

# We Were Soldiers Once...and Young : The Battle That Changed the War in Vietnam

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In November 1965, 450 men of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, under the command of Lt. Col. Hal Moore, were dropped by helicopter into a small clearing in the Ia Drang Valley. They were immediately surrounded by 2000 North Vietnamese soldiers. Three days later, only two and a half miles away, a sister battalion was chopped to pieces. Together, these actions at the landing zones X-Ray and Albany constituted one of the most savage and significant battles of the Vietnam War. How these men persevered - sacrificed themselves for their comrades and never gave up - makes a vivid portrait of war at its most inspiring and devastating. General Moore and Joseph Galloway, the only journalist on the ground throughout the fighting, have interviewed hundreds of men who fought there, including the North Vietnamese commanders. This account rises above the specific ordeal it chronicles to present a picture of men facing the ultimate challenge, dealing with it in ways they would have found unimaginable only a few hours earlier. It reveals to us man's most heroic and horrendous endeavour. In this history of one of the most violent periods of the 20th century, the author relates the personal experiences of men on the brink of death for a cause they didn't understand. The book has been adapted for film, starring, amongst others, Mel Gibson.

In the first significant engagement between American troops and the Viet Cong, 450 U.S. soldiers found themselves surrounded and outnumbered by their enemy. This book tells the story of how they battled between October 23 and November 26, 1965. Its prose is gritty, not artful, delivering a powerful punch of here-and-now descriptions that could only have been written by people actually on the scene. In fact, they were: Harold Moore commanded the men of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, who did most of the fighting, and Joseph Galloway was the only reporter present throughout the battle's 34 harrowing days. *We Were Soldiers Once...* combines their memories with more than 100 in-depth interviews with survivors on both sides. The Battle of Ia Drang also highlights a technological advance that would play an enormous role in the rest of the war: this was perhaps the first place where helicopter-based, air-mobile operations demonstrated their combat potential. At bottom, however, this is a tale of heroes and heroism, some acts writ large, others probably forgotten but for this telling. It was a bestseller when first published, and remains one of the better books available on combat during the Vietnam War. --John J. Miller Each year, the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps selects one book that he believes is both relevant and timeless for reading by all Marines. The Commandant's choice for 1993 was *We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young*."

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most heroic and horrendous endeavor.  
"From the Hardcover edition.

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