

A Name on a Wall: Two Men, Two Wars, Two Destinies

Mark Byford

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An unusual coincidence occurred early one morning at the most visited war memorial in the United States as a shaft of sunlight hit one of the 58,282 names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The name was Larry Byford.

So begins a unique personal journey to discover the story of the name on the wall. Travelling more than 30,000 miles, from east Texas to Vietnam, Mark Byford learns about the lasting impact on Larry's siblings, friends and the comrades who were there with him on the day he died in the summer of 1967. He pinpoints why that time became the turning point of America's most divisive war of the twentieth century.

A Name on a Wall is a gripping true story that focuses on duty, heroism and fate. We learn not only about the tragic loss of Larry Byford, a draftee rifleman in Vietnam, but also the contrasting war story of the author's own father, Lawry Byford, a draftee from Yorkshire, for whom the Second World War became the springboard for a new life filled with opportunities.

Forty years after the final American combat troops left Vietnam, thirty years after The Wall was built to heal a nation, and in the light of the recent controversial wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, what lessons, if any, have been learnt through the ultimate sacrifice of the name on a wall?



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