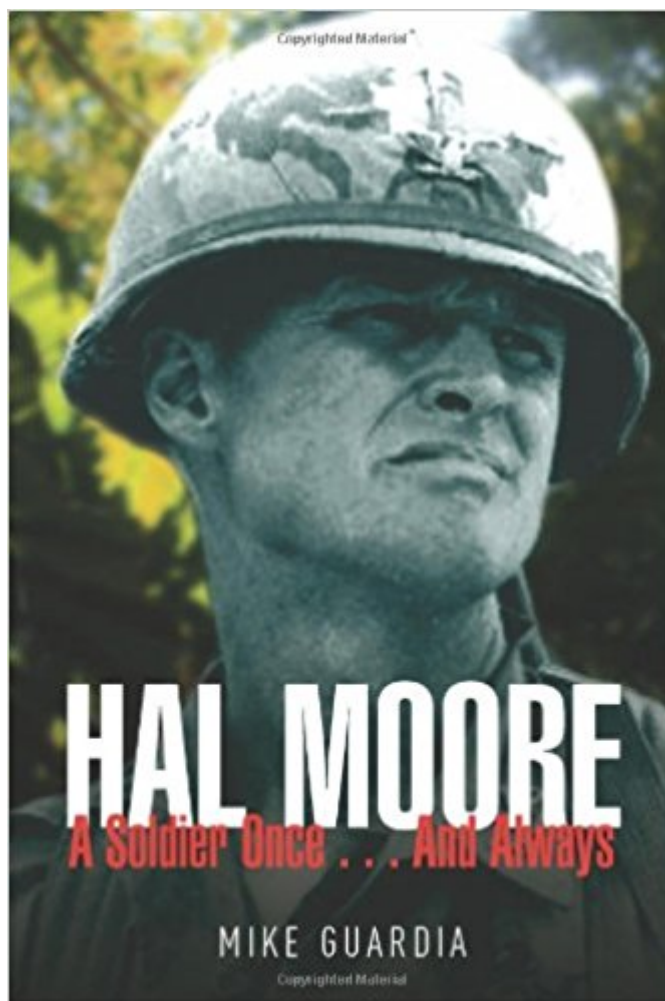




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Hal Moore: A Soldier Once, and Always



Synopsis

Finalist 2013 Army Historical Society Distinguished Writing Award. Hal Moore, one of the most admired American combat leaders of the last 50 years, has until now been best known to the public for being portrayed by Mel Gibson in the movie "We Were Soldiers." In this first-ever, fully illustrated biography, we finally learn the full story of one of America's true military heroes. A 1945 graduate of West Point, Moore's first combats occurred during the Korean War, where he fought in the battles of Old Baldy, T-Bone, and Pork Chop Hill. At the beginning of the Vietnam War, Moore commanded the 1st Battalion of the 7th Cavalry in the first full-fledged battle between U.S. and North Vietnamese regulars. Drastically outnumbered and nearly overrun, Moore led from the front, and though losing 79 soldiers, accounted for 1,200 of the enemy before the Communists withdrew. This Battle of Ia Drang pioneered the use of "air mobile infantry"--delivering troops into battle via helicopter--which became the staple of U.S. operations for the remainder of the war. He later wrote of his experiences in the best-selling book, *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*. Following his tour in Vietnam, he assumed command of the 7th Infantry Division, forward-stationed in South Korea, and in 1971, he took command of the Army Training Center at Fort Ord, California. In this capacity, he oversaw the US Army's transition from a conscript-based to an all-volunteer force. He retired as a Lieutenant General in 1977. At this writing, Hal Moore is 90 years old and living quietly in Auburn, Alabama. He graciously allowed the author interviews and granted full access to his files and collection of letters, documents, and never-before-published photographs. Mike Guardia, currently an officer in the U.S. 1st Armored Division is also author of two highly acclaimed biographies, *American Guerrilla*, about the life of the true founder of Special Forces, Russell Volckmann, and *Shadow Commander*, about the career of Donald Blackburn.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This book brings the saga of one of the Army's premier combat commanders to a new generation of military leaders. We are in Hal Moore's debt for his distinguished service under the most challenging conditions. We are in Guardia's debt for making Moore's story accessible to the American public." -ARMY Magazine

"Simply stated, Hal Moore is an American treasure and military hero. In this biography by Mike Guardia, one of America's finest military historians, Moore's story is captured from his earliest days at West Point, through Korea, to the seminal moment of his Army life during the famed 1965 Battle of Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam. The book benefits greatly from Guardia's many interviews with Moore, his family, fellow soldiers and others who have known him through the years. --Brian Sobel, author of "The Fighting Pattons"

"Guardia's honest recollections of his experiences in Viet Nam (both during the war and in 1993 when he returned to visit the men that three decades before were considered the enemy) are eye-openers." -Statesman Journal

"The strategies, the nature of the enemy, whether or not real lasting success followed military or personal battles, always can be questioned. Hal Moore, through the focused eyes of author/tank unit commander Mike Guardia has a major impact on how we as a nation and as individuals see things militarily or otherwise." -Joplin Independent

"In the well-written biography 'Hal Moore: A Soldier Once...and Always,' author Mike Guardia tells how Moore exemplifies the leadership qualities needed in all military leaders both in battle and in peacetime. It is a well-documented study of an exceptional soldier...it explores his knack for bringing out the best in his subordinates and for turning poor performing units into extraordinary organizations that became the envy of other commanders. This biography should be essential reading for every sergeant and officer in the military, and every executive in business." -MWSA

"An outstanding biography of Moore, one of America's most distinguished Soldiers, granted Guardia numerous interviews and allowed the author unrestricted access to his collected letters, documents, and never before published photographs to produce this first ever fully illustrated biography." (Armchair General)

"Simply stated, Hal Moore is an American treasure and military hero. As the consummate soldier, Moore would have been successful in any fighting force through the ages. In this biography by Mike Guardia, one of America's finest military historians, Moore's story is captured from his earliest days at West Point, through Korea, to the

seminal moment of his Army life during the famed 1965 Battle of Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam. The battle has become the stuff of legend and Guardia captures the story in vivid detail. The book goes on to tell the full story of Moore's rise to Lieutenant General and his special place in the annals of American history. The book benefits greatly from Guardia's many interviews with Moore, his family, fellow soldiers and others who have known him through the years. Just recently a major military magazine declared that Hal Moore was one of the top 100 generals in history. After completing this book, the reader will know why. (Brian Sobel, author of *The Fighting Pattons*) In the well-written biography "Hal Moore: A Soldier Once and Always," author Mike Guardia tells how Moore exemplifies the leadership qualities needed in all military leaders both in battle and in peacetime. It is a well-documented study of an exceptional soldier and innovative problem solver... "Hal Moore" is a quick read, yet contains sufficient depth to fully understand Moore's personality, character and motivation. It explores his knack for bringing out the best in his subordinates and for turning poor performing units into extraordinary organizations that became the envy of other commanders. This biography should be essential reading for every sergeant and officer in the military, and every executive in business. (Military Writer's Society of America) "Here a reader finds the building blocks upon which Moore's leadership style crystallized and where he honed his tactical skills. From the U.S. Military Academy at West Point to the trenches of the Korean War, and to Moore's participation in the development of 'air mobile' doctrine and tactics, the author shows us Hal Moore 'the man' as well as the soldier. . . . Guardia [also] chronicles the key role Moore played in pulling the Army back from the abyss of the post-Vietnam malaise." (Toy Soldier and Model Figure) this book brings the saga of one of the Army's premier combat commanders to a new generation of military leaders. We are in Hal Moore's debt for his distinguished service under the most challenging conditions. We are in Guardia's debt for making Moore's story accessible to the American public. (ARMY Magazine)...a concise, admiring biography of retired Army Lt. Gen. Harold "Hal" Moore... Told in Moore's strong first-person voice, this readable narrative goes over the basics of the November 1965 actions at Landing Zones X-Ray and Albany, the fiercest components of the 34-day Battle of the Ia Drang Valley... Guardia leans heavily on the two books in his account of Moore's life, along with interviews he conducted with his ninety-year-old subject, with members of his family, and with veterans who served with him. (The VVA Veteran) first-ever, fully illustrated biography, we finally learn the full story of Hal Moore, one of America's true military heroes. (Books Monthly UK) "Guardia's honest recollections of his experiences in Viet Nam (both during the war and in 1993 when he returned to visit the men that

three decades before were considered the enemy) are eye-openers." (Statesman Journal) easy and fast read ... but Guardia manages to reach the heart of what made Moore a successful military leader." (Connecticut Guardian) "Well researched... logical, straight forward, and enjoyable to read." (Tip of the Spear, Newsletter of the Special Forces Association)....collectively captures the heroism that Moore performed on fighting for freedom abroad. This work comes from hours of interview from the subject and his personal archive. Guardia has done a service in sharing the life of a forgotten hero. (Pure Politics.com) The strategies, the nature of the enemy, whether or not real lasting success followed military or personal battles, always can be questioned. Hal Moore, through the focused eyes of author/tank unit commander Mike Guardia has a major impact on how we as a nation and as individuals see things militarily or otherwise. (Joplin Independent) "...an in depth biography of one of the America's most admired soldiers... Vintage black and white photography peppers this fascinating, thoroughly researched saga of Moore's life and career in the service, highly recommended... " (Midwest Book Review) This is truly an outstanding biography as the author, one of America's finest military historians, was allowed unrestricted access to Moore's collected letters, documents, and never before published photographs which added greatly to this fully illustrated biography. Author Mike Guardia tells how Moore exemplifies the leadership qualities needed in all military leaders both in battle and in peacetime. It is a well-documented study of an exceptional soldier and innovative problem solver. This book contains sufficient depth to fully understand Moore's personality, character and motivation. It explores his knack for bringing out the best in his subordinates and for turning poor performing units into extraordinary organizations that became the envy of other commanders. This biography should be essential reading for every sergeant and officer in the military, and every executive in business. (Joint Forces Journal) ...well written with numerous photos and just enough details to keep the reader's interest in the life of Hal Moore. (MILITARY) a valuable contribution to military history and biography more broadly, and the history of the Vietnam War and the U.S. military in the second half of the 20th century specifically. (Daily News, Bowling Green KY)

Mike Guardia is a professional author and a six-year veteran of the United States Army. He holds a B.A. and M.A. in American History from the University of Houston.

Since the publication of *We Were Soldiers*, the name of Hal Moore has become imbedded in the history of not only the Vietnam War but also into the time honored history of the US Army. Since this reawakening of what really transpired in Vietnam, we also learn the lessons of military leadership in

the actions and words of Lieutenant General Hal Moore (retired.) Hal Moore along with the First Cav Division in the first major battle of the Vietnam War in the Ia Drang Valley has brought forward to students of history a frank and balanced sense of what the war was about. In this book Mike Guardia also goes much deeper into the life and times of what I consider to be the best ground commander of troops in the 20th century regardless of nationality. Guardia's book is direct and to the point. There is no extended analysis or needless hyperbole written within. We learn of Moore's early life and how he developed his religious convictions and sense of right and wrong. The author develops how Moore sought admission into West Point and right there we see a young man who is determined to make something of himself. His development into becoming an officer during his years at the Military Academy is told of his academic struggles and the development of his character so determined to overcome his main enemy at the point, which was the demon of mathematics. What Moore lacked in mathematical skills, he made up in his superior skills in the social sciences of human nature and psychological skills. In short Moore's seeds of superior leadership skills were first honed on the plains of West Point. Nevertheless as Moore said "I graduated at the top of the bottom fifteen percent of my class." Guardia goes forward with young Moore's career to include his time served as a junior officer in occupied Japan where I have a sense that the young infantry officer thought of his time spent there as being a time of underutilizing his talents. After Japan we see Moore utilizing his expertise as an airborne trooper testing the latest and greatest jumping equipment to be used by the Army. From that point, Moore is deployed to Korea and serves as an infantry officer of the line in the 7th Infantry Division. Not only was he on the line and got the opportunity to develop his leadership skills, he got to know how to best utilize his people. Through stringent training and constant follow up along with the command of troops through his concept of leadership from the bottom up, Moore found the golden keys to military leadership. Along with line duty Moore also got to experience staff work in S3 operations planning. Hal Moore loved to lead troops but in order to advance in this man's army an officer needed to have staff time on his resume. By 1964 Moore found himself in the experimental 11th Air Assault Division in Fort Benning Georgia. From that time forward until their deployment as the renamed 1st Cav Division would be forever imbedded into the very persona of Hal Moore. What his leadership and command performance in the Ia Drang Valley did was to show to one and all that Moore was a leader extraordinaire and that the theory of Air mobility was in fact to become the doctrine of the US Army in Vietnam. From that point on Guardia takes us on the grand tour of Moore's life after the Ia Drang Valley. From stateside duty in the Pentagon to Norway to becoming the 7th Infantry Division commander in Korea we learn of how he applies his principles of leadership in many different

situations and eclectic problems. At the end of the book Guardia reviews Moore's basic principles of leadership; which by the way should be posted on the walls of anyone who is in a leadership role from the basic Forman to the CEO and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. My favorite Moore principle is the following: "Soldiers in battle do not fight for what some leader says on television or in a speech. Soldiers fight and die for their buddies. They do not want to let their buddies down. It's a matter of honor." This book is written like Moore conducts his life and that is direct, honest providing inspiration that this should be the way we all conduct our lives. Bravo for you, Mike Guardia.

This was a well written book straight from General Moore. As a retired Marine Master Sergeant and Vietnam Veteran I was impressed with his leadership and zeal during a bad time for the Army and the draft in general. I was only disappointed by two things that the author didn't write about. First, there was no mention of the debacle of the retreat from the Chosin Reservoir caused by MacArthur's miscalculation of the Red Chinese response and the resulting relief from duty by President Truman. Second, there was no mention of General Westmoreland's failed attrition policy that resulted in the deaths of thousands of Marines and Soldiers. There was some criticism about "Washington's policies" but no acknowledgement of Westmoreland's role, or the turnaround and success of General Abrams after Westmoreland became Chief of Staff. From General Moore's quotes in the book I felt that perhaps he was being loyal to his seniors and chose not to comment. That being said, his decision to retire as a Lieutenant General speaks volumes to me as to how he felt about abandoning our Vietnamese allies. General Moore could have easily become Army Chief of Staff in my opinion. He is a hero and patriot and I salute him.

The true story of Hal Moore rivals, "It doesn't take a Hero" the book written by General Norman Schwarzkopf. Hal Moore describes the details of both the Korean and Vietnam war and the issues with taking an objective, losing many men and then giving up the objective due to political influence in both wars. His earlier life as a West Point plebe and subsequent rise to 3 star general is very interesting reading. The description of the La Drang valley fight early in the Vietnam war was spot on, as I was in country at the time having served 2 tours in Vietnam. It was later made into a movie with Mel Gibson, "We were Soldiers." He accurately describes the life of one of the great soldiers of all times Command Sergeant Major Plumley. Hal Moore could have easily put on a 4th star if he hadn't taken the option to retire after 32 years. There is a great picture of Plumley and Moore standing together in full dress as they were old men on line. Read the book, it is great!! L Lee Parmeter Author

This book covers a time period that I was not really familiar with and through Hal Moore I learned those qualities that I hope still are being taught to those who serve our country. In fact, they are qualities that set an example for me as an individual also. In reading this account I got a sense of how important it is to have the commander in chief of our military (The president of The United States) a person with integrity who regards each individual serving our country as too valuable to be lost at a negotiation table or used as pawns on a chessboard so to speak. There were times during the battles discussed when the higher powers dictated a certain area was to be taken or the frontline in a battle was to be moved to a certain point, which our soldiers then did their utmost to follow those orders - even at the loss of precious human life, only to later have it then seemingly lose its importance. Situations like that certainly give me pause as to the motivating factor behind the initial decision. But had a leader like Hal Moore been at the negotiating table, with his men on the ground I think those decisions would be made with a lot more regard for the human loss factor. Reading these types of historical books does bring an awareness to me of how very important it is that we make sure we elect those to be in power that have experience in practical areas such as military service.

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