



A Soldier's Best Friend: Scout Dogs and Their Handlers in the Vietnam War

John C. Burnam

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In a Vietnam War memoir unlike any published before, John C. Burnam recalls his service in-country as a scout dog handler in the 25th Infantry Division's 44th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) with his canine comrades, Hans, Timber, and Clipper. Like 10,000 other young combat infantrymen, Burnam loved and cared for his dogs, literally carrying their food and water into battle, as they located injured GIs, searched out Vietcong weapons caches and deadly booby traps, and alertly thwarted enemy attacks and ambushes. More than 57,000 Americans lost their lives in Vietnam, and countless others were wounded, taken prisoner, or reported missing in action; thousands more would have fallen victim had it not been for the use of German shepherds for scouting, sentry, and patrolling and Labrador retrievers for tracking. Yet these intrepid animals' service has been largely forgotten. In fact, the nearly 4,000 American war dogs of Vietnam were classified as "equipment" at the war's end. Deemed expendable despite the impassioned pleas of their handlers, thousands were abandoned to unknown fates. Vietnam War Dogs is a stirring war story but one that honors the courage of real men and their real best friends. 8 pages of black-and-white photos enhances this superbly written testimonial to the strength and courage of America's soldiers and the heroics of their dog teams during the Vietnam War. "An authentic and compelling story by a two-tour combat infantry veteran. Read this magnificent book." —Lieutenant General Harold G. Moore (U.S.A., ret.) co-author of *We Were Soldiers Once and Young: Ia Drang, The Battle that Changed the War in Vietnam*

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