

No. 21206 ■ 16 Aug 1933 – 18 Oct 1999 ■ Died in Fayetteville, GA
Cremated. Interred in Bethesda Tennessee Family Cemetery, Bethesda, TN



Gerald Thomas “Jerry” McCall, also known to many as Tom, was born in Bethesda, TN, on 16 Aug 1933, the son of Mildred E. and Herbert L. McCall. Prior to entering West Point, he attended Vanderbilt University for two years. When he arrived at West Point in the summer of 1953, he was well prepared mentally and physically for the challenges of Beast Barracks and Plebe year. He quickly adjusted to military life and the rigorous discipline at West Point. After Beast Barracks, he was assigned to Company I-1. Jerry was a quiet individual, with a perpetual smile on his face and a Tennessee drawl in his speech. He made friends easily and always had a positive attitude and a competitive spirit. He was an excellent athlete and competed in several intramural sports. He participated in the weightlifting, pistol, and ski clubs and worked on the *Pointer* staff. He excelled in academics and graduated in the upper quintile of his class. When he discussed the social and political issues of the 1950s, he always expressed a progressive view and compassion for the underprivileged. While at West Point, he was respected and well liked by all of his fellow cadets.

At graduation, Jerry was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers. He attended the basic engineering course at Ft. Belvoir, VA, and Airborne and Ranger schools at Ft. Benning, GA. His first duty assignment was to the 326th Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division, at Ft. Campbell, KY. While there, he was assigned as an aide to then-MG William C. Westmoreland, division commander. In 1961, he served in the 13th Engineer Battalion in Korea. In 1963,

he earned a master’s degree in nuclear engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, OH. While there he met Leann.

In 1964, Jerry married Leann Lucas in Newark, OH, and while moving to numerous assignments they raised two sons. Dirk Douglas was born in September 1968 at Ft. Sill and Matthew Neal was born in February 1971 at Ft. Leavenworth.

The family lived in Germany from 1964 to 1967, while Jerry served with the 12th Engineer Battalion. In 1967, he served a tour in Vietnam. He served on the staff and faculty at the artillery and missile school, Ft. Sill, OK, where he headed the engineer committee during 1967-68. He was assigned to the department of the Army Office of Personnel Operations during 1969-70. In 1971, he completed the Command & General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth, KS, and was assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea during 1971-72.

Jerry was assigned to the Infantry Center at Ft. Benning, GA, during 1974-75. While there, he decided to learn how to sail a small boat. He went to the library and checked out a book on sailing and taught himself the basic skills for operating and sailing a small boat. Throughout his life, Jerry liked to learn new skills and try new activities. When he took up other activities, he would research the activity and teach himself the craft or skill he was interested in learning.

During 1975-79, he was the executive officer of the 4th Training Brigade at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. While there, he was in charge of setting up and assisting with the Special Olympics. In 1979, he was assigned to the Readiness Region IX. In 1982, he completed the Army War College. During 1982-85, he was stationed at Ft. McPherson, GA. During his military career, he was awarded the Bronze Star, three Army Commendation Medals, the Meritorious Service Medal and the Legion of Merit.

Jerry retired from active duty in 1985 and settled in Fayetteville, GA, where he was very active in the Boy Scouts with his

sons and spent many weekends camping with them. He also served for six years as the Scoutmaster for his sons’ troop. Jerry was an avid chess player, and soon he had most of the boys in the troop hooked on chess as well. Both sons eventually became Eagle Scouts. He also accepted a position in academic computing at Emory University, Atlanta, GA. In 1993, he received Emory’s Award of Distinction and in 1996 retired from his second career. He enjoyed retirement with various hobbies, such as woodworking, carving birds, building and flying remote control airplanes. He and Leann traveled and visited their sons in Japan and New York. Jerry was a kind, patient, loving person and a true southern gentleman. Dirk said, “Dad was the most patient person I ever met. He almost always maintained a sense of calm and tranquility, working steadily to resolve any challenge. He was able to step back and see the big picture. He always gave me good advice. He was an amazing father.” Matt said “My dad was always there for me. He was my first soccer coach and my Boy Scout leader. He taught me the little things like chess and how to shoot a gun, and the big things like how to care about other people and to do the right thing. I’m the person I am today because of my dad.”

Jerry stayed very active until he passed away on 18 Oct 1999, after a brave battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife Leann; his two sons, Dirk and Matt; daughter-in-law Tracy; two grandchildren, Hayley Rie and Samantha Reiko; and an older brother Dr. H. Travis McCall. Dirk received his master’s degree from Columbia University and stayed in New York City. He is involved in the political community and currently is the director of the Bronx Pride Center. Matt followed in Jerry’s footsteps by joining the military after he graduated from law school. He currently is a major in the Air Force.

—Bobby G. Christy, classmate