

## Jack Lucas Memorial Foundation

### The Youngest Recipient of the Medal of Honor

The mission of the **Jack Lucas Foundation** is to ensure that Lucas and Comrades at Arms will continue to be honored for significant contributions to the victory at Iwo Jima during World War II.

By forging his mother's signature, teenager Jack Lucas became a fraudulent enlistee in the United States Marines.

Lucas was born in Plymouth, North Carolina on February 14, 1928. As a teenager, he was a cadet captain in the military school where his mother enrolled him following his father's death. He had heard reports of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and decided that he should be part of the military defense of his country.

Large for his age, Lucas had little difficulty convincing the recruiter that he was 17. He took the papers to his mother; but, even with the promise that he would return and complete his education, his mother could not or would not sign the papers. Lucas forged her name to begin his military career. Along the way, he also became the youngest recipient of the Medal of Honor since the Civil War.

# Battle of Iwo Jima

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL Editorial Page

AT WAR

Iwo Jima

The famous battle offers lessons for us 60 years later.

BY ARTHUR HERMAN

Saturday, February 19, 2005 12:01 a.m.

Sixty years ago today, more than 110,000 Americans and 880 ships began their assault on a small volcanic island in the Pacific, in the climactic battle of the last year of World War II. For the next 36 days Iwo Jima would become the most populous 7 1/2 square miles on the planet, as U.S. Marines and Japanese soldiers fought a battle that would test American resolve even more than D-Day or the Battle of the Bulge had, and that still symbolizes a free society's willingness to make the sacrifice necessary to prevail over evil—a sacrifice as relevant today as it was 60 years ago.

The attack on Iwo Jima capped a two-year island-hopping campaign that was as controversial with politicians and the press as any Rumsfeld strategy. Each amphibious assault had been bloodier than the last: at Tarawa, where 3,000 ill-

prepared Marines fell taking an island of just three square miles; at Saipan, where Army troops performed so poorly two of their generals had to be fired; and Peleliu, where it took 10 weeks of fighting in 115-degree heat to root out the last Japanese defenders, at the cost of 6,000 soldiers and Marines.

Iwo Jima would be the first island of the Japanese homeland to be attacked. The Japanese had put in miles of tunnels and bunkers, with 361 artillery pieces, 65 heavy mortars, 33 large naval guns, and 21,000 defenders determined to fight to the death. Their motto was, "kill 10 of the enemy before dying." American commanders expected 40% casualties on the first assault. "We have taken such losses before," remarked the Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Holland M. Smith, "and if we have to, we can do it again."

Even before the attack, the Navy's bombardment of Iwo Jima cost more ships and men than it lost on D-Day, without making a significant dent in the Japanese defenses. Then, beginning at 9 a.m. on the 19th, Marines loaded down with 70 to 100 pounds of equipment each hit the beach, and immediately sank into the thick volcanic ash. They found themselves on a barren moonscape stripped of any cover or vegetation, where Japanese artillery could pound them with unrelenting fury. Scores of wounded Marines helplessly waiting to be evacuated off the beach were killed "with the greatest possible violence," as veteran war reporter Robert Sherrod put it. Shells tore bodies in half and scattered arms and legs in all directions, while so much underground steam rose from the churned up soil the survivors broke up C-ration crates to sit on in order to keep from being scalded. Some 2,300 Marines were killed or wounded in the first 18 hours. It was, Sherrod said, "a nightmare in hell."

And overlooking it all, rising 556 feet above the carnage, stood Mount Suribachi, where the Japanese could direct their fire along the entire beach. Taking Suribachi became the key to victory. It took four days of bloody fighting to reach the summit, and when Marines did, they planted an American flag. When it was replaced with a larger one, photographer Joe Rosenthal recorded the scene—the most famous photograph of World War II and the most enduring symbol of a modern democracy at war.

Yet, in the end, a symbol of what? Certainly not victory. The capture of Suribachi only marked the beginning of the battle for Iwo Jima, which dragged on for another month and cost nearly 26,000 men—all for an island whose future as a major air base never materialized. Forty men were in the platoon which raised the flag on Suribachi. Only four would survive the battle unhurt. Their company, E Company, Second Battalion, 28th Regiment, Fifth Marine Division, would suffer 75% casualties. Of the seven officers who led it into battle, only one was left when it was over.

But the Marines pushed on. Over the next agonizing weeks, they took the rest of the island yard by yard, bunker by bunker, cave by cave. They fought through

places with names like "Bloody Gorge" and "The Meat Grinder." They learned to take no prisoners in fighting a skilled and fanatical enemy who gave no quarter and expected none. Twenty out of every 21 Japanese defenders would die where they stood. One in three Marines on Iwo Jima would either be killed or wounded, including 19 of 24 battalion commanders. Twenty-seven Marines and naval medical corpsmen would win Medals of Honor—more than in any other battle in history—and 13 of them posthumously. As Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, said, "Among the Americans who served on Iwo Island, uncommon valor was a common virtue."

Yet even this valor and sacrifice is not the full story of what Iwo Jima means, or what Rosenthal's immortal photograph truly symbolizes. The lesson of Iwo Jima is in fact an ancient one, going back to Machiavelli: that sometimes free societies must be as tough and unrelenting as their enemies. Totalitarians test their opponents by generating extreme conditions of brutality and violence; in those conditions—in the streets and beheadings of Fallujah or on the beach and in the bunkers of Iwo Jima—they believe weak democratic nerves will crack. This in turn demonstrates their moral superiority: that by giving up their own decency and humanity they have become stronger than those who have not.

Free societies can afford only one response. There were no complicated legal issues or questions of "moral equivalence" on Iwo Jima: It was kill or be killed. That remains the nature of war even for democratic societies. The real question is, who outlasts whom. In 1945 on Iwo Jima, it was the Americans, as the monument at Arlington Cemetery, based on Rosenthal's photograph, proudly attests. In the jungles of Vietnam and Cambodia in the 1970s, it was the totalitarians—with terrible consequences.

Today, some in this country think the totalitarians may still win in Iraq and elsewhere. A few even hope so. Only one thing is certain: As long as Americans cherish the memory of those who served at Iwo Jima, and grasp the crucial lesson they offer all free societies, the totalitarians will never win.

Mr. Herman, a historian, is the author, most recently, of "To Rule the Waves: How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World" (HarperCollins, 2004).

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# The Story of Jack Lucas

by William Standing



"It was not so much the  
loss of life"

(Reprinted from the Summer 1996 issue  
of the Marine Corps Magazine.)

*Fourteen and fresh from boot camp, Jacklyn Lucas was bound for glory.*

**THE YOUNGEST AMERICAN** so far to win the Medal of Honor was a two-fisted, fire-plug of a kid who wanted so badly to fight he lied about his age to enlist, stowed away on a troopship to get into the war, and was at least technically AWOL when he got his shot at combat. He was, of course, a Marine – Private First Class Jacklyn Harold Lucas, Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Marines, 5th Marine Division.

Lucas's story is as well begun as anywhere "during," to quote his citation, "action against enemy Japanese forces on Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands, 20 February 1945."

As Lucas recalls, he'd come ashore at Red Beach with the third or fourth wave in a four-man fire team. They fought across the pork-chop shaped island's western waist and dug in for the night. Early the next afternoon, the commendation says, "while creeping through a treacherous twisting ravine which ran in close proximity to a fluid and uncertain front line on D- plus- I -day, PFC Lucas and three other men were suddenly ambushed by a hostile patrol which savagely attacked with rifle fire and grenades. "

Quick to act when the lives of the small group were endangered by

two grenades which landed directly in front of them, PFC Lucas unhesitatingly hurled himself over his comrades upon 1 grenade and pulled the other under him, absorbing the whole blasting forces of the explosions in his own body in order to shield his companions from the concussion and murderous flying fragments. By his inspiring action and valiant spirit of self-sacrifice, he not only protected his comrades from certain injury or possible death but also enabled them to rout the Japanese patrol and continue the advance."

The broken, bloody, shrapnel-riddled soldier the stretcher-bearers hustled away had been 17 for less than a week."

Maybe," a surgeon said, "he was too damned young, and too damned tough to die." That was offshore aboard the hospital ship *Samaritan*, when it began to look as if Lucas would live. Before the doctors were done, he'd go under the knife 22 times. There are still about 200 pieces of scrap iron in him, some the size of .22-caliber bullets. Lucas sets off airport metal detectors.

There was, in any case, no question he was young, and all the brig time he served for brawling suggests he was rugged. Lucas figures he was 5-foot-8 and 185 pounds when he enlisted at Norfolk, Virginia, on August 6, 1942; and he'd left Parris Island's boot camp in Leatherneck fighting trim.

He'd turned pugnacious – as he puts it, "rambunctious" – when he was 10, the year his father, a Plymouth, North Carolina, tobacco farmer, died. "I was kind of shattered to lose my father," Lucas says, "I guess I just resented a lot of things and that loss. I was a mean kid."

His mother sent him off to Edwards Military Academy in Salemburg when he was 11, and, he says, "that good discipline kind of straightened me out." Lucas worked his way up to a cadet captaincy by the time he was 13, but his academy career almost ended that December when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. "That signed and sealed the thing for me right there," he says. "I was determined that I was going to serve in the Marine Corps and fight the enemy." Lucas left to sign up but he couldn't fool the recruiters.

The next year, he was more artful. He told his mother he was going to sign her name to the enlistment consent papers. She could, he told

her, try to stop him, but he'd find another way. She acquiesced on the promise Lucas would finish his schooling when he was discharged.

With his military school training, Lucas, 14, shone in basic. He did so well in Camp Lejune heavy machine-gun school that he was detailed to the training command. But that wasn't what he had in mind. "My sole purpose," he says, "was to kill Japanese."



When the rest of his unit was ordered to San Diego, "I packed my sea bag and got on the back of the train and stowed away to California." On the West Coast a sergeant discovered Lucas had no records, but it was more trouble to send him back than to keep him. Shortly, Lucas was sailing with his battalion for a staging area in Hawaii.

So far, so good. But at Camp Catlin on Oahu, he made a mistake. In a letter to his 15-year-old sweetheart in Swan Corner, North Carolina, Lucas mentioned his age. A mail censor noticed, and Lucas was soon explaining things to his colonel. The CO decided he was too good a Marine to lose – Lucas said he'd just go join the Army, anyway – but too young a man for combat. When his unit shipped out for Tarawa, Lucas stayed in Honolulu.

He was determined to follow: "I was just obsessed to kill Japanese." Marines who got into trouble tended to get sent to the front; Lucas started picking fights. "Anything I could provoke," he says. "I got locked up a number of times for fighting, but they let me go. But then I mashed up on some sergeant. I got two different tours of 30 days on bread and water and a lot of rock busting."

Celebrating his freedom after one stretch in the brig, Lucas and a buddy shanghaied a truckload of beer from ships' stores and treated their company. The Marines worked their way through 10 or 12 GI cans full of iced brew, and Lucas and pal went back for a second load. "We were too inebriated to operate efficiently, and the police caught

us," Lucas says. "These two M.P.s came and got me."

While one M.P. went for his buddy, Lucas says, "I beat the dickens out of the other guy. I had 18-inch biceps in those days. I was so muscled up I could run through a brick wall." In the process of running away, however, he got confused and ran back into the building in which he'd been caught, straight into the arms of the angry M.P.s.

Before he got out of the brig, Lucas said, "I figured this procedure isn't working for me." He packed his gear, went to Pearl, caught a Higgins boat, and on January 9, 1945, climbed aboard one of the troopships Tokyo Rose said was bound for Iwo. As Providence would have it, cousin Samuel Oliver Lucas was aboard. With Samuel's help, Lucas hid in landing craft, slept on the weather deck, and fed himself for 29 days.

The day before his name would have moved from the AWOL to the deserter list, Lucas turned himself in to Captain Robert H. Dunlap. The captain, who would win a Medal of Honor the same day as Lucas, took him to a Colonel Pollock. Lucas remembers the colonel said, "I'd like to have a whole shipload of fellows that want to fight as bad as you."

At Saipan, another Marine went ashore with appendicitis, and Lucas was issued his weapon and gear. On February 14, he turned 17 in the hold of *USS Deuel*, APA 160; there was no party. On February 19 he hit the beach at Iwo.

"Shells were flying, people were being blown apart, and bullets were everywhere," he says. "They made hash of us. I was as anxious as ever to kill as many Japs as I could kill. It was just where I wanted to be."

**O**N D-DAY PLUS ONE, Lucas and his team were making their way toward the Japanese airstrip on the plain northeast of Mount Suribachi. They had stopped to pound an enemy pillbox and had jumped for cover into one of two parallel trenches that led from it through the soft volcanic ash sand that covers the sulfurous island. To their surprise the Marines discovered "there were a11 these Japs in this other trench. Eleven of them. We opened fire. There wasn't time to put your weapon to your shoulder. We just fired off hand.

"This last Jap I shot, I shot him in the forehead just above the eye.

**My rifle jammed. I was looking down at my rifle trying to get the damned thing unjammed, and when I did I saw the grenades. I was the first to see them. I hollered 'grenades,' and I dove for them.**

**"I smashed my rifle butt against one and drove it into the volcanic ash, and fell on it, and pulled the other one under me. I was there to fight, and we were there to win. What you have to do you do to win. It was not in me to turn to run.**

**"That volcanic ash and the good Lord saved me. If I'd been on hard ground that thing would have split me in two. There was just one explosion. One was all I could handle, and I had trouble handling that one. It blew me over on my back, and it punctured my right lung, but it never knocked me out." Lucas also sustained injuries to his thigh, neck, chin, and head.**

**The rest of the team sprinted down the trench, turned and fired down the other. Lucas lay on his back, his right arm twisted so far underneath him he thought it had been blown off. His mouth and throat filled with blood, and he might have drowned if he had lost consciousness. He kept moving his left hand to show that he was alive. "That," he says, "was the only thing I could move." A Marine from another unit came up and Lucas, barely recognizable as an American, was afraid he would be shot, but the soldier called for a Corpsman.**

**While the medic worked on him, a Japanese soldier popped up from a hole in the trench. The Corpsman shot him. A mortar barrage walked up to the edge of the trench and delayed the stretcher-bearers. As they hurried off, one stumbled and dropped his end. Lucas split his head open on a rock. "I looked up at him and smiled to let him know I knew that what he was trying to do, and I appreciated it. I could see he was exhausted."**

**On the evacuation beach a Corpsman covered Lucas with a poncho for shelter from the elements. "I thought, 'Oh, Lord, I'm dead,'" he says. "Of course that morphine took hold, and I passed out."**

**As sailors hoisted Lucas aboard an LST, they nearly dropped him into the sea. Someone caught him by the foot. He lay in the hold with hundreds of other wounded until there was room for him on the *Samaritan*. Before it sailed for Honolulu, the flag went up on Suribachi.**



The word was passed on the ship. "I felt as jubilant as I could be," Lucas says. "I'd fought for my country. I felt a great deal of pride in that. The only regret for me was that I didn't get to stay there longer to kill more of them."

In seven months Lucas was in good enough shape to be separated. When he was put up for the Medal of Honor, the Corps tried to delay his discharge, but Lucas was having none of it." I didn't even know what the Medal of Honor was," he says. "I didn't think about any medals going into battle. I went there to do one thing, and that was to kill Japanese. I didn't want no medals."

He was visiting friends in North Carolina when the White House summoned him to Washington to accept the award from Harry S Truman on October 5, 1945. There were 14 other recipients that day, all sailors and Marines, among them Pappy Boyington. Among the onlookers were Generals George Marshall, George Patton, and Hap Arnold, Admiral Nimitz, and Secretary of Defense James Forrestal. Marshall sat next to Lucas's mother. She's 92 now and lives with him in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.



"Truman said he'd rather be a Medal of Honor winner than President of the United States," Lucas says. "I said, 'Sir, I'll swap with you.'"

There was a Nimitz Day parade after ward in Washington and another three days later in New York. "I had my own car, and I'd stand up, and women would throw kisses at me," Lucas says, "and some of them ran out between the barricades and I got voluptuous kisses. I was 17-years-old, and I had a helluva time."

**T**ME, OF COURSE, moves on. In the years that followed, Lucas, true to his word to his mother, finished high school and graduated from college. He got married in dress blues on the television show "Bride and

**Groom" in 1952. It was the first of three marriages, none of them successful. He has four sons – one a West Pointer – a daughter, and seven grandchildren.**

**His second wife tried to hire an undercover state trooper to kill him. Lucas helped her win leniency from the court. "I'm still friends with all of them," he says, "even the one who tried to kill me."**

**During Vietnam, Lucas accepted a commission in the Army but found his methods and the military's still didn't mix. He got out after six years. He has made and lost a fair amount of money in the meat business, had IRS troubles, and lived temporarily in a tent on a friend's Maryland farm.**

**The police found marijuana growing on the farm – which Lucas knew nothing about – and arrested him. There was some embarrassment but no prosecution.**

**"Life is not just a bed of roses; it can be like a roller coaster ride," Lucas says. "I've lived the life of probably two or three men in many ways." In 1985 he returned to Iwo. "I had to try to walk on the beach without having to duck. I had time to see more of that island than I had time to walk around and observe before," Lucas says. "I could not get to the place where I was wounded. But I could see from the top of Mount Suribachi approximately where I was wounded. That's when the feeling came back, a good feeling, that we had whipped their butts."**

**He's also gone back to Washington. You may have seen part of his visit on television. In January 1995 the White House invited Lucas, his son the West Pointer, and grandson to be President Clinton's guests at the State of the Union Address. The theme of the speech was service to the country, and Mrs. Clinton thought the Lucas family was a good example.**

**Lucas visited the Clintons before the speech and chatted. "I told her, I said,**



**'You are a magnificent looking lady. You look a whole lot prettier in person than you do on television.'**

**"One of the things I told him is, 'Sir; you know, you've got a lot of courage. If I was on a job and somebody criticized me as much as they criticize you, I'd be in the nut house.'"**

**That night, at the end of the speech in the well of the House of Representatives, the President paused to recognize Lucas sitting in the balcony next to the First Lady.**

**"They saved me as the last one to be introduced," Lucas says, "but, man, was I ever the one to get the ovation. He started telling about me, and all the congressmen and senators looked up in the gallery at me, and then they clapped for five minutes. It swept me away.**

**"I got so choked up, I couldn't even smile. Honest to goodness, I had to swallow a hundred times to keep the tears from running down my face. I thought, 'Gosh, here's the son of a tobacco farmer, and all these people, and mom – she was down here in Mississippi – watching me on TV.'"**



**Sixty-eight now, Lucas devotes part of his time to speaking to civic clubs and school groups, still trying to be of service, and he often thinks of the Marines. "I love my Corps," he says. "I grew up in the Marine Corps, and they have got an outstanding piece of history. I'm just a little part of it."**

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## Medal of Honor World War II

Jack Lucas was a fraudulent enlistee. He was only 14 years old when he joined the Marine Corps in 1942 after falsifying his enlistment papers to reflect his age at 17. Three years later, just five days after he actually turned seventeen, he was in his second day of combat at Iwo Jima.

Forty-thousand Marines made the initial landing at Iwo Jima, suffering 5,320 casualties in the first day alone. One of the most bitter fought battles of World War II, 27 Americans received Medals of Honor for their heroism on the small Pacific Island from February 19 to March 16th, 1945. Only 13 of these Medal recipients, with an average age of 23 years, survived to wear their Medal. Jack Lucas, at seventeen, became the youngest American in this century from any branch of service, to receive our Nation's highest award. Despite the horrible wounds caused by selflessly covering two enemy grenades with his own body to save his comrades, he was one of the few to survive.

Jack Lucas is a true patriot, a man who loves our Country and has sacrificed much to preserve it. He makes frequent visits to schools and veterans organizations to speak to the public about the service and sacrifice that are required by those who live in a free society. In 1995 he was invited to Washington, DC for President Clinton's *State of the Union* address, where the World War II hero was introduced to a rousing standing ovation by both houses of the United States Congress. More recently, he and his wife Ruby, attended ceremonies where Jack's story was placed in the mast of a US Ship.

Jack Lucas is perhaps, best defined by the words of our President upon introducing him during that 1995 State of the Union Address:

"The last person I want to introduce is Jack Lucas from Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Jack, would you stand up?"

"Fifty years ago in the sands of Iwo Jima, Jack Lucas taught and learned the lessons of citizenship. On February 20, 1945, he and three of his buddies encountered the enemy and two grenades at their feet. Jack Lucas threw himself on both of them. In that moment he saved the lives of his companions and miraculously in the next instant a medic saved his life. He gained a foothold for freedom, and at the age of 17, just a year older than his grandson, who is up there with him today, and his son, who is a West Point graduate and a veteran, at 17 Jack Lucas became the youngest Marine in history and the youngest soldier in this century to win the Congressional Medal of Honor.

"All these years later, yesterday, here is what he said about that day. 'Didn't matter where you were from or who you were, you relied on one another. You did it for your country.' We all gain when we give and we reap what we sow. That's at the heart of this New

**Covenant, responsibility, opportunity and citizenship, more than stale chapters in some remote civics book, they are still the virtue by which we can fulfill ourselves and reach our God-given potential and be like them, and also to fulfill the eternal promise of this country, the enduring dream from that first and most sacred covenant. I believe every person in this country still believes that we are created equal, and given by our Creator the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.**

**"This is a very, very great country and our best days are still to come."**

**President William J. Clinton  
State of the Union Address, 1995**

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## **Indestructible: The Unforgettable Story of a Marine Hero at the Battle of Iwo Jima (Hardcover)**

by [Jack Lucas](#), [D. K. Drum](#)

### **From Publishers Weekly**

Few battles in any war were as terrible as the February–March 1945 battle of Iwo Jima. Nearly 6,000 American marines and 21,000 Japanese soldiers died on the small Pacific island, and more than 17,000 Americans were wounded in the vicious fighting. This evocative memoir recounts the battle from the perspective of Mississippi author Lucas, who was one of 22 marines awarded the Medal of Honor at Iwo Jima. Having finagled his way into the marines at 14, he was an undisciplined, hard-driving 17-year-old PFC when he performed the courageous act that earned him the nation's highest military award for valor. By throwing his body on top of two live grenades hurled at him and his four-man squad, Lucas saved the lives of the three other marines, though he was severely wounded. Though his flashbacks to his childhood and the dispiriting details of his tumultuous personal life following the war make the narrative lag at times, his re-creation of his part in the battle of Iwo Jima is the highlight of the book. (*May 29*)

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### **From School Library Journal**

Adult/High School—Fourteen-year-old Lucas joined the Marines in 1942 by forging his mother's signature on his enlistment papers. At age 15, he stowed away on a troopship destined for Iwo Jima, and a few days after his 17th birthday he threw himself on top of two grenades to save three fellow Marines and become the youngest soldier ever to receive the Medal of Honor. *Indestructible* is more than a wartime memoir, although the detailed recounting of the Battle of Iwo Jima and Lucas's recovery from his wounds are the strongest parts of the book. Reading this straightforward narrative is like sitting down with one's World War II veteran grandfather and hearing his stories. Despite meeting four U.S. presidents and being honored for his heroism, Lucas remains humble. His voice is proud and patriotic, but he also recognizes his own shortcomings and mistakes. Black-and-white photos from the National Archives and his family are included. This very readable volume would be a good complement to a curriculum on the war.—*Sondra VanderPloeg, Tracy Memorial Library, New London, NH*

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**From [Booklist](#)**

On Iwo Jima, Lucas smothered a Japanese grenade with his own body, saving three other marines. He suffered near-fatal injuries, and he became the youngest man ever awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. He had lied his way into the marines at 14 and stowed away to Iwo Jima to get into combat. After the war, his career of determination continued, for he recovered sufficiently to serve as an officer in the army's paratroops. Leaving the military, he survived two marital and several business failures before achieving a happy third marriage and, in retirement from the military, a distinguished record in veterans' affairs. He is modest about his service, frank about his failings (and those of his second wife, who tried to have him murdered when he discovered her defrauding his meat business)--like so many other Medal of Honor recipients, an unassuming sort of man. Like them, too, he has a story worth hearing, if only to remind us of what manner of man is designated by the word *hero*. *Roland Green*

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***The Advocate*, 05/6/06**

"[Lucas'] story has the immediacy and candor that only this kind of first-person account can convey."

***Military.com*, 7/12/06**

"Simple, straight-forward, and old-fashioned...The writing here is unadorned, but Lucas' story doesn't require fancy writing."

***BookPage*, July 2006**

"[A] straightforward account...Compelling."

***America in WWII*, August 2006**

"Remarkably candid...The life and times of a fighting marine told with blunt honesty...A remarkable and readable book."

***Winston-Salem Journal*, 6/4/06**

"A memoir that stands out for its unabashed frankness."

***Semper Fi*, July 2006**

"Lucas' love for the Corps and his country guides the reader through this engaging tale."

**Book Description**

A riveting combat memoir of an Iwo Jima hero-the youngest Marine in history to win the Congressional Medal of Honor

Here is an eloquent, plainspoken combat memoir of a young soldier who belongs in a class with World War II combat hero Audie Murphy. At the height of the Battle of Iwo Jima, Jack Lucas and three other Marines attacked a Japanese pillbox. When two enemy grenades landed in their midst, Private Lucas jumped on both grenades, just as they were exploding. His buddies were saved, but Lucas was torn apart. Miraculously, he survived-but just barely. For this brave action seventeen year-old Jack Lucas from North Carolina became the youngest soldier in the twentieth century, and the youngest Marine in history to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. In *Indestructible*, we learn of the rocky road that led Jack Lucas to Iwo Jima-

from his lying about his age to join the Marines to his going AWOL in order to join the action in the Pacific-and his arduous, frightening recovery following his heroic sacrifice. Today, wherever Jack Lucas speaks crowds gather to honor him and pay tribute to Marine heritage and pride as well as to pay their respects to one of America's greatest generations.

**About the Author**

Jack Lucas served his country in three wars before retiring from the service. He lives in Mississippi.