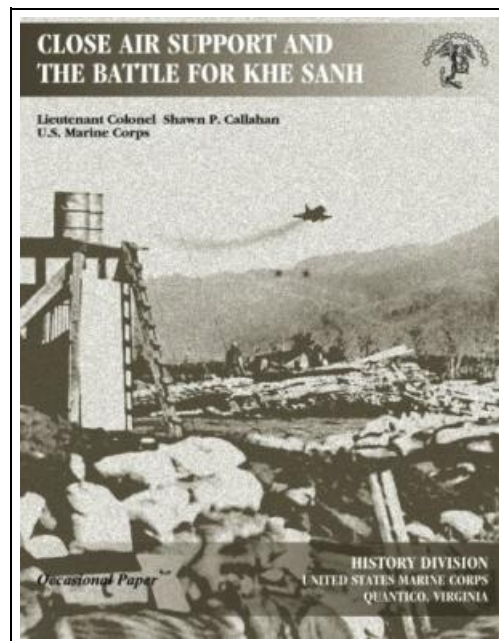


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Createspace, United States, 2013. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. In the 77 days from 20 January to 18 March of 1968, two divisions of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) surrounded a regiment of U.S. Marines on a mountain plateau in the northwest corner of South Vietnam known as Khe sanh. The episode was no accident; it was in fact a carefully orchestrated meeting in which both sides got what they wanted. The north Vietnamese succeeded in surrounding the Marines in a situation in many ways similar to Dien Bien Phu, and may have been seeking similar tactical, operational, and strategic results. General William C. Westmoreland, the commander of the joint U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (COMUSMACV), meanwhile, sought to lure the NVA into the unpopulated terrain around the 26th Marines in order to wage a battle of annihilation with air power. In this respect Khe Sanh has been lauded as a great victory of air power, a military instrument of dubious suitability to much of the Vietnam conflict. The facts support the assessment that air power was the decisive element at Khe Sanh, delivering more than 96 percent of the ordnance used against the NVA. This work focuses mainly on fixed-wing close air support, or the support provided by jet and propeller-driven conventional aircraft, to the general exclusion of rotary-wing aircraft, also known as helicopters. There are several reasons for this, none of which are meant to belittle the contributions or heroism of the Marine, Army, and Air Force helicopter pilots who fought in the hills around Khe Sanh. First, until the arrival of the AH-1G Cobra in April 1969, there was no helicopter designed for dedicated close air support of Marines in Vietnam. The primary gunship during the battle of...

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