

Lieutenant General Carl H. Jark

Lieutenant General Carl H. Jark is an important figure in the history of Fort Sill, the Field Artillery School and the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School (FAOCS) that was established at Fort Sill in 1941. LTG (then CPT) Jark was the first Commandant of the Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill and served in that position until July 1942. After fighting in World War II, he returned to Fort Sill as a Colonel and served as the Executive Officer of the Field Artillery School.

He was born on June 13, 1905 in Leigh, Nebraska and graduated high school in 1924. Standing at 6' 5", Jark was a tremendous athlete and acquired the nickname "Tiny". While a cadet at West Point, Jark participated in the 1929 Drake Relays and broke the world record by throwing a discus 158 feet and 3 inches. He graduated from West Point on June 13, 1929.

During the early 1930s, Jark attended primary flying school, served in the 18th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, completed the Battery Officer's Course and Advanced Motors Course. In the late 1930s, he served in the 13th Field Artillery, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, the 17th Field Artillery, Fort Bragg, N.C., and in May 1939 became an instructor at the Field Artillery School.

In June 1941, Captain Jark was placed in command of the new Officer Candidate School by the commandant of the Field Artillery School, BG George R. Allin. Captain Jark was given a staff of instructors to plan and execute the new organization, discipline and academic instruction of the school. As originally planned in 1941, the OCS organizational scheme called for a commandant of candidates, an executive officer, an adjutant, and a supply officer. Each class was commanded by a class tactical officer with one assistant class tactical officer per hundred students.

Captain Jark's FAOCS headquarters was in Building 2600 (then known as CC 1). The first OCS class was billeted in pyramidal tents (w/ wooden supporting frames on concrete slabs) just east across the street (Currie Road). Their tents paralleled Currie from Ringgold to Miner Road. The next several classes extended the tented battery areas eastward. For a while as each class graduated, an incoming class took its place. This was the original home of OCS and before it closed 12 December 1946, it had expanded into some 1500 hutments. The original Classes started with 126 candidates. By the time Jark left, classes of 550 were starting each week and the staff had expanded to strength of 66 officers and an authorized course capacity of 6,600 candidates, 12 classes of 550 candidates each.

During his long and distinguished career, he commanded the 1st Cavalry Division Artillery in Japan and the 2nd Armored Division Artillery in Germany. He was Commanding General of the 7th Infantry Division in Korea and the Commanding General of the Fourth U.S. Army from January 1962 until his retirement on July 31, 1964.

General Jark returned to Fort Sill several times during the 1960's and 1970's and visited the Officer Candidate School each time. He served as the Graduation Speaker for Class 4-73, the last class to graduate on July 6, 1973. During his address to the last graduating class, he offered these words of advice to the newly commissioned second lieutenants: "Those of you who will soar with eagles in the morning should not hoot with owls at night."

General Jark's decorations include the Army Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm. He passed away March 22,1984 at the age of 78.