



Baptism: A Vietnam Memoir

Larry Gwin

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"The 2nd Battalion of the 7th Cavalry had the dubious distinction of being the unit that had fought the biggest battle of the war to date, and had suffered the worst casualties. We and the 1st Battalion."

A Yale graduate who volunteered to serve his country, Larry Gwin was only twenty-three years old when he arrived in Vietnam in 1965. After a brief stint in the Delta, Gwin was reassigned to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in An Khe. There, in the hotly contested Central Highlands, he served almost nine months as executive officer for Alpha Company, 2/7, fighting against crack NVA troops in some of the war's most horrific battles.

The bloodiest conflict of all began November 12, 1965, after 2nd Battalion was flown into the Ia Drang Valley west of Pleiku. Acting as point, Alpha Company spearheaded the battalion's march to landing zone Albany for pickup, not knowing they were walking into the killing zone of an NVA ambush that would cost them 10 percent casualties.

Gwin spares no one, including himself, in his gut-wrenching account of the agony of war. Through the stench of death and the acrid smell of napalm, he chronicles the Vietnam War in all its nightmarish horror.

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