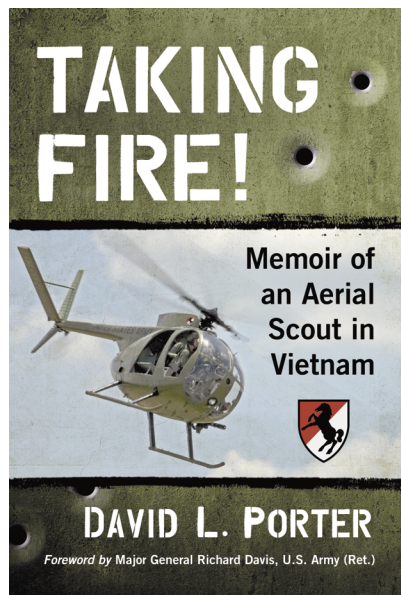




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Taking Fire!

Memoir of an Aerial Scout in Vietnam

David L. Porter

Foreword by Major General Richard Davis, U.S. Army (Ret.)

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As a first lieutenant in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, U.S. Army pilot David Porter was section leader in an Aerial Scout platoon in Vietnam. Their mission was to conduct reconnaissance in OH-6 aircraft (a.k.a. Light Observation Helicopter or “Loach”) near the Cambodian border. Finding and engaging the enemy at low altitude in coordination with an AH-1 Cobra gunship circling above, these units developed a remarkable method of fighting the

Viet Cong: Hunter-Killer Operations.

The tactic had great local success but died with the war. Few today are aware of the hazards these pilots faced during times of intense combat. Porter’s vivid memoir recounts the internal workings of a legendary air cavalry troop, in-the-cockpit combat actions, and the men who were key players on this perilous battleground.

Colonel David L. Porter retired after twenty-seven years in Combat Arms. In addition to Vietnam, he served multiple tours as a cavalryman on the German border, commanded a cavalry squadron during the collapse of “the wall” in early 1990. He served in multiple combat divisions, Armor School, and various staff positions, including the Pentagon. In retirement, he became the Director of Admissions at Colorado Technical University and is currently a government contractor training America’s soldiers. He lives in Jackson, Tennessee.

“Dave Porter’s vivid description of the life and experiences of an aerial scout during some of our toughest battles in South Vietnam is a ‘must read’ for both old and young soldiers alike. ... No one could tell their story better than ‘Dave’ a young cavalry lieutenant who flew the missions under the canopy and lived and felt all of the emotions that come with face-to-face combat.”—PETE TAYLOR, LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U.S. ARMY (RETIRED)

“Gripping account...keeps you glued to your seat...riveting stories of in-flight emergencies, emergency landings and coping with the loss of fellow Aviators”—GERALD E. KLEIN, COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, U.S. ARMY (RETIRED)

“I know the author well enough to know that his accounts are accurate, and, perhaps even understated. An extremely high number of battles in Vietnam started with an air cavalry scout being shot down or hit while performing the toughest reconnaissance missions given. ... This important book begins to reveal just what warriors those Air Cavalrymen were.”

—PAUL E. FUNK, LTG US ARMY (RET), PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE NATIONAL MOUNTED WARFARE FOUNDATION

“A riveting account of an Aerial Scout serving with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam in 1969. This writing gives us a vivid picture of the challenges facing a young officer as he established his credentials as a true professional in our armed forces.”—JOSEPH R. INGE, LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U.S. ARMY (RETIRED)

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