

Close Combat Study Guide

Close Combat by W. E. B. Griffin

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Plot Summary

Close Combat by W.E.B. Griffin is one in a series of books on World War II. This book is basically centered on Guadalcanal and events in the lives of the people who served there and elsewhere in the war effort. The book opens with a group of pilots taking off from Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. The characters are introduced and followed throughout the book.

The book is basically a story of the people involved in the war effort. Pickering, known as Pick, Galloway and Dunn are pilots flying planes that are crafted piecemeal from parts from inoperative planes. The mechanic in charge of keeping the planes operational is Oblensky. The highest ranking officer on the island is Major General Vandegrift Major Jack Stecker commands a land unit on the island.

There is a group of war correspondents that were sent to the area to cover the invasions of Guadalcanal, Gavutu and Tagli, under the command of Major Jake Dillon what had been a Hollywood press agent before the war. Dillon has left the island and nineteen year old Bobby Easterbrook is the only photojournalist still active. The others have been injured or killed. Easterbrook continues taking pictures.

Fleming Pickering is the father of Pick and a special envoy to Secretary of the Navy Knox. He is involved with intelligence analysis in the Pacific and works closely with General Douglas MacArthur and President Roosevelt. He has a special team to analyze the MAGIC interceptions of Japanese radio messages.

Galloway, Dunn and Pick are sent to Hawaii for refitting. While there, Jake Dillon decides they would be useful for his war bond tour, and has them assigned to him. He also brings Easterbrook home for work in the tour. The tour brings them into contact with politicians and movie stars. Easterbrook feels that he is dreaming when he finds himself staying at a Malibu beach house, having an affair with a beautiful woman and mixing with movie stars.

The reader watches as rules are bent and strings are pulled as people like Jake and Fleming Pickering secure the people and supplies that they need to do the assignments they are given. Jake manages to get McCoy, who was in the Brig and slated for a court martial, free to receive the Medal of Honor and to go on the war bonds tour.

Griffin basically portrays the human aspect of the war as the reader follows the lives of the main characters on their various assignments. The book is fast and easy to read, making it very enjoyable for the reader.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

Charles Dunn is viewing the Pagoda, or control tower, at Henderson Field, Guadalcanal. He is one of two original VMF-229 pilots remaining on the island and is waiting for the rest of his group to be airborne. Since the parts for the planes came from other inoperative planes, Dunn asked his group to check their guns, which they did. One of the six planes only has three guns functional but decides to fly with them instead of turning back. The planes headed in a northwest direction.

Dunn was Acting Commander because Captain Charles M. Galloway was away on a secret mission. Lieutenant Colonel Clyde W. Dawkins, the Commanding Officer knows that Dunn is young and that they are breaking regulations making him the Acting Commander, but he feels that Dunn is a natural leader and the best man for the job. Dunn and Dawkins talk about the crash of one of the planes that had run out of fuel. Dunn feels personally responsible for the death of the man even though Dawkins tells him that it wasn't his fault. He insists on writing the widow. The patrol had failed to find the Blue Baron, Baron Eric von Hassenfeffor, who they were hoping to engage.

Galloway is piloting a plane with Pick Pickering as his co-pilot. They land at Henderson Field.

Bobby Easterbrook is on Guadalcanal as part of a photojournalist team under Major Jake Dillon, who had been a Hollywood press agent. They were sent to photograph the invasions. Of the original seven, Easterbrook was the only active member of the original group. He is photographing the planes as they land, thinking it strange that the R4D was flown by fighter squadron pilots. The plane is loaded with food and alcohol brought from Australia.

Easterbrook sees Jake Dillon get out of the plane. Jake takes the film from his camera and exposes it. He says they don't want pictures of the cargo. The plane was flown by Galloway and Pickering and Easterbrook helps them unload the cargo.

Chapter 1 Analysis

Charles Dunn is a young, only twenty three, and the Acting Commander of the squadron in Captain Galloway's absence. During the flight, one of the men crashes, having run out of fuel. The man dies and Dunn feels personally responsible even though Dawkins tells him otherwise. Dunn knows that Galloway is on a secret mission and he worries about him. Dawkins tells him that Galloway will return safely, which he does. There were some aspects of command that Dunn didn't have and one of them was writing letters to the family of comrades who were killed. This may have been part of the reason for the comments he made to Dawkins.

Bobby Easterbook is a nineteen year old photojournalist. He was sent to the Solomon Islands as part of a photojournalist team led by Jake Dillon to photograph the invasion. He is worried about his own mortality since five of the team are wounded or dead. He tries is not to dwell on it but can't stop thinking about the possibility.

When Galloway and Pickering return to Henderson Field, their plane is full of food and alcohol that thye brought from Australia.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Jake and Technical Sergeant Steve Oblensky talk with Major General Vandegrift at Headquarters. They tell him that they can count on the Coastwatchers. Vandegrift has heard of Major Edward Banning who tells him this. The men go inside to talk. Banning has a message from General Pickering. He is to prepare a report on Japanese capabilities and deliver it to Pearl Harbor and also be prepared to present it personally in Washington.

Banning and Vandegrift discuss the intelligence situation and how not to reveal sources. They discuss the poor communication between the Japanese Army and Navy and their strength. Banning believes that the Japanese General Hyakutake will attack Guadalcanal and try and take Henderson Field. He doesn't know when the attack will come but the General is already on the island. The Americans will need reinforcements.

In Washington, D.C., Secretary of the Navy Knox is meeting with President Roosevelt. They are discussing the intelligence issue and the problems between Bill Donovan and J. Edgar Hoover. Donovan is in charge of the Office of Strategic Services which would become the CIA. Donovan can't get Douglas MacArthur to cooperate with him and believes that the problem is Fleming Pickering. Knox explains that the animosity between Donovan and Pickering dates back to before the war.

Pickering arrives at the Foster Lafayette Hotel where he is picked up by his friend, Senator Richardson Fowler. They are going to a meeting at the White House but stop for a drink first. Pickering tells Fowler about the Coastwatchers in the Pacific Islands. The message Pickering had shown Fowler had referred to them.

At the meeting with the President, Roosevelt talks about the friction between Donovan and MacArthur and wants Pickering to help ease the tension.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Vandegrift is disturbed by the message from Fleming Pickering because Pickering has a reputation of being a spy for the Secretary of the Navy. Banning tells Vandegrift that the orders came from Secretary Knox and that Vandegrift is not supposed to inform his superiors. Intelligence is a big issue in the war. Banning and the two men discuss the value of protecting intelligence sources.

Bill Donovan is in charge of the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the CIA. Fleming Pickering had been offered a job with Donovan, but had turned it down because it was not at a high enough level for him. Because of this, there is friction between him and Donovan. Donovan was having a difficult time with MacArthur and felt

that Pickering was the cause of the problem. Because of this, President Roosevelt asks Pickering to talk to MacArthur and to put in a good word for Donovan.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Major Jack Stecker awakens on Guadalcanal and gets dressed. He is called to a breakfast meeting with Vandegrift.

The Americans had decided to invade Guadalcanal, Tulagi and Gavutu to halt the Japanese. They needed to recapture New Guinea to prevent a Japanese invasion of Australia. A few days after the successful invasion, the US Naval fleet sailed from the area, leaving the Marines to fend for themselves.

Stecker felt there would be a Japanese attack on Henderson Field soon. At his breakfast with Vandegrift, he learns he has been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. Easterbrook is there to take pictures. After the breakfast, he watches as reinforcements arrive. He meets Ken McCoy on the beach. McCoy tells him how he worked with Pickering to replace the Coastwatchers on Buka. McCoy is going home via Pearl Harbor and says he will stop to see Stecker's son who is hospitalized there.

Dunn receives a new flight suit and other supplies from Pick. They talk about the pilot who died in the crash the day before. Galloway enters and tells them that McCoy won't be able to leave until the next day since they are making repairs to the plane. Galloway says he volunteered to fly a search mission and asks Pick if he wants to go with. While flying, they encounter a group of Japanese planes. Galloway's plane is hit as the Japanese planes begin bombing Henderson Field. Pick has only five or six minutes of fuel remaining. They turn toward Henderson and land while the attack is in progress.

Chapter 3 Analysis

The characters of Jack Stecker and Ken 'Killer' McCoy are introduced in this section. Stecker had served in China and is considered knowledgeable about the Japanese. He feels that the Japanese will soon attack Henderson Field because it is the place where the Japanese supply lines are attacked from. He knows Ken McCoy from earlier missions and the two talk about McCoy's intelligence work with the Coastwatchers. McCoy is killing time before leaving for Pearl Harbor and asks Stecker if he can tag along with him. Stecker isn't particularly happy about the idea but says okay.

Galloway and Pick fly a search mission and just as they are about to return having only five or six minutes of fuel, spot a group of Japanese planes. The Japanese bomb Henderson Field. They had failed to spot the planes earlier. In spite of the attack, the two aviators manage to land safely at Henderson. Neither shows any fear during the incident.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Pick's plane was totaled in the landing. He hit some debris and had a blowout. Oblensky says he thinks he can fix Galloway's plane but not Pick's. Galloway thanks Pick for getting the Japanese Zero off his tail.

The men were discussing the attacks afterward. There had been a delay in the information from the Coastwatchers so they didn't have any advance warning. Banning says that he has to Espiritu Santo and they discuss the condition of the planes and field. Galloway doesn't think it will be possible for them to leave before morning.

Dawkins works on the flight arrangements for the men. He talks to Captain Samuel Davidson of the US Army Air Corps, who isn't happy about the idea. As the plane is being readied to leave, Easterbrook brings Dillon a bag of film. He is pulled into the plane by Dillon.

At Espiritu Santu, Rear Admiral Daniel Wagem is about to take off in a seaplane, when the pilot is ordered to abort. Wagem had come to Espiritu Santu to assess the situation in Guadalcanal, which he knew was in trouble. He and his staff are now returning to Pearl Harbor when he learns one of his staff has been bumped from the flight. Banning has to show Wagem his orders before Wagem settles down about a member of his staff being bumped.

Banning and Pickering meet at Pearl Harbor. The two men look at some film of Henderson Field. Pickering tells the staff that he wants the film developed and copies of each from to take to Washington with him. Banning gives Pickering his report that is worse than Pickering thought it would be. Pickering says that Banning will brief Secretary Knox.

Banning warns Pickering about his security, especially with Mrs. Ellen Feller, his aide. Mrs. Feller has slept with several men, aside from Pickering, who is made that Banning hadn't told him this sooner.

After a shower, they meet at Pickering's house. Dillon is there, along with McCoy. They watch Banning's plane leave for Washington. Pickering thanks Dillon for the pictures.

Easterbrook is outfitted with fresh clothing and driven to Muku-Muku, Pickering's estate.

Chapter 4 Analysis

The Coastwatchers were a group of people scattered around the islands of the Pacific. They reported any movement of Japanese troops or any other activity to the Americans

and Australians. Their report was delayed to Guadalcanal or the Americans would have had notice about the Japanese attack and could have prepared for it.

Ken McCoy feels that Easterbrook is about to go over the edge. This is his evaluation of Easterbrook even though he hasn't talked to him much. This may be why Dillon pulled Easterbrook into the plane as he was leaving Guadalcanal.

The men all arrive in Oahu and go to the Pickering estate. Pickering wants to show his gratitude to them for the quality of the pictures they supplied him with for the report to Secretary Knox. Dillon had taken Easterbrook out of Guadalcanal because of McCoy's comments. He now wonders what to do with him.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Banning's flight arrives in San Francisco. A Shore Patrol officer meets Banning and says there is a plane waiting for him.

The Office of Management Analysis was under the command of Fleming Pickering, with Lieutenant Colonel F. L. Rickabee, under him. Dillon was somehow involved with them and Macklin was under Dillon selling war bonds. Colonel David M. Wilson, the Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff in Personnel is looking over Macklin's record at the request of General J.J. Stewart from the Public Affairs Office. Wilson wasn't impressed with Macklin's record and wonders why Dillon had him brought home for the bonds tour. General Stewart arrives and asks that Macklin be assigned to his staff. Wilson agrees that it is a splendid idea.

Banning arrives at Anacostia Naval Air Station in Washington, D.C. He is met by Captain Edward Sessions who tells Banning that they will meet with Knox that evening. When Sessions asks for his opinion on Guadalcanal, he says that it is pretty bad and the troops need reinforcements.

Rickabee meets them at the Foster Lafayette. Knox and others arrive for the meeting. Banning begins his report and shows the pictures they brought from Guadalcanal. After hearing Banning's report, Knox calls the White House and arranges for a meeting to be held in fifteen minutes. At the meeting, President Roosevelt tells them of a report of Japanese ships off the Santa Cruz Islands and an all out attack on Guadalcanal. The troops need reinforcements and the men talk about what they can do. Knox does not feel that MacArthur and Nimitz are doing all they can. Roosevelt finally dictates a letter to the Joint Chiefs of Staff telling them to use every weapon to defend Guadalcanal.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Macklin does not have a good record, having been branded as a liar. He had tried to place the blame for his own failure on Ken McCoy and had been caught. Normally, Wilson and others would have moved for his dismissal from the Marines, but there was a war going on. Stewart's request that Macklin be assigned to his staff relieved Wilson of the problem of trying to find a place for him, so he was elated with the idea.

Banning arrives in Washington, D.C. for his meeting with Knox. After telling Knox of the critical situation in Guadalcanal and showing the pictures from Dillon and Easterbrook, Knox phones the White House for an immediate meeting. When they arrive, Roosevelt tells them of a message concerning the appearance of Japanese ships in the area preparing for an attack on Guadalcanal. Knox feels that Nimitz and MacArthur are not doing all they could and says so. The President does not want to issue a direct order to MacArthur and Nimitz feels that it would undermine his confidence in them. However,

the President apparently agrees with Knox on the importance of Guadalcanal and dictates a memo to the Joint Chiefs of Staff telling them to use every available weapon to defend the island.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

As Pickering arrives in Brisbane, it occurs to him that he failed to notify anyone of his arrival. He spots some of his staff on the wharf. He learns that McCoy had notified them of his arrival. They will go to his residence, the Water Lily Cottage where his men, Second Lieutenant John Moore, First Lieutenant Hon Song Do, called Pluto, and First Lieutenant Joseph Howard are. The other Sergeant Steven Koffler, lives a few blocks away. Koffler's girlfriend, Australian Yeoman Daphne Farnsworth, is pregnant.

At the Cottage, the men have prepared a briefing for Pickering, complete with maps. They have been analyzing the MAGIC intelligence. The three men tell Pickering that they feel that the Japanese will attack Guadalcanal the next day. They discuss the size of the Japanese strike force and how overpowered the Marines will be. As they talk, the phone rings. Pickering is invited to lunch with MacArthur.

Arriving at Lennon's Hotel for luck with MacArthur, Pickering finds that he is invited for dinner with the General's family. Pickering brings up the subject of Bill Donovan. MacArthur says that he and Nimitz both ignore Donovan. MacArthur doesn't want Donovan poking around in his operations. Pickering reports the conversation to Knox. He also requests promotions for his men.

Lieutenant Max Krinski is Officer-in-Charge of the Brig in San Diego. He metes out discipline to offending military personnel. He is reviewing the case of Staff Sergeant Thomas McCoy, who he recommends for a general court martial when he receives a call telling him to release the man. He is to receive the Medal of Honor in Washington.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Pickering has his own staff, Pluto, Moore, Howard and Koffler that analyze the MAGIC intelligence for him. Their analysis indicates that the Japanese will attack Guadalcanal the next day. Pickering knows that they need help there and that they can't amass the kind of support that they request let alone get it there in time.

Pickering finds MacArthur totally unreceptive to the idea of Bill Donovan. He says flat out that he doesn't want Donovan poking around in any of his operations. Sensing that the subject is closed, Pickering does not raise the issue again that day. He reports the discussion to Knox and finds out what he can about MacArthur's operation in the Philippines.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Easterbrook, Dillon and McCoy are driving from San Diego to Los Angeles. Easterbrook is sick along the way and McCoy thinks he has malaria. Since his service records have been lost, they don't think they can have him admitted to a military hospital. Dillon calls Dr. Harald Barthelmy and makes arrangements to meet at Jake's Malibu house. After the call, Dr. Barthelmy talks to his receptionist, Dawn Morris and asks her to act as a nurse at Jake's house. He gives her four prescriptions which he writes and sends her to the druggist. When they arrive at the beach house, Dillon tells Dawn that he will call a few producers for her if she takes good care of Easterbrook while they are in Washington.

Pickering has dinner with MacArthur and his wife, Jean. They discuss the MAGIC intercepts and the fact that the VMF-229 has been withdrawn from combat. They discuss the requests for support that came from Ghormley and feel he sounds desperate. Ghormley has been relieved of his command and replaced by Admiral Halsey. Pickering again broaches the subject of Bill Donovan and how his people could be valuable to MacArthur. MacArthur postpones the discussion until after the conference with Halsey.

In Washington, while waiting for the arrival of Dillon and McCoy, General Stewart is trying to find out who Easterbrook is, since he was mentioned in a memo from the Secretary of the Navy. They confirm that he was a member of the combat correspondents. When Dillon arrives, he explains about Easterbrook's lost service records and how he can't be paid. The general says that he will try to help in having the lost records reconstructed. Dillon asks that Easterbrook be promoted to sergeant.

The men then talk about the new bond drive. They have McCoy and Macklin for the national bond campaign. Dillon is to be in charge of the bond tour and the training of war correspondents at Hollywood studios. He will be based in California.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Dillon and McCoy are rude to the officer at the Personnel Office. Dillon says that Easterbrook's service records have been lost and must be reconstructed. He is unhappy that the process takes a month. He wants it done immediately and he is used to having his own way.

The security of MAGIC intelligence is supposed to be very secret yet Pickering observes that MacArthur discusses it freely in front of his wife and servants. Pickering thinks to himself that MacArthur is the biggest violator of security. MacArthur again refuses to discuss the issue of Bill Donovan. Granted, he has a lot of his mind, but he won't even discuss the issue.



Dillon is assigned to duties that he is familiar with in the area of public relations. He is running the bond drive and is placed in charge of the training of war correspondents at Hollywood studios. The Marines seems to be somewhat in awe of him. General Stewart doesn't give him order directly. Dillon notices it too.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

Galloway, Pick and Dunn are at Pearl Harbor. They are at the hospital and Galloway asks about his nurse friend, Commander Kocharski. They find her and learn that Dick Stecker is there. They plan on visiting him. The group goes to Muku Muku, Pick's father's house. When Galloway checks in with Lieutenant Dawkins at Ewa, he tells him they are spending the day at Muku Muku. Dawkins says he will come there.

When Dawkins arrives, he hands a message to Galloway. The three men have been ordered to report to Los Angeles to work on the war bonds campaign for ninety days. They have a ten day leave before they are required to report. Dunn is supposed to be on a flight later that evening. Galloway and Pick want to know how they can get out of the assignment.

Charley Galloway calls an old friend in Pennsylvania, Carolyn Ward McNamara. He says he will be in the States for a few days and wants to see her. She says she will meet him in San Francisco.

The group, which includes several nurses, get drunk. The two nurses spend the night there planning to return to the hospital early in the morning.

Veronic Wood is having munch after a rough morning of shooting at the Metro-Magnum Studios. H. Morton Cooperman joins her in the commissary. The studio has arranged for her to participate in the war bond tour during her one month vacation, but she doesn't want to. When she learns that Jake Dillon is back in Los Angeles, she is angry that he didn't call her. She has her chauffeur drive her to Jake's Malibu house.

Jake is happy to see her. He introduces her to Bobby and Dawn and then they retire to the bedroom.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Galloway, Dunn and Pick are in Oahu. Charley finds nurse Commander Korcharski whom he knew from before the war. They both were assigned overseas to separate places.

None of the three men is happy about being assigned to the war bond tour. They are more concerned about being refit at Ewa and returning to duty than they are about selling bonds. Since they have to report to Los Angeles, Galloway calls Carolyn Ward McNamara and they make arrangements to meet. The men want to make the best of their ten day leave and their time in the States.



Bobby Easterbrook is still recovering from malaria at Jake Dillon's Malibu beach house. He thinks he is dreaming. He has Dawn in bed with him whenever he wants and he has just talked to movie star Veronica Wood. He doesn't know about Dawn's deal with Jake or he would probably be very upset.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Moore arrives at the Water Lily Cottage with a briefcase handcuffed to his wrist. He gives the messages to Pickering. The message authorize promotions for Pluto, Moore and Hart. Pickering informs his men of their new promotions. There has been no invasion of Guadalcanal as their reports had indicated and Pickering tells them to find out what is happening. He explains the MAGIC program to Hart, who now has security clearance, and how important it is for the Japanese not to know their codes were broken. The analysis of the MAGIC intercepts are made available to only three people, one of whom is Pickering.

The group discusses the October 18 invasion date and the fact that there has been nothing in the intercepts to contradict that date. The fact that the attack hasn't begun means the Japanese had some problems, probably moving their equipment. They feel there will still be an attack even if it is by an attack force of one.

Macklin is in Los Angeles waiting for Dillon. He gives him a message from General Stewart that there is good news about Easterbrook. They discuss the personnel assigned for the tour, including the three pilots who are in San Francisco. Jake then goes to San Diego to talk to General Underwood and Colonel Frazier about securing the release of McCoy.

Pickering is wearing a dress uniform with all of his ribbons when Ellen Feller arrives at the Water Lily Cottage. When she is alone with Pickering, he lets her know that he knows of her romantic affairs. He is limiting her access to MAGIC. He tells her that if she doesn't agree to the terms, she will spend the rest of the war in a federal mental hospital because of the reports Army Intelligence has on her. Three men enter the room and inject Ellen with a sedative, and then take her out. Pickering has a stiff drink of scotch after they leave.

Chapter 9 Analysis

Pickering's men receive promotions for their service and Hart is given security clearance. Pickering clearly cares about his team and tries to do his best by them. When they work on analyzing the situation in Guadalcanal, they act as a team of equals and drop any reference to rank. They brainstorm as equals, each rendering his own opinion.

Jake is assembling the personnel for the second war bond tour. He knows that the three pilots are in San Francisco but doesn't know that they don't want to take part in the tour.

Pickering has to deal with the issue of Ellen Feller with whom he had a brief affair. Army Intelligence has compiled a file on her and she is considered dangerous. She is taken

by Army Intelligence, sedated, and will be locked up until after the war. The experience is hard on Pickering, even though he never wavered. He has a stiff drink after they depart.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

When the Japanese attack on Guadalcanal takes place, it was turned back.

Banning is in New York City, having attended a performance at Radio City Music Hall with Carolyn Spencer Howell. They go to Jack and Charlie's Saloon afterward. He meets Ken McCoy outside and they go in together. They are joined by Ernie Sage, McCoy's date. When the women excuse themselves to use the restroom, Banning and McCoy talk. McCoy will be sent to China to set up a weapons reporting stations, but he doesn't know when.

Carolyn Ward McNamara traveled to San Francisco by train. She didn't have a seat for most of the trip and was tired and dirty when she arrived at the Andrew Foster Hotel, the most elegant hotel in the city. Pick and Dunn introduce themselves in the lobby. The assistant manager leads her to the Pickering suite, where Galloway is.

Jake Dillon drives back to his Malibu house, having made the arrangements for the release of McCoy. He finds that Veronica is waiting for him. He reports to General Stewart on the successful outcome of his mission to San Diego. He learns that the problems with Easterbrook's records have been solved and he has been promoted to staff sergeant. There is talk of commissioning Easterbrook to second lieutenant and placing him in charge of training combat correspondents. Dillon is to bring Easterbrook to San Diego on Monday.

Chapter 10 Analysis

Banning and McCoy meet at a New York City saloon, with their dates. Banning is married to a White Russian woman who is stranded somewhere in China. McCoy says he will be going to China to set up a weapon reporting station. Banning thinks it is in anticipation of a future invasion of Japan and is glad that the brass are thinking ahead.

Dillon makes a deal for the release of McCoy in San Diego. When he reports to General Stewart, he learns that not only have Easterbrook's service records been straightened out, they promoted him to Staff Sergeant and plan on commissioning him as a Second Lieutenant and placing him in charge of training combat correspondents. Dillon thinks that Easterbrook, age nineteen, is a little young for all of this, but he doesn't agree.

Veronica tells Jake that Easterbrook is in love with Dawn. Jake isn't too worried. He will arrange for a screen test for her and send her back to the doctor's office. He will have Easterbrook in San Diego on Monday and will feed him some story about Dawn. He is not too concerned or worried about Easterbrook's feelings.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

Pickering arrives at MacArthur's headquarters wearing his full dress uniform. They discuss the MAGIC intercepts about the situation in Guadalcanal. Pickering reads the intercepts. MacArthur is pleased with the results in Guadalcanal. Pickering says that Pluto feels that one of the Japanese on Guadalcanal, Commander Ohmae, is more important than the CINCPAC analysts believe he is.

Dillon is at the airport to meet Pick and Dunn. He learns that Galloway did not make the trip and that they will be on another plane in a few minutes. Pick tells Jake that Galloway is with his girlfriend and not coming. Dillon tells them that they will escort McCoy to Washington for the medal ceremony. Pick is personally responsible for them. When they are introduced to Staff Sergeant McCoy, they tell him that they know his brother. Easterbrook appears since he is going with them. They all return to Los Angeles the day before the beginning of the war bonds tour.

Senator Fowler appears in the suite where Pick, Dunn and Easterbrook are eating. Fowler tells them the latest news about Guadalcanal and how the Japanese attack was turned back.

The medal presentation ceremony is to be held at the office of the Secretary of the Navy. General Steward decides to attend as does Senator Fowler. After the ceremony, the men return to the suite at the Foster Lafayette.

Chapter 11 Analysis

When Pickering meets MacArthur, he notices that they make various comments about security. He knows that they are referring to the situation with Ellen Feller, even though they don't say anything. Since MacArthur is in a good mood, Pickering decides he better read the MAGIC intercepts more closely.

When Pick and Dunn meet Jake at the airport, they are rude to him. It is obvious that they don't want any part of the bond tour. They are to escort McCoy to the medal ceremony in Washington and return to Los Angeles the day before the start of the war bond tour. None of them seems to be happy about the situation but the awards ceremony comes off without any problems.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Dunn and Pick are at the Pensacola Naval Air Station. They are stopped by Colonel Porter because of their unkempt looks and the fact that they have been drinking alcohol. He takes them inside and has them empty their pockets. Among the contents, he finds the medals they received the day before. Colonel Porter then orders Captain Carstairs to help them find transportation and to assist them in anyway. They go on to Alabama to visit Dunn's family.

Captain Carstairs arrives at the Dunn home and tells Pick and Dunn that they won't be returning to their units. They are going to train fighter pilots. Carstairs says that he is being sent to the Pacific. Pick is asked to spend a day with the flight students. They have no choice but to accept the invitation. As they talk, cars with visitors begin to arrive.

Easterbrook spends his leave in Missouri, visiting his family. He wants to return to Los Angeles early to be with Dawn, even if it means lying to his parents.

In Malibu, Jake is with Veronica at the beach house. He proposes to Veronica and she accepts.

Chapter 12 Analysis

This section discusses what Dunn, Pick, Easterbrook and Jake do during their leave after the medal award ceremony. Dunn and Pick spend some time with Pick's family in Alabama. Captain Carstairs comes to talk with them about the change in policy regarding flight instructors. The Marines now want their flight instructors to have active combat training. This means that Carstairs will be sent overseas, and Dunn and Pick won't be able to return to their units but will be assigned as flight instructors. It makes some sense to require the flight instructors to have combat experience but could the experienced pilots like Pick and Dunn be of better use in combat.

In a surprise move, Jake proposes to Veronica. Equally surprising is that Dawn's screen test was successful and the studio has big plans for her.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Jack Stecker walks into Division Headquarters in Guadalcanal. The arms he carries are not the ones Marines usually carry. He prefers the Garand rifle to the Springfield and he has a shoulder holster and Colt pistol that belonged to his son. He is at headquarters to meet with Vandegrift. He learns that he is leaving the next day. He is introduced to his replacement, Colonel G.H. Newberry, whom he knew from Quantico. When Newberry leaves, Stecker finds he will be sent to Australia via Hawaii where he will have a week's leave.

In Brisbane, Pickering meets with Willoughby. He wants information on Captain Fertig. He had been commissioned before the war in the Philippines and went into demolitions. Willoughby remembers him from the Polo Club. Fertig is running the guerrilla operation in the Philippines. Pickering then writes Knox that he thinks Rickabee's people should be involved with the Guerillas in the Philippines. He also says that he can't get MacArthur to accept Donovan and that it will require a direct order from the President. Pickering requests that Banning and McCoy be assigned to work on the Phillipine guerrilla operation.

Captain Carstairs arrives at the Dunn house to pick up Dunn and Pick. They drive to Corey Field in Florida for their talk to the aviation cadets. There are two Wildcats there and Pick notices that they are perfectly maintained. He also notices that his and Dunn's names are on the planes. They are given a good introduction from Admiral Sayre who introduces them by reading the orders that announced their medals.

Chapter 13 Analysis

There are apparently a lot of personnel changes taking place in the Marine Corps. Vandegrift tells Stecker that he is being replaced and assigned to Hawaii. He isn't happy about it and wants to know why. It isn't performance related. His skills can be used elsewhere.

Pickering meets with Willoughby and wants information about Fertig who is the leader of the guerrillas in the Philippines. He doesn't give any indication of why he wants this information. The reader learns from a message to Knox that Pickering thinks the Marines should have official involvement with the guerrillas in the Philippines.

Pick and Dunn are driven to Corey Field to address the aviation cadets. Neither was prepared for the introduction they were given. There are two meticulously maintained Wildcats sitting there. One has Pick's name on it; the other has Dunn's name on it. They don't ask why but seem awed by the reception they receive.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

Inside the tent, Pick and Dunn find new aviator suits with their names on them. They will engage in mock combat with Colonel Porter and Captain O'Fallon, who flew in from Memphis. They go over the plan for the dogfight and then takeoff. During the maneuvers, Dunn landed at the auxiliary airfield. Pick lands beside him. Dunn walks over to a tree and urinates. He tells Pick that they will say officially that it was a precautionary landing because of a warning light.

After the activities with the cadets, Martha, an old friend of Pick's appears. Her father, the Admiral, wants to see Pick. Colonel Porter thanks Pick for making the day a success and Pick leaves with Martha. In the car, he finds out that she lied. Her parents don't know that Pick is there and think she is visiting a friend. They go to the San Carlos Hotel where Pick gets the key to the penthouse. They get a bottle of Johnnie Walker and take it to the penthouse. They talk for a few minutes and then realize they made a mistake. Martha leaves first.

In Los Angeles, Dawn is autographing photographs that will be used in the war bond tour. She would bring her first film the week after the tour since she was already under contract to Metro-Magnum Studio. Her doorbell rings and she sees Jake's car in the parking lot, but it is Veronica who is at the door. She says she wants to talk about Easterbrook. Veronica tells Dawn to figure out how to let Easterbrook down gently without hurting him or she will have Veronica as an enemy.

Dunn and Pick are at the Foster Beverly Hills Hotel and Pick calls Dillon's office. Dillon says he will come to their cottage. Easterbrook calls right after Pick and Macklin is sent to bring him to the cottage. He also calls Veronica and tells her to meet him there. Galloway also arrives at the cottage with Carolyn Ward Spencer. They learn that Galloway is going back overseas. Jake tells the group that they will leave on a bus the next day. Galloway is bringing Carolyn on the tour.

Chapter 14 Analysis

The activities with the cadets include a dogfight. It has been a long time since Pick and Dunn have flown planes in such good order and have used paved runways. Pick at first panics until he remembers that paved runways give the plane a different feel. When Dunn lands at an auxiliary field, Pick follows thinking he had a mechanical failure. Instead, Dunn urinates on an oak tree and says that someday he will bring his grandson to the spot. This was something that Dunn did for himself. He seems to have needed some sort of release from the pressure.

Martha and Pick have the penthouse at the San Carlos Hotel. The suite has a lot of memories for Pick. He and Dick Stecker had lived there while they were in flight training.



Pick did not deal well with Dick's crash. When they talk about Dick and Martha's dead husband, they realize that they made a mistake, and Martha leaves.

Dawn receives a surprise visit from Veronica. Dawn used Easterbrook to get a screen test and he now thinks he is in love with her. Veronica tells Dawn not to hurt Easterbrook or she will have an enemy in Veronica. She seems to be the only one who is concerned with Easterbrook's feelings.

Galloway appears at the cottage for the war bond tour. He couldn't get out of it but is bringing Carolyn with on the tour. Afterward, he is being assigned overseas.



Chapters 15 - 16

Chapters 15 - 16 Summary

Pickering is decrypting MAGIC messages. He said he wanted to see everything and he would decide what was important. He is working alone in the dungeon when he receives a call that Jack Stecker is waiting to see him. Pickering is happy to see him and brings him down to the dungeon, telling him not to ask what the various machines are. They talk about their families and Pickering tells Jack he can stay at the house with him.

When they leave the dungeon, they go to a church to attend a wedding. Pickering introduces Stecker to Commander Feldt, they head of the Coastwatchers Establishment. Steven Koffler and Daphne are married and after the reception, Feldt goes to the Cottage with Pickering. They talk about Killer McCoy and Pickering says he is thinking of sending him to the Philippines. They then discuss the effectiveness of guerrillas and talk about various weapons. Pickering requests that Stecker be transferred to him to work on the Philippine guerrilla operation.

The war bond tour is in Portland. Veronica tells Pick that Easterbrook has left the tour to train combat correspondents. McCoy and Dunn arrive. They mingle with other guests and pose for photographs. Pick is seated next to Mrs. Alice Feaster at the dinner.

A few days later, the tour is in Seattle. Dunn tells Pick that the cruiser Atlanta was sunk near Savo Island. Easterbrook arrives from Los Angeles looking for Dillon. He wants to resign his commission. The combat correspondents don't take him seriously because of his age. He doesn't feel competent to lead them. Easterbrook doesn't tell any of this to Dunn and Pick.

In chapter Sixteen, Pick writes a letter to his father and is interrupted when one of McCoy's guards arrives. He says that McCoy wants to apologize to Easterbrook. They ring McCoy to the suite. McCoy says that he saw Easterbrook trying to rescue a fallen officer at Bloody Ridge and that Easterbrook deserved the medal more than he did. A reporter in the room who was with Dunn, wrote an article reporting the discussion.

After the tour ends, Dunn and Pick are in Memphis. Dunn is promoted to captain and both report for duty as flight instructors.

Pickering is still waiting for Stecker to be assigned to him. McCoy is there also and Koffler says he wants to be included. A message arrives saying that Vandegrift is being promoted to Lieutenant General and Commandant of the Marine Corps. Stecker's being promoted to Colonel and recommended for promotion to Brigadier General. He won't be going on the Philippines mission.



Chapters 15 - 16 Analysis

Security is supposed to be a big issue with MAGIC intelligence but Pickering takes Jack Stecker to the dungeon when Stecker doesn't have clearance. Pickering says he takes responsibility for his actions but Pickering won't reveal any information to Stecker about what the machines are. Pickering obviously trusts Stecker. Again, after the wedding, Pickering talks to Stecker and Feldt about sending Killer McCoy to the Philippines. Pluto mentions that the subject is classified, but Pickering basically ignores him.

The impression is that Stecker is relieved of his unit because of a competence issue. This was Pickering's first thought and something that Feldt mentioned. Stecker himself feels this way because he seems to be in limbo with a vague assignment and Pickering can't get him assigned to his unit. Nobody could find out Stecker's status until Pickering received a message concerning Vandegriff's promotion. Along with it was the announcement that Stecker's promotion to Colonel and the news that he would be promoted to Brigadier General. Vandegriff had plans for him all along that he didn't reveal.

Easterbrook also feels inadequate in his new assignment. He doesn't feel qualified to train and lead the combat correspondents and feels that he isn't taken seriously because of his age. He wants to resign his commission. A run-in with McCoy changes the situation and an article in the papers shows he committed acts of valor at Bloody Ridge. This was the boost in his confidence and credibility that he needed.



Characters

Robert F. Easterbrook

Robert Easterbrook is a nineteen year old Marine corporal serving on Guadalcanal. His nickname is Easterbunny. Before entering the Marines he had been a freshman at the University of Missouri with a high enough grade point average to ensure his entry into the Graduate School of Journalism. He had planned on a career as a photojournalist. He had enlisted the day after Pearl Harbor for the duration of the war plus six months which he now views as the dumbest thing he has ever done. Some of his photos have already been on the covers of Life and Look. He was classified as a clerk/typist when posted at Quantico. He was then sent overseas as a replacement for a photojournalist where he was assigned to photograph the invasion of Guadalcanal, Tulagi and Gavutu.

When McCoy says that Easterbrook is ready to go over the edge, Dillon has him return to the States with them? Dillon tells the Personnel people that Easterbrook's service records have been lost and must be reconstructed. They are told the process will take a month. While driving from San Diego to Los Angeles with Dillon and McCoy, Easterbrook becomes ill with what McCoy recognizes as malaria. Dillon arranges for Dr. Harald Barthlmey to treat him at Dillon's Malibu house. He stays at Dillon's Malibu house until the problems with his service records are straightened out along with a promotion to staff sergeant. He is also awarded a medal for his service and there is talk of commissioning him as a Second Lieutenant and having him train war correspondents.

Fleming Pickering

Fleming Pickering is a special envoy to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. He is the owner of the Pacific and Far East Shipping Company and one of the few men who was knowledgeable about the Pacific before the war. His primary task for Knox is to gather and analyze information about the Pacific area. He works closely with General Douglas MacArthur and travels frequently around the Pacific. In his forties, he is a brigadier general in the Marines. He is married to Patricia, heir to a hotel fortune. They have one son, Malcolm, who is a pilot in the Pacific. Pickering has homes in various places, including Oahu, where he holds meetings. He uses Dillon's photos for Banning's report to Secretary Knox.

Pickering had served in France during the First World War and had earned the Distinguished Service Cross. Now he and his staff of Pluto, Hart and Moore are involved in analyzing the MAGIC intelligence intercepts and determining what moves the Japanese will make. Pickering had had an affair with Ellen Feller, a civilian member of his staff and was warned that she was sleeping with other men and, therefore, a security problem. He becomes interested in the guerrilla movement in the Philippines



and decides that it should be an official Marine operation. He is putting together a team at the end of the book.

Charles M. Galloway

Charley Gallloway is a twenty eight year old captain in the United States Marine Corps. He is a pilot who is on a secret mission at the opening of the book. He is nicknamed the Skipper or The Old Man and is rated as an instructor pilot. When he returns to Henderson Field, the plane is full of food and alcohol from Australia. Galloway often flies search missions in the area, usually with Pick. There squadron, the VMF-229 has been pulled from service and Galloway, Pick and Dunn go to Pearl Harbor on their way to Ewa to be refitted. They stop at the hospital and Galloway finds nurse Commander Kocharski whom he had been dating before they were both sent overseas. Galloway is ordered to work on the war bond campaign for ninety days. He isn't happy about it and wants to know how he can get out of it. He feels that it is more important to have his squadron refit than it is to sell bonds. He avoids reporting to Los Angeles for the war bonds assignment, staying in San Francisco for as long as possible. His old girlfriend, Carolyn Ward McNama has flown there to meet him. After the war bond tour, he returns to his unit overseas.

William Charles Dunn

William Charles Dunn is a First Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. He is a twenty three year old pilot who is the Acting Commander of Fighter Squadron VMF-229. He is a small man, about five feet six inches tall weighing approximately one hundred forty pounds. He is young to be an acting commander but he had an excellent combat record. He is from Alabama and receives medals for his service in Guadalcanal. After the war bond tour he is promoted to Captain and assigned to be a flight instructor in Memphis.

Richard B. Macklin

Richard Macklin is a graduate of the US Naval Academy at Annapolis and a career Marine. He had graduated from Parachute School in Lakewood, New Jersey but took part in the invasion of Gavutu as a member of the infantry. He was injured before ever reaching shore. He had met Jake Dillon at Lakewood and again at the Army Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. Dillon had sent for him to take part in the War Bond tour.

Jack Stecker

Jack Stecker is the commanding officer of the 2nd Battalion, Fifth Marines on Guadalcanal. He had worked at the Army's Infantry Center and was very knowledgeable about guns. Stecker had served in Shanghai and was considered to be knowledgeable about the Japanese. He is promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on Guadalcanal and then is



relieved of his unit and sent to Australia. Then he is promoted to Colonel and recommended for promotion to Brigadier General.

Malcolm S. Pickering

Malcolm Pickering is a second lieutenant and pilot in the United States Marine Corps. He is twenty two years old and is known as Pick. His father is Brigadier General Fleming. Pickering who reports to Secretary of the Navy Knox. His mother is Patricia, the heir to a hotel fortune. After the war bond tour, he is assigned to be a flight instructor in Memphis.

Ken McCoy

Ken McCoy

Ken McCoy, known as Killer McCoy, was twenty one years of age. The young Marine worked in intelligence and is fluent in Japanese, China and several European languages. He had served in China. McCoy had had problems with a Lieutenant Macklin who didn't like him and tried to undermine his changes in officer training, but McCoy succeeded.

Jake Dillon

Jake Dillon is a Marine Corps Major who worked as a public relations officer for the Marines. He led the group of photojournalists who photographed the invasion in the Solomon Islands. He had been a Hollywood press agent before the war and is in charge of the war bonds campaign.

Alexander Archer Vandegrift

Alexander Vandegrift is the commanding general of the First Marine Division. He is the most senior officer on Guadalcanal. He is promoted to Lieutenant General and Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Hon Song Do

Hon Song Do is an analyst of the staff of Fleming Pickering and is based in Hawaii. He interprets and analyzes Japanese radio intercepts. He is promoted to Captain based on Pickering's recommendations.



John Marston Moore

Moore is an analyst on Pickering's staff and is based in Hawaii. He is promoted to First Lieutenant based on Pickering's recommendation. He is part of the team that analyzes the MAGIC intercepts.

Steve Oblensky

Steve Oblensky is a technical sergeant in the Marine Corps and stationed in Guadalcanal.

George F. Hart

George Hart is a member of Fleming Pickering team of MAGIC intercept analysts and is based in Hawaii.

Frank Knox

Frank Knox is Secretary of the Navy and whom Fleming Pickering reports to.



Objects/Places

Guadalcanal

Guadalcanal is in the Solomon Island group in the Pacific.

Tulagi

Tulagi is an island in the Solomon Islands in the Pacific.

Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. is the capitol of the United States.

Gavutu

Gavutu is an island in the Solomon Islands group in the Pacific.

Espiritu Santu

Espiritu Santu is an island in the Pacific where there is a US Naval base.

Pearl Harbor

Pearl Harbor is on the island of Oahu in Hawaii where CINCPAC Headquarters is located.

Muku Muku

Muku Muku is the Pickering estate in Oahu, Hawaii.

San Francisco

San Francisco is a city in California on the West Coast.

Brisbane

Brisbane is a city on the central east coast of Australia.



Water Lily Cottage

Water Lily Cottage is the name of Pickering's rented residence in Brisbane, Australia.

San Diego

San Diego, in Southern California, is the site of a US Naval base.

New Caledonia

New Caledonia is an island in the Coral Sea east of the Solomons.

New York City

New York City is the nation's largest city located on the East Coast.

Pensacola

Pensacola is a city in Northern Florida where there is a Naval Air Station.



Themes

Relationships - Jake and Veronica

Jake Dillon is a Marine Corps Major who works for the Office of Public Affairs. Before the war he was a high paid press agent for Metro-Magnum Studio which is paying him his full salary while he is serving the Marines. He is a fast talking individual who does what he has to get the job done and he doesn't question his assignments from the Marine Corps. Before his Guadalcanal assignment, he was dating movie star Veronica Wood. When she learns that he is back in town, she goes to his Malibu beach house, where she finds him with the ailing Bobby Easterbrook and attendant Dawn Morris. He hadn't even called her and she wants to know why.

After making sure that Bobby and Dawn were comfortable, they retire to the bedroom. It appears that their relationship is physical. As a moving star, she will be a part of the war bonds tour. When she asks why he never married, he tells her that it's because of the war and his assignment to the Marine Corps. After being interrupted by a call from the studio, she steers the conversation back to the subject. After hemming and hawing a little, he finally asks if she could wait until after the war. She makes him get down on one knee to propose properly, which he does. This scene is a bit of a surprise to the reader because there was no indication that their relationship was so serious, especially since both of them are pros on the Hollywood scene.

Bending Rules

A second theme of the book is how the various characters pull strings and bend rules to get what they need to accomplish their assignments. This is especially true of Jake Dillon. As a Hollywood press agent, he is used to wheeling and dealing. While he follows his orders and doesn't question his assignments, he doesn't hesitate to negotiate whatever he has to in order to complete the assignments. When McCoy was supposed to receive the Medal of Honor, Dillon had to locate him. He found him in the Brig in San Diego facing serious charges and a court martial. He managed to have the charges dropped in exchange for taking two gunney sergeants with to guard him for the medal ceremony and for the war bonds tour.

Dillon also bent a few rules for Bobby Easterbrook. When the comment was made that Easterbrook was close to going over the edge, he pulls him onto the plane and takes him back to the States. He gets him through customs even though his service records have been lost. He keeps Bobby at his Malibu house while he is sick, making a deal with a doctor's receptionists to take care of Bobby in exchange for a screen test. They all show up in good condition to receive their medals and go on to work in the war bonds tour, which also included aviators Galloway, Pick and Dunn who didn't want to be a part of the tour.



Contribution to the War Effort

Another theme of the book is contribution to the war effort. This isn't unusual during a time of war but the reader can see how people contributed what they could according to their abilities. For example, Jake Dillon, who had been a Marine, came back to active service for the Office of Public Affairs. He had been a highly paid Hollywood press agent before the war and the Metro-Magnum Studio continued to pay him his full salary while he was with the Marines. The Hollywood studios themselves offered to provide the facilities for the training of combat correspondents. This was the assignment that Bobby Easterbrook was given. Veronica Wood, a high paid movie star, agreed to give her time to the warbond tour even though she may have been more agreeable because she was engaged to Jake Dillon. Dawn Morris was a starlet who also gave her time to the bond tour. Fleming Pickering was the head of the Pacific and Far East Shipping Company and his wife was a wealthy hotel heiress. He volunteered for the war effort, returning to active duty with the Marines and worked as a special envoy for Secretary of the Navy Knox. The contribution of the combatants came through their bravery and willingness to risk their lives. For example, at the end of the book, Koffler volunteers for the assignment with the Philippines guerrillas, not even knowing what it was about. Each contributed what they could.



Style

Point of View

The book is written in the third person point of view with the author, W.E.B. Griffin, acting as the narrator. This approach allows the author to describe the settings and to provide background information for the reader. This is a much better approach than the first person point of view would be. When the first person point of view is employed, the knowledge of the reader is limited to the knowledge of the storyteller. This limitation is avoided by the use of the third person since the reader has all of the necessary information provided by the author. There is quite a bit of dialogue between the different characters that allows the reader to learn the personalities of the characters and adds more realism to the characters. The author and the characters are obviously pro-American which is to be expected in a book of this type and Griffin does a good job in describing the settings and the equipment for the reader and provides the little details that make a difference. The point of view is appropriate for the book and the reader will appreciate the knowledge and style of the author.

Setting

There are numerous settings for the action of the book. Most of the scenes involving combat involve the islands of Guadalcanal, Tulagi and Gavutu. There are islands in the Solomon Island group in the Pacific, near New Guinea. There are also scenes in New Caldeonia, an island in the Coral Sea, east of the Solomon Islands, as well as the Pacific island of Espiritu Santu, where there is a U.S. Naval Base. There are also many scenes in Hawaii. Pearl Harbor is located at the island on Oahu and the site of CINCPAC headquarters. Pickering has an estate called Muku Muku in Oahu which also provides a setting for some of the action. Brisbane, Australia, is also the scene of action. MacArthur's headquarters are located in Brisbane and Pickering has a rented house called the Water Lily Cottage there. There are also many scenes in Washington D, as well as cities like Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, New York City and Pensacola. Some scenes take place at the homes of the soldiers as they are on leave, as well as many hotels, many of which are owned by the Pickering family.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel and the meaning of the terms used are relatively clear and straight forward. The easy to read novel is written in everyday English. Even though the main characters are all in the military, there are not many military terms used and Griffin explains the various kinds of weapons and equipment where necessary. The only terms he doesn't define are terms like CINCPAC. In most of the Griffin novels, these terms are usually defined in footnotes, but not in Close Combat. This doesn't cause much of a problem for the reader because there are not that many used. There are not terms or



phrases with hidden meanings. The reader always knows what is happening in the novel. There are some sections where the language is a little earthy, but this adds to the realism of the characters and the novel. In short, the language used in the novel results in fast and easy reading. There is little to slow the reader down, and this the reader will appreciate.

Structure

The structure of the novel is the usual structure in the W.E.B. Griffin novels in this series. There are a total of sixteen chapters. There are no chapter titles, but there are headings at the beginning of each chapter. These headings indicate the place and the time and the date. This is useful for the reader who always knows what the time frame is and where the action is taking place. There are different scenes in the chapters that are designated by a number and the heading.

Through out the book are the contents of the correspondent between characters and the MAGIC intelligence intercepts. These are just as informative to the reader as the sections of the novel are and add to the realism of the novel.

There is no Introduction, Table of Contents or Index. There are also no maps which might have helped the reader in regards to the geography of the island.

The structure of the book works well for the novel. It results in easy and quick reading with nothing to slow down the reader.

Quotes

You can't reasonable expect to go up day after day and expect to survive - not against enemies who not only outnumber you, but are flying, with far greater experience, the Zero, a fighter plane that is faster and more agile than the Wildcat (Chapter 1, pg. 3)

"I sent him to the Pacific to get information I was not getting via the Annapolis Protection Society," Knox said. "He did what I asked him to do. And he's doing a good job now." (Chapter 2, pg. 36)

From a variety of sources, Intelligence had learned that the Japanese would in the near future complete the construction of an airfield near Lunga Point on the north side of the island. If it became operational, Japanese aircraft would dominate the area: News Guinea would almost certainly fall. And an invasion of Australia would become likely (Chapter 3, pg. 49)

"Christ, it's worse than I thought," Pickering said after Banning finished reporting Vandegrift's assessment of his situation, along with his own and the other code-breaker's analysis of Japanese intentions and capabilities" (Chapter 4, pg. 88)

"That's unless he gets reinforced, and unless they can somehow keep the Japs from reinforcing, we're going to get pushed back into the sea" (Chapter 5, pg. 114)

"How I don't know. But certainly, someone who has been flown across the world at the direct order of the President of the United States to arrange a peace between the chief of American espionage and the Supreme Commander of the South West Pacific Ocean Area should be able to deal with the problem of a Marine buck sergeant who has knocked up his girlfriend" (Chapter 6, pg. 128)

Except of course, you, Jean, Pickering thought. Ther most serious violation of security vis-a-vis MAGIC is committed by the Supreme Commander (Chapter 7, pg. 160)

"Jesus!" Galloway said, disgustedly. "How do we get out of this, Skipper? Or at least how do I?" (Chapter 8, pg. 181)

"The program is called MAGIC," Pickering went on. "A MAGIC intercept is a Japanese message we have intercepted and decoded. Such messages have the highest possible security classification. If the Japanese even suspect that we have broken their codes, they will of course change them (Chapter 9, pgs. 201-202)

But you volunteered, didn't you, Killer? And you're not stupid. Or are you? What is the difference between valor and stupidity (Chapter 10, 231)

I have just had my wrist slapped. I've been told he doesn't want to hear me try to sell Donovan's people to him again. But he didn't ask Willoughby what he meant. Or does he already know about Ellen Feller? (Chapter 11, pg. 263)



"You don't know, do you?" Carstairs said. "You two are not going back to your squadrons. None of the Guadalcanal aces are. You're going to train new fighter pilots. Here, I mean in the States. Probably at Memphis, I would guess" (Chapter 12, pg. 294)

Well, I know how that feels. Every time I check my uniform in the mirror and see the stars, I feel like I'm impersonating an officer (Chapter 13, pg. 317)

Pick's first thought when he saw the brand-new flight suits was to wonder if there were any more around her, and if so, how he could steal them. His fellow pilots of VMF-229 had been almost pathetically grateful when he returned with the boxes of RAAF flight suits he stole at Port Moresby, New Guinea; theirs were literally in tatters (Chapter 14, pg. 335)

But the real reason he was in Seattle was to tell Major Dillon that he wanted to resign his commission. He shouldn't have been made an officer in the first place (Chapter 15, pg. 383)



Topics for Discussion

Who were the Coastwatchers? What was their function?

What is MAGIC? Why is it important?

What is the situation in Guadalcanal? Why are the troops there in such a precarious position?

What was the problem concerning Ellen Feller? How was the problem handled?

What were the war bond tours? Why didn't Galloway and Pick want to be involved?

What problem does Easterbrook have with his commission and his assignment to train combat correspondents?

Why are Pick and Dunn assigned to Memphis? How do they feel about the assignment?