AFA Graduate Among Dead in Viet Crash

By LARRY PEARSON
Rocky Mountain News Writer

A flaming airplane crash in South Viet Nam has claimed the life of an Air Force Academy graduate—the first graduate to die in action against the enemy—according to wire service dispatches Sunday.

The victim, **First Lt. Valmore W. Bourque**, 28, was killed Saturday when the C-123 Air Force transport plane he piloted was shot down by Communist guerrillas in the mountains north of Saigon. He was graduated in 1960 from the Air Force Academy.

Lt. Bourque's wife, Linda, a 1960 graduate of the University of Colorado, is a native of Colorado Springs. She lives at 1424 Cheyenne blvd., Colorado Springs, with her daughter, Wendy, 2.

An Air Force Academy spokesman said, "As far as the Academy knows, this is the first Academy graduate to be killed in action who stayed in the Air Force."

Vietnamese troops Sunday recovered the bodies of seven of the eight American servicemen aboard the plane. They fought a nightlong battle with Red guerrillas to reach the scene.

Eighth Feared Dead

A U.S. military spokesman said an eighth American was feared dead in the crash, but his body has not been found. He said the plane carried eight Americans—not five Americans and two Vietnamese as originally announced.

The body of another American serviceman was found near the Cambodian border where U.S. Army Capt. Herman Y. Towery of Georgetown, S.C., and three Vietnamese companions were captured Thursday. Two dead Vietnamese were found near the body.

First Lt. Valmore W. Bourque

The deaths of the eight men in the crash and the ninth found near the border raise to 216 the number of Americans killed in combat in Viet Nam.

Mrs. Bourque, a 1956 graduate of Cheyenne Mountain High School in Colorado Springs, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Jewett of 1516 W. Cheyenne rd., Colorado Springs.

She said Sunday that she received a telegram from the Defense Dept. Saturday night informing her that her husband was "missing in action."

Lt. Bourque's transport was dropping supplies to a U.S. Army special forces camp at Bu Prang, 100 miles northeast of Saigon, when Red bullets caught it flying at low level. A second C-123 on same mission was hit by the heavy ground fire but was able to return to base.

Ground parties tried to reach the scene Saturday, but were hampered by strong enemy fire. Pilots of rescue planes said the wreckage was in flames, and ammunition was exploding. They expressed doubt at that time that any aboard could have parachuted. They saw no sign of life around the wrecked transport.

In addition to his wife and daughter, Lt. Bourque is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Valmore Bourque, and a brother, Robert, all of South Hadley, Mass.

Mrs. Bourque, who majored in English at CU, said she and her husband were married three years ago at the Colorado College chapel in Colorado Springs.

She said she received a letter from her husband last Wednesday, in which he wrote he was being sent on an aerial mission north of Saigon.

Played Sports

She said her husband was a member of Air Force Academy baseball and soccer teams during his four years there. He played shortstop on the baseball team.

The Defense Dept. listed the other seven from the downed plane as:

Staff Sgt. Theodore B. Phillips, husband of Mrs. Anna Ruth Phillips of Riverside, Calif.

Staff Sgt. Ernest J. Halvorson, husband of Mrs. June H. Halvorson of Montclair, Calif.

First Lt. Edward S. Krukowski, husband of Mrs. Marie A. Krukowski of Bangor, Maine.

Airman 1c Eugene Richardson, husband of Mrs. Joyce J. Richardson of Sacramento, Calif.

First Lt. Robert G. Armstrong, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Armstrong of the Bronx, N.Y.

Staff Sgt. Lawrence Woods, husband of Mrs. Frances L. Woods of Clarkesville, Tenn.

Pfc. Charles P. Sparks, son of Mrs. Wilma M. Roseberry of Kileen, Tex.

Woods and Sparks were Army men, the others Air Force.

Lt. E. W. Bourque Is First AFA Grad Killed In Battle

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A Colorado Springs pilot 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 Sunday.

The plane was piloted by 1st Lt. Ealmore W. Bourque, 28, whose wife, Linda L. Bourque, lives at 1424 Cheyenne Blvd., with their 2-year-old daughter, Wendy.

Lt. Bourque is the first Air Force Academy graduate to die in action against the enemy. He graduated in 1960.

Mrs. Bourque last saw her husband before Christmas of 1963 when he was sent to Viet Nam. She received a letter from him Wednesday saying he was being sent on an air mission west of Saigon.

Mrs. Bourque is a 1956 graduate of Cheyenne Mountain High School and a 1960 graduate of the University of Colorado.

They were married in the Colorado College Chapel three years ago.

Vietnamese troops recovered the bodies of seven of the victims. They fought a nightlong battle with Red guerrillas to reach the scene.

A U. S. military spokesman in Saigon said an eighth American was feared dead in the crash Saturday, but his body was not found. The plane carried six Air Force crewmen and two Army men.

The body of another American serviceman was found near the Cambodian border where U. S. Army Capt. Herman Y. Towery, of Georgetown, S. C., and three Vietnamese companions were captured Thursday. Two dead Vietnamese were found near the body.

On the political front, the 17-man high national council Saturday night named Phan Khac Suu, a 59-year-old agricultural engineer, as South Viet Nam's new head of state. Suu was chairman of the national council.

Suu was the candidate of the council members who opposed putting another military man in charge of the government. The rest of the council had preferred Maj. Gen. Duong Van Minh, the onetime chief of state.

Suu's post is largely ceremonial. His main job is to select a prime minister and win the council's approval of his choice. The prime minister will run the government.

The prime minister must be chosen and approved by Tuesday, the day on which Prime Minister Maj. Gen. Nguyen Khanh has said he will resign.

The constitution is designed to give the army—and presumably Khanh—veto power over matters concerning national security and the war against the Viet Cong.

The Reds shot down the U. S. plane as it was on an ammunition supply run to the Bu Prang Special Forces camp 100 miles northeast of Saigon. The twin-engine craft burned, setting off the ammunition aboard.

The Viet Cong riddled the downed plane with gunfire until they were beaten off by the Vietnamese rescue party.

The Air Force crewmen aboard the C123 besides Lt. Bourque were Lt. Robert G. Armstrong, Bronx, N.Y.; Lt. Edward S. Krukowski, Bangor, Maine; S. Sgt Theodore B. Phillips, Riverside, Calif.; S. Sgt. Ernest J. Halvorson, Montclair, Calif., and Airman 1-C Eugene Richards, Sacramento, Calif.

The two Army men on the plane were listed as —S. Sgt. Lawrence Woods, Route 6 Clarksville, Tenn., and Pfc. Charles P. Sparks, Killen, Tex.

An autopsy was performed Sunday night on the body of the American found near the Cambodian border in order to determine the cause of death.

There was speculation the victim was Towery, a member of the Special Forces who had been assisting the Vietnamese in an operation against the Viet Cong near the border. When last seen Thursday, he was being taken alive toward Cambodian territory aboard a Viet Cong sampan.

The body was found Sunday about 10 yards from the border in the same area where he had been taken.

If the body was that of Towery, it was speculated that he had been returned to Vietnamese territory and killed there shortly after his capture.

There was also a suggestion that he had been killed in order to avoid any diplomatic incidents arising from the fact he had been taken by the Viet Cong into Cambodian territory.

Local Pilot Is Shot Down In Viet Nam

Eighth Oct 26 1964

C-123 Pilot Is School's First War Casualty

Air Academy Graduate Shot Down in Viet Nam

REDS DOWN AF TRANSPORT WITH 5 YANKS

Twin-Engine Plane Also Carrying 2 Viets Sighted Burning by Rescue Craft; All Aboard Feared Dead; Other Craft on Supply Mission Returns Safely

SAIGON, South Viet Nam — (UPI) Communist guerrillas today shot down a U. S. Air Force C123 transport plane loaded with a supply of ammunition. The five Americans and two Vietnamese aboard apparently were killed.

Supply Mission

A U.S. military spokesman said the plane was downed while on a resupply mission to the Bu Prang special forces camp in Quang Duc province, 100 miles northeast of Saigon.

He said it was "unlikely" there were any survivors.

He added that rescue craft flying over the wreckage "reported seeing the aircraft burning and ammunition aboard exploding."

The massive twin-engined "provider" transport was one of two U.S. Air Force planes on the resupply mission.

The spokesman said both planes came under fire, but that the second plane returned safely to Tan Son Nhut airport near Saigon.

The spokesman added that those aboard the crashed plane were three crew members from the U.S. Air Force, two soldiers of the U.S. Army special forces, and two Vietnamese believed to be military men.

Hunt Continues

Meanwhile, the hunt continued for a missing U.S. Army special forces officer who was captured during a battle Thursday and was last seen being taken toward Cambodia by his captors.

The officer was identified by an American military spokesman as Capt. Herman Y. Towery, whoes wife lives in Georgetown, S.C.

The South Viet Nam foreign ministry formally charged today that Towery was made prisoner by "Cambodian soldiers" who were helping communist Viet Cong guerillas in the border area battle.

Other Craft on Supply Mission Returns Safely

SAIGON, South Viet Nam — (UPI) Communist guerrillas today shot down a U. S. Air Force C123 transport plane loaded with a supply of ammunition. The five Americans and two Vietnamese aboard apparently were killed.

Supply Mission

A U.S. military spokesman

battle.

Demand Return

The Vietnames government demanded that neighboring Cambodia return Towery immediately.

The U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh formally asked the Cambodian government whether it had any information about Towery.

Both the Vietnamese government and the U.S. military here said Towery was taken prisoner on Vietnamese territory near the border with neutralist Cambodia. He then was reported taken across the border.

A U.S. military spokesman said earlier that air and ground operations were continuing in the area today in an attempt to rescue Towery.

Loss of U. S. Plane Linked to Cambodia

Compiled from Wire Dispatches

SAIGON, Viet Nam — There were indications Monday that a two-engine U.S. Air Force transport shot down Saturday was hit by Cambodian fire and not the Communist Viet Cong.

The U.S. C123 had been maki a supply drop over a U.S. Special Forces camp Saturday when it was hit by ground fire. It crashed and burned, and all eight Americans aboard were killed.

Among those killed was 1st Lt. Valmore W. Bourque, 28. He was the first graduate of the Air Force Academy to die in combat.

Bourque, a 1960 AFA graduate, is survived by a widow, Linda, and a daughter, Wendy, 2, who live in Colorado Springs.

Military sources said Monday the plane crashed in Viet Nam about hal fa mile from the Cambodian frontier. Cambodia announced Sunday that one of its anti-aircraft batteries had shot down an American two-engine plane Saturday at about the same place but on the Cambodian side.

Military sources here said the wreckage of the plane showed it had been hit not only with small arms fire but with projectiles of 50-caliber or larger.

A U.S. Air Force pilot and his Vietnamese co-pilot were killed Monday when their A1E Skyraider fighter - bomber ashed 30 miles northeast of Saigon. Oct 26, 1965

Another story on page 3.

1ST LT. VALMORE BOURQUE
Killed in South Viet Nam.

V. W. Bourque

COLORADO SPRINGS — Funeral services for 1st Lt. Valmore W. Bourque, first U.S. Air Force Academy graduate to be killed in action, will be held at 10 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 5, at the Chapel of Our Saviour, 8 Fourth Ave., Broadmoor.

The Rev. James Burnette will officiate. Burial will be at the Air Force Academy Cemetery and full military honors will be given. Nov 3, 65

Bourque was killed Oct. 24 while flying combat missions in South Viet Nam. He was pilot of a C123 and was the first lieutenant in his squadron to be upped to aircraft commander.

Using his French language ability, Bourque had developed a communication system which enabled U.S. personnel and French speaking Vietnamese to clearly exchange information under difficult conditions.

He was graduated from the Academy in 1960.

He is survived by his widow, Linda, and a daughter, Wendy, of Colorado Springs; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Valmore Bourque, and a brother, Robert, all of South Hadley, Mass.