



Colonel Elizabeth H. Branch

Colonel Elizabeth H. Branch was born on July 16, 1917, in Stanford, Connecticut.

She enlisted in the Army on July 31, 1942 and attended the WAAC Officer Candidate School at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. She was commissioned upon graduation as a member of OCS Class # 4 on October 3, 1942.

She served during World War II at Camp Blanding, Florida and later in England, France, and Belgium and immediately afterwards in Nanking, China on a mission headed by General George C. Marshall in 1946.

Colonel Branch served at Fort McClellan Alabama from 1955-1957 as an instructor and LOGEX (Logistic Exercise) Liaison Officer and was the head of WAC officer procurement for Fourth Army at Fort Sam Houston during 1958.

After earning a bachelor's degree from George Washington University, she became the first female officer to head a division of the Army Ordnance Guided Missile School at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

She was assigned to the Troop Operations Division, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, Headquarters Department of the Army prior to her command assignment from June 1966 to August 1968, where she served as Commanding Officer and

Commandant of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) Center and School at Fort McClellon, Alabama.

When the restrictions on women's promotions were lifted in late 1967, she was on the first list of women promoted to full colonel. Of the twenty-seven eligible WAC officers, she was one of the six selected by the Board. Until that time there were only two WAC Colonels - the Director of the WAC and a member of the White House Staff.

In September 1968 she became one of the first women officers assigned to the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Colonel Branch was assigned to the MACV (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) as the command historian in 1971. She remained in that assignment for 18 months. Two annual histories of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, appeared between February 1971 and August 1972, when she led its Military History Branch.

Her military awards include: The Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, The Bronze Star, Army Commendation Medal, Women's Army Corps Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, European African Middle-Eastern Service Medal, World War II Victory Medal, National Defense Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Vietnam Service Medal and Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Colonel Branch retired after with more than 30 years of service after returning from Vietnam in 1972.

She served on the Board of Directors of the Women's Army Corps Foundation and developed the foundation's oral history program.

She died on February 26, 2006 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.