

PFC Bobby Dale Smith
AEHC featured person for the week of July 25, 2021

Private First Class Bobby Dale Smith
April 22, 1948 – July 31, 1967

Killed in Action this week in 1967, PFC Bobby Dale Smith is buried in our cemetery's Section 5, Lot 92, Space 5.

Summary of our research: Bobby Dale Smith was born on April 22, 1948, to Dale Pershing Smith (1919-1962) and Gladys Mae (Adkins) Smith (1923-2017).

Bobby's father, Dale P. Smith, was the son of George Wiley Smith (1878-1968) and Clara Althea (Robeson) Smith (1884-1980). Dale was born in Brookville. He was listed as a stock clerk on the 1940 Census at the age of 21. He served with the US Army in WWII as a Private in the Battery A of the 246th Field Artillery Battalion. He married Gladys Mae (Adkins) in March 1945. They had three children Wanda Sue, Bobby Dale, and William Roscoe. Dale and Gladys moved to Manilla around 1957. Dale worked in Rushville at the International Furniture Company until he took ill around 1959. Dale passed away in 1962. Gladys also worked at the International Furniture Company, Shelbyville Danner's, and Hallmark Store. She was active in the Morristown American Legion Auxiliary. She passed away in 2017 and was buried next to her husband at Arlington East Hill Cemetery.

Bobby's paternal grandparents, George Wiley and Clara Althea (Robeson) Smith were farmers. George was born in Glenwood area to Wright T. Smith (1843-1880?) and Catharine (Hauk) Smith Davis (1848-1907?). George and Clara were married in 1902. They farmed near Brookville and then in Fayette County. They are both buried in Fayette County.

Bobby's paternal great-grandparents, Wright T. and Catharine (Hauk) Smith were married in 1864 after Wright T. Smith returned from the Civil War. He served as a Private in Company C of 16th Infantry. He was discharged due to wounds. Wright T. Smith was the son of John M. (1800-1865) and Prudence Smith (1802-1868). Wright is believed to be buried in the Nelson Cemetery, west of Arlington. Catharine remarried after Wright passed and is buried next to her second husband in Fayette County.

Wright's parents, Bobby's great-great-grandparents, John and Prudence came to Indiana around 1838. John was born in North Carolina and Prudence was born in Virginia. They are both buried in the Stanley Cemetery, north of Arlington.

Bobby's mother, Gladys Mae (Adkins) Smith, was born in Kentucky to Marion (1886-1968) and Martha (Ash) Adkins (1894-1979). The Adkins family came to Indiana through Kentucky after 1932. They were living in Fayette County in 1935 and by the 1940 Census were in Posey Township.

Bobby's maternal grandparents, Marion and Martha (Ash) Adkins were farmers. They are both buried in Arlington East Hill Cemetery.

Bobby Dale Smith grew up in Shelby County until his family moved to Manilla around 1957. He was a prominent athlete and graduated from Manilla High School in 1966. He won the Howard Ross Award, given annually to Manilla's outstanding basketball player. Bobby served on the Student Council and was active in various school clubs, including Future Farmers of America. Bobby was a member of the Arlington Christian Church.

Bobby enlisted in the United State Marine Corps on September 16, 1966. He was home that Christmas on leave between basic and advanced trainings. He was sent overseas to Vietnam on March 28, 1967. He was assigned to L Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Amphibious Force. Bobby suffered shrapnel wounds during an ambush on May 20th. After his six weeks of recovery, he returned to duty on July 5th.

Private First Class Bobby Dale Smith was killed in action in the Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam on July 31, 1967. Sadly, he became Rush County's first casualty of the Vietnam War. Bobby was survived by his mother, sister, brother, his grandparents, and several nieces and nephews.

PFC Bobby Dale Smith was laid to rest in Arlington East Hill Cemetery on Wednesday, August 16, 1967, with full military honors. He was escorted back to the States by his cousin, US Air Force Airman First Class Steven Adkins.

Unfortunately, two more from Rush County would be lost during the Vietnam War. The second casualty was PFC Michael D. Geise of Carthage, who was killed in action in March 1968. The third was Spec. James Keith Merrell of Milroy, who was killed in action in January 1969. PFC Geise was also laid to rest in Arlington East Hill Cemetery.

October 2020, Arlington East Hill Cemetery's Veterans and First Responders Honor Park was dedicated. PFC Bobby Dale Smith has a brick on our Walk of Honor and his name was placed on the Killed in Action panel of the "All Gave Some, Some Gave All" podium.

We will continue to honor PFC Bobby Dale Smith and PVT Dale P. Smith for their and their family's service and sacrifice for our Community and Country.

(Sources: Ancestry, Find-a-Grave, Newspaper archives, and Arlington East Hill Cemetery records)

More information about our cemetery and its history can be found at www.arlingtoneasthillcemetery.com

Pfc. Smith Rites Set

Funeral services for Marine Pfc. Bobby D. Smith, 19, of Manilla, who was killed in Vietnam on July 31, will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Hawk-Spencer Mortuary in Morristown, where friends may call after 7 o'clock this evening. Burial, with military rites,



will follow in Arlington East Hill Cemetery. The Rev. Benjamin L. Herring of the Homer Federated Church will officiate.

The young Marine, son of Mrs. Gladys Smith of Manilla, was a 1966 graduate of the Manilla High School where he was a prominent athlete.

His body was escorted home by a cousin, A 1/C Steven Adkins, also of Manilla, who is serving with the Air Force in Vietnam. The plane arrived in Indianapolis this morning.

