



25<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY  
DIVISION



50<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY



"F" COMPANY



SPECIALIST FOUR



INFANTRYMAN

## RAYMOND WALTER SULLIVAN

"F" Company (Long Range Patrol), 50th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division  
Specialist 4th Class, E4, RA18915779, MOS 11B2P

Home of Record: San Francisco, CA

Date of Birth: May 30, 1950, Age at time of loss: 18, Single

25th Infantry Division, Tay Ninh Province, Republic of Vietnam

Start of Tour: September 24, 1968, Date of Casualty: January 24, 1969, Days in Country: 123

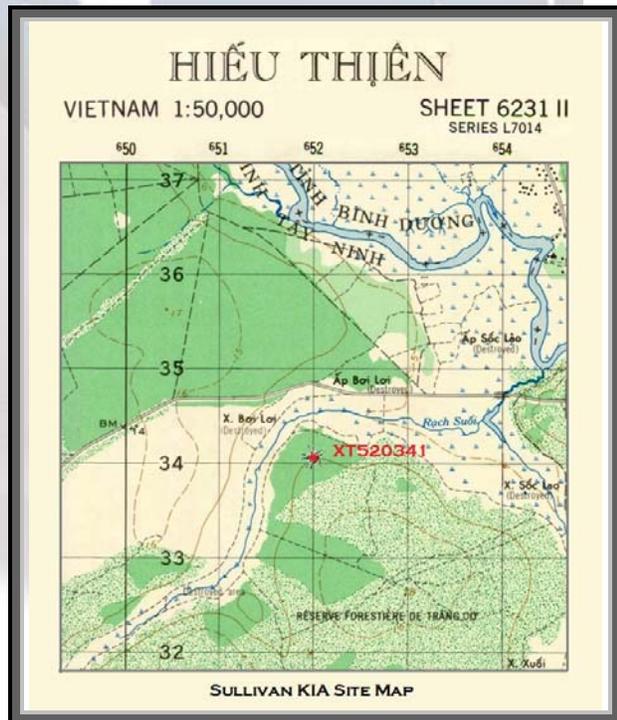
Casualty Type A1, Gun, small arms fire, Panel 34W - Row 072

Specialist Raymond Sullivan was a member of Team 22, Company F (Long Range Patrol), 50th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division.

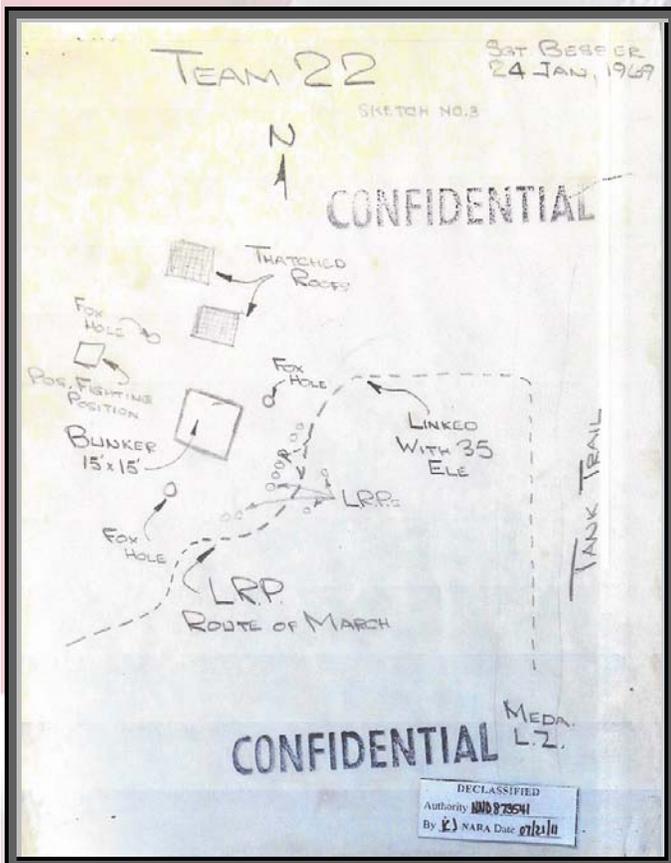
On January 23, 1969, LRP Team 22, led by Sergeant Tom Besser, was inserted by UH1D helicopters into an area near the Boi Loi woods approximately 25 km Northwest of Cu Chi. The 11 men were tasked with the primary mission of ambushing enemy personnel and, if the opportunity arose, to capture an enemy soldier.<sup>1</sup>

The initial team insertion was in the vicinity of coordinates XT518340. The team had only progressed about 15 meters when they discovered 2 camouflaged enemy bunkers. The bunkers were very well constructed...with interiors about 5 feet square with 3 feet of packed earth on top. The exterior walls were slanted at a 45 degree angle. One of the bunkers had ground level firing apertures and a tunnel entrance as well. The team did not attempt to destroy the fortifications as they were not certain of the strength of the enemy unit in the area. Also, aside from the bunkers, there was little cover in the area...so the team moved out towards the East of this location. The team found more evidence of enemy activity near coordinates XT520340 where they found an old VC defensive position with 6 fox holes that were about 2 feet square and 4 feet deep but the fighting positions appeared not to have been used for 3 or 4 weeks. There was, however, a foot path running through the area that had been used within the past 24 hours.

The team set up for the night nearby and monitored an estimated enemy squad talking and moving from East to West near their night position. They did not engage the enemy because they could not see them. Also during the night, the team monitored 4 volleys of 6 to 8 rounds each of either Mortar or Rocket Fire. Sergeant Besser was unfamiliar with the sound and could not determine the distance to the location...hence he did not call in artillery fire on the suspected enemy position. Finally, the team heard 3 single shots and voices approximately 400 meters from their position. They called in artillery on the enemy with unknown results.



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At 0830 the following morning, the team moved out towards the north. After traversing about 100 meters, they spotted a large bunker. Their point element began moving towards the bunker to check it out when they were engaged by a short burst of enemy fire from a nearby foxhole. The team dropped to the ground and began returning fire. At that moment, the team became pinned down when semi-automatic weapons fire from the bunker began hitting their positions with deadly accuracy...targeting anything that moved. As the team radioed for helicopter gunship support, they could see between 20 and 25 enemy personnel about 100 meters in the distance moving towards them. The team began to take casualties as their Vietnamese Kit Carson Scout, in an attempt to rise up slightly and ascertain where some of the close-in fire was coming from, was hit and wounded by enemy AK47 fire.

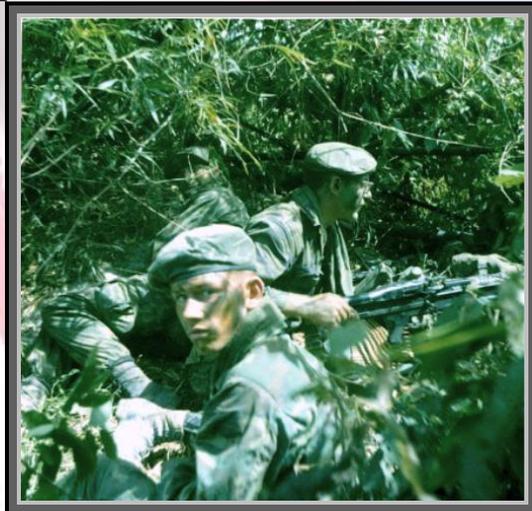
Gunships arrived and team leader Sergeant Besser began directing the helicopter's gun and rocket fire on the enemy positions. During one of the rocket runs, a rocket went off course, hit a tree, and exploded over the team's position, wounding team member Specialist Regenthal. It was at about this time that Specialist Sullivan was mortally

wounded. Of the team of 11, all but 3 were extracted by med-evac helicopters. Team Leader Besser also returned to Cu Chi with the wounded.

Specialist Regenthal's, destroyed radio and Specialist Sullivan's CAR-15 rifle were missing...as well as some additional equipment and rucksacks left behind when the team had to give priority to removing those who were wounded and/or needed assistance moving to a nearby extraction point. Since the supporting gunship runs were suppressing most of the enemy fire, the team was able to crawl to an extraction point some 30 meters distant.

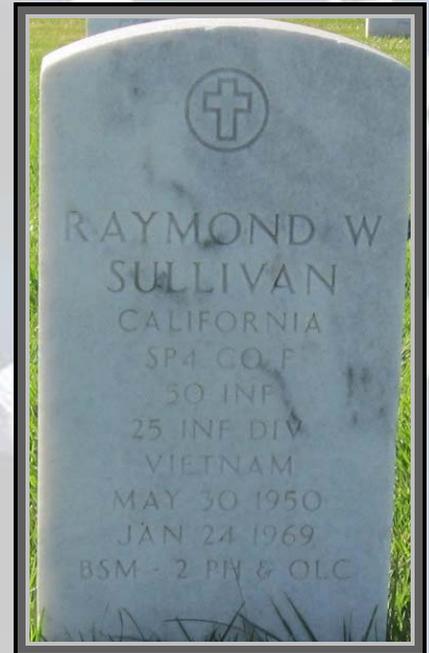
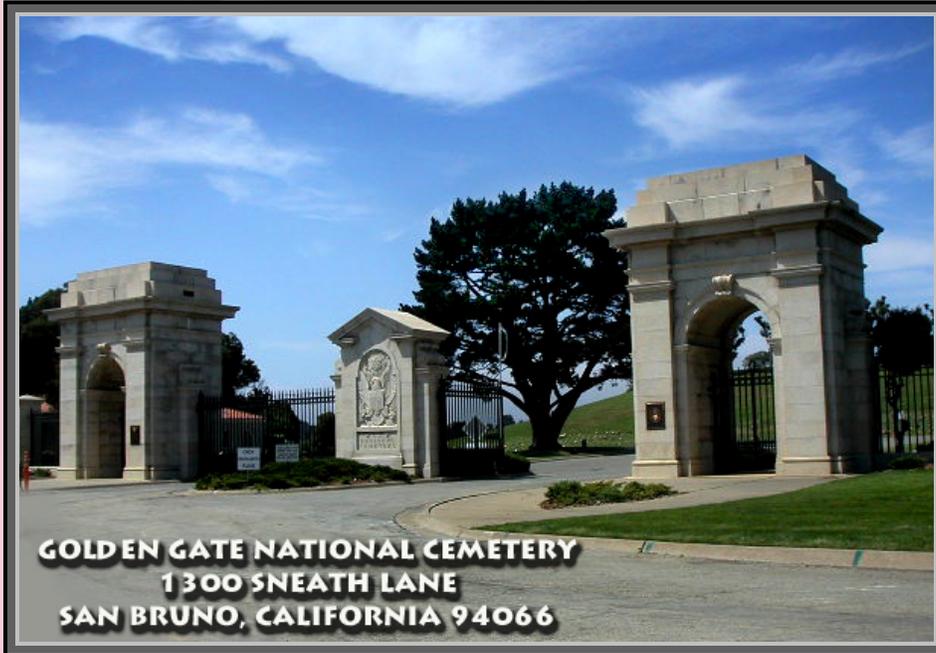
The remaining team members were joined by an Aero-Rifle unit and were able to return to the contact site and retrieve several lost items. All was recovered except Specialist Sullivan's rifle, the damaged radio and a few hand grenades...taken off of the rucksacks. The items were likely pirated by the enemy force as it withdrew from the scene of the contact. Dave Regenthal wrote a personal account of the fight...as well as a moving story of his experiences at the 12th Evac hospital in Cu Chi. Read the account entitled: [January 24th, 1969](#)

In the photo below (Left), Team Leader Tom Besser receives Purple Heart with Sullivan to the right in the rank behind him. In the photo below (Right), Ray Sullivan on patrol (Front).<sup>2</sup>



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Ray Sullivan is buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery, Plot U, 299, San Bruno, San Mateo County, CA



**AWARDS AND DECORATIONS OF RAYMOND SULLIVAN:**



Parachutist Badge



Combat Infantry Badge



Bronze  
Star



Purple  
Heart  
(2 awards)



National  
Defense



Vietnam  
Service



Vietnam  
Campaign

1. After Action Report, F Company (LRP), 50th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division, 24 January 1969, Reproduced at the National Archives Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.

2. Photos of Ray Sullivan provided by him Team Leader, Tom Besser.