written by and foremost for MarinesBy Flying PhotographerLG Lewis 'Chesty' Puller is a true icon of USMC's history, and one that is

acclaimed and revered by Enlisted men as well as NCOs and Officers for his battle courage and his attitude towards leading from the front while caring for your men. Even considering that his life is rather well recorded in countless official documents and many eye-witnesses were still alive when this book was written, nobody had attempted to provide a complete and as unbiased as possible account not only of his accomplishments but also about the person behind the legend. One could argue that a fellow Marine is well or actually ill suited to write such an account, with many arguments readily available for either view, and this book evidently seems to show this ambivalent view. On one side the author, as a USMC Reserve Officer, is well prepared to write about the many battle engagements and particularly about the special bond 'Chesty' was able to develop with the troops under his command. However, the same fact implies that at lengths this book is difficult to understand for non-military readers, and even worse, the author tries to clarify some aspects which clearly are only interesting for Marines or very die-hard Marine fans. As such, unfortunately part of the reading experience for the general public is spoiled, and in the end the reader seems to have read a USMC internal document, written by Marines for Marines. And it is a shame, since his life is really interesting and the author presents a lot of good descriptions paired with intelligent analysis and worthwhile conclusions. While the photographs are indeed very interesting, they seem to be a little too sparse for such a volume. Overall, this is an interesting, well-researched and lengthy book about one of 'The' Marines, but the reader will need some military background, preferably USMC, to really grasp the full content, and as such it loses a couple of stars.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Best book on the ultimate Marine. By Bill Hensler This book is flat out excellent. Marines must be proud to have such an ultimate legacy in their ranks. This book is much better than the earlier Marine! The Life of Chesty Puller. This book covers the early life, WWI era enlistment, Marine service life in Latin America, trials of getting a commission, WWII service, and Korean War service of Chesty Puller. For the USA the Great War was a short war. Chesty had tried to go through officer training but when the war ended in 1918 and the cut backs hit in 1919. I was very happy with the author's narrative of Chesty's life. It totally explained his early service. In the book, Marine, it did a fair job as a narrative of Puller's Latin American service. What was surprising to this reviewer was Chesty got to know a lot of the Marine junior officers in the 1920s who ended up being the commanding officers during WWII. I was sort of surprised what General Smith had to say about Chesty. I had never read that point of view. You'll have to read the book and I will not spoil it for you. Additionally, I was sort of surprised about what the author said of Chesty's view of "Service Schools" and how it detracted from field experience. However, this lack of higher command schools catches up with Chesty in spades during the fighting in the Pacific. Chesty didn't have the knowledge back ground for some of the artillery fires needed to support his units. I was rather surprised that he didn't lobby harder for direct support of 75mm howitzers and 57mm anti-tank guns. The author has nothing but excellent praise of Chesty but he is not afraid to point out Chesty's short comings. But Chesty is like is far cousin, George S. Patton, and Chesty's leadership comes to front during the fight in Korea. This book makes it clear: if Chesty had not been in Korea then the U.N. Army Groups in Korea may have been destroyed by the Communist Ground forces. During the American Civil War the Confederate General Lee lamented that "Union forces are protected by Providence." In Korea the Marines were lead by the perfect leader - Chesty - who knew how the enemy operated, how to demonstrate leadership at the front, and could motivate the men in the worst of conditions. When Chesty leaves Korea (and the author makes it darn clear that Truman isn't the saint the media says he is) he is assigned to a training unit. During this time and up the time of Chesty's retirement the Marine is a colorful interview for the media and his comment "whiskey drinking soldiers" becomes part of the 1950s lexicon. Chesty meant well and what he means is your soldiers need tough physical conditioning. The Germans in WWII felt the same way, "Sweat saves blood." Chesty leaves the Marines because of medical reasons. The Author says that Chesty had a 199/150 blood pressure rate. The typical for a 53 year old man should be no higher than 120/90. Chesty has a stroke and is discharged. Medical science was not quite as understood today as in the '50s. One of Chesty's commanders wants his discharged because - a correct observation is made - command would kill the Marine. I was surprised that the book tells that Chesty is sued over the book Marine. The lawsuit is settled for \$30,000 which is a hefty settlement in the early 1960s. Chesty's personal life is both happy and sad. His family is successful but his son is badly wounded in Vietnam. Chesty dies in 1971 to a grateful for his service Marine Corps. All Army and Marine Junior Officers can learn a good deal from this book. Train your men well and respect them. Keep things simple in training and focus on tasks. Be honest in dealing with service members and your superiors. Eat healthy and don't smoke (Chesty had a stroke at 54 directly linked to tobacco and diet). This was a wonderful book.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended. I suggest reading it with Burke Davis' Marine By Don Jillisky Chesty was a man with his own frailties long before he was a Marine Corps legend. That is revealed in his personal letters to his wife, Virginia. Nonetheless, he was a patriot and warrior who held himself to the highest standards. This book is about the courage and principal that defines the culture of the Marine Corps to this very day. In this individual we see the embodiment of what the Marine Corps aspires to be. Highly recommended. I suggest reading it with Burke Davis' Marine, Puller's "autobiography" in the other hand.

Featured on the Commandant of the Marine Corps' Reading List The Marine Corps is known for its heroes, and Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller has long been considered the greatest of them all. His assignments and activities

covered an extraordinary spectrum of warfare. Puller mastered small unit guerrilla warfare as a lieutenant in Haiti in the 1920s, and at the end of his career commanded a division in Korea. In between, he chased Sandino in Nicaragua and fought at Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, and Peleliu. With his bulldog face, barrel chest (which earned him the nickname Chesty), gruff voice, and common touch, Puller became—and has remained—the epitome of the Marine combat officer. At times Puller's actions have been called into question—at Peleliu, for instance, where, against a heavily fortified position, he lost more than half of his regiment. And then there is the saga of his son, who followed in Chesty's footsteps as a Marine officer only to suffer horrible wounds in Vietnam (his book, *Fortunate Son*, won the Pulitzer Prize). Jon Hoffman has been given special access to Puller's personal papers as well as his personnel record. The result will unquestionably stand as the last word about Chesty Puller. From the Hardcover edition.

From *Library Journal* The first biography since Burke Davis's uncritical *Marine!* (1962), this engrossing biography by Hoffman (Marine Corps Historical Ctr.) effectively portrays "Chesty" Puller (1898-1971) as an enduring icon of the U.S. Marine Corps. His 37-year career included engagements with bandits in Haiti, rebels in Nicaragua, Japanese Imperial forces on Guadalcanal, New Britain, and Peleliu, and North Korean and Red Chinese armies in Korea. Puller's legendary reputation is based on fearlessness, uncompromising leadership, and an ability to gain the respect and affection of his enlisted men. The author celebrates these qualities but also offers a balanced discussion of Chesty's more questionable traits, like his continuing disparagement of staff officers and military education courses and his penchant for costly frontal assaults against an entrenched enemy. Tender family correspondence allows readers to get beyond Puller's crusty exterior. Hoffman's research efforts into untapped sources, map selections, and detailed battlefield accounts are the cardinal strengths of this definitive biography. Recommended for military collections in all libraries. John C. Edwards, Univ. of Georgia Libs., Athens Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Lionized by the Marine Corps, the decorated, barrel-chested Lewis Puller had a career that virtually defined what a marine should be. Although this thorough biography has a quasi-official imprimatur--the author is a marine--it is not hagiographic and occasionally renders serious criticism of the hero. Puller's reputation as an exceptionally aggressive unit leader was established in the 1920s and 1930s by his performance in combat during U.S. interventions in Haiti and Nicaragua, but it was during Pearl Harbor that the Puller legend took off. Although immobilized by a shrapnel wound during the ghastly Battle of Peleliu in 1944, he ordered frontal assaults that resulted in the loss of more than half his regiment. Also covered is his doughty leadership in the Korean War at Inchon, Seoul, and the disaster of the Chosin Reservoir. Hoffman has succeeded in objectively folding his subject's faults into a work that will reinforce Puller's iconographic stature as the Marine Corps' ultimate warrior. For libraries near a marine base, the best defense is a good offense: buy it by the box. Gilbert Taylor Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved Praise for *Chesty: The Story of Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller, USMC* "There are as many wild tales about Chesty Puller's battlefield exploits as there are Marines. Jon Hoffman, like a master prospector, has separated the fool's gold from the real nuggets in telling this glittering story of an extraordinary Leatherneck."—Colonel Joseph H. Alexander, USMC (Ret.), author of *A Fellowship of Valor: The Battle History of the United States Marines* "Holder of an incredible five Navy Crosses, Marine Corps hero Lewis B. Puller deserves this definitive biography. Jon Hoffman, in his meticulously researched and written *Chesty*, gets past the legends and reveals the man."—Brigadier General Edwin Howard Simmons, USMC (Ret.), director emeritus, Marine Corps History Praise for Jon T. Hoffman's *Once a Legend: "Red Mike" Edson of the Marine Raiders* "Jon Hoffman's biography catches the dark, driven nature of Edson's brilliant career. It is faithful to the man and his Marine Corps and will rank with the best books about American combat leaders. An outstanding achievement."—Colonel Allan Millett, USMCR (Ret.), author of *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* "'Red Mike' Edson, as brilliantly chronicled in this book, was . . . courageous and fearless—truly a legend."—Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.) "Jon Hoffman has captured the qualities and contributions of this exceptional thinker, fighter, and patriot. *Once a Legend* strips the veil from a remarkable career and gives us the man in true perspective."—Colonel J. E. Greenwood, USMC (Ret.), former editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette* From the Hardcover edition.