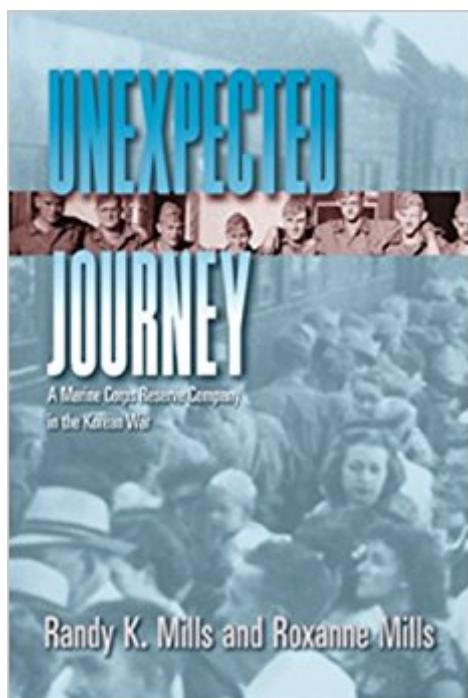


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# Unexpected Journey: A Marine Corps Reserve Company In The Korean War



## **Synopsis**

In the fifty years since the Korean War dominated America's headlines, the poor state of readiness of U.S. armed forces at the beginning of that conflict has faded from memory. Yet, in those early days of desperate combat-when victory and even survival were far from certain-many Americans were rapidly deployed to this new-found war zone, deplorably unprepared for the challenges that awaited them. By focusing on one unit-a Marine Corps Reserve company called to active duty with no warning and virtually no time to prepare-this meticulously researched and vividly presented account makes clear what these individuals faced and how they coped. This is a human story that takes the reader into the personal lives of the participants and provides a view of post-World War II American society. Through the lens of this detailed look at one company in a nearly forgotten war, important issues come into view that are relevant today. The efforts of the Marine Corps to remain adequately prepared for combat in a time when economic and political considerations mandate a military drawdown have particular relevance to current debates, and the trials and tribulations recounted here are rife with lessons for today's planners, trainers, and warriors. The authors have blended documentary research with newspaper accounts of the day, interviews with participants, personal correspondence, and diaries to reconstruct this amazing story of what happened when a group of young people from middle America were called upon to make an unexpected journey.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: US Naval Institute Press (October 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1557505462

ISBN-13: 978-1557505460

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 6.2 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,905,932 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in Books > History > Military > Korean War > Personal Narratives #20331 in Books > History > Asia

## **Customer Reviews**

The Millses' book should appeal to readers of Stephen Ambrose and other chroniclers of the American citizen-soldier. It is the story of a reserve company of marines from Evansville, Indiana--240 men, both World War II veterans and teenagers with no military experience. Their lives

and their training were both disrupted when the Korean War broke out and marine reserves were called up to fill out the First Marine Division. Evansville's men went to Korea on short notice, to endure Korea's hostile landscape and fight against formidable Chinese opponents. Most of them arrived in time for the march out from Chosin and were veterans by the time of the fighting in spring 1951. Except for six who didn't return, they mostly served out their time by the end of 1951 and were home with the stories and memories told here, in many cases for the first time. Roland Green  
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"As a tribute to Company C, this book succeeds and deserves inclusion in the personal literature of the Korean War." -- Naval War College Review, Autumn 2003 "Korean War buffs will enjoy this book, as will every living member of the Marine Corps." -- Choice, July 2001

I was surprised to locate this book after years of researching. The book appeared slightly used as it was from a library. My father and uncle both served in this unit and both are included in the writings. Although my dad passed away 30 yrs. ago, my uncle, a WWII vet who served in the Pacific, is still around. The writer validated friends and events they spoke of. The book was so overpowering that I could only read a few chapters in one sitting, finding myself emotionally caught up by the validation of stories they told. It also validated how our government lured these young high school boys, using sharp uniforms and a few extra dollars a month, then sent them into combat, ill prepared, undertrained, and lacking equipment. Both were wounded but at least returned. Both my dad and uncle were proud and will forever be Marines. Semper Fi!

Thank you, my father is apart of this group and is in the book. Along with other family members that were not so lucky to make it back.

The book was written about my Marine Reserve Unit. I took the picture on the cover so of course I love this book.

One day attending class or going to work and the next headed to Korea and the most trying battle of that war. This was a real tear jerker that I just couldn't put down until the final page was read.

Smooth transaction, book was a gift for my husband who is a Korean War Vet and he said the book was good.

My Dad, Charles Gottman, was interviewed and referenced in this book. I read the copy he owned, but decided to buy my own copy. Dad passed away last June and nostalgia came over me. The book is good and I learned so much about my Dad while reading it. He once said, "there are some things you don't want to talk about". I could almost imagine my Grandma's heartbreak after signing for my Dad to join, as he was underage. She thought he would be safe and not go overseas if he was in the reserves. Fortunately, Dad returned home safe. Very interesting book and I typically don't read this genre.

Unexpected Journey is the history of Company C, 16th Infantry Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, from Evansville, Indiana, and its combat service during the Korean War. The authors have written a very personal story, which delves deeply into the lives of the men of Company C, and describes the difficulties they faced along with how they managed to cope with those difficulties. In writing this book, the authors relied heavily on oral interviews done with the surviving members of Company C. In addition, the authors have utilized not only archival primary sources, but also newspaper accounts, letters, and diaries to reconstruct the story of what happened to these young men from middle America. This book is highly recommended for those interested in the use of reserve forces or the Korean War.

Before reading this book I had very little knowledge about the Korean War. Now I have new found respect and admiration for these veterans and veterans of all wars. The authors have done a masterful job of weaving the eye witness accounts of these small town reservists into an intriguing story. It is the story of the real live heroes that we Americans have to thank for the freedom and peacetime we take for granted. If you came away from the movie "Saving Private Ryan" with the feeling of extreme gratitude for never having experienced war first hand, you will get the same jolt from reading "Unexpected Journey: A Marine Corps Reserve Company in the Korean War."

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