



Black Sheep One: The Life of Gregory "Pappy" Boyington

By Bruce Gamble

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Black Sheep One is the first biography of legendary warrior and World War II hero Gregory Boyington. In 1936, Boyington became an aviation cadet and earned the “wings of gold” of a naval aviator. After only a short period on active duty, however, he was “encouraged” to resign from the Marine Corps due to his unconventional behavior. Remarkably, this inauspicious beginning was just the prologue to a heroic career as an American fighter pilot and innovative combat leader. With the onset of World War II, when skilled pilots were in demand, he became the commander of an ad hoc squadron of flying leathernecks. Led by Medal of Honor winner Boyington, the legendary Black Sheep set a blistering pace of aerial victories against the enemy.

Though many have observed that when the shooting stops, combat heroes typically just fade away, nothing could be further from the truth for Boyington. Blessed with inveterate luck, the stubbornly independent Boyington lived a life that went beyond what even the most imaginative might expect. Exhaustively researched and richly detailed, here is the complete story of this American original.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Anyone over 50 should recognize the name: leading the WWII Marine Fighting Squadron 214 the air and ground fighting Black Sheep Boyington ("Black Sheep One") racked up the most hits in the Marines, earning the Medal of Honor before being shot down over Japanese territory in 1944. Presumed dead, he spent 20 months in a prisoner-of-war camp, and was released at war's end to the surprise of the nation. Twelve years later, his memoir *Baa Baa Black Sheep* hit bestseller lists, and six years after that, the book became a hit TV series starring Robert Conrad. Retired naval flight officer Gamble, who has already penned an account of the squad's exploits, here narrows his focus to its most famous exponent. The results are less than heroic. Black Sheep's appeal was in its raciness for its time (in one scene quoted here, Boyington is on his knees "in front of two very gorgeous gams"); one purpose of this book seems to be to fill in the blanks and innuendo, and to detail some years better lost. It's unclear that anyone still cares about these matters, though, and the same is true of the numbing familial detail of the first chapters. But Boyington's military exploits are still of interest to buffs, and here Gamble's expertise comes to the fore. If Boyington, who died in 1988 at 76, had a tendency to fudge or exaggerate, Gamble carefully sets the matter of his actual achievements straight, and they remain impressive. Veterans of the war and fans of the show may want the full story here, but since Gamble assumes Boyington's status rather than rehabilitates it, few others will tune in. (Dec.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Gamble's *Black Sheep* (1998) made it clear that the men of Marine Fighting Squadron 214 were misfits only according to bureaucratic regulations. Their legendary commanding officer, Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, however, was about as unorthodox as one could be and still accomplish anything useful. The product of a catastrophically dysfunctional family, he spent his life fighting a ferocious drinking problem, a string of wives and lovers, and, somewhat more successfully--he won the Medal of Honor for 20-odd air-to-air victories--the Japanese. As World War II loomed, he was about to be thrown out of marine aviation for his drinking and debts. He volunteered for the Flying Tigers and compiled a combat record that made him invaluable. He ended the war a prisoner of the Japanese, and until he died in 1988, he was often a prisoner of alcoholism. Nowadays a reader has to understand Boyington's time and place to tolerate him. Gamble gives us such an understanding, and even so, you may feel slightly hungover at the end of this fine biography.

Roland Green

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From the Inside Flap

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mildred Smith:

Typically the book Black Sheep One: The Life of Gregory "Pappy" Boyington will bring you to the new experience of reading some sort of book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. When you try to find new book to learn, this book very appropriate to you. The book Black Sheep One: The Life of Gregory "Pappy" Boyington is much recommended to you to read. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can more easily to read the book.

Michael Stanford:

This Black Sheep One: The Life of Gregory "Pappy" Boyington is great publication for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who also always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it details accurately using great organize word or we can declare no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read the idea hurriedly you can have whole information in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but tricky core information with wonderful delivering sentences. Having Black Sheep One: The Life of Gregory "Pappy" Boyington in your hand like getting the world in your arm, info in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no reserve that offer you world with ten or fifteen moment right but this publication already do that. So , this is good reading book. Hey Mr. and Mrs. occupied do you still doubt which?

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