



Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan

By Doug Stanton



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From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *In Harm's Way* comes a true-life story of American soldiers overcoming great odds to achieve a stunning military victory.

Horse Soldiers is the dramatic account of a small band of Special Forces soldiers who secretly entered Afghanistan following 9/11 and rode to war on horses against the Taliban. Outnumbered forty to one, they pursued the enemy across mountainous terrain and, after a series of intense battles, captured the city of Mazar-i-Sharif, which was strategically essential if they were to defeat the Taliban.

The bone-weary American soldiers were welcomed as liberators, and overjoyed Afghans thronged the streets. Then the action took a wholly unexpected turn. During a surrender of six hundred Taliban troops, the Horse Soldiers were ambushed. Dangerously outnumbered, they fought for their lives in the city's immense fortress, Qala-i-Janghi, or the House of War. At risk were the military gains of the entire campaign: if the soldiers perished or were captured, the effort to defeat the Taliban might be doomed.

As the Americans struggled to hold the fortress, they faced some of the most intense urban warfare of our time. But until now the full story of the Horse Soldiers has never been told. Doug Stanton received unprecedented cooperation from the U.S. Army's Special Forces soldiers and Special Operations helicopter pilots, as well as access to voluminous after-battle reports. In addition, he interviewed more than one hundred participants and walked every inch of the climactic battleground.

This exciting story is filled with unforgettable characters: brave Special Forces soldiers, tough CIA operatives, cunning Afghan warlords, anxious stateside soldiers' wives who do not know where their husbands have gone, and humble Afghan boys spying on the Taliban.

Deeply researched and beautifully written, Stanton's account of America's quest to liberate an oppressed people touches the mythic. The Horse Soldiers combined

ancient strategies of cavalry warfare with twenty-first-century aerial bombardment technology to perform a seemingly impossible feat. Moreover, their careful effort to win the hearts of local townspeople and avoid civilian casualties proved a valuable lesson for America's ongoing efforts in Afghanistan.

Horse Soldiers is a big-hearted and thrilling read, with an epic story that reaches not just across the cold mountains of Afghanistan but into the homes of small-town America, and confirms Doug Stanton as one of our country's preeminent storytellers.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In this absolutely riveting account, full of horror and raw courage, journalist Stanton (In Harm's Way) recreates the miseries and triumphs of specially trained mounted U.S. soldiers, deployed in the war-ravaged Afghanistan mountains to fight alongside the Northern Alliance-thousands of rag-tag Afghans who fought themselves to exhaustion or death-against the Taliban. The U.S. contingent, almost to a man, had never ridden horses-especially not these "shaggy and thin-legged, and short... descendents of the beasts Genghis Khan had ridden out of Uzbekistan"-but that was not the only obstacle: rattling helicopters, outdated maps, questionable air support and insufficient food also played their parts. Stanton brings each soldier and situation to vivid life: "Bennett suddenly belted out: 'It just keeps getting better and better!' Here they were, living on fried sheep and filtered ditchwater...calling in ops-guided bombs on bunkers built of mud and wood scrap, surrounded by Taliban fighters." In less than three months, this handful of troops secured a city in which a fort had been taken over by Taliban prisoners, a tangle of firefights and mayhem that became a seminal battle and, in Stanton's prose, a considerable epic: "Dead and dying men and wounded horses had littered the courtyard, a twitching choir that brayed and moaned in the rough, knee-high grass."

Review

"Doug Stanton's *Horse Soldiers* is as gripping as the most intricately plotted thriller. It is a masterwork of stunning military action, brilliant in-depth journalism, and powerful storytelling. Finally Americans can know how just a few dozen courageous U.S. soldiers beat the Taliban under the most extreme and dangerous conditions imaginable. I could not put this book down." -- Vince Flynn

"*Horse Soldiers* is a great read -- a riveting story of the brave and resourceful American warriors who rode into Afghanistan after 9/11 and waged war against Al Qaeda. We're hearing many of these stories for the first time -- and from those who waged a war worthy of Rudyard Kipling, James Bond, and Davy Crockett." -- Tom Brokaw

"Doug Stanton's *Horse Soldiers* is the story of the first large American unconventional warfare operation since World War II. My Green Berets were launched deep into enemy territory to befriend, recruit, equip, advise, and lead their Afghan counterparts to attack the Taliban. The Horse Soldiers succeeded brilliantly with a highly decentralized campaign, reinforced with modern airpower's precision weapons, forcing the Taliban government's collapse in a few months. Doug Stanton captures the gritty realities of the campaign as no other can." -- Geoffrey C. Lambert, major general (retired), U.S. Army, and commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne), 2001-2003

"Not just an epic war story, *Horse Soldiers* is a beautifully written, intimate portrait of the men and women who lived the battle on the fields of fire -- and at home, too. Their secret mission against the Taliban was intelligent, brave, and undertaken with great care for the good people of Afghanistan. Doug Stanton's superb account is an invaluable insight for policy makers and the public for years to come." -- Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*

"In the spirit of *Black Hawk Down* and *Flags of Our Fathers*, Doug Stanton plunges into the heart of a single mission and returns with a stark understanding not only of what happened but what was truly at stake. Through precise reportage and hauntingly rendered battle scenes, Stanton shows that we may ignore this 'forgotten' theater only at our own peril." -- Hampton Sides, author of *Ghost Soldiers* and *Blood and Thunder*

"Spellbinding...action packed prose. [Stanton's] gritty narrative is thoroughly researched and the details of military operations jarringly precise...The book reads more like a novel than a military history...the Horse Soldier's secret mission remains the U.S. military's finest moment in what has since arguably been a muddled war." -- *USA Today*

"Stanton packs a huge amount of research into a thrilling action-ride of a book... deserves a hallowed place in American military history...." -- Bruce Barcott, cover of *The New York Times Book Review*

"*Horse Soldiers* reads like a cross between an old-fashioned Western and a modern spy thriller." -- *Parade Magazine*

"Stanton has captured the inner workings of... Special Forces operations. A thorough recounting of the events told from the soldiers' point of view." -- Veritas, *Journal of Special Operations History*

About the Author

Doug Stanton is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *In Harm's Way: The Sinking of the USS Indianapolis and the Extraordinary Story of Its Survivors*, and *The Odyssey of Echo Company*. A former contributing editor at *Esquire*, *Sports Afield*, and *Outside*, Stanton is now a contributing editor at *Men's Journal* and has written extensively on travel, sport, entertainment, and history. Stanton lives in his hometown of Traverse City, Michigan, with his wife, the investigative reporter Anne Stanton, and their three children.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Vera Forde:

This *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is usually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. That *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* without we comprehend teach the one who studying it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't become worry *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* can bring once you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even telephone. This *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* having great arrangement in word along with layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

Eric Fincher:

Do you have something that you prefer such as book? The book lovers usually prefer to pick book like comic, small story and the biggest some may be novel. Now, why not striving *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* that give your satisfaction preference will be satisfied by reading this book. Reading behavior all over the world can be said as the means for people to know world far better then how they react toward the world. It can't be explained constantly that reading routine only for the geeky man but for all of you who wants to become success person. So , for all of you who want to start reading as your good habit, you may pick *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* become your own

personal starter.

David Busby:

This Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan is great publication for you because the content and that is full of information for you who else always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it details accurately using great coordinate word or we can point out no rambling sentences inside. So if you are read it hurriedly you can have whole facts in it. Doesn't mean it only offers you straight forward sentences but challenging core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan in your hand like finding the world in your arm, data in it is not ridiculous a single. We can say that no book that offer you world in ten or fifteen minute right but this publication already do that. So , it is good reading book. Hey Mr. and Mrs. hectic do you still doubt that?

Nancy Brown:

Within this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability in doing something more are more important than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple method to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to get a look at some books. One of many books in the top checklist in your reading list is Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of US Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking right up and review this e-book you can get many advantages.

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