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The Last Stand Of Fox Company: A True Story Of U.S. Marines In Combat



THE LAST STAND *of* FOX COMPANY

BOB DRURY AND TOM CLAVIN



Synopsis

November 1950, the Korean Peninsula: After General MacArthur ignores Mao's warnings and pushes his UN forces deep into North Korea, his 10,000 First Division Marines find themselves surrounded and hopelessly outnumbered by 100,000 Chinese soldiers near the Chosin Reservoir. Their only chance for survival is to fight their way south through the Toktong Pass, a narrow gorge that will need to be held open at all costs. The mission is handed to Captain William Barber and the 234 Marines of Fox Company, a courageous but undermanned unit of the First Marines. Barber and his men climb seven miles of frozen terrain to a rocky promontory overlooking the pass, where they will endure four days and five nights of nearly continuous Chinese attempts to take Fox Hill. Amid the relentless violence, three-quarters of Fox's Marines are killed, wounded, or captured. Just when it looks like the outfit will be overrun, Lt. Colonel Raymond Davis, a fearless Marine officer who is fighting south from Chosin, volunteers to lead a daring mission that cuts a hole in the Chinese lines and relieves the men of Fox. This is a fast-paced and gripping account of heroism and sacrifice in the face of impossible odds. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I read this book in two days. I would have managed it in one had I not started so late in the day, thanks to being near the end of the mail carrier's route. In a word, it is breathtaking, as compelling an account of small unit action as I've ever read. As an account of a heroic stand it ranks right up there with Charles B. MacDonald's "Company Commander" or Harold G. Moore's "We Were

Soldiers Once...and Young." The soldiers who fought on Fox Hill are brought to life in the narrative and you find yourself identifying with them, rooting for them, hoping they will make it. The book is, however, not without deficiencies, albeit, most of them minor. One error is the famous M1 Garand being referred to as the "Garland" M1, a rather more festive but inaccurate name. Hopefully this and other minor errors of omission and commission will be corrected in the published version of the book. My uncorrected proof did not have any of the 16 pages of black and white photos, but it did have the 15 maps and these vary in quality. The second map, "Chosen Reservoir Campaign" is identical to the third map, "Toktong Pass and Fox Hill", the only difference being that the third map is cropped. This third map, which is supposed to illustrate the movements of Fox Company, does not do justice to the narrative. The authors mention as the company's objective, Toktong-san, a mountain, but this mountain appears nowhere on the map and I had to read a ways into the book to find out where the mountain was in relation to Fox Hill (north, south, east, or west). We are told that this area is a bottleneck but the map gives no clue as to the terrain (we know only that it is mountainous).

Bob Drury and Tom Clavin have brought their skills to the telling of a very tiny slice of time during the Korean War which in itself is a very small timeframe in the many wars that our country has fought. By digging into the details from first hand interviews with the participants and into other writings, the authors have put together a very readable account of five days in the lives of 234 U.S. Marines that most likely seemed like one hundred years. The authors bring to the reader the circumstance of this situation in which these soldiers were thrust - "hold that hill". How many times were soldiers placed into a similar situation? But this "hill" is documented and now the reader can feel what it was like to be in the middle of North Korea in 20 degrees below zero weather, with the "fog of war" ever present as this small group of Marines protected thousands of other U.S. soldiers from the Chinese invasion that was attempting to cut off the U.S. soldiers from their supply lines, thereby isolating them from the 38th Parallel. The writing is not elegant and the story doesn't have the flair of some authors, but the descriptions are clear and the wording is easily understood. The story just pulls on you from the beginning and you constantly want to get back to it and see how bad the situation is getting. I don't want to use the word entertaining as that would take away from what these men had to go through, but book was riveting and enlightening. I read this book with a sense of dread and a sense of pride, that anyone would have the courage and fortitude to carry out these orders under these conditions for our liberty and freedom.

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