



Rites for AF Grad Killed in Action

—STORY ON PAGE 22

The flag - draped coffin of Capt. Valmore W. Bourque, 28—first Air Force Academy graduate to be killed in action—is borne to his final resting place in the Air Force Academy cemetery. His comrades-in-arms bid him farewell with full military hon-

ors in ceremonies in Colorado Springs and at the Academy. He was killed Oct. 24 when his transport plane was shot down in South Viet Nam. His wife and 2-year-old daughter live in Colorado Springs.

—UPI Photo by Bob Thomas.



FIRST KILLED IN ACTION—A bugler plays taps as Capt. Valmore W. Bourque, 28, the first Air Force Academy graduate to be killed in action, is buried in the Academy cemetery. Bourque and seven others were killed in Viet Nam when the C-123 transport he was piloting was shot down. —Free Press-UPI Telephoto

First Academy Graduate To Die in Combat Buried

Capt. Valmore W. Bourque, the first Air Force Academy graduate to die in combat, was buried with full military honors Thursday in the Academy's cemetery.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Linda L. Bourque, 1424 W. Cheyenne Blvd., and a two-year old daughter, Wendy.

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Bourque, of South Hadley Falls, Mass., reported to the brand new Air Force Academy at 4:30 a.m. July 11, 1955. Following a medical examination and the signing of a myriad of documents, at 6:10 a.m. he became Basic Cadet Bourque, the first member of the Cadet Wing to receive the official oath.

On Oct. 24, 1964, he became

* * *

the first Academy graduate to die in combat. He was among eight American servicemen killed when their C-123 transport plane was shot down by Communist Viet Cong in Viet Nam.

The Air Force announced Lt. Bourque's posthumous promotion to captain prior to burial. Academy cadets, airmen, and other Air Force personnel

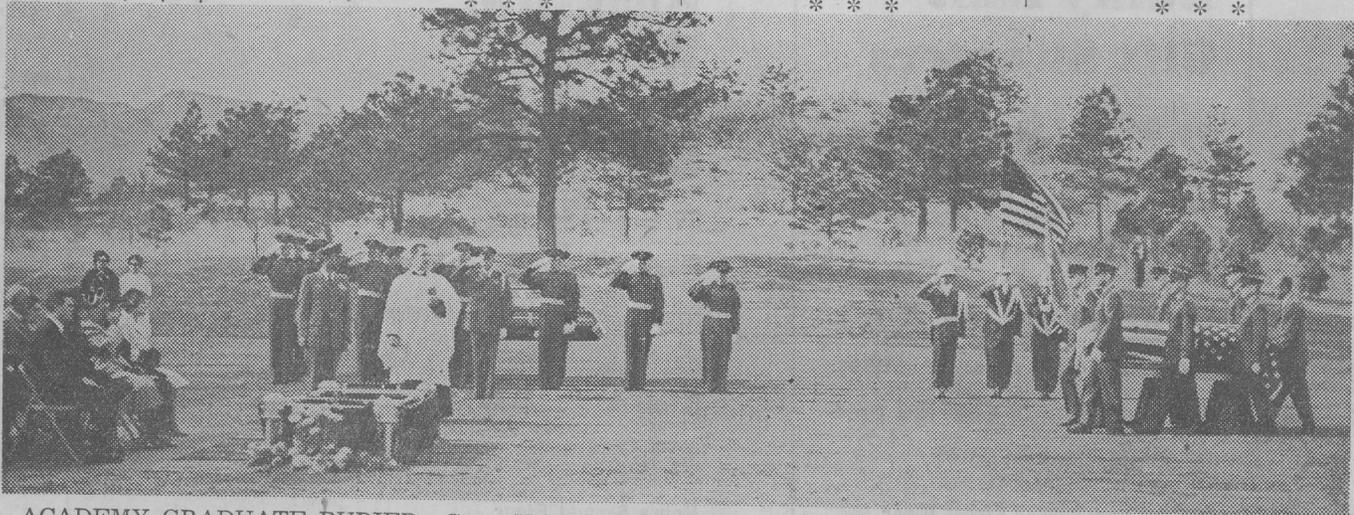
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took part in the military burial services, with buglers from the Academy Band playing taps.

Many of Capt. Bourque's classmates of 1960 returned to the Academy for the services.

Capt. Bourque rests in the cemetery which also holds the body of the Academy's first superintendent, General Hubert R. Harmon.

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ACADEMY GRADUATE BURIED—Capt. Valmore W. Bourque, first Air Force Academy graduate killed in action, was buried Thursday in the Academy's cemetery. Pallbearers, classmates of Capt. Bourque, carry

the coffin by an honor guard of 24 cadets from the 6th Cadet Squadron, the unit to which the captain was assigned during his years at the Academy.

(Air Force Photo)

Friday, November 6, 1964
THE FALCON NEWS

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By SSgt. Bill Holland

With the burial yesterday of the first Academy graduate to die in action, the refrain, "In Flanders Field the poppies grow, between the crosses row on row," takes on a deeper significance for those connected with this Command.

Although penned to commemorate Armistice Day—a national observance which is now called Veterans' Day, the lines honor Capt. Valmore W. Bourque and the approximately 1,189,000 others who have lost their lives preserving the principles of democracy which is indicative of the American way of life.

Since 1918, World War II, the Korean War and the fighting in Viet Nam have added crosses to the nation's cemeteries and brought mourning and sadness to many more homes. In recognition of the supreme sacrifice American servicemen have made since World War I, the name of the holiday was changed to encompass all U. S. veterans of all wars and conflicts.

Regardless of what the holiday is called, its fundamental purpose remains the same—to remind the citizens of this country that their military men and women still serve. If men like Captain Bourque were not willing to risk their lives, the world might not be free, and we would not have the freedoms which have become commonplace in our society.

In the words of President Lyndon B. Johnson in urging Americans to observe Nov. 11, Veterans' Day, he said, "remembering with respect and affection those who have defended the nation in time of war . . ."

While we at the Academy will remember the veterans of the past and Captain Bourque, those of us now in the armed services can look forward to the future and be justifiably proud that we are part of a force that insures that our fellow citizens will be able to celebrate with us in the years to come.

But most important of all, it is imperative that each of us do our part to strengthen, not weaken, our country through dedicated service so men like Captain Bourque will not have died in vain.

* * *

Military Burial Set For Capt. Valmore W. Bourque

See last
Nov 5 1967
Air Force Academy cadets, airmen and other members of the Air Force will take part in formal military burial services for Capt. Valmore W. Bourque 10 a.m. today.

Capt. Bourque, the first academy graduate killed in action, was appointed captain posthumously.

An academy spokesman said Capt. Valmore was due for promotion and the orders were put in effect following his death in a Viet Nam air crash.

A member of the first academy class, Capt. Valmore was also the first cadet to register at the academy, the spokesman said.

Burial services in the academy cemetery will follow services at Chapel of Our Saviour, Broadmoor.

Taking part in the ceremony will be 21 airmen from the Academy Headquarters Squadron and 21 cadets from the Sixth Cadet Squadron. Capt. Bourque was assigned to this squadron during his years at the academy.

The four-man color guard and the firing squad for the ceremony will be made up of airmen stationed at the academy.

"Taps" will be played by a member of the academy band.

Pallbearers will be military personnel.

Capt. Bourque is survived by his widow, Mrs. Linda Jewett Bourque



CAPT. VALMORE W. BOURQUE

of Colorado Springs; his daughter, Linda Sue Bourque of Colorado Springs; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Valmore Bourque of South Hadley Falls, Mass.; and a brother, Robert Bourque of South Hadley Falls, Mass.

C123 Pilot First AFA Casualty

SEE STORY PAGE 7

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo.—First Lt. Valmore W. Bourque of South Hadley Falls, Mass., killed in action Saturday in South Viet Nam, was the first Air Force Academy graduate to die in combat. Academy officials said Monday.

Bourque, 28, was the pilot of a C123 transport plane shot down by the Viet CONG in a mountainous area north of Saigon. Seven other U.S. servicemen died when the plane crashed in flames.

Bourque was a member of the Academy's baseball and soccer teams and was graduated in 1960. He took pilot training at Graham Air Base, Fla.

His wife is a native of Colorado Springs and lives there with a daughter, Wendy, 2. Mrs. Bourque is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Jewett of Colorado Springs.

Bourque was born in Holyoke, Mass., July 23, 1936, and attended Williston Academy at Easthampton, Mass., for a year before entering the Air Force Academy. In addition to his widow, survivors include his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Valmore V. Bourque and a brother, Robert, all of South Hadley Falls.

N.E. Heroes Mourned by Vietnam Fliers

Continued from Page 2

couple of friends. We spent New Year's Eve last year in a place in San Francisco. We were coming here. We were a little late for the plane, I'm afraid. They aren't going back anymore. I figure maybe my generation has some unfinished business here. I wouldn't feel right going back to the States for New Years. Maybe they would think I forgot about the business we have going."

His friends were LT. VALMORE BOURQUE of So. Hadley Falls, Massachusetts, and LT. U. T. SCOBELL, who came from Maryland, but adopted Westover Field as his home mail box.

'GALLANT MEN'

On October 24, 1964 Lt. Valmore Bourque was shot down over Cambodia while on a supply mission to a Special Forces camp. On the same flight was Lt. Edward S. Krukowski of Bangor, Maine. He got it, too.

"I don't know why something wasn't written about them," Sam Burke said. "They were, what do you say, how does that phrase go, the gallant men. They really were, you know. Long dead now: It's been a month. But I can see them coming through the door right now. 'Flare mission tonight?' They used to come in and say—'hey, lazy, you're not working tonight? Take a ride.' They were a team those two. They sure scared me a few times. We were out one night and took 43 hits on a flare mission. I think that 41 of them were from knives, we were that close to the ground.

"Ah, it's a long story. It's just that you wonder why nobody ever wrote it. They were just guys. Scobell went down early. He bought it in an L-19 in Cambodia in March. The farm. Straight in. Machine gun fire.

"Then Bourque . . . and Krukowski. They were flying this 123 for a Special Forces drop. It went tough. Up there along the border you can't tell. The Cambodians have a strategic site which looks just like the one our people have. It's maybe eight clicks (kilometers) on the dial.

PICKED WRONG SPOT

"This day they came in. Three birds were on the run. Bourque was flying the lead ship. They picked the wrong spot and it was the Cambodian place. On the first pass—you see, they were trying to get down low, because you have to hit from close-up to make sure they drop on the site and not in the woods

"They were carrying 10,000



Lt. Valmore W. Bourque knew that he was on the promotion list for captain before he died and had this picture with captain's bars taken for the occasion. He was promoted to the rank posthumously.



Lt. Samuel Burke III Holds Photo of His Late Friend, Lt. Valmore Bourque, South Hadley Falls



Lt. Edward Krukowski, Bangor, Me., Shot Down Over Cambodia

pounds of cargo. They had 4000 of it unlashd, probably, because they were getting ready to drop. In the big birds like the 123 you don't have much chance to take evasive action.

"The came in straight and there was no firing and then suddenly they opened up on them. Bourque took a good evasive action. It was a reflexive action, really. He pulled to the left at 100 feet, but then they hit him again and the bird went right over on its back and pulled right and went straight into the mountain.

"It must have been murder in there. There were eight guys in the compartment getting ready to kick the cargo. They had it all unstrapped. Can you imagine 4000 pounds bouncing around as they went into the mountain?

'NOT PRETTY THING'

"They went on fire when they hit. Not a pretty thing. They landed in Vietnam. There was just that much difference. A lousy mile. Guys trying to do a good job. A lousy mile and they got jammed up. The Special Forces people got the bodies out the next day. There wasn't much."

Lt. Valmore Bourque was promoted to Captain posthumously. He was the first Air Force Academy graduate killed in Vietnam.

There was Colonel William Fleming, who commands this group. He has flown fighters the Hump in World War II and



Mrs. Bourque and Daughter, Wendy, 1/2

he flew in Korea and now he flies with the young men here in the big cargo craft which are the lifeline of this plagued country.

He was standing there and he said, they were all good men. The young lions. I am an

old man. But I see them come. Krukowski was a really good man. He came from Bangor, Maine. I can say he was a fine, capable man. He rated being with Bourque.

"Bourque was one of the ones that you see rarely. He was bound to be a Chief of Staff of the Air Force some day. He was young and dark and crew cut and good and he could fly anything you could put wings on. But flying 123s into that country takes the good ones away from you."

TRUSTING TO LUCK

The man, Scobell, was an L-19 pilot. That is a light observation aircraft, unarmored, trusting to luck and skill and daring to keep aloft.

One day U. T. Scobell—U. of Maryland All America, a man with a Post Office Box at Westover Field for a home — was escorting a strike to relieve a hamlet near Cambodia. He came out of a 180-degree turn straight into machine guns and he went nose first into the mountain.

"He never knew what hit him. He never took evasive action," said Sam Burke. "He just took it through the windscreens and he was gone that fast."

"That's the breaks of the game. It is a tough war in a tough place in a tough time. So you lose some of the good ones. But you miss them, you know? You keep looking for them to come through the door. They should be walking in here right

now with laughter and lights in their eyes. It kind of gets you. I thought maybe they deserved a little more. Maybe a story or something. Just so you could say that in this time and this place these young men were here they lived. They were. They fought. They were part of it. They were Americans."

ENGINES STILL

A long time later, Sam Burke was opening the door to his quarters, to loan a man a flight suit.

It was late and Tan Son Nhut was quiet and the engines were still and only the ghostly blue lights of the runway and the probing searchlights looking for Viet Cong and the soft whoosh of a mortar flare in the distance could be heard.

There were some pictures on the desk and there was an empty bunk with limp mosquito netting in the corner.

"Whose pictures?" a man asked.

"Friends of mine. Guys named Bourque and Scobell and Krukowski," Sam Burke said. "Used to be room-mates of mine from time to time."

Sam Burke looked around the room.

"I don't have any room-mates any more," he said. "Here, use this suit."

The name on the suit said: "Bourque, V., USAF." "Come on," said Sam Burke, Centurion, "I'll buy you a beer."

In Thursday's Record American, Bill McSweeney tells of the New England men, from Colonel to Sergeant, who hold key posts in the headquarters of Gen. Westmoreland, commanding general of the Vietnam area.

Letters Tell of Courageous Life in Vietnam

Continued from Page 2

menting on stories condemning the lack of support allegedly being given by the Vietnamese to the Special Forces, Richard wrote his parents:

HAVE JOB TO DO

"Those clippings you sent me make me disgusted. These people, in their own way, are a gallant and fearsome people. They have a job to do and they do it. Sure some are bad, but you'll find that in every group.

"When the time for action comes I'd be just as proud to have a Vietnamese soldier beside me as an American one."

the "incredible courage" of the natives.

"These people deserve a lot of credit," he said. "When the men are off fighting it is the women, and old men and little children who defend the villages.

"I picked up a little girl in my arms. Her body was riddled with bullets. My heart almost broke because I could not make her understand that I would not hurt her anymore. She was dead before we could get her back."

This strange new breed of American soldier so preoccupied with the affects of war on the

Special Forces. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Underwood, Sr., of 46 Maypole rd., Merrymount section of Quincy.

"The fight had become something more than just defeating the human enemy" Jim said.

"It had become for George a dedication to help the people of this strange country, torn apart by a war that seems to be beyond the comprehension of the people back home."

REENLISTED

So taken by this dedication was George Underwood that on Christmas Eve, 1963 when his family was awaiting his arrival home, he sent a telegram saying

400 Vietnamese youngsters that he was ambushed by Viet Cong guerrillas and killed.

ANSWERS LOT OF 'WHYS'

A young veteran of Vietnam answered a lot of the "whys" in a sympathy note to Judy Costello of Quincy, sweetheart of Cpl. Slack.

"Duty in Vietnam weaves a mysterious force about the men stationed there," he wrote. "It becomes a personal matter, almost a crusade. It ties men together in a common cause, regardless of individualities to which men are ready to give their lives if the necessity arises."

when he died last July 23.

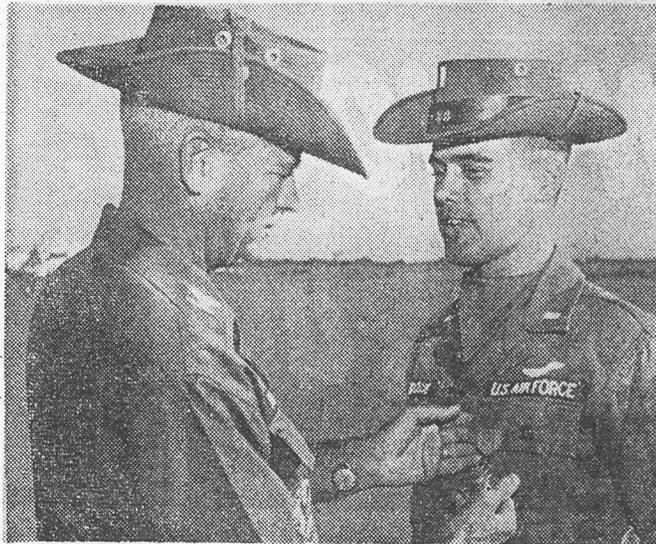
To honor him, his comrades-in-arms constructed a crude school house for the Montagnards — the mountain tribesmen with whom he lived — and dedicated it as a memorial to him.

More important, the dedication exercises featured the tribesmen themselves who looked upon Underwood as a friend.

Caribou lost two of its boys this year, too. They were 1st Lt. Roger E. Gavin, of 42 Spring st., and Pfc. Richard Bubar, Rte. 2, both in the Army.

Lt. Gavin was killed March 15, 1964.

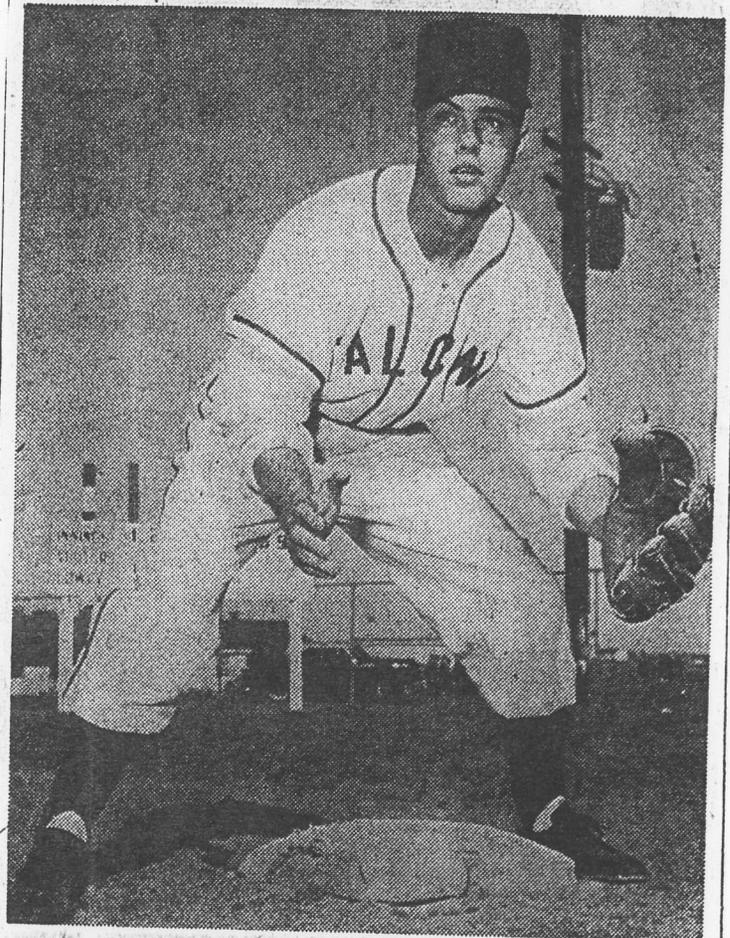
SOUTH HADLEY



Before Death In Viet Nam

HONORED BEFORE DEATH IN SERVICE TO U. S. — Capt. Valmore W. Bourque, right, son of Mr. and Mrs. Valmore V. Bourque of 381 North Main St., South Hadley Falls, is shown receiving from an unidentified Air Force Colonel the U. S. Air Force Medal for meritorious achievement during an aerial flight in support of the fight against Communist aggression in Viet Nam. Capt. Bourque was killed in action Oct. 24 in a transport plane downed by gun fire near the Cambodian border. A graduate of South Hadley High School, Class of 1954, he received his commission upon graduation from the U. S. Air Force Academy. He had been promoted to the rank of captain two weeks prior to his death.

Member Of Air Force Nine



VAL BOURQUE

DENVER, Colo. (Special) — team. He is a graduate of Cadet Val Bourque, son of Mr. South Hadley High school. The and Mrs. Valmore V. Bourque, AFA Falcons are playing a 15-game schedule, with all but two 75 Lamb St., South Hadley Falls, of the contests against varsity opponents from the Rocky Mountain region. 4/50