



Private Grover H. Sommers

Headquarters, Headquarters Company

29th Engineering Topographic Battalion

Grover H. Sommers, the son of George and Elizabeth Buys Sommers, was born on December 22, 1928, in Salt Lake City. His father died before he was born and his mother died when he was seven years old. He was reared by his Uncle and Aunt, George and Ada Sommers Lee.

A graduate of North Summit High School, he enlisted in the army on August 15, 1949. He was assigned to Headquarters, Headquarters Company 29th Engineering Topographic Battalion. On a flight from Manila to Tokyo, Japan; he was killed along with 33 other passengers when the plane crashed into Mount Hirugatake. He died on April 20, 1950.

At the time of his death, he was survived by his sister Ada Norma and his Aunt and Uncle. He was buried in the Coalville City, Utah cemetery.

The 29th Engineer Topographic Battalion, was one of two active topographic battalions, and is the oldest of all U.S. military mapping units. It was created on October 20, 1917. The responsibilities of the 29th included first, second, and third order geodetic surveys and photogrammetric control surveys; collection of maps produced by foreign mapping agencies; and collection of geodetic data and engineer intelligence data for the Army Map service. At the time of Pvt. Sommers death, they were stationed in the Philippine Islands.

The Battalion's distinctive unit insignia is as follows: the blue shield with the red saltire is from the arms of Langres, Haute Marne, France, and recalls the location of the headquarters of the 29th Engineers and the Base Printing Plant during World War I. The white piping along the red diagonals gives the Engineer colors. The four stars indicate the four major operations with the 29th Engineers are credited as follows: Aisne-Marne, Toul Sector, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne. The red five bastioned fort indicates the number of the parent organization (5th Engineers), and also recalls the Santiago Campaign of 1898. The crescent symbolizes the fighting against the Philippine Moros.