

## Three War Veteran

By the time he arrived at Clemson College in 1946, Albert Ward Smarr, Jr. had already served his country in time of war. Smarr left his home of Hickory Grove and enlisted in the Army in September 1943. He served as a B17 gunner and radio operator assigned to the 570<sup>th</sup> Squadron of the 390 Bomb Group. Flying from Framlingham Airfield in Southeastern England, the 570<sup>th</sup> was a frequent visitor over enemy territory. On a mission over Berlin in March 1945, Smarr's aircraft was downed by enemy fire and Smarr spent the remaining two months of the war in Europe as a prisoner in Stalag Luft 1A. Smarr was freed when the Red Army overran Berlin in May. He was honorably discharged from the Army Air Force as a staff sergeant on November 4, 1945.



Like so many returning veterans, Smarr took advantage of the GI Bill to enroll in Clemson. At Clemson, Smarr was active in the amateur radio club and Iota Lambda Sigma, the national industrial education fraternity, which he served as president his senior year. Upon graduation in 1950, Smarr received a commission as an Army second lieutenant and completed training in both infantry and armor—just in time for the Korean War.

Smarr served as a platoon leader with the 89th Tank Battalion in Korea before being assigned as aide-de-camp to the Commanding General of the 25th Infantry Division in February 1952. After the war, Smarr commanded a company in the 57th Tank Battalion, V Corps in Germany and later was the Assistant S-3 on the battalion staff.

From 1956 to 1965, Smarr's assignments consisted of various training positions, culminating in attendance at the Army's prestigious Command and General Staff College. As the operations officer of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division Smarr served his first tour of duty in Vietnam as an advisor to the 25th ARVN Infantry Division. Later, while assigned to the staff of Plans Division, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Department of the Army, Colonel Smarr returned to Vietnam to participate in a study of the feasibility of the use of armor in Southeast Asian warfare.



From 1968-1970, he returned to South Carolina as Battalion Commander and then Brigade Commander at the US Army Training Center, Infantry, at Fort Jackson. Colonel Smarr returned to Vietnam in July 1971 as Chief, Territorial Forces Division, Advisory Team 1, Military Assistance Command Vietnam. In February 1972, Col Smarr was accompanying his counterpart, a high ranking ARVN General Officer, on a liaison visit to the destroyer USS *Craig*,

in Da Nang harbor. On lifting off from the ship, the helicopter tail rotor impacted a railing on the ship's deck causing the helicopter to crash into the sea. Only three of the ten personnel on board the helicopter survived the crash.

Colonel Smarr was survived by his wife, Dorothy Anne Smarr; sons Albert, Richard, and John; and daughters Linda and Joan.

For his courageous, loyal and selfless service in three wars, Albert Smarr was awarded the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Prisoner of War Medal, Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, UN Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnamese Medal of Honor, Aerial Gunners Wings, and General Staff Identification Badge.

Albert Smarr served his country and the cause of freedom around the globe. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

