

UH-1D 65-09631

Information on U.S. Army helicopter UH-1D tail number 65-09631

Date: 01/31/68

South Vietnam

UTM grid coordinates: AT845858

Original source(s) and document(s) from which the incident was created or updated: Defense Intelligence Agency Helicopter Loss database. Also: OPERA (Operations Report.)

Loss to Inventory

Eye Witness Report

You're all aware that I have been searching for Hubert Bankhead for many years. I have talked to each of you about him and related that traumatic time we shared in the opening hours of the Tet Offensive. I was AC at the time. Hubert was still learning the ropes as a pilot. We were assigned Little Bear aircraft 9631 for a counter mortar mission at Dau Tieng on 30 January 1968. Williams and Bell were the two crewmembers assigned. At 04:00 on the morning of the 31st, I decided to get the crew together and get into the air. Intelligence information indicated an impending attack from the enemy. The compound was basically surrounded. The blades were being turned for start when the enemy launched their attack. We got airborne but we never got to a safe altitude or airspeed. We crashed at 4:15 AM into trees. The aircraft inverted. We were surrounded. In short, we were all injured - but we all got out alive. Hubert lost his lower leg. He never made it back to our hooch, Magnet Manor.

A/C Rick Gillespie

P Hubert Bankhead

G Williams-No sure if Williams or Bell was the gunner, but they were the crew members

CE Bell