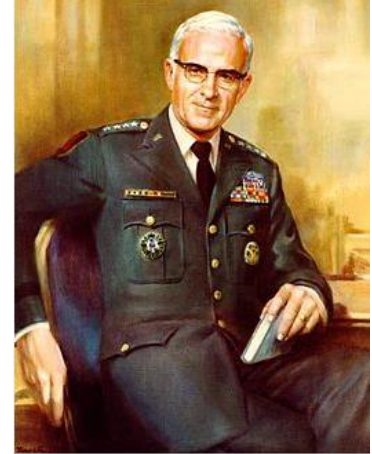


## **Bernard W. (“Bernie”) Rogers** **USMA Class of June 1943**



General Bernard W. Rogers was born in Kansas in 1921 and spent a year studying at Kansas State University before reporting to the U.S. Military Academy in the summer of 1940. He graduated 13<sup>th</sup> (of 514) in the war-shortened class of June 1943 and served as the First Captain of the Corps of Cadets. After completing the Infantry Officer Basic Course he was assigned back to USMA to teach economics, government, and history. After serving as an aide from 1945-1947, he attended the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar and then commanded the 3d Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Korea from 1952-1953. After serving in various troop, command, and staff assignments Rogers again saw combat as the assistant division commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in Vietnam from 1966-1967. For his actions there he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, one of the few awarded to a general officer for actions in Vietnam. Rogers left Vietnam to become the Commandant of the Corps of Cadets at USMA from 1967-1969. He then commanded the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and Fort Carson, CO where he set up two way communication with enlisted soldiers by implementing the “Enlisted Men’s Council.” Rogers became known as one of the innovative thinkers of the Army after he shared his inventive ways of handling disciplinary, racial, drug, and other issues at the Army Commanders Conference in November 1970. As a general officer, Rogers also served as U.S. Army DCSPER, CG of FORSCOM, Chief of Staff of the United States Army (1976-1979) and Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACUER) from 1979-1987. He retired in 1987 after 44 years as an active duty commissioned officer.

General Rogers was dedicated to a “people-first” style of leadership and is credited with instigating the framework to transition to the All Volunteer Force using quality of life programs while still maintaining a focus on training and unit readiness. General Bernard Rogers was recognized with the Distinguished Graduate Award by his alma mater in 1995. He passed away in 2008.

### **Awards:**

DSC, Defense DSM (2), Army DSM, Navy DSM, Air Force DSM, SS, LOM (4), Distinguished Flying Cross (3), BS w/V, PH, CIB

## Distinguished Service Cross

AWARDED FOR ACTIONS DURING Vietnam War

Service: Army

Rank: Brigadier General

Division: 1st Infantry Division

GENERAL ORDERS:

Headquarters, U.S. Army, Vietnam, General Orders No. 4124 (August 14, 1967)

### CITATION:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Brigadier General Bernard William Rogers (ASN: 0-25867), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division. Brigadier General Rogers distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 10 March 1967 while serving as Assistant Division Commander, 1st Infantry Division during a Viet Cong attack on a Vietnamese Special Forces camp at Cau Song Be. Upon being notified that the Vietnamese camp was under attack, he immediately flew to the area. General Rogers made several low helicopter passes over the besieged camp, despite intense hostile fire, to investigate the strength and disposition of the Viet Cong forces. He alerted nearby artillery and aircraft bases and then landed in the beleaguered camp amidst an enemy mortar barrage. He conferred with the ground commander, assessed the battle situation, and mapped a plan of defense. Exposing himself constantly to the insurgents' fire, he supervised the positioning of the defenders on the perimeter and adjusted artillery and air strikes. General Rogers' willingness to risk his life for the Vietnamese soldiers and their camp inspired the men to fight with renewed vigor. Returning to his helicopter, he made additional passes over the area to further assess the situation and to ensure that the Viet Cong positions had not changed. Flying at extremely low levels, he accurately marked the enemy concentrations with smoke grenades to aid incoming support aircraft in locating their targets. However, the fighter pilots were unable to see the smoke well enough because of the darkness and dense jungle foliage. General Rogers directed his pilot to maneuver over the insurgents at minimum altitude while the door gunner marked the targets with tracer rounds from his machine gun, enabling the supporting aircraft to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy. When the Viet Cong broke contact and began to retreat, General Rogers directed additional air strikes on them, inflicting further casualties. His dynamic leadership, outstanding tactical ability and unparalleled courage were responsible for the overwhelming defeat of the insurgent forces. Brigadier General Rogers' extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.