



John E. Mann Sr.

March 24, 1926 - December 12, 2015

Lieutenant Colonel John E. Mann was a distinguished thirty-three year veteran of the United States Army who served in Europe, Korea, The Middle East and South East Asia and was awarded more than thirty U.S. and foreign decorations. They include The Silver Star, three Legions of Merit, three Bronze Stars, The Distinguished Flying Cross, The Meritorious Service Medal, The Army Commendation Medal, six awards of The Air Medal, The Combat Infantry Badge, the Glider Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge and seven foreign awards. He spent seventeen years in Airborne and Special Forces units. His parachute jumps outside the Continental United States included those in Germany, Okinawa, Vietnam and Lebanon.

John Earl Mann, Sr. was born March 24, 1926 in Camden, South Carolina to Otis Mann and Helen Carlos Mann, their only child. At twelve years of age, Mann became a member of the Methodist denomination and his love of God and Christian values sustained him throughout his life. After several years of attending the South Carolina public schools, John was enrolled in Mather Academy and graduated in 1944. Shortly thereafter, he was drafted into the United States Army at age 18 in October, 1944. He reported to Fort Banks, Massachusetts for his induction and was then transferred to Fort McClellan, Alabama for basic training.

Determined to continue his education, John took college courses in the

evening and in 1966, he received the bachelor's degree in history from Park College in Parkville, Missouri. In 1976 he was awarded the master's degree in public administration from the University of Oklahoma. Mann was a graduate of the Army's Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

After completing basic training, Mann was selected as cadre (drill sergeant) and trained troops for combat. Shortly after the war ended in Europe, he was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia – the home of the Airborne School. Although he had seen a film of airborne training, he had not had the opportunity to experience “up close and personal” paratroopers executing their responsibilities. He was indelibly impressed with their demeanor, self-confidence and courage. It was there Mann observed black paratroopers for the first time. His term of service was about to end and upon discharge, he re-enlisted for airborne duty in early 1947 with the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, known as the Triple Nickles. This was the first and only black battalion that served during World War II. Although Mann was not a part of the inaugural units, he had the distinguished honor to serve with the organization prior to its being integrated into the 82nd Airborne Division and becoming the 3rd Battalion, 505th Airborne Infantry Regiment.

Shortly after the Korean War began, Mann became a company First Sergeant at the age of 24 and later received a direct commission as Second Lieutenant. He served as First Lieutenant in the closing months of the Korean War and was given the command of a company in the 3rd Infantry Division. Upon his departure, he was awarded his first Bronze Star. Later he was assigned again to the 11th Airborne Division, and while serving on a peace-keeping mission during the Cold War in Germany, was sent to Lebanon where he was promoted to Captain.

After completing Special Forces and counter-insurgency training, Mann was

assigned to 1st Special Forces Group on Okinawa and sent as a detachment commander to Viet Nam where he served on the Division Staff in the 25th Infantry Division and later as Battalion Commander. He saw considerable combat and earned numerous medals and commendations for his valor in battle.

Following his service in Viet Nam, Mann was assigned to the Pentagon as an Executive Officer in the Warsaw Pact Division until 1973. His next assignment was to The Netherlands to serve as Commander of the American Army Troops assigned to Allied Forces Central Europe Headquarters. He returned to the United States in 1977 and completed his last year of service at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, DC before retiring as Lieutenant Colonel.

Mann was a founding member of the 555th Parachute Infantry Association, the first black parachute unit which was later integrated into the 82nd Airborne Division. In 1978, Mann met with former members of the Triple Nickles at Howard University to plan their first reunion that would take place at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in 1979. Mann enjoyed attending annual reunions that were held across the country. He served as public information officer for the national organization.

He was also a founding member of The Rocks, Inc. an organization of active duty and retired army officers who visit historically black colleges teaching and mentoring young cadets and encouraging them to choose army as a career.

As a civilian, Mann was appointed County Personnel Officer for Prince George's County Maryland from 1979 to 1981, before taking a position as business manager for Glenelg Country School in Howard County, Maryland. He retired from Glenelg in 1991.

While enrolled at Mather Academy, Mann's writing ability was recognized and encouraged by his teachers. He continued writing and during and after military service his articles were published in a number of national magazines and newspapers. After attending a seminar at his local library in the early 1990s, Mann joined Sisters in Crime, a fiction, mystery writing group. He completed writing courses with Long Ridge Writers Group in West Redding, Connecticut. In 2003, his first mystery novel was published followed by three others in five years.

Following his civilian retirement, Mann continued to participate in numerous military and civic activities. He taught Sunday school classes; mentored and tutored boys at a middle school in Baltimore city; promoted the legacy of The Triple Nickles through speaking engagements and television interviews. He was honored to receive requests to address a chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America at Graterford Prison in Pennsylvania, cadets at the Naval Academy in Annapolis and graduating seniors at Glenelg Country School. While writing, military and civic responsibilities kept him busy, John always found time to play golf. He played with friends on local golf courses and his golf clubs were always a part of his luggage when he travelled – in and out of the country.

Each year, the National Visionary Leadership Project (NVLP) in Washington, DC selects African Americans who are seventy years of age or older who have made significant contributions in their fields of endeavor and in the African American Community. The NVLP is a nonprofit organization co-founded by Camille Cosby and Renee Poussaint. In 2008, John was selected as an NVLP elder in recognition of his exemplary military service. Among those with whom he shares this honor are Maya Angelou, Edward Brooke, Ray Charles, John Hope Franklin and Shirley Chisholm. Videotapes of the elders' interviews are permanently archived at the Smithsonian Institution.

Mann balanced his commitment to military service and family. He was a kind, loving and generous husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. During his military career, his family travelled worldwide with him and their care and well-being were always a first priority. His first wife, Grace Thigpen died during his deployment in the Netherlands. His second marriage was to Jean Tucker Adams in 1987 and they treasured and nurtured their large, blended family. John and Jean were a loving couple and best friends. They enjoyed one another, travelled worldwide and had a broad circle of friends and colleagues. Mann was described by both family and friends as a trustworthy, dependable person of quiet dignity whose military bearing belied a gentle spirit and keen sense of humor. Mann was respectful of all with whom he came in contact.

In 2005, Jean shared with John her desire to rejoin Zion Baptist Church where her mother was one of the founders. John became a member of Zion and he and Jean attended regularly until he became ill.

During several years of failing health, Mann received loving, caring support from his wife and family. Tiffany Gardner, his primary caregiver was described by family as “an earthly angel” who provided loving care seven days a week whether her patient was in the home, hospital or rehabilitation facility. The family thanks the staff at Manor Care Ruxton for their attentive care.

Mann’s life, legacy and cherished memories will live on through his loving wife, Jean; sons, Rev. John Earl Mann, Jr., Stuart Adams (Deidra), Rev. Scott Adams (Tanya); daughters, Helen Mann Williams, Patricia Mann Quarles; grandchildren, Dorrien Mann, Tricia Goodman (Douglass), Grace Nix, Randall Adams, Harrison Adams, Scott Adams II, Ray Owensby; great-grandchildren, Darren Moulden, Michael Goodman, Gabrielle Goodman, Kimani Nix, Ricardo Duplechan and many relatives and friends.

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA

Previous Events

Public Viewing

DEC 17. 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Wake

DEC 18. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion Baptist Church
1700 N. Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Service

DEC 18. 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion Baptist Church
1700 N. Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21205

Tribute Wall



“ *John E. Mann Sr.*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *Jean, you are in our prayers. The Barhams*

Doris Barham - December 17, 2015 at 05:22 PM



“ *Dear Jean:*

You and your family have my sincere condolences at this time. I know that you have been a wonderful caregiver and example of faith and fortitude. I will continue to place your name in the prayer urn at The Open Church.

May you be surrounded by many loved ones and friends who hold dear memories of John. He had to be a wonderful man, husband and father because of the lovely person I've seen in you. Most of all, may you know always that God is with you ALWAYS; so walk with the Peace of the Lord.

*Sincerely,
Marco K. Merrick*

Marco K. Merrick - December 17, 2015 at 02:20 PM



“ *Please accept my condolences and the comfort that the scripture at PS.34:18 brings.*

Sharon Harris - December 17, 2015 at 10:31 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of John E. Mann Sr..*



December 16, 2015 at 10:15 AM



“ *We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.*

March Funeral Homes - December 14, 2015 at 04:51 PM