

Commandant Eulogizes the Corps' 23rd Commandant, General Wallace M. Greene Jr.

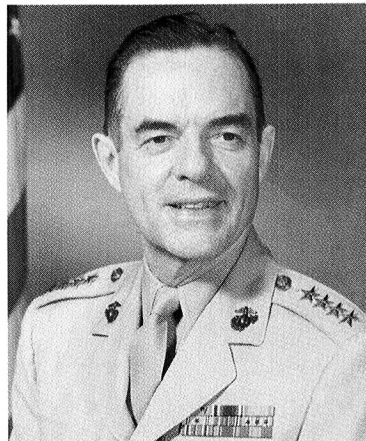
On March 8, 2003, our Nation lost a patriotic warrior and a loyal public servant, when our twenty-third Commandant, General Wallace M. Greene Jr., died in Alexandria, Virginia. Born December 27, 1907, in Waterbury, Vermont, General Greene entered the U.S. Naval Academy following a year of study at the University of Vermont. Upon his graduation in 1930, he was commissioned a second lieutenant and began a storied thirty-seven year career that culminated in his serving as the Corps' most senior officer.

As a young company grade officer, General Greene quickly distinguished himself as a talented and extremely capable leader while serving in a variety of billets stateside and during sea duty in USS *Tennessee* (BB-43). Stationed in Shanghai with the 4th Marines from 1937 to 1939, he observed Sino-Japanese hostilities. Following his service in China, General Greene attended a number of military schools in the U.S. and in Great Britain, held a company command, and fulfilled an assignment as a Special Naval Observer in London, England.

By February 1942, when General Greene completed his tour in England and quickly shipped out to the Pacific, he had developed an expertise in amphibious warfare. He soon put his knowledge and experience to good use while helping to plan and execute the successful invasion of the Marshall Islands in 1943. When General Greene became the G-3 for the 2d Marine Division for the Saipan and Tinian operations in 1944, he had already established a well-earned reputation as a superb operations officer. His efforts helped ensure the Marine Corps' success in the Pacific and resulted in his assignment to key staff and command positions.

In 1956, while serving as the Assistant Division Commander of the 2d Marine Division, his reputation for wise leadership, fairness, and sound judgment led to his reassignment to the Parris Island Recruit Depot where he helped solidify the professionalism and accountability of recruit training. General Greene's leadership as the Commanding General of the Recruit Training Command, Parris Island, and later as the Commanding General of the Recruit Depot, ushered in a new era of recruit training. He improved the quality of the warfighting training, ensured that the dignity of recruits was respected, and enhanced the public's trust in and support for the Marine Corps.

General Greene's later assignments, including command of Camp Lejeune and as Marine Corps Chief of Staff, prepared him well for the responsibilities he embraced as Commandant during the esca-



General Wallace M. Greene Jr.
23rd Commandant of the
Marine Corps

tion of the Vietnam War. In 1965, the Marine Corps enjoyed an unrivaled condition of readiness—a fact quickly and clearly demonstrated in Southeast Asia. General Greene advocated for a clear U.S. objective in Vietnam as well as aggressive and innovative military action. He did not allow the growing frustration concerning the conduct of the war to impact the combat performance and welfare of Marines. Under his stewardship, the Corps' battlefield successes greatly enhanced our illustrious legacy of warfighting prowess.

General Greene's leadership and vision for the Corps ensured that Marines acquitted themselves well during the Vietnam War while preparing for future challenges. He encouraged a study into the conditions of the future battlefield, MarCor 85, the broad outlines of which remain part of Marine Corps doctrine.

Indeed, those of us in uniform today owe a debt of gratitude to General Greene for his service and positive influence upon the Corps, as does the Nation. He successfully led Marines through several challenging trials for our Corps, during times of war and peace. He will be missed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. W. Hagee". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

M. W. Hagee
General, U.S. Marine Corps
33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps



Wallace M. Greene Jr.

General Wallace M. Greene Jr., 23rd Commandant of the Marine Corps, 37-year Marine and veteran of China and World War II, brilliant staff officer, long-range planner and troubleshooter, and a longtime benefactor and friend of *Leatherneck*, died of cancer March 8 at the Goodwin House in Alexandria, Va. He was 95.

According to retired Marine Major Robert B. Morrissey, Gen Greene's personal assistant for public affairs when the general was Commandant: "General Greene's personal integrity impacted most who came to know and be associated with him, including his general officers, Pentagon journalists and members of the [Joint Chiefs of Staff], quickly earning him a wide reputation for this highly respected character trait.

"His thoughtfulness in his dealings with others, including families of his Marines, was a delight to behold. ... It was not play-acting. He was a very genuine person fiercely dedicated to the well-being of his Marine Corps and totally loyal to those who served him, with little thought for himself. He was a modest individual with a subtle sense of humor."

Gen Greene's personal decorations include two Distinguished Service Medals and two Legions of Merit with combat "V."

He was buried with full military honors on April 3 at Arlington National Cemetery with his wife. With the exception of tours of duty overseas, the two were inseparable until her death in 2001.