



1ST CAVALRY
DIVISION



1ST BATTALION
50TH INFANTRY



"B" COMPANY
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER
CALL SIGN:
"BOLD
BARBARIAN 5"



1ST LIEUTENANT



ARMOR

ROBERT IRVING BALLARD

"B" Company, Executive Officer, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry
First Lieutenant, O2, OF110105, MOS 1542

Home of Record: West Monroe, LA

Date of Birth: February 23, 1943, Age at time of loss: 24, Single

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

Start of Tour: September 1, 1967, Date of Casualty: February 3, 1968, Days in Country: 155

Casualty Type A1, MFW, Panel 37E - Row 003

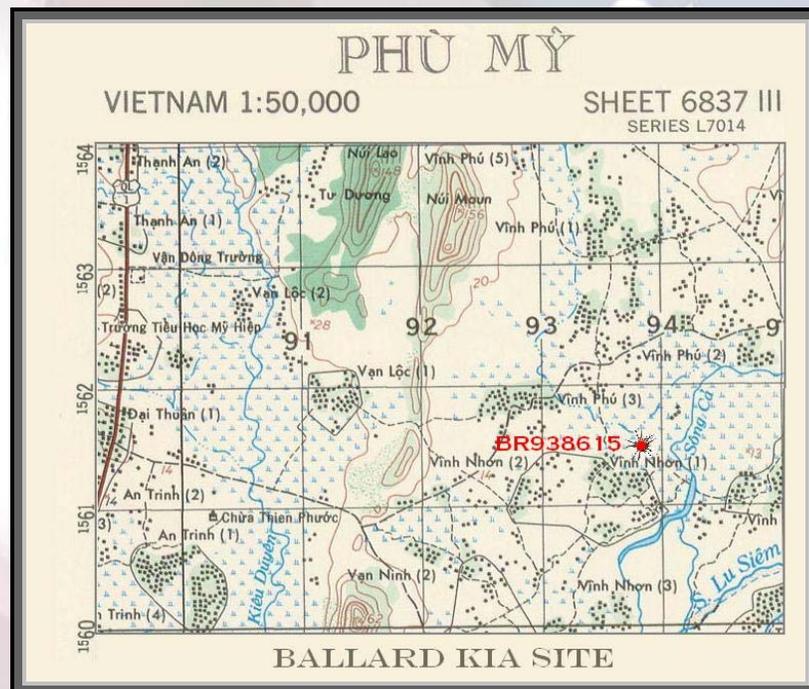
As The "Bravo" Company Executive Officer (Second in Command) Bob Ballard could have spent his time back in the relative safety of LZ Uplift....but the Tet Offensive was raging in Binh Dinh Province and Bob's proven bravery manifest itself once again as he was with his troops on the field of battle Southeast of Phu My on February 3rd.



Former Bravo Company Commander Dick Guthrie witnessed the fight from the air. The enemy had dug in along a vegetated hedge row north of the village of Vinh Nhon, and was delivering Rocket and small arms fire from several strong points. Guthrie, who had rotated to serve as the S-3 "Air" Officer for the Battalion, flew in with the C&C Chopper to evacuate the severely wounded officer who had been struck by a B40 rocket...which had not "armed". The rocket entered Bob Ballard's chest through the arm pit hole in his flack vest.

Bob Ballard died of his wounds without regaining consciousness. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions. Ballard had previously been awarded Silver Stars for his actions in the Battle of Tam Quan on December 10, 1967, and during the An Lac(2) portion of the Battle of An Tinh on January 2nd, 1968.

A map of the location of the action on February 3rd, North of Vinh Nhon, is shown below:



Continued...

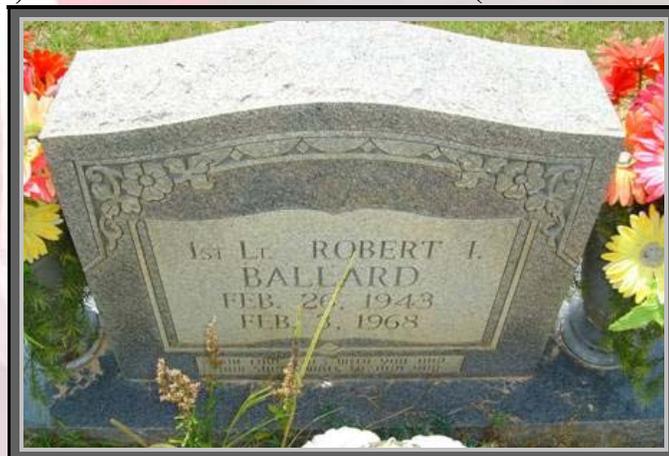
Pictured below-left are the Officers from "B" Company...sometime prior to December 10th of 1967. Left to right: Jim Wonsick, Weapons Platoon; Bob Ballard, 3rd Platoon; Brian Thomas, 1st Platoon; Howie Pontuck, Executive Officer (KIA 8 Mar 68); Dick Guthrie, Commanding Officer; Thurman Pike, 2nd Platoon; Rennerfelt, Artillery Forward Observer. Below-right is Bob Ballard while with "A" Co. during the summer of 1967 at Fort Hood Texas.



Below Left is LT Ballard prior to Vietnam Deployment and below right are pictured LT Driscoll and LT Ballard aboard the USS John Pope during the "cruise" to Vietnam in September of 1967.



Bob Ballard is buried near his childhood home of West Monroe, Louisiana, at the New Chapel Hill Baptist Church Cemetery, Ouachita Parish, Arkansas Road & Slocum Road (Picture below)



Continued...

BOB BALLARD'S AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:



Combat Infantry Badge



HQ, 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 1713

21 MARCH 1968

FOR GALLANTRY IN ACTION WHILE ENGAGED IN MILITARY OPERATIONS INVOLVING CONFLICT WITH AN ARMED HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. FIRST LIEUTENANT BALLARD DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF BY EXCEPTIONALLY VALOROUS ACTION ON 3 FEBRUARY 1968, WHILE SERVING AS EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF COMPANY B, 1ST BATTALION (MECHANIZED), 50TH INFANTRY DURING A COMBAT MISSION NEAR VINH NHON, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. WHEN HIS UNIT BECAME PINNED DOWN BY INTENSIVE HOSTILE FIRE AND SUSTAINED SEVERAL CASUALTIES, LIEUTENANT BALLARD, DISREGARDING HIS OWN SAFETY, LEFT HIS COVERED POSITION TO ASSIST HIS WOUNDED COMRADES. DRAWING THE HOSTILE FIRE TO HIMSELF, LIEUTENANT BALLARD CONTINUED TO ADVANCE UNTIL HE WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED, BUT HIS COURAGEOUS ACTION ENABLED HIS OWN MEN TO SAFELY EVACUATE THE WOUNDED PERSONNEL. HIS GALLANT ACTION WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN CAPTURING A LARGE NUMBER OF HOSTILE SOLDIERS AND CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF HIS UNIT'S MISSION. LIEUTENANT BALLARD'S GALLANT ACTION IS IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MILITARY SERVICE, AND REFLECTS GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, HIS UNIT, AND THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 2077

9 APRIL 1968

FOR GALLANTRY IN ACTION WHILE ENGAGED IN MILITARY OPERATIONS INVOLVING CONFLICT WITH AN ARMED HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. FIRST LIEUTENANT BALLARD DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF BY EXCEPTIONALLY VALOROUS ACTION ON 2 JANUARY 1968, WHILE SERVING AS A PLATOON LEADER WITH COMPANY B, 1ST BATTALION (MECHANIZED), 50TH INFANTRY DURING A SEARCH AND CLEAR MISSION NEAR AN LAC, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. WHEN HIS UNIT BECAME HEAVILY ENGAGED WITH A LARGE ENEMY FORCE, LIEUTENANT BALLARD EXPOSED HIMSELF TO THE ENEMY FIRE AS HE CARRIED A WOUNDED COMRADE TO SAFETY. WHILE LEADING AN ASSAULT AGAINST THE HOSTILE EMPLACEMENTS, LIEUTENANT BALLARD SUSTAINED A WOUND, BUT CONTINUED TO LEAD THE ASSAULT. DISREGARDING HIS OWN SAFETY, HE THEN PERSONALLY NEUTRALIZED AN ENEMY FORTIFICATION AND ASSISTED IN DESTROYING SEVERAL OTHERS. LIEUTENANT BALLARD'S GALLANT ACTION IS IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MILITARY SERVICE, AND REFLECTS GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, HIS UNIT, AND THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 2755

2 MAY 1968

FOR GALLANTRY IN ACTION WHILE ENGAGED IN MILITARY OPERATIONS INVOLVING CONFLICT WITH AN ARMED HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. FIRST LIEUTENANT BALLARD DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF BY EXCEPTIONALLY VALOROUS ACTION ON 10 DECEMBER 1967, WHILE SERVING AS A PLATOON LEADER WITH COMPANY B, 1ST BATTALION (MECHANIZED), 50TH INFANTRY DURING A SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSION NEAR BONG SON, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. WHEN HIS UNIT BECAME HEAVILY ENGAGED WITH A LARGE ENEMY FORCE, LIEUTENANT BALLARD REPEATEDLY EXPOSED HIMSELF TO THE HOSTILE FIRE AS HE POSITIONED HIS MEN IN GOOD DEFENSIVE POSITIONS AND DIRECTED THEIR BASE OF FIRE AGAINST THE HOSTILE EMPLACEMENTS. DISREGARDING HIS OWN SAFETY, HE THEN ASSAULTED AN ENEMY BUNKER AND NEUTRALIZED IT WITH A HAND GRENADE. HIS GALLANT ACTION WAS IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MILITARY SERVICE, AND REFLECTS GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, HIS UNIT, AND THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

Continued...



**Silver Star
w/2olc**



**Purple
Heart
w/1olc**



**National
Defense**



**Vietnam
Service**



**Vietnam
Campaign**