

# The Bridge At Dong Ha

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this is the true story of the legendary vietnam war hero john ripley who braved intense enemy fire to destroy a strategic bridge and stall a major north vietnamese invasion into the south in april 1972 told by a fellow marine the account lays bare ripley s innermost thoughts as he rigged 500 pounds of explosives by hand walking the beams beneath the bridge crimped detonators with his teeth and raced the burning fuses back to shore thus saving his comrades from certain death first published in 1989 the book has broad appeal as a riveting tale of adventure but john miller has taken this daring act of heroism beyond the specifics of time and place to provide new insights into the nature of war and warriors characteristics that have remained unchanged for centuries and will remain valid for generations to come it has been on the marine corps commandant s recommended reading list since 1990 newly illustrated by col charles waterhouse usmcr ret

provides a detailed account of the vietnam war from the perspective of the south vietnamese armor forces

the easter offensive took place primarily in the northern three military regions out of a total of four of south vietnam in the northernmost region called i corps the north vietnamese opened the attack on 30 march 1972 with a massive artillery barrage of an intensity unmatched since world war ii worse from an infantryman s perspective there were heavy tanks also unprecedented on the battlefields of south vietnam frightened south vietnamese soldiers cowered in their positions often refusing to fight they abandoned many key positions and by the end of april most of quang tri province including the provincial capital was in enemy hands and an entire south vietnamese division had been destroyed in ii corps and iii corps the battle began less dramatically but with equally devastating effects district capitals fell in quick succession in three provinces and two key cities kontum and an loc came under siege after savage fighting lasting more than a month both cities managed to hold out though they were largely destroyed the key to this pyrrhic victory was american air power lots of it which bombed the besieging north vietnamese troops around the clock statistics indicate that a vast

majority of enemy casualties there were probably some 30 000 killed and wounded were inflicted by aerial attacks both sides claimed victory after the easter offensive which officially ended in september 1972 with the recapture of quang tri city by south vietnamese marines but the verdict is not so clear cut north vietnam had gained none of its goals of capturing and holding a provincial capital nor had it decisively defeated the south vietnamese army on the other hand north vietnam did gain considerable territory along the laotian and cambodian borders as well as the area just south of the demilitarized zone few people lived in these regions but any ground gained played well at the paris negotiating table in the end north vietnam committed all but one of its divisions to battle leaving only a skeleton force to guard the homeland against a counterattack this is unprecedented in military history and illustrates how confident hanoi was that the americans would not strike back indeed the only u s response was renewed bombing of the north the culmination of which was operation linebacker ii the infamous christmas bombing whatever else it accomplished the combination of north vietnamese offensive and american bombing retaliation brought about final agreement on a peace treaty at paris and allowed final u s disentanglement from vietnam book jacket title summary field provided by blackwell north america inc all rights reserved

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