

Synopsis

In *To Hell and Beyond*, the hero didn't wear silver wings on his uniform, and no screaming-eagle made from steel propelled him into battle. He didn't belong to any Officer's Club, and only the basic ribbons of a foot soldier graced his broad chest. The one thing he *did* have, which continues still today, is a love for his country, his fellow Americans, and a will to live that goes beyond description. In his slow southern drawl, SSgt. Nathan Henry, US Army, (Ret.) related to me what it was like to spend 2,094 days struggling to stay alive while a POW in Vietnam. As far as we know, this is the first *enlisted* man's version of what happened during those gruesome years behind enemy lines.

I was raised in the same small country town as Nathan (Nat) Henry, and I know how deep his roots are planted in the ways of survival and country life that stems from living within the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. Time would reveal how the knowledge he gained while roaming these rugged hills digging ginseng and fishing for trout in the cold mountain creeks would help this young soldier endure the tortures and trials of being a Prisoner of War. It would be these same skills that would see him through a grueling forty-eight-day forced march on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, living in jungle cages for more than two years, and sustaining him long enough to eventually make it back to the southern home he so dearly loved.

To Hell and Beyond portrays the true story of torture, imprisonment, and the barbarous acts inflicted upon a man few people would ever

know. He, and the other enlisted men who spent time as Prisoners of War, were not known to the general public simply because they weren't highly decorated pilots or thrust into the limelight during Operation Homecoming in 1973. This is the story of one man who defied all odds to survive and who, through recalling painful memories, will lead the reader step-by-step into the horrors and debilitation suffered by him and all our men while held as POWs during the Vietnam conflict. This manuscript, although based on one man, reveals the pride and determination of all POWs and their struggle to survive the tortures inflicted by the enemy in an effort to break their spirits and turn them against the country that had sent them to the Godforsaken jungles of Vietnam. This is the personal story of Nathan B. Henry and his journey *To Hell and Beyond*.