

Colonel Harold T. Smith (Combat in Three Wars) Artillery OCS Class 84-43

Harold T. Smith was born in Covington, Tennessee, on March 16, 1920. He graduated from Arkansas State College, in 1943, with a B.S. degree in business administration. Since WW II prevented the Class of '43 from commissioning upon graduation (although they had finished four years of ROTC), he and his classmates became second lieutenants through Officer Candidate School (OCS). On 9 September 1944, he completed the Field Artillery Pilot Course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. This qualified him to fly the small, unarmed airplanes that were organic to the Field Artillery. In January 1945, he deployed to Europe with the 16th Armored Division and flew combat fire support missions throughout France, Germany, and into Czechoslovakia. In 1948, he accepted a regular Army appointment.

In early September 1952, Captain Smith was assigned to Division Artillery HQ, 25th Infantry Division in Korea. As the Division Artillery Aviation officer, he had staff supervision of 16 aircraft pilots and aerial observers and all aviation operations to insure continuous aerial surveillance over the division's area. In addition to his staff duties, Captain Smith flew many reconnaissance flights himself. From 17 September to 5 October 1952, Captain Smith served with distinction as an air observation pilot, flying twenty missions in Korea. His superior knowledge of artillery fire direction procedures and his flying proficiency earned him the Air Medal. He later earned a Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster (BOLC) on his Air Medal for flight operations from 6 October to 24 November 1952 and a second BOLC from 25 November 1952 to 4 January 1953. By 1953, he had flown 140 missions and was featured in a news article in the Memphis paper "The Commercial Appeal."

As a Lieutenant Colonel, and commander of 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division (airmobile), he received The Bronze Star Medal for outstanding, meritorious service in connection with ground operations against hostile forces in the Republic of Vietnam, 1 September 1965 to 20 July 1966. During the period of July 1968 to 1970, Colonel Smith was Deputy Director, SD3, Institute Special Studies, U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, conducting computerized war games comparing Lockheed AH-56A armed helicopters to other types of aircraft. Throughout his career, COL Harold T. Smith distinguished himself by exceptional service in positions of great responsibility culminating as Director, Directorate of Plans, Training and Security, U.S. Army Aviation Center School, Fort Rucker, Alabama, from October 1970 to September 1973 for which he earned The Legion of Merit.