Thomas Ruger, Brigadier General, U.S.

Thomas H. Ruger had a full and active life. It is impossible to include all his accomplishments within a brief biographical timeline. Therefore, this will serve to highlight his prestigious career, as well as touch on his personal life.

1833 April 2: Ruger was born to Rev. Thomas Jefferson and Maria Ruger in Lima, Livingston County, NY.

1846 Ruger family moved to Janesville, WI.

1850 July 16: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Janesville, Rock County, WI showed 17-year-old Thomas living with his parents and siblings. His father Thomas, was a Presbyterian Episcopal Church clergyman.

1854 Graduated from the U.S. Military Academy.

1858 October 6: Married Helen Lydia Moore.

1860 August 1: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Harmony, Rock County, WI showed “Howard,” an attorney at law, and his wife Hannah along with their infant daughter living with Thomas’ family. His father Thomas J. Ruger was listed as a Clergyman.

1861 April 18: Six days after Fort Sumter was bombarded Thomas Howard Ruger enlisted in the U.S. Army. He was commissioned as an officer in Co. S 3 WI Infantry as a Lieutenant Colonel.

August 10: Promoted to Full Colonel.
September: Thomas’ younger brothers Edward and William also joined the U.S. Army and mustered into the 13 WI Infantry.

1862 November 29: Promoted to Full Brigadier General.

1863 July 1-3: Commanded a division at Gettysburg.

   Brigadier General Ruger was sent to New York City to establish military control during the Draft Riots.

1864 November 30: Commanded a division on the main line at the Carter House. He was promoted to Brevet Major General for his service at Franklin.

1866 Served as Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen’s Bureau in North Carolina. The Freedmen’s Bureau was an arm of the U.S. Military intended to ease the journey from slavery into freedom for the almost four million newly freed slaves.

1880 June 17: The U.S. Federal census enumerated in Helena, Lewis and Clark County, MT showed Thomas, a Colonel U.S.A., and Helen living with their daughters.

1897 Retired from the U.S. Army because he had reached the age limit.

   August 17: Applied for a passport for he and his wife along with their daughter Anna. He lived in New York City at the time of his application.
Description of Thomas Ruger on Passport Application


Gave a comment to *The Tribune* about The Battle of Franklin.

1907  June 3: Major General Thomas Howard Ruger died in Stamford, CT.

June 4: One of many obituaries across the country appeared in *The Baltimore Sun*, Baltimore, MD.

He was buried at the American Military Academy Cemetery at West Point.

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1 Ancestry.com
Biographical Sketch from Source: The Union Army, vol. 8

THOMAS HOWARD RUGER Ruger, Thomas H., brigadier-general, was born at Lima, Livingston county, N. Y., on April 2, 1833. He was graduated at West Point in 1854, and placed in the engineer corps, U. S. A. He resigned on April 1, 1855, after service at New Orleans, La., and practiced law in Janesville, Wis., until June, 1861, when he became lieutenant-colonel of the 3d Wis. regiment. He was made colonel on Aug. 20, and brigadier-general on Nov. 29, 1862, serving in the Rappahannock campaigns, commanding a division at Gettysburg, and helping to put down the draft riots in New York in 1863. He guarded the Nashville & Chattanooga railroad in Tennessee until April, 1864; then led his brigade, under Sherman, until November, and on Nov. 30, 1864, was brevetted major-general of volunteers for services at the battle of Franklin and placed in charge of a division of the 23d corps against Gen. Hood's army in Tennessee. Organizing a division at Nashville, he led it, from Feb. to June, 1865, in North Carolina, and then commanded that department until June, 1866. He was made a colonel in the regular army on being mustered out, July 28, 1866, and on March 2, 1867, was brevetted brigadier-general for services at Gettysburg. He was detailed by Gen. Meade on Jan. 13, 1868, as governor of Georgia, which duty he performed until July of the same year. Gen. Ruger was superintendent of the U. S.

2 Findagrave.com
military academy at West Point, 1871-76; in command of the Department of the South, 1876-78, having in charge the U. S. troops in South Carolina during the state government troubles, and later was in command of stations in the West and South. He was made a brigadier-general on March 19, 1886. He had charge of the Department of Missouri during April and May, 1886, and took charge of the Department of Dakota in 1888. He was commissioned major-general on Feb. 8, 1895, and was placed upon the retired list, April 2, 1897.