



Can Do!: The Story of the Seabees (Bluejacket Books)

William Bradford Huie

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When William Bradford Huie, a reporter for H. L. Mencken's *American Mercury*, joined the U.S. Navy in 1943, he received a commission as a public relations officer in the little-known Civil Engineer's Corps Construction Battalions--the Seabees. With the publication of *Can Do!* the following year, Americans soon came to appreciate the significance of the corps's work and the danger of their wartime activities. As readable and entertaining today as it was some fifty years ago, this account tells the story of the Seabees who landed with the Marines at Guadalcanal and Wake Island, Sicily and Salerno. Experienced civilian engineers, carpenters, steam-shovel operators, plumbers, truck drivers, surveyors, and the like, they landed with the first waves of American assault troops, bringing heavy equipment ashore to build roads, bridges, and airfields and repair whatever they could. Often working under enemy fire, they incurred many casualties and won the deep respect of everyone who came into contact with them.

Huie's book is filled with spirited accounts of the Seabees's achievements in the Aleutians, the South Sea islands, Europe, and Africa. A passionate and convincing advocate, Huie wrote the book not only to call attention to their accomplishments but to serve as an inspiration to others, and he often has the Seabees tell their stories in their own words. Appendixes offer valuable details, including lists of casualties, award recipients, and Seabees' poems. An introduction by Donald R. Noble is included in this new paperback edition.

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