



# A Wake-up Call: Vietnam 1968

*Roy L Parker*

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## **A Wake-up Call: Vietnam 1968** Roy L Parker

In the early 1960's I had become a teenager, but while other boys my age were interested in girls, I developed an infatuation for war. It was my dream to find glory in combat. I read more than 200 books within a year's time on war and was fascinated by it. I built plastic models of warplanes and naval vessels and even wrote stories about the Atlantic convoys during World War II. My step-father was a combat veteran of World War II and Korea and he discouraged me from even considering becoming a soldier. In December 1967 I was a high school dropout and the Vietnam War was in the news every day. I wanted to be a soldier and experience the glory of war so I enlisted in the Army. I volunteered for the infantry and requested duty in Vietnam. I was only 18 years old and thought I was bulletproof. I arrived in Vietnam on May 10, 1968 and was assigned to the 4th Infantry Division stationed in the Central Highlands of this war-torn Asian country. During my tour I watched in disbelief the horrors of war and on the 19th of August I was severely wounded by friendly fire. My entire unit was decimated and I lost many a good friend during my short time in combat but I learned there is no glory in war. The experience would change me in many ways and after 42 years I still live with the demons from my combat days in Vietnam. I returned to Vietnam for a second tour in 1970. This only reinforced my lesson - "There Is No Glory in War."

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