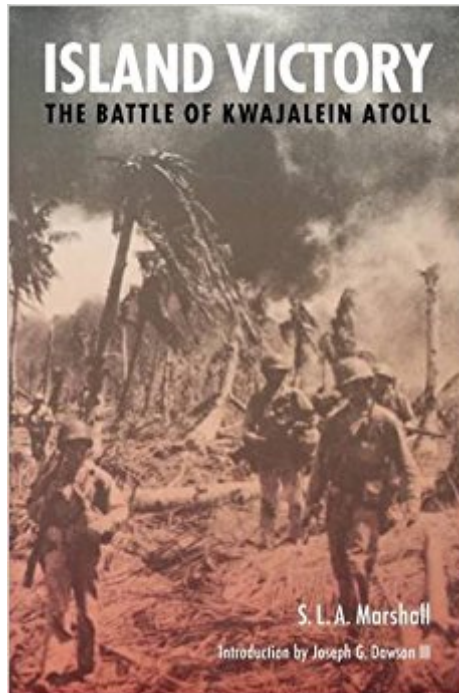




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# Island Victory: The Battle Of Kwajalein Atoll (World War II)



## Synopsis

An on-the-spot history of a fight in the Pacific during World War II, *Island Victory* was the first battle history written by then-Lieutenant Colonel S. L. A. Marshall, a veteran of World War I who would serve in Korea and Vietnam and become a brigadier general in the process. After the Seventh Infantry Division drove across Kwajalein Atoll in the first days of February 1944, successfully wresting control of the strategic southern tip from the Japanese, Marshall was charged with producing an accurate and comprehensive account of the fight. His solution: bring the front-line soldiers together at once and interview them as a group, tapping the collective memory of a platoon fresh from battle. In this book, readers get a rare, firsthand sense of all the emotions that soldiers in combat experience. Numerous maps and photographs help us visualize precisely what took place. A compelling work of military history, and the first book of its kind, *Island Victory* is itself an important chapter in the history of how military exploits are described and recorded.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Written accounts of war simply do not get any closer to the actions and feelings of those [who] were there. *Island Victory* is a highly recommended, 'must read' book." •The Midwest Book Review (The Midwest Book Review)"Island Victory presents Marshall at his best, unobtrusively weaving together the testimonies of several hundred infantrymen of the 7th Division during the battle for Kwajalein Atoll. . . . The Kwajalein victors interviewed so painstakingly by Sam Marshall provide a priceless candor and authenticity, the emotional testimonies of young men still flushed with adrenalin, guilt, and relief." •Joseph H. Alexander, *Journal of Military History* (Joseph H.

Brigadier General S. L. A. Marshall (1900–1977) served as an enlisted man in World War I, an official historian in World War II, an Army historian in Korea, and an advisor and observer in Vietnam. He wrote more than fifty books. Joseph G. Dawson III's most recent book is Doniphan's Epic March: The 1st Missouri Volunteers in the Mexican War. He is a professor of history at Texas A&M University.

Marshall's method of research was innovative at the time, and I can't fault it (though several others have), but his writing style has always seemed rather heavy to me. I'm not sure how to explain it, but it's like the speaker who has very good facts to relate but seems to drone on and on about it -- the info is there, but pay close attention to sifting the wheat from the chaff. I'll not fault his gathering and providing historical data -- his method seems to work. After purchase I have kept each of his books in my World War II library, if that is an indication/recommendation. I pass on those I do not choose to keep for reference.

First off, I am a little surprised at the lack of books written on the battle for Kwajalein. There really isn't a whole lot out there on it. Of course compared to many of the other amphibious assaults in the Pacific, Kwajalein doesn't really come anywhere close to the horrific bloodshed and gore of Tarawa, Saipan, Iwo Jima, Peleliu and Okinawa. I think from what I've seen out there, this particular book by S.L.A. Marshall does a good job of describing the "nuts and bolts" of the battle. For me personally however, it was a bit on the dry side and I was actually looking forward to getting through it and on to something written with a little more heart and soul in the style perhaps of any of Hornfischer's great books. Island Victory is however mandatory reading for any student of the war in the Pacific. There really is nothing else out there that does a better job on this battle, but the writing style of Marshall is an acquired taste I guess. After reading it, I feel I have a pretty good handle on what happened at Kwajalein, but I came away feeling like there is more to be told than what is available in Marshall's book. If you are a serious student of the war in the Pacific as I and many others are, then this book is an absolute MUST read for you. You will get a great picture of what happened on Kwajalein, but at the same time, I think you will be looking forward to moving on to something that provides more than the dry writing style of Mr. Marshall. Maybe I'm just a little jaded in my opinion because my previous read before Island Victory was Joseph H. Alexander's Utmost Savagery, a book on Tarawa that will drain the blood from your veins.

Highly recommended. Marshall's writing takes the oral accounts of the battle from the soldiers and marines who fought the battle and weaves it into a very good narrative. Not for the politically correct - when it was originally written it reflected the stereotypes and prejudices Americans had about the Japanese in WW II. However, without the actual flavor of the dialogue spoken by the GIs who fought in the battle, it would feel rather dry and scholarly. Kwajalein Island (where I live and work) looks a lot different than during the battle over 65 years ago; over the years the island has increased in area and certain places where major battles took place are now further inland on the island rather than on the coast.

Thank you for having a bit of my family history available for me to purchase. My Grandfather Thomas Burrechia is noted in this book.

It starts out a little confusing. Author spends a lot of time on unit buildups from squad to division. So far it has been a good book on the battle. I would recommend it to others that are interest in the war in the pacific. Kwajalein was used as a place to take prisoners and kill them.

My wife's father was in this war, he died protecting his men. He received the Purple Heart and the Silver Star.

Very good. I enjoyed reading.

Not worth reading unless you have a real deep interest in military history at the most detailed level.

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