

RESTRICTED

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NO. 464

Award of Silver Star I
Award of Oak Leaf Cluster II

SECTION I - AWARD OF SILVER STAR

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, a Silver Star is awarded to each of the following named individuals for gallantry in action.

DAVID J. HANRAHAN, 01289077, Captain, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 12 September 1944 in France. During an attack against enemy defenses on a strategically important hill, Companies E and F were subjected to a savage counterattack from the rear and were almost surrounded by a large hostile force. Captain Hanrahan, commanding officer of Company H, volunteered to bring tanks and tank destroyers to aid the beleaguered units. He left the comparative safety of the battalion observation post and braved heavy sniper and machine gun fire to reach the base of the hill. After dispatching a messenger for the tanks, he checked his 81mm mortars, which were supporting the rifle elements of the battalion, and discovered that the gun crews had suffered 15 casualties and had been disorganized by the incessant machine gun and mortar fire. He made a hazardous reconnaissance to locate the enemy gun positions and, when the tanks and tank destroyers arrived, guided them into position and directed their fire on the hostile targets. Captain Hanrahan's daring action relieved the pressure on Companies E and F, and, after two hours of intense fighting, the hill was secured by these units. Although he suffered a painful leg wound during the operation, Captain Hanrahan returned to the depleted mortar section, supervised the evacuation of casualties and reorganized and resupplied the unit. He continued to direct his company in successive attacks until he was ordered to withdraw from the battlefield for medical attention. Entered the Service from Bronx, New York.

WELDEN M. GREEN, 01299734, First Lieutenant, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action from 8 to 11 October 1944 in France. Companies E and F, in position on a hill, were ordered to attack across a clearing to a wooded area east of the hill. After a five minute artillery barrage the attack began, and Lieutenant Green, commanding Company E, moved to the front of his unit and led his men forward across the open terrain. The enemy suddenly opened fire with machine guns, mortars and artillery which inflicted heavy casualties on the attackers and wounded the commanding officer of Company F. Lieutenant Green retained his calmness and good judgment in the face of the deadly blasts of hostile fire. Moving fearlessly about the fire-swept area, he reorganized the two companies and led them forward to assault hostile positions in the wooded section. After seizing the area, he deployed the men of both companies and established an all-around defense. During the course of the day Lieutenant Green directed his men in repelling a series of strong enemy counterattacks, securing the sector until another company could move on to the battalion objective. Entered the Service from Thatcher, Arizona.

DONALD M. BLAGRAVE, 0475272, First Lieutenant, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 15 October 1944 in France. Lieutenant Blagrove was leader

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of the assault platoon of Company I in the unit's attack against an enemy-held town. As the platoon neared its objective, the enemy suddenly opened fire with machine guns, mortars and artillery. Lieutenant Blagrove swiftly deployed his platoon and directed his men to advantageous positions for returning the hostile fire. He then maneuvered a light machine gun section into position to support the riflemen and directed the establishment of a mortar observation post. Ignoring the heavy fire which blasted the area, he made numerous forward reconnaissances to locate a covered route for his platoon's advance. After discovering a possible route, he personally led one of his squads forward and seized the first house of the town, capturing several prisoners. He then directed the remainder of his platoon forward and led a house-to-house assault against the enemy. Under his courageous leadership the platoon smashed hostile opposition and opened the way for the rest of the company to advance and occupy the town. Entered the Service from Aurora, Illinois.

JOHN W. SMITH, 0519221, First Lieutenant, 132d Field Artillery Battalion, for gallantry in action on 26 August 1944 in France. While advancing through a thickly wooded area, Company C, 142d Infantry Regiment, was caught in a heavy enemy artillery barrage. Lieutenant Smith, artillery forward observer with the company, was separated from his field artillery group in the confusion engendered by the incessant shelling. He swiftly set up his radio in a necessarily exposed position and, fearlessly braving the heavy fire, crawled across open terrain to reach a spot affording better observation. Working alone under enemy shellfire, Lieutenant Smith calmly directed a heavy artillery concentration on the hostile positions. His accurate fire forced the enemy to withdraw and enabled Company C to reorganize and continue the attack. Entered the Service from Bonham, Texas.

WALTER J. SWOYER, 33184992, Private First Class, Company G, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 30 August 1944 in France. Company G was advancing in an attack against enemy positions when one platoon lost contact with the remainder of the organization. Private First Class Swoyer, company runner, was assigned the mission of contacting the platoon and reporting its position to his company commander. Although he was subjected to aimed sniper fire, he pressed forward until he spotted five enemy riflemen firing on the platoon. He moved swiftly to their rear and approached cautiously to within a few feet of their position. He suddenly stepped forward and demanded the enemy to surrender. The soldiers, caught completely unawares, were too startled by his daring action to offer any resistance. Private First Class Swoyer disarmed his prisoners and marched them back to his company command post. He then returned to the platoon, secured the desired information and reported back to his company commander. Entered the Service from Boyerton, Pennsylvania.

PAUL J. MAYFIELD, 36445966, Private First Class, Company L, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 9 September 1944 in France. Private First Class Mayfield was a rifleman in the 1st Platoon, which was on the right flank of Company L during an attack against a well-defended enemy road block. When he spotted an antitank gun protecting the road block, he crawled under heavy hostile fire to within 15 yards of the weapon and killed the enemy gunner with one carefully aimed rifle grenade. The enemy located Private First Class Mayfield's position and directed heavy small arms fire at him, wounding him in the shoulder and arm. Aware that the antitank gun was not destroyed and might still be used against his comrades, he refused evacuation and, in spite of intense suffering, rapidly scored three consecutive direct rifle grenade hits on the gun, completely destroying it. Entered the Service from Granite City, Illinois.

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WILLIAM H. THOMAS, 20816149, Private, Company A, 36th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for gallantry in action on 29 August 1944 in France. Private Thomas, a gunner in an M-10 tank destroyer crew, was covering the advance of two tanks during the drive on an important hostile stronghold. When both tanks were hit and set afire by enemy shells, several casualties were inflicted on the tank crew and the other crew members were forced to abandon them and seek cover for themselves. Private Thomas saw the plight of the wounded soldiers and, with two companions, unhesitatingly left his tank destroyer and ran through a heavy barrage of shellfire to aid the men. He reached one of the blazing tanks and removed two injured soldiers whose shattered legs had prevented them from crawling out. With shells blasting the area around them, Private Thomas and his comrades calmly administered first aid to the wounded crew members. While they were so engaged, a shell struck a haystack near their tank destroyer and set it ablaze. Although it seemed impossible to save the vehicle, Private Thomas rushed across an open field alone and, braving the hostile fire, reached the tank destroyer and drove it several hundred yards over shell-torn terrain to a place of cover. He then jumped to the ground and smothered the flames with a fire extinguisher and sand. Entered the Service from Mansfield, Texas.

SECTION II - AWARD OF OAK LEAF CLUSTER

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, an Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Second Silver Star is awarded to each of the following named individuals for gallantry in action.

CLARE N. LYKE, 024601, Captain, 132d Field Artillery Battalion, for gallantry in action on 27 September 1944 in France. While attacking through a densely wooded area, the 3d Battalion, 142d Infantry Regiment, was subjected to a heavy artillery and mortar barrage directed from a nearby hill. Aware of the need for supporting artillery fire, Captain Lyke, forward observer attached to the 3d Battalion, courageously led his group to the crest of the hill, and, working calmly under the incessant shellfire, established an observation post. Although he was wounded by the mortar fire, he disdained evacuation and remained steadfastly at his post. After two hours of careful observation, Captain Lyke spotted two mortar positions and skillfully adjusted artillery fire on them, destroying them both. He also directed fire on an enemy-occupied house, scattering and disorganizing the hostile troops. Because of his determination and courage, the 3d Battalion was able to move forward and occupy the hill. Entered the Service from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

DAVID W. SISCO, 01297603, First Lieutenant, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 29 September 1944 in France. Machine gun and rifle fire directed from a densely wooded area inflicted heavy casualties on Company B during an attack. Although the exact location of the well defended enemy positions could not be determined, Lieutenant Sisco volunteered to lead approximately 40 rifleman and machine gunners in an attempt to smash the resistance. Displaying unusual qualities of courage and leadership, he led his men into the woods, maintaining excellent control in spite of the difficult situation and terrain. He advanced fearlessly under incessant artillery and machine gun fire, and he and his men destroyed two enemy machine guns, reduced two automatic rifle positions, killed three hostile soldiers and took five prisoners. By his quick-thinking and decisive action, he was responsible for cleaning the woods, thus enabling the company to continue its advance and achieve its objective. Entered the Service from Newport, Virginia.

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JAMES W. SHEPPARD, 20806527, Staff Sergeant, 1st Infantry Division, for gallantry in action on 16 August 1944 in France. On that day in the invasion of Southern France, Company L advanced on an enemy-held town and took up a defensive position. Sergeant Sheppard and his companion were awakened at daybreak by the sound of a machine gun firing down the street from their position. They cautiously crossed the street, entered the building which housed the enemy machine gun and crawled alongside the wall until they were directly under the hostile fire. A hand grenade hurled through a window silenced the gun. Proceeding down the street, they met a member of the French irregulars who informed them of the location of the enemy command post. They immediately made their way into the building which the Frenchman had described, kicked the door open and fired their rifles as they entered the command post. Their sudden, daring action surprised the five enemy soldiers who occupied the building into surrender, and Sergeant Sheppard and his comrade captured this center of hostile operations and completely disrupted their communications. Entered the Service from Throckmorton, Texas.

CHARLES MARTIN, 35794910, Private First Class, Company D, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 28 September 1944 in France. Private First Class Martin, first gunner in a heavy machine gun squad, was assigned the task of covering the right flank of his battalion as it crossed a highway. After the two leading rifle companies had successfully completed the crossing, the enemy suddenly opened fire from both flanks with machine guns and rifles, thereby cutting the battalion in half. The enemy infantry assaulted the troops which had not crossed the road and forced them to withdraw for reorganization. Instead of leaving with his comrades, Private First Class Martin valiantly remained by his gun, firing point blank at the enemy. Even when his helmet was blown from his head by the concussion of a hand grenade and his shoe was torn open by bullets, he maintained his position and delayed the attackers until the friendly troops had reorganized and again advanced to clear the road of the hostile force. During this engagement Private First Class Martin was wounded by machine gun fire. Entered the Service from Cincinnati, Ohio.

By command of Major General DAHLQUIST:

JOHN S. WINN, JR.
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Acting Chief of Staff

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Vincent M. Lockhart
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Captain, Adjutant General's Department
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