



General Douglas Kinnard

September 13, 1921 - July 29, 2013

Brigadier General, USA Ret., Douglas Kinnard, decorated combat veteran of three wars, whose final major task was, as head of Field Force II Vietnam, to plan the Cambodian incursion in the spring of 1970, died July 29 in Chambersburg, PA. He was 91.

A graduate of West Point's D-Day Class of June 6, 1944, Kinnard was first assigned to the 71st Division, which joined up with Patton's 3rd Army after the Rhine crossing. The 71st served as the lead division on Patton's left flank as the Third Army advanced rapidly across southern Germany. An Artillery lieutenant and forward observer, he was awarded the Bronze Star for Heroic Achievement. Advancing into Austria, the 71st liberated German death camps and took hundreds of thousands of German prisoners.

Reassigned to Headquarters Third Army in Heidelberg, Germany, Kinnard headed the staff responsible for the return of US Forces home. He himself returned in 1947 and was sent to Princeton University as a graduate student in the Dept. of Politics. Upon completion, he joined the faculty of the Field Artillery School at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, where he met Wade Tyree, daughter of a local lawyer, who had recently been crowned Miss Oklahoma University Freshman. They were married two years later.

During the Korean War, Kinnard served with an artillery unit on the Eighth

Army front. For his service he was awarded an oak leaf cluster to the bronze star medal. After early promotion, in 1957 he was assigned to the Pentagon to the office of General Maxwell Taylor, the Army Chief of Staff. There he worked on strategy papers under the supervision of General William Westmoreland, who would again be his immediate supervisor in Vietnam. After further studies at the Army War College, he was named a special assistant to the Supreme Commander of NATO at its headquarters in France. He was seen as a rising star among his peers and by his superiors. He was then given command of the 24th Division Artillery in Munich, Germany.

Following this, he was ordered to Vietnam as Chief of Operations Analysis, working directly for Westmoreland. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for his work. On his return home, he became the first artilleryman of his West Point class to be promoted to Brigadier General, and, at the time, he was the youngest general in the army. Though regarded as an officer with a brilliant career before him, Kinnard said that he then began to consider retiring to pursue a career in academia. Consequently, he began to explore the possibility of returning to Princeton for a Ph.D. Believing that staying in the army would preclude the time left him to establish a significant career dedicated to writing and teaching, Kinnard sought to retire from the Army. He was refused, deemed too valuable and needed for a second tour in Vietnam.

Back in Vietnam in May 1969, Kinnard commanded some 8,000 artillerymen located in sixty fire bases from the Cambodian border to the South China Sea. Each day he helicoptered to some of these bases as well as to nearby Vietnamese artillery units, and to the infantry forces they both supported. After six months in command, Kinnard was assigned as Chief of Staff of the Second Field Force and for several months also acted as its deputy commander. His final major task was to head up Field Force planning for the Cambodian incursion, which began April 30, 1970. At the completion of his second Vietnam tour he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the

Distinguished Flying Cross, four Air Medals for Valor, and several Allied medals including the National Order of Vietnam. Upon returning home, he retired and headed for Princeton, where he had been accepted for a fellowship in Princeton's Department of Politics.

By 1973 Kinnard had his Ph.D., a publishable dissertation on the Eisenhower presidency, a tenure-track position in the University of Vermont's Political Science Department, and also served as Director of Area and International Studies, an interdepartmental position. Kinnard found the academic period stimulating and always felt that his years as a college professor were immensely fulfilling. During this period he took a two-year leave of absence from UVM to become the only civilian to serve as Chief of Military History, U.S. Army. Chief of Staff John Wickham later commended him as "a superb Chief of Military History."

Returning to UVM he continued to publish seminal works on both Vietnam and the Eisenhower presidential years. His original scholarship on the latter was the basis for the subsequent positive reassessment of President Eisenhower now commonly accepted. *The War Managers*, considered a classic, is a study and analysis of the perceptions of Kinnard's fellow general officers who served in Vietnam. It was with the passing of Gen. Creighton Abrahms that Kinnard realized the pressing necessity to gather insights and opinions of these generals while they were still alive, on how the war had been conducted. He had often commented on how our understanding of history could have deepened if Grant's or Pershing's officers had been interviewed soon after their wars. The book is highly critical of civilian/political leadership and its consequences in Vietnam. The book's conclusions are applicable to current U.S. foreign policy, especially in light of our present involvement in the Middle East.

Regarded with great esteem by students and colleagues, Kinnard was made Professor Emeritus at the University of Vermont in 1984. After his return to UVM, he continued his academic career as a visiting professor at a number of universities. In 1994, President Clinton appointed him a Commissioner on The American Battle Monuments Commission. In that capacity he participated in planning and supervising the funding and construction of the World War Two Memorial on the National Mall. For these duties Kinnard received his second Distinguished Service Medal.

Kinnard authored eight books. In 2001 he published *From The Paterson Station: The Way We Were*, memoirs of his early years through the Depression, World War Two, and the post-war years. He completed his memoirs in 2012 with *Adventures in Two Worlds: Vietnam General and Vermont Professor*.

Kinnard will be buried at West Point on August 15. He is survived by his wife, Wade Tyree Kinnard, and his son, Frederick.

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