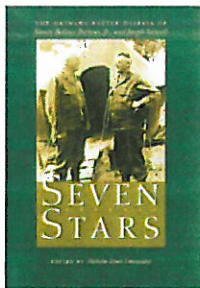


The balance of the book is devoted to the first two years of the Pacific War, with the author having the advantage of the historical perspective of half a century and literally thousands of books and official records to examine. The book includes an extensive bibliography, demonstrating a high order of scholarship.

*The Eagle and the Rising Sun* is the definitive account of the first two years of the war between the United States and Japan. This a rare "one of a kind" work. It can only be hoped that Alan Schom will continue his account through victory and the lost peace.

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*Seven Stars: The Okinawa Battle Diaries of Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., and Joseph Stilwell.*

Edited by Nicholas Evans Sarantakes. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004.

ISBN 1-58544-294-1. Appendixes. Maps.

The hideous battle for Okinawa in 1945, complete with mass kamikaze suicide plane assaults and enormous losses in the ground campaign for the combatants and civilians alike, is well known. A simple search of the Library of Congress catalog turns up dozens of tomes of varying size and quality on the subject. One must ask, therefore, if the world needs yet another monograph on the subject. Fortunately, the answer, in the case of Nicholas Sarantakes' edited volume of the diaries of the two generals who led the assault on Okinawa, is a resounding yes.

Dr. Sarantakes is uniquely qualified to put forth this new book. His own recent study on the role Okinawa has played in Japanese-American relations since its capture by American forces in 1945, *Keystone: The American Occupation of Okinawa and U.S.-Japa-*

*nese Relations*, has been well received.

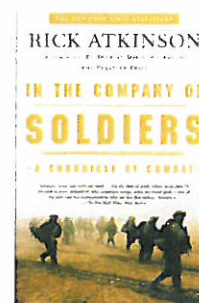
While GEN Joseph Stilwell's diaries are well known and often used, Sarantakes correctly notes that even the most recent studies of the struggle for Okinawa were written without access to Buckner's diaries and his lengthy and informative letters to his wife. This has been an important omission, especially as Buckner's conduct of the ground war on Okinawa has been usually labelled as most unimaginative. For example, on 5 June Stilwell described Buckner as "tiresome," adding a day later that "there is NO tactical thinking on push." Perusing Buckner's diaries and the cleverly integrated missives to his spouse, one gets a better idea of the tactical problems Buckner faced at Okinawa, problems that any other commander may have found difficult to address. Buckner's diaries and letters discuss tactical conundrums, relations with the other services, and various other concerns in some length. The general's relations with the United States Navy, never good previously (he was nearly cashiered in 1942 by George Marshall for an ill-advised contretemps with Admiral Robert Theobald), appear to have improved by 1945. Indeed, Stilwell's characterization of Buckner as "tiresome" stemmed from Buckner's frequent Reaganesque wisecracks about the difficult conditions on Okinawa. Buckner's statement, "The Lord said let there be mud," apparently did not impress Stilwell much.

Of course, anyone who has read Stilwell's wartime diary in its entirety knows that Stilwell was not much impressed by many of the people he interacted with over the course of the conflict. Thus, his acerbic comments about other Allied officers present at Japan's formal surrender on 2 September--Sir Bruce Fraser of Britain was "a fat red dumpling," Australian GEN Thomas Blamey was a "tub of guts," while Canada's representative, COL Moore Cosgrove, who signed the surrender document in the wrong place, resembled "an elderly masher or gigolo type"--are not at all surprising. But despite Stilwell's

poor opinion of Buckner, the two men had much in common. Prior to their arrivals at Okinawa in 1945, both men had spent frustrating years in largely ignored theaters of war, Alaska in Buckner's case, China for Stilwell. Buckner had managed (barely) not to be removed from command; thanks to his very poor relations with Chiang Kai-Shek, Stilwell had not been so fortunate. Thus, both generals had an opportunity for redemption at Okinawa, though it did not work out so well for either. Buckner died on 18 June, after carelessly exposing himself to Japanese artillery fire at a front-line Marine position. Called upon to replace Buckner, Stilwell took over as the bloody battle was coming to its awful cessation. Any chance that Stilwell might then lead the Tenth Army into combat again in a projected invasion of Japan ended with Japan's capitulation.

This volume is heartily recommended to any and all interested in the struggle for Okinawa. Sarantakes has included useful maps, compiled a chronology, and his explanatory endnotes are detailed and informative. Any future study of the Okinawa campaign will have to make good use of *Seven Stars*.

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*In The Company Of Soldiers: A Chronicle Of Combat.* By Rick Atkinson. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2004. ISBN 0-80507561-5. Maps. Photographs. Index. Pp. 319. \$25.00.

Embedding media for the Iraq War was an experiment sure to produce unforeseen results. One unsurprising result however is the numbers of books these journalists are now cranking out. The books cover all aspects and viewpoints of the war. *In The Company Of Soldiers* is one of those that stand out from the crowd because its author is the