

CHARLES EDWARD BROWN Jr.

Battery C 4/42 Artillery

4th Infantry Division

KIA 11/02/1966

Age: 24

Race: Caucasian

Sex: Male

Date of Birth Sep 29, 1942

From: SPRINGFIELD, VA

Religion: EPISCOPAL, ANGLICAN

Marital Status: Married

1LT - O2 - Army - Regular

MOS: 1193: Field Artillery Unit Commander

Length of service 2 years

His tour began on Jul 23, 1966

Casualty was on Nov 2, 1966

In , SOUTH VIETNAM

NON-HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY

OTHER ACCIDENT

Body was recovered

Panel 12E - Line 9



LT Charles E. Brown's decorations

Charles Edward Brown, Jr., who matriculated at Yale with the Class of 1964, left after freshman year and accepted an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy in their Class of 1965. He was commissioned a First Lieutenant in the artillery and began his tour in Vietnam on 23 July 1966 as a member of Battery C, 4th Battalion, 42nd Artillery, 4th Infantry Division, US Army.

He died 2 November 1966 in Vietnam as the result of injuries received while supervising the loading of ammunition into a helicopter when a bundle of ammunition fell causing injury.

Below, courtesy of the West Point Association of Graduates, is the obituary that appeared in the Winter 1970 issue of the Assembly, the former alumni magazine for West Point graduates.

Charles Edward Brown, Jr.

U.S. Military Academy Class of 1965  
Died 2 November 1966 in Vietnam, aged 24 years.  
Interment: West Point Cemetery, West Point, New York

To the young man about to be tagged New Cadet Brown, C. E., that yawning sallyport might have been heaven's main portal, and that sharp 1961 Beast Detail a welcoming committee of angels.

This was it! For longer than anyone could recall, his dreams had focused on West Point. He had looked on all other opportunities mainly as preparing him for this. He had grown up among West Pointers, including three in his own family. His maternal grandfather (Ronald DeVore Johnson, '09), whom he idolized, had given him a shining image of the West Point graduate. Now at last Charlie had the chance to become one of these elite men.

Nearing nineteen, he packed two hundred pounds of solid strength on a six-foot frame. He had stamina and coordination for the rugged tasks ahead -- developed easily and naturally through the years of competitive sports and the discipline of hard physical labor.

Hopkins Grammar in New Haven had shown him glimpses of greatness and made him aware of his own intellect. Freshman year at Yale University had provided time and stimulation to search deeply for his life's purpose.

It was no boy's whim, but a young man's thoughtful decision that made him say his thanks and goodbye to Yale when Congressman Giaimo of Connecticut, rewarding Charlie's merit and single-minded persistence, offered him a principal appointment to the USMA Class of 1965.

And so he came, eagerly, joyfully, bringing gifts for his Alma Mater. All of nature's endowments, and all that he had made of them, he offered earnestly and without reservation. One thing he asked in return: Make me a West Pointer!

It is amusing to speculate on who was the more confounded those first few days -- Charlie Brown by the Beasties' impregnable sternness, or the Beasties, by his irrepressible happiness at being hounded by them. They surely must have judged him blasé, and put him down for special attention. How could they make allowances for the fact that he was in love with the whole Idea?

A human character is too complex to encompass with words. To us, his friends and relatives, Charlie's total nature was decent,

honest, and true -- essentially simple and lacking in guile. He was direct and eager in seeking the friendships of those whom he admired,  
and his outstanding qualities as a friend were enthusiasm and loyalty.

It was self-evident to Charlie that a soldier should love his country and be ready to defend it and that he, as a cadet, should be proud of West Point and of himself for being part of it. He was moved by the beauty of a full dress parade or an inspiring chapel service,  
by the spiritual force of Taps at graveside, and by the pageantry, the tumult, the surging voice of the Corps at a hard-fought football game.

For Charlie, as for his classmates, this was a time of growth and maturing -- learning more about his own real nature and that of his fellows. His cadet years were, overall, a smooth and easy passage. He watched with unbounded pride as the Academy made him into a man -- strong in body and character, keen, alert, purposeful.

As graduation approached, we realized that Charlie had found his love and his life's full meaning in the person of a young lady named Joan Bucknam. It was a delightful coincidence that Joan's father and Charlie's were USMA classmates ('34) and there was already a bond of friendship between the in-laws-to-be.

As she later expressed it, Ruth Bucknam, Joan's mother, found beneath Charlie's solid and forceful personality a fine, delicate sensitivity.

In nature, in music, in books, and in people, she found Charlie always in search of tenderness and beauty.

And Ralph, Joan's father, says, "To me he was a son. I was proud of his unswerving devotion to duty, his concern over his enlisted men, and his knowledge of his profession. I am sure that he would have made a real mark in his profession."

The summer of 1965 was a memorable whirl of excited goings and comings: Joan's graduation from Vassar three days before Charlie's from USMA; then jump school with plans for an early fall wedding; then weekly revisions of plans, each setting the wedding earlier than the last. Finally, a beautiful ceremony on July 31st in the Cadet Chapel and an unforgettable reception in the Officers' Mess.

After one happy year of stateside life together, mostly at Fort Lewis, Joan and Charlie received the long-expected alert for his unit.

There was one last visit back East with the families, and then a difficult farewell.

Charlie went out to Vietnam with a professional's full knowledge of what awaited his unit. But his leave-taking was casual, as befits a soldier. There was unspoken yet dearly expressed love for all of us. He went proudly and confidently, buoyed by our love for him. He went with a West Pointer's heart for his duty. He had great plans and hopes for a life to be shared with all of us.  
But this job was to be done first.

And then in November came the tragic news that he had been killed in a combat accident.

Word from many sources has told us what splendid leadership and dedication he gave to this, his last duty. Those who served with him admired and respected him; throughout his battalion they felt a deep sense of loss after his death.

Now that he is gone, we see our Charlie more dearly than ever before. We are awed and grateful that he was one of us.

We know now that the central motivating force of his life was simply to please and honor -- and earn the approval of those he loved.

His wife, his parents, his parents-in-law, his brother and sister, his grandparents, his friends, and the men he was responsible for -- these were the people from whom he drew his strength. And there was his beloved Alma Mater with her long gray line of loyal sons

which he had so proudly joined.

He wanted his life always to honor them and show his faith in them.

Well done! Well done, indeed, our son!

Top photo and above text taken from the website:

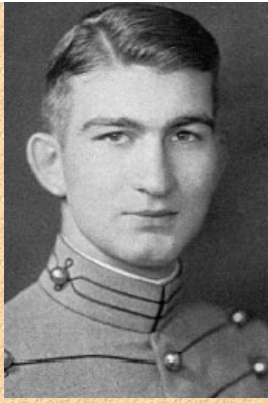
[Yale University Class of 1964](#)

Charles E. Brown Jr. is buried in the cemetery at West Point



Grave marker for Charles E. Brown

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**COLONEL CHARLES EDWARD BROWN**

1st Lieutenant Charles E. Brown Jr.'s father, Colonel Charles E. Brown, was also a graduate of the US Military Academy, Class of 1934. Colonel Brown served with distinction during World War II, earning the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, three Bronze Stars, the Purple Heart and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

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