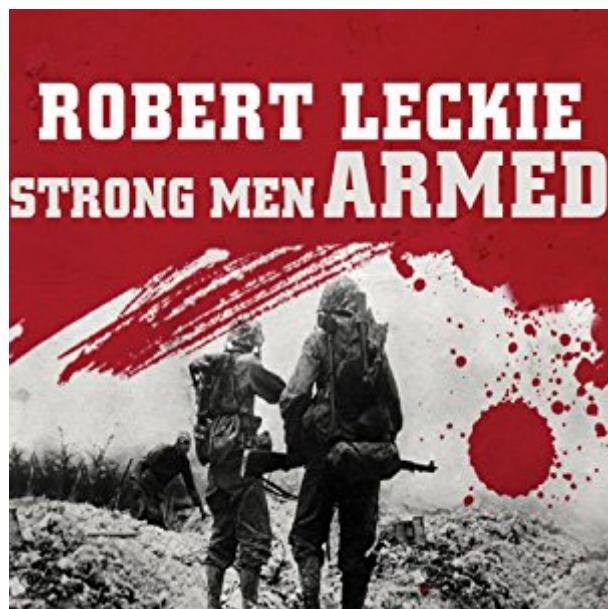


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# Strong Men Armed: The United States Marines Against Japan



## Synopsis

Written by Robert Leckie, whose wartime exploits are featured in the Tom Hanks/Steven Spielberg HBO miniseries *The Pacific*, *Strong Men Armed* is the perennial bestselling classic account of the U.S. Marines' relentless drive through the Pacific during World War II. As scout and machine-gunner for the First Marine Division, Leckie fought in all its engagements until his wounding at Peleliu. In *Strong Men Armed*, Leckie uses firsthand experience and impeccable research to re-create the nightmarish battles of the Pacific campaign---from Guadalcanal to Okinawa---as ships, men, and guns moved over vast distances to fight an enemy that was willing to defend to its last man. Here is the whole sweeping epic of the Marines who battled---and won---on the bloody beaches at Guadalcanal, the unforgiving reefs at Tarawa, the rain-soaked mud of New Britain, the dark gray soil and deadly caves of Mount Suribachi, and the muddy slopes of Shuri Castle on Okinawa. It is a masterful narrative by a writer the *New York Times* praised as possessing the "rare gift of capturing all that is human in the most inhuman of man's activities."

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 17 hours and 13 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Tantor Audio

Audible.com Release Date: September 9, 2010

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B0042EMDLO

Best Sellers Rank: #148 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > Asia #602 in Books > History > Asia > Japan #804 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > Military

## Customer Reviews

Three veterans of the First Marine Division have written accounts of WWII. E.B. Sledge in "With the Old Breed," William Manchester in "Goodbye Darkness," and Robert Leckie in "Strong Men Armed." "With the Old Breed" and "Goodbye Darkness" are personal reminiscences, but "Strong Men Armed" is a scholarly study. It doesn't dwell on personal experiences, but gives the vast panorama of the Navy/Marine Corps island hopping campaign, and helps to put Sledge's and Manchester's personal memoirs into the context of the whole war in the Pacific. Leckie does give his

chronicle a personal touch by occasionally stopping to pay tribute to some of the matchless individual deeds heroism and sacrifice. One arresting theme is his account of each and every Medal of Honor awarded to Marines who threw themselves onto live hand grenades to save their comrades. ("Greater love hath no man than this: that he lay down his life for his friends.") Sledge's book ("With the Old Breed") is a plain spoken account of one man's view of the horrors of the war in the Pacific. Manchester's book ("Goodbye Darkness") reads something like the out-loud ruminations of a mental patient working through unresolved issues on the psychiatrist's couch. Leckie's book is an epic account of a titanic struggle. For the Big Picture of the war in the Pacific, "Strong Men Armed" can't be beaten. For a more personal look at the war, read "With the Old Breed."

To my knowledge, no other comprehensive presentation of the Pacific theater brings home the chilling reality of the US Marine Corps island campaign as Strong Men Armed by Robert Leckie. It's all here: the frenzied horror of amphibious assault under massed fire, the slogging through sodden, malarial jungles, the hand-to-hand slugfest required to rid each island of an entrenched and implacable foe, and the truly uncommon selflessness that led to a multitude of Medal of Honor recipients. Guadalcanal, Bougainville, New Britain, Tarawa, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and other Pacific assaults are presented in detail from the perspective of enlisted and commissioned marines. Both infantry and air wing receive their due as Leckie is equally skilled at describing the Marine Corps aerial domination of the Japanese fighter and bomber. I've read my fair share of WWII history and it is in awe and suspense that I ripped through this gritty, sometimes ghastly, yet ultimately inspirational book. Leckie's Strong Men Armed is a military masterpiece. I cannot offer a stronger recommendation. 5+ stars.

Robert Leckie's vivid account of WWII Marine Corps history is a must read for any military enthusiast. Reading this gripping tale of Leathernecks fighting their way through the steamy jungles of the far east isles with such distant names as; Guadalcanal, Saipan, and Iwo Jima, will leave you with an unequivocal respect for the valiant men who sacrificed their lives for our country. As a former Marine I have a greater appreciation for the price that was paid in the Pacific Theater. This book will never let me forget the cost in blood and lives my beloved countrymen paid, so that we may have our freedom. Leckie's book memorializes our fighting Marines: Men like, Manila John Basilone, Chesty Puller, Red Mike Edson, and countless others who, "went above and beyond the call of duty", for the love of our country, God, and Corps. **STRONG MEN ARMED**, should be read by every boot, NCO, and Commissioned Officer of the United States Marine Corps as a reminder of the

heroic and gallant sacrifice our Marines paid for our way of life. May the Marine Corps live forever!

Semper Fidelis, Roger Lemos (Cpl.USMC)

Those of you who are unfamiliar with Mr Leckie have been missing out. He is one of the premier military historians, not only because of his excellent writing style, but because he is a combat veteran and can therefore associate with his subject. He has written wonderful general histories of all of America's wars, including the best WWII summary, *Delivered from Evil*. But this book stands tall among all of his other writings because this one was personal. Leckie is a veteran of many bloody battles with the first Marine division in WWII and therefore knows quite well what he is talking about. Here he takes you on a sweeping journey, as the marines battle the japs across the Pacific. His writing is awesome! He always keeps you on the hook, and as you speed through his very short chapters, you find it hard to find a place to stop. This is a very easy read, including well drawn maps, that will give you a good overall history of the Pacific campaign and still show you the war from the individuals perspective on every page. One of the classics of Pacific WWII literature!!!

Although twenty four years of age I have a deep respect and admiration for soldiers of the second world war, but my respect for the US Marine is unsurpassed. In Leckie's book you will read easily the most enjoyable and heartbreaking overview of the titanic struggle between the United States and the Japanese Empire. Enjoyable because it is well written, flows beautifully, and honestly reads like an action thriller. (Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Peleliu and Iwo Jima were the best accounts in this book) But also heartbreaking because one has to realize that WWII was a war against good versus evil, nothing more. Liberals may hate me for that but the truth hurts sometimes. And the godawfull truth of WWII is that a lot of brave men had to die agonizing deaths or receive crippling injuries to insure that the evil in the world was vanquished. The Marines were the best of the best, then as well as now. Through superior technology, tactics, and an indomitable spirit the US Marine defeated the once feared Japanese Samurai. Let us be thankfull that Japan is an ally of the US now, and that (God willing) we will never have to fight each other again. I did not find this book to be overly critical of the Japanese, and although some will balk at the use of the slur "Japs" lets remember that Leckie was a Marine in the big one, he fought for his country and was injured on the line. Meaning he probably saw some of his best friends blown to bits by Japanese artillery or cut down by machine gun and rifle fire. Old hatreds die hard, and in "Strong men armed" you'll never read a more moving tribute to the greatest of the greatest generation.

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