



The Longest Rescue: The Life and Legacy of Vietnam POW William A. Robinson

Glenn Robins

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While serving as a crew chief aboard a U.S. Air Force Rescue helicopter, Airman First Class William A. Robinson was shot down and captured in Ha Tinh Province, North Vietnam, on September 20, 1965. After a brief stint at the "Hanoi Hilton," Robinson endured 2,703 days in multiple North Vietnamese prison camps, including the notorious Briarpatch and various compounds at Cu Loc, known by the inmates as the Zoo. No enlisted man in American military history has been held as a prisoner of war longer than Robinson. For seven and a half years, he faced daily privations and endured the full range of North Vietnam's torture program.

In *The Longest Rescue: The Life and Legacy of Vietnam POW William A. Robinson*, Glenn Robins tells Robinson's story using an array of sources, including declassified U.S. military documents, translated Vietnamese documents, and interviews from the National Prisoner of War Museum. Unlike many other POW accounts, this comprehensive biography explores Robinson's life before and after his capture, particularly his estranged relationship with his father, enabling a better understanding of the difficult transition POWs face upon returning home and the toll exacted on their families. Robins's powerful narrative not only demonstrates how Robinson and his fellow prisoners embodied the dedication and sacrifice of America's enlisted men but also explores their place in history and memory.

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