

## JAMES EARL WRIGHT

Heavy Weapons Platoon, "D" Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (Mechanized), 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry  
Private First Class, E3, Posthumous Promotion to CPL, US53840145, MOS 11C20

Home of Record: Arab, AL

Date of Birth: March 29, 1945, Age at time of loss: 22, Married

1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam

Start of Tour: September 1, 1967, Date of Casualty: December 10, 1967

Days in Country: 100

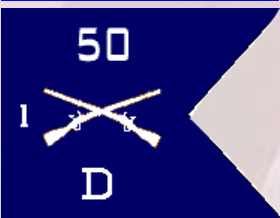
Casualty Type A1, Gun, small arms fire, Panel 31E - Row 079



1<sup>ST</sup>  
CAVALRY  
DIVISION  
(AIRMOBILE)



1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION  
50<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY



"D" COMPANY



CORPORAL



INFANTRY

Corporal James Earl Wright was killed by a sniper's round as "D" Company came under heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from the village of My An (2) on the 10th of December, 1967.

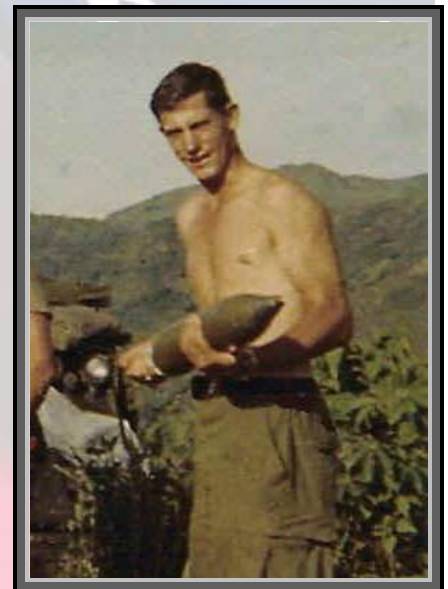
Fourteen 50th Infantry men were killed in the Battle of Tam Quan, which was the major battle of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's "Operation Pershing" on the coastal Bong Son Plains in and around Binh Dinh Province. 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) units, including the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry, and the 40th ARVN Regiment engaged the NVA/VC including the 7th and 8th Battalions of the 22nd NVA Regiment, 3rd NVA Division in a running battle from 6 to 20 December, 1967.

The engagement began on the 6th of December when a scout helicopter from "A" Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry observed an antenna and received small arms fire from a native village structure in the vicinity of the village of Dai Dong (2) near the city of Tam Quan, from which the ensuing battle took its name. Late in the afternoon, a Platoon of Infantryman (Blues) from Troop "A" were sent to investigate the antenna and became pinned down by intense enemy automatic and small arms fire. Reinforcements from "B" Troop, 1st of the 8th Cavalry and a "Ready Reaction" platoon of Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) from "A" Company, 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry were able to successfully remove the 9th Cavalry elements that had been pinned down.

The following morning, on December 7th, after prep artillery fire and CS Gas deployment, the "A" Company Ready Reaction force was called in to help the now engaged troops from "A" Troop, 1st of the 8th Cavalry in the same vicinity. LT Hinton's RTO was killed in this action. Dudley Arlentino of Coolidge, Arizona became the first 50th Infantry man killed in the battle.

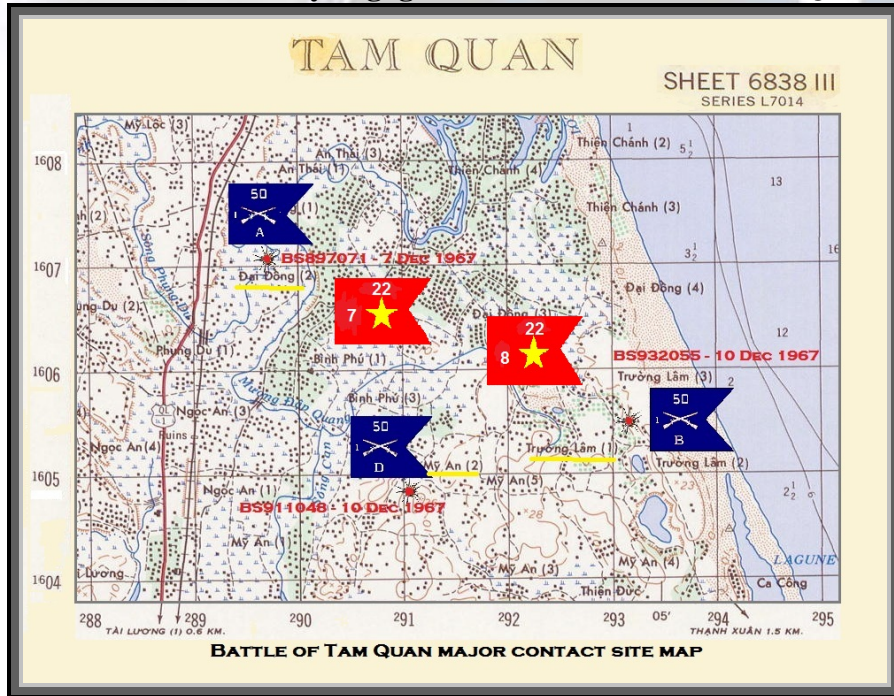
At this time, other 50th Infantry elements became fully involved in the battles as the enemy forces were located and attacked by our "B" and "D" Companies. Actions on the 10th of December saw ten men killed from "B" Company at the village of Truong Lam (2) and three men killed from "D" Company at the village of My An (2).

Most sources list the enemy (VC/NVA) dead for the battle at 650 and friendly forces lost a total of 58 men.



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A map of the location of the three key engagements of the Battle of Tam Quan is shown below.



Below is a photo of James Wright at Fort Hood, Texas sometime in 1967.  
(Photo contributed by Linda McLendon, James' widow)

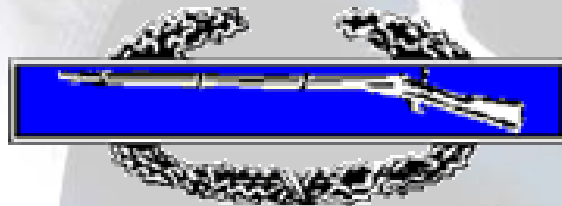


James Earl Wright is buried at Brookwood Memorial Gardens, 2059 Gunterville Road, Arab, Marshall County, AL 35016, shown below.



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## JAMES EARL WRIGHT'S AWARDS AND DECORATIONS



Combat Infantry Badge



THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL  
WITH "V" DEVICE FOR VALOR

HQ, 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 1493

14 MARCH, 1968

FOR HEROISM, NOT INVOLVING PARTICIPATION IN AERIAL FLIGHT, IN CONNECTION WITH MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST A HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WRIGHT DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF BY EXCEPTIONALLY VALOROUS ACTION ON 10 DECEMBER 1967, WHILE SERVING AS A RIFLEMAN WITH COMPANY D, 1ST BATTALION (MECHANIZED), 50TH INFANTRY DURING A COMBAT MISSION NEAR BONG SON, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. WHEN HIS UNIT CAME UNDER INTENSE HOSTILE FIRE, PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WRIGHT, DISREGARDING HIS OWN SAFETY, EXPOSED HIMSELF TO THE ENEMY FIRE AS HE ASSAULTED AND DESTROYED AN ENEMY BUNKER WITH HAND GRENADES. WHILE RETURNING TO HIS VEHICLE, PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WRIGHT WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED. HIS DISPLAY OF PERSONAL BRAVERY AND DEVOTION TO DUTY WAS IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MILITARY SERVICE AND REFLECTS GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, HIS UNIT, AND THE UNITED STATES ARMY.



Bronze  
Star  
(Valor)



Purple  
Heart



National  
Defense



Vietnam  
Service



Vietnam  
Campaign