



**Class Narrative Class 2-67 B1
19 July 1966 – 10 January 1967
U.S. Army Armor School OCS**



Class 2-67, the second class designated as Company B1, was the sixth Armor branch specific class and eighteenth OCS class at Fort Knox during the Vietnam War Era. Starting the twenty-three week mentally and physically challenging course on Tuesday 19 July 1966 the class would celebrate their graduation on Tuesday 10 January 1967. The company roster that was on file at the Armor School Research Library may be missing its last page. There are 103 names typed in alphabetic order on the roster and there is no indication that candidates from other classes were recycled into the class. The rosters of other classes who had candidates recycled into the class had the names handwritten in on the last page of the roster. It was determined that three OC's in the class were recycled to three other classes and graduated. Those classes were 6-67, A2; 7-67, C1; and 12-67, F1. Twenty-three members of the class either quit or were relieved from the Officer Candidate program, and seventy-seven Senior Officer Candidates would graduate and be commissioned as Second Lieutenants of Armor on 10 January 1967. The class average was 82.14.

Donald R. Hawkins and Lester A. Smoot, Jr. were retained as Tac Officers in the Officer Candidate Brigade. Donald Hawkins was assigned to classes 9-67 and 25-67, Company D2. Lester Smoot would be assigned to three classes. Class 16-67, Company H2; 27-67, Company G1; and 1-68, Company E1. Twenty members of the class received orders to the Officers Rotary Wing Aviators Course. Of the seventy-seven graduates it's known that nineteen are at Fiddler's Green. Four of the nineteen were killed in Vietnam. Thirty-four graduates have been located.

The graduation ceremony was held in Gaffey Hall Auditorium. In his introductory remarks, BG Richard L. Irby acting assistant commandant of the Armor School, said he hoped the candidates would take what they learned and apply it with common sense and continue to learn. Graduation guest speaker was the Armor Center's Chief of Staff, COL Thomas Dooley. He advised the graduates to be able to combine humility with pride. Be wisely aggressive without being dogmatic. Be firm without being stubborn. Be capable of making decisions without being rash. Accept criticism without resenting it. Inspire others, and at the same time, be inspired by others. Be loyal not only to those whom you serve but to those who serve under you. Senior Officer Candidate John F. Pilling gave the class response. Following the response COL Bernard E. McKeever, commanding officer of the OC Brigade administered the Oath of Office. It was announced that the Distinguished Honor Graduate was Charles F. Riley and he also had won the Military Stakes Course by earning 886 of the possible 1000 points. Distinguished Honor Graduate was William J. Zuraitis and the Distinguished Military Graduates were James M. Ingraham, Terrell L. Sharp, James H. Rausch, Theodor H. Rauh, Donald W. Venn, II and Billy G. Chapman. As DHG Charles Riley received his gold bars from COL Dooley and Mrs. Daniel A. Wilson who was the wife of B Company Commander, CPT Daniel A. Wilson. Mrs. Wilson filled in for 2LT Riley's wife who was in Germany.

This class had recipients of the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service. James M. "Mike" Sprayberry was the recipient of the Medal of Honor. His Medal of Honor citation can be read at <https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/1615>. Earl D. Greer was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross. His Distinguished Service Cross citation is detailed at <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=5069>. COL Earl D. Greer (Ret), COL Mike P. Kehoe (Ret), and LTC James M. "Mike" Sprayberry have been inducted into the OCS Hall of Fame at Fort Benning, Georgia.

29 December 2018