



JAMES EDWARD HUGHES

(OCTOBER 15, 1933 - MARCH 13, 1966)



Staff
Sergeant



Signal Corps
Radio Operator



Parachutist



Detachment A-302,
5th Special Forces
Group (Airborne)



III Corps



Mobile Strike
Force Command
(MIKE Force)

Years of Service: 1952 - 13 MAR 1966

Medals & Awards:

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Army Good Conduct Medal

National Defense Service Medal

Vietnam Service Medal

Korean Defense Service Medal

Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation

Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Four Service Stripes

One Overseas Service Bar



Staff Sergeant James Edward Hughes launched his 14 year career in the United States Army in 1952. He first saw action when he was deployed to Panama, serving as a paratrooper during the 1964 Anti-American riots over sovereignty of the Panama Canal Zone. Leaving Panama having completed 150 successful jumps, Hughes then joined the Special Forces, a select unit commonly known as the "Green Berets." SSG Hughes volunteered to serve two year-long tours in Vietnam and was assigned to Detachment A-302, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), III Corps, Mobile Strike Force Command, (Mike Force), 1st Special Forces as a radio operator. Known for their speed and precision, the Mike Force operated using jungle warfare tactics and worked closely with indigenous soldiers to gather intelligence, conduct raids, and disrupt enemy activity. Between tours, Hughes returned home on leave. In conversations with his family, he described difficult assignments that took him to remote outposts in the mountains. His final

mission, a search and destroy engagement known as Operation Silver City, took place in the Long Khanh Province.

James "Jimmy" Hughes was born in Pulaski County, Virginia, in 1933, to Alice Lillian Chapman and Goodson Frazier Hughes. He attended Pulaski High School, where he played football, and graduated from Roanoke's Jefferson High School in 1951. Hughes' connection to Lynchburg began in 1957, when he enrolled in classes at Lynchburg College. Jimmy's brother, Russell, also attended Lynchburg College and was finishing his senior year when Jimmy died in 1966. Their mother, Alice Hughes, remembered that Jimmy always wrote "happy letters" home in support of the Vietnam War. "Somebody has to fight this war," he wrote, "I'm not married and it's my duty to do it so that those who have families can stay at home."