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**LATE HISTORIAN'S NEW BOOK A FINAL TRIBUTE TO THE VETERANS WHO
 INTRIGUED, INSPIRED, AND EMBRACED HIM**

For over 20 years, military historian and author Keith Nolan spent the majority of his waking hours researching and writing about the myriad of bloody, complex, and often-overlooked battles waged by thousands of American troops during the Vietnam War. On February 4, 2009, Nolan succumbed to his own long, difficult battle—this one with cancer—at the age of 44. Now, a year and a half since his passing, Nolan's final book, *Search and Destroy: The Story of an Armored Cavalry Squadron in Vietnam, 1-1 Cav, 1967-1968* (July 15, 2010), will finally be released.

Nolan, known to his friends as Keith, pioneered and excelled at his own special brand of military history: the excellent combining of in-depth interviews with those who took part in the fighting and deep research into the official records. That, along with a fluid writing style, added up to a dozen of the best books ever written on Vietnam War. *Search and Destroy* is no exception.

Recounting the 1-1 Cavalry's intense combat throughout Southeast Asia in 1967-68, Nolan's latest book deftly tells the story of America's most-decorated cavalry squadron at the height of General Westmoreland's war of attrition against the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese. It was during this period of the war that soldiers in the squadron earned a Medal of Honor, four Distinguished Service Crosses, and thousands of Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, and Purple Hearts during savage battles in places like Tam Ky, the Que Son Valley, the Pineapple Forest, Hill 34, Cigar Island, and Tien Phuoc.

As with his previous books, however, Nolan took the necessary measures to ensure that he delivered an unbiased and unvarnished depiction of the squadron's actions in Vietnam, including not only the heroism of America's fighting men, but also any controversy or brutality that may have occurred.

The villages among which the 1-1 Cav operated were under the complete control of the enemy, and faced with an uncooperative population who aided in the planting of mines and sheltering of enemy

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troops, certain elements of the squadron ended up lashing out with violence similar to that experienced at My Lai. The veterans Nolan interviewed were all too aware of these incidents, a fact that gave many a moment of pause.

“When Keith Nolan contacted me six years ago I was extremely wary of his motives,” said 1-1 Cav and Vietnam veteran Richard Brummett. “Of the several cavalry squadrons and tank battalions in the Viet Nam War, why was he writing about the 1-1 Cav? What did he know?”

Brummett soon realized, however, like those who had spoken with Nolan before him, that the author’s intentions were solely focused on telling the whole story, not head-hunting or writing a pro-or anti-war piece.

“What I discovered once I committed to working with Keith on this story was that he had no problem with the truth,” said Brummett. “Keith accomplished the task of fairly explaining the how and why regrettable actions took place. He did not condemn, because he had come to understand the terrible pressures soldiers fought under so long ago.”

In the end, Brummett, like so many of the veterans interviewed by Nolan over the years, realized that having an author as dedicated as Nolan telling his story, as well as those of the veterans he fought alongside, was as high an honor as he could ask for.

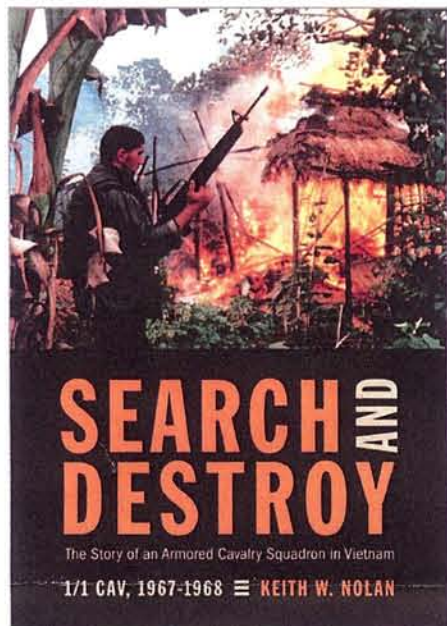
“The men of the First Squadron of the First Cavalry Regiment are lucky to be the subjects of his Keith’s last book,” Brummett said recently. “It is difficult to convey how much Keith Nolan’s writing of our story means to the veterans of the 1-1 Cavalry. Although we will never forget that year we fought in the tropic strangeness of an alien land, we will soon be gone. Keith’s work will ensure our triumphs and our pain will not vanish with us.”

ABOUT ZENITH PRESS

Zenith Press (www.zenithpress.com) is a leading publisher of military history and aviation with hardcover and softcover narratives and illustrated books. Zenith’s primary area of interest is contemporary American military history, twentieth century forward, with an emphasis on World War II, the Vietnam War, and contemporary armed conflict.

SEARCH AND DESTROY

The Story of an Armored Cavalry Squadron in Vietnam



Search and Destroy
The Story of an Armored
Cavalry Squadron in Vietnam:
1-1 Cav, 1967–1968
by Keith W. Nolan

6 x 9, 448 pages
32 b/w photos, 6 maps
ISBN-13: 978-0-7603-3312-9
\$30.00 / \$33.00 CAN / £20.00

Pub Date: July 15, 2010

“Keith Nolan’s research, his comprehension of the political as well as the military actions, his careful concern for those who were there, and, most of all, his writing, are superb.”

—Stephen Ambrose

In his last book before losing his battle with cancer, acclaimed historian Keith Nolan tells one final story of the soldiers he respected and a war by which he was captivated

Historically, 1-1 Cav had been heralded as “The U.S. Army’s Most Battle-Honored Unit,” given the sheer volume of campaign streamers and unit awards earned during the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Indian Wars, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, the border clashes with Pancho Villa, and the North African and Italian campaigns of World War II. Its reputation would be confirmed in Viet Nam as 1-1 Cav was recognized, hands down, as the most aggressive and professional outfit in the American Division.

The squadron was at its best during 1967–1968, at the height of General Westmoreland’s war of attrition against the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese. Soldiers in the squadron earned a Medal of Honor, four Distinguished Service Crosses, and thousands of Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, and Purple Hearts during savage battles in places like Tam Ky, the Que Son Valley, the Pineapple Forest, Hill 34, Cigar Island, and Tien Phuoc.

There was an ugly undertone to 1-1 Cav’s victories, however. The villages among which the unit operated were under the complete control of the enemy, and faced with an uncooperative population who aided in the planting of mines and sheltering of enemy troops, certain elements of the squadron lashed out with violence similar to that experienced at My Lai. *Search and Destroy* delivers the unvarnished truth of the heroism and the brutality of the Viet Nam War as fought by the men of 1-1 Cav.

The last book before his passing, acclaimed military historian Keith W. Nolan’s *Search and Destroy* immerses the reader in two years of combat with 1-1 Cav as officers and soldiers trained in black-and-white conventional warfare encounter Viet Nam’s many shades of gray. Through personal interviews with the men who served there, as well as extensive use of official and personal documents from the war, Nolan brings the highs and lows to life. This is not the Viet Nam War whitewashed or demonized, this is the complicated reality of what happened to these men in that place and time. Stories of great compassion, heroism under fire, tragic accidents, and brutal payback illuminate the daily existence of frontline soldiers in Viet Nam as they struggle to survive and make it home.

Welcome to I Corps, Republic of Viet Nam . . .

"I told these kids, you're going in a combat zone, and if you're smart enough to listen to me, most of you are going to come back alive."

—Platoon Sgt. Charles N. Boyd

"If you saw a muzzle flash, you'd shoot at it. If you saw what you thought was a flash from a mortar, you'd shoot at that, too."

—Sgt. Richard P. Rensi

"Something happens to your brain in combat. Something takes over, and you're capable of anything."

—Spc. 4th Class Dick L. Taskey

"We worked hard and played hard. If we did good out in the field, we partied when we got back. . . We were Boyd's Bastards."

—Pfc. Thomas M. Bursott

"We'd never fought a guerrilla war before. We didn't know how to behave, quite honestly."

—Spc. 4th Class Robert E. Johnston

About the Author

Keith W. Nolan studied the Vietnam War for twenty-five years and has published articles on the subject in *Leatherneck*, *the Marine Corps Gazette*, *Proceedings*, and *Vietnam* magazine. He is also the author of eleven Vietnam War combat histories, all of which have been Military Book Club selections, including the critically acclaimed *Ripcord: Screaming Eagles Under Siege, Vietnam 1970*. Nolan passed away at the age of 44 in early 2009, after a difficult battle with cancer.

From a Fox News article dated February 26, 2009:

"Keith is to the history of the Vietnam War as Vietnam is to hot and humid. He published his first magazine article on Vietnam as a teenager, his first book at nineteen. All told, he wrote 10 books on the war. It didn't make him rich or famous, but it did fill him with purpose. Needless to say he was a great and eager resource.

"The first time we met, Keith explained that his publisher was eager for him to write books on "popular" wars. He told me that they loved his writing, but Vietnam simply didn't sell. "Why not write about the Civil War", they said. I asked too. What Keith said is seared into my consciousness. We were in the living room of his small house waiting for the camera crew to set up. He looked me in the eyes and said, "If I don't do it, who will?" He went on to reveal feelings very similar to my own: That the veterans of that war deserve better and he was unwavering."

About Zenith Press

Zenith Press (www.zenithpress.com), an imprint of Quayside Publishing Group, encompasses combat memoirs; battle and unit histories; books on civil and military aviation; biographies of prominent military figures; titles on espionage and national security issues; books on military weapons and equipment; and titles on policing, firefighting and rescue.