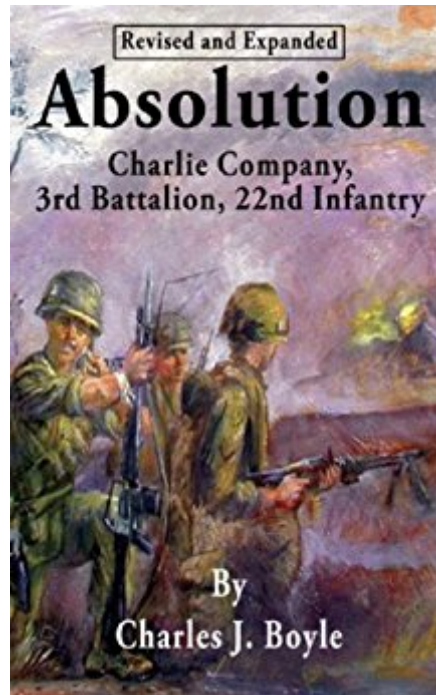


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Absolution: Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry



Synopsis

Fresh out of Infantry OCS, 2nd Lieutenant Dennis Riley gets a reality check when he joins his platoon in the Hobo Woods, south of Cui Chi, home of the 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam. It was a blistering hot August in 1967 when he met the men of the Third Platoon, Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry. By nightfall they are in contact with elements of the 272nd NVA and the blood letting seldom takes a break for the next twelve months. Dennis and his men are frequently ambushed, mortared and booby trapped, but by New Year's 1967/68 they are ready for the fight of their life at Fire Support Base Burt, north of Tay Ninh, astride the Cambodian border. The 2nd Battalion (Mech) and the 3rd Battalion hold off the combined assaults of four North Vietnamese regiments killing over 600 of the enemy by daybreak. Absolution vividly describes the carnage and American heroism of that battlefield using the eyewitness accounts of helicopter gunship and medivac pilots, platoon leaders, sergeants and the fighting men. Now a First Lieutenant, Dennis Riley is selected to command Charlie Company, badly demoralized after losing twelve killed and dozens wounded at Burt. At the onset of the Tet Offensive, ten more gallant Americans die as Riley and his company slug it out during sixteen days of frontal assaults against an entrenched enemy at the village of Ap Cho, south of Cui Chi. The description of this battle is as close to combat as you can get without having been there. And if you were there... anywhere in Vietnam, thank you and God Bless you! April 12, 1968 was Good Friday, but the 3rd Battalion saw nothing good about a regiment of NVA screaming across their positions in the middle of the night. They paid dearly for it, losing hundreds of their Communists attackers to the 22nd Infantry. It fell to hand to hand combat, bayonet for bayonet... all night long. One hundred, fifty three NVA died within the perimeter. In the aftermath of that carnage and the loss of so many lives, Dennis Riley grows disenchanted with the war. He is quietly reassigned to administrative duties, eventually returning to America in late 1968. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder steals his mind and his soul as he wanders the country aimlessly, grieving the loss of so many of his men. We find Dennis astride a Texas railroad track as a fast moving Western Pacific freight train bears down on his car. Few books can get you as close to combat and the men who sacrificed so much in Vietnam as Absolution does. It is action packed and factual. You'll shed a tear or two as you travel those deadly battlefields with Dennis Riley, Charlie Company, and the 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry. If you want to know what PTSD is all about, how it effects all fighting men, and how to resolve it; this book may be a very big help to you.

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Customer Reviews

Absolution is a true story of horror, love, the vulgarity of war, and the nobility of the warrior. Between 1960 and 1975, hundreds of thousands of young men were thrust into the barbarity of an Asian civil war. Inadequately trained for jungle warfare (and initially armed with defective weapons) the men of Charlie Company acquired their "killer skills" by instinct and imagination. Transformed by necessity, these young men became quickly transformed into brutal gladiators. "What's your body count" commanders asked their soldiers each evening -- as if the war were sport, and if a scorecard named the winner. Exacerbating the soldier's dilemma was a powerful and biased news media which created a myth of the Vietnam-era soldier as a misfit, a perverse example of a military machine gone awry, wreaking havoc and destruction upon innocent civilians. Absolution is the true, candid, unflinching story of Charles J. Boyle, a man who commanded a platoon in combat in Vietnam, and at the outbreak of the Tet Offensive, was selected to command Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry. Absolution is an invaluable, eye-witness account and an outstanding contribution to the growing library of Vietnam military history.

Absolution, Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, is not another "tour of duty," or "how I

won the war," book. It is an extraordinary and moving story of battle, poignantly told by an author who has "been there." Absolution is a remarkable resurrection of the Vietnam battlefield, with all of the valor, pain, and sacrifice that distinguished it from other wars. It is undistorted in its accuracy, and exquisite in its prose. Absolution, Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, is superb history and great reading! It will tear at your heart and make you want to cry.

This book accurately shows what goes on in the mind of an infantry lieutenant. It focused on the human aspects of leadership and command. It showed how to deal with the loss of soldiers and friends in combat. Every leader has been too close to soldiers and this book shows why it is dangerous to do so. Having said that, it also shows what a soldier in the right place at the right time can and will do for his leaders. SGT Jay Cee and his friends from Company C, 3/22 Infantry gave their lives for their commander and friend. Absolution tells why soldiers will give their lives and how leaders deal with it. I recommend it for cadets before commissioning, lieutenants in the basic course, and captains prior to command. It is an excellent resource for leaders.

When I read this story some thirty-one years after taking part in the battles described, I recall some of those days and nights more vividly than I ever thought possible. This book, Absolution, took me back to places I never want to see again. Yet, the journey was not lonely; my companions were the finest men I have ever known. Brigadier General Roy K. Flint, United States Army (Retired) Former Academic Dean at the United States Military Academy

Absolution, by Charles J. Boyle, is an outstanding book about a great lieutenant and his men. As an avid reader of the Vietnam War, I have never read a book about Vietnam that touched my heart as much as this one. Once I started reading the book, I could not put it down. A true and accurate portrayal of the Vietnam War and its brave American soldiers.

Absolution should be required reading for every President, Vice President and Congressman who has the ability to declare war. This book tells with heart breaking clarity what the foot soldiers and junior officers faced in Vietnam. One feels their pain and their courage as they obey orders to attack over and over again knowing that their weapons are defective and promised air support and new supplies will not materialize. The reader is caught up in the horror of the unnecessary deaths and injuries resulting from the failure of senior officers and/or the US government to provide the necessary men and equipment - or the appropriate strategy - to be victorious and to minimize

casualties. Absolution should absolutely be required reading for all Members of Congress! And for all citizens who care about our country and our souls.

I served with Chuck Boyle during 1968. Our regiment's motto is "Deeds not Words". Chuck's book pulls no punches and is written by a true American hero. For those of us who were there and for those who were not, I urge you to read ABSOLUTION.

I am a female born on the eve of the Vietnam War. We were not taught much about the war and this book rips it wide open. Doing a history project about the Vietnam War, I stumbled onto this book. Now I know! It is an emotional, raw, beautifully written story of war and the men who fought it. Author Boyle is a master of the craft of writing. I was spellbound by his descriptions of battle. I could not put it down. There is love woven between every line of this saga. If you want to see and feel real combat; if you want to know why Vietnam Veterans don't talk much about their war, read this remarkable book. Every American should read it. It will move you to tears and your heart will ache forever for our gallant fighting men.

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