

1945

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AG RECORDS SEC.

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO #36, U. S. Army

14 June 1945

GENERAL ORDERS

NO. 217

Posthumous Award of Silver Star.....I
Award of Silver Star.....II
Corrected Award of Silver Star.....III

I. POSTHUMOUS AWARD OF SILVER STAR. Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, a Silver Star is posthumously awarded to the following named individual for gallantry in action:

ROBERT BURKETT, 01692514, Second Lieutenant, 753d Tank Battalion, for gallantry in action on 3 May 1945 in Germany. Lieutenant Burkett was in command of a group of tanks and tank destroyers supporting an infantry attack on a town when the friendly troops were subjected to heavy machine gun fire from a strong enemy force. Using his tank to clear a passage through a road block, he deployed his weapons and delivered heavy fire on the enemy positions, enabling the infantry to resume the advance. Although the enemy directed heavy self-propelled gun fire at his tanks, he placed them in formation and led them in charging the hostile positions. When the ammunition was expended, he still continued forward. His gallant and aggressive leadership demoralized the hostile troops and forced them to flee to the town, abandoning two 88mm and three 20mm cannons and many machine guns. After pursuing the enemy into the town, Lieutenant Burkett dismounted to contact an ammunition carrier to reload his tanks when a shell burst nearby and fragments killed him instantly. Next of kin: Mrs. Bessie Burkett (Mother), 116 Montgomery, Savannah, Georgia.

II. 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:

GEORGE K. FELL, 0342056, Captain, 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mcz). Entered the Service from El Paso, Texas.

THOMAS P. CORWIN, 01110431, Captain, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion. Entered the Service from Utica, New York.

for gallantry in action on 1 May 1945 in Germany. When an infantry battalion's advance was halted by blown bridges, these men volunteered to reconnoiter a route for the battalion. Upon locating a bridge across the river which had not been blown, they attempted to cross the bridge and were fired on by a group of approximately 35 SS troops. Undaunted by the overwhelming odds, they returned the hostile fire, killing six Germans and driving the remainder back from the bridge. Then, despite intense small arms fire, they ran to the bridge and cut the wires which had been placed to detonate a charge of dynamite. They fought valiantly until help arrived and prevented the enemy from retaking and destroying the bridge. The gallant actions of the above named men enabled the battalion to continue its advance.

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B. ROGERS HODGE, 02006065, Second Lieutenant, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 15 March 1945 in France. Lieutenant Hodge was leading his platoon in attacking an enemy-held town under cover of a smoke screen when the smoke began to clear and the hostile troops suddenly opened fire with machine guns, rifles and mortars. Swiftly placing his platoon in position, he ran from man to man, pointing out targets and directing a heavy volume of fire at the enemy. When the intensity of the hostile fire increased, Lieutenant Hodge ordered his men to move back a short distance while he remained in position to cover their withdrawal. Although stunned by a mortar shell which burst only five yards away, he continued firing until his platoon had completed its withdrawal. Then, rejoining his men, he reorganized the platoon and led it aggressively forward. As a result of his inspiring leadership, the platoon was able to seize the designated sector of the town. Entered the Service from Knoxville, Tennessee.

WILLIAM E. GUINN, 34083712, Sergeant, Company F, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 19 and 20 March 1945 in Germany. Assigned the mission of seizing a knoll defended by an enemy pillbox, Sergeant Guinn, acting platoon leader, advanced approximately 30 yards in front of his men. Directing his platoon to lay down a base of fire, he moved forward and personally cut his way through a barbed wire entanglement which blocked the approaches to the strong point. He then assaulted the trenches in front of the pillbox and forced the enemy riflemen to take cover in the fortification. Despite hostile fire, he swiftly moved to the side of the pillbox and threw hand grenades through the apertures, killing three Germans and forcing the remainder to flee. By his quick-thinking and aggressiveness, Sergeant Guinn reduced an enemy pillbox and was able to establish a strong defense of the area. Entered the Service from LaGrange, Georgia.

ALBERT J. ROBERTSON, 12095909, Technician Fourth Grade, 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop, for gallantry in action on 3 May 1945 in Germany. Tec 4 Robertson, a radio operator, was riding in an armored car which was leading the advance of a motorized task force. When the leading vehicles approached enemy positions, he asked to remain at his post beside the driver in spite of the dangers which he knew confronted him. An enemy bazooka shell exploded directly to the front, wounding him and rendering the driver unconscious. When the order to move back was given, he pushed the driver aside and, despite the pain of his wound and the heavy enemy fire, succeeded in driving the vehicle slowly backward. A second bazooka shell set the armored car on fire, but Tec 4 Robertson kept it moving for another 20 yards until the crew was ordered to seek cover. With shells bursting all around him, Tec 4 Robertson partially revived the driver, helped him through the hatch and led him to a place of safety. His quick-thinking and courage were a source of inspiration to his comrades. Entered the Service from Fort Dix, New Jersey.

FRANK J. GAVIN, 36163407, Technician Fourth Grade (then Technician Fifth Grade), Medical Detachment, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 30 May 1944 in Italy. When the five members of a tank crew were wounded by a direct bazooka hit on the tank, Tec 5 Gavin immediately left his covered position and dashed across flat, open terrain to aid the casualties. Although shells were crashing in the vicinity and bullets were striking all around him, he dragged the men from the tank and calmly administered emergency treatment. He was stunned by the concussion of two mortar shell explosions, but he finished treating his

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patients and directed their evacuation. On the following day, when friendly troops attacked stubbornly defended enemy positions and suffered severe casualties, Tec 5 Gavin again exposed himself to intense enemy fire to move about the battlefield and administer first aid to the wounded. He personally treated 29 injured soldiers. By his gallant actions, he was responsible for saving the lives of many casualties. Entered the Service from Chicago, Illinois.

PAUL P. MANIS, 34920680, Private First Class, Company C, 141st Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Crossville, Tennessee.

WILLIAM M. BRINTON, 39922814, Private First Class, Company C, 141st Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Idaho Falls, Idaho.

for gallantry in action on 22 March 1945 in Germany. During the fighting in the Siegfried Line, the squad of which these men were members launched an assault to clear a sector of mutually supporting pillboxes. While the other members furnished covering fire, the above men and two comrades crawled forward under intense small arms fire and heavy artillery and mortar concentrations and, reaching the first pillbox, blew it open with a beehive charge. After reducing three more pillboxes in this manner, one of the men, who had been previously wounded during the action, was evacuated; but the above mentioned men and one remaining companion continued dauntlessly forward. Bravely exposing themselves to approach each strong point and place the charge, they captured a total of eleven pillboxes. As a result of their courage and aggressiveness, 56 prisoners were taken and the sector of defenses was cleared.

JENNINGS J. SUMNER, 35775193, Private First Class, Medical Detachment, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 13 March 1945 in France. On entering a minefield a soldier was seriously wounded by an exploding mine and lay helplessly exposed to heavy enemy machine gun and artillery fire. Fully aware of the danger involved, Private First Class Sumner, an aid man, entered the minefield to go to his aid. As he advanced toward the wounded man, he stepped on a mine and was himself seriously wounded. Despite the pain of his wound, he crawled the remaining distance and, as bullets struck around him and shells burst nearby, administered first aid to his patient. He then valiantly crawled out of the minefield on his knees to summon aid to evacuate the casualty. Entered the Service from Hurricane, West Virginia.

WALTER J. OLESZKOWICZ, 36897518, Private First Class, Company K, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 15 March 1945 in France. Although the route of Company K's approach to a town was across open fields thickly strewn with mines, Private First Class Oleszkowicz, a radio operator, voluntarily advanced with one of the assault platoons. When the men were halted by flares and intense machine gun fire, he helped reorganize the platoon for another attack. When a second attempt failed and he was unable to contact supporting tanks on his radio, he ran through the enemy fire to locate the tanks and lead them forward. In a third attack, the platoon leader was seriously wounded by exploding mines, leaving the men completely disorganized. Private First Class Oleszkowicz called the company commander by radio for instructions and succeeded in attaching the remaining men to a unit where they could effectively support the attack. Entered the Service from Detroit, Michigan.

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DOMINICK DE MARCHIS, 33938680, Private First Class (then Private), Company C, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 22 March 1945 in Germany. During the intense fighting in the Siegfried Line, the squad of which Private DeMarchis was a member launched an assault to clear a sector of mutually supporting pillboxes. While the other squad members furnished covering fire, he and three comrades crawled forward under intense small arms fire and heavy artillery and mortar concentrations and, reaching the first pillbox, blew it open with a beehive charge. Private DeMarchis was wounded at the beginning of the action; but, despite the heavy enemy fire and the pain of his wound, he remained with his squad and continued placing charges against the German strong points until four pillboxes had been reduced. His valor and determination were a great inspiration to his comrades. Entered the Service from Bristol, Pennsylvania.

III. CORRECTED AWARD OF SILVER STAR. So much of General Orders 154, this Headquarters, dated 30 April 1945, as awards a Silver Star to JACK BAXTER, 02006896, Second Lieutenant, 142d Infantry Regiment, is rescinded and the following substituted therefor:

WOODROW J. BAXTER, 02006896, Second Lieutenant, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 23 March 1945 in Germany. Lieutenant Baxter was leading his company's assault platoon in a night attack on an enemy-held town when one of the supporting tanks moved out in front of the advancing troops. The tank crew, believing the element on the left flank to be German, began firing on this friendly unit. Although the tank was the target for enemy self-propelled gun fire, Lieutenant Baxter dashed to the moving tank and leaped upon it. Exposing himself to heavy small arms fire as well as the self-propelled gun fire, he climbed to the turret and, after attracting the crew's attention, stopped the tank from firing into the friendly troops. His courageous action undoubtedly saved many lives and enabled the company to continue its advance. Entered the Service from Coleman, Texas.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL DAHLQUIST:

JESSE B. MATLACK
Colonel, General Staff Corps
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

William T. Steger
WILLIAM T. STEGER

1st Lt, Adjutant General's Department
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