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

GENERAL ORDERS

4 August 1944

NO. 274

COMMENDATION FOR EXCEPTIONALLY MERITORIOUS CONDUCT

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-55 each of the following named individuals is commended for exceptionally meritorious conduct.

VAIDEN P. HINER, 0331374, Captain, 131st Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 18 November to 7 December 1943 in Italy. As intelligence officer for his battalion, Captain Hiner moved constantly between the artillery battalion and the infantry command posts in order to keep his unit informed of the situation. Although frequently exposed to intense enemy shell fire, he never faltered in performing his important duties. Because of the accurate information secured by Captain Hiner, effective artillery preparations and fires in support of counterattacks were delivered by the battalion. Entered the Service from Abilene, Texas.

JOSEPH F. GRIFFITHS, 01306814, First Lieutenant, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 9 June 1944 in Italy. Lieutenant Griffiths was with a reconnaissance party, consisting of two platoons of infantry riding on a platoon of tanks, that sought contact with a friendly armored unit. Enroute the leading jeep hit a mine field and the party commander was killed. Quickly assuming control, Lieutenant Griffiths supervised the care of the wounded, pending arrival of aid men, and sent for a mine sweeper. He located most of the mines before the engineers came to finish the job. Reorganizing his patrol he led it on, skillfully by-passing an area interdicted by shellfire, to reach his objective. Entered the Service from Washington, Pennsylvania.

VICTOR L. GEELY, 36152809, Staff Sergeant (then Corporal), Headquarters Battery, 36th Division Artillery, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 16 January 1944 in Italy. Corporal Geely was assigned the mission of leading a wire crew in installing an important and urgently needed wire circuit. Although the route necessitated crossing an enemy mine field under hostile artillery fire, he fearlessly led his crew into the area. Aware of the importance of his mission, he continued laying wire until one of his crew members was injured by an exploding mine. Corporal Geely, after sending his crew ahead, calmly rendered effective first aid under the ceaseless artillery shelling, then helped carry the wounded man to an ambulance. He immediately rejoined his men and continued laying wire until the circuit was completed. Entered the Service from Kalamazoo, Michigan.

DONALD O. LEMING, 35168929, Sergeant, Headquarters Battery, 133d Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 2 June 1944 in Italy. Sergeant Leming was assigned to a liaison section supporting a battalion of infantry during the action in the vicinity of a vital town. With his detail of two men, Sergeant Leming worked along with the infantrymen as they advanced up a strategic height. As the advance elements reached the objective they were pinned down by small arms fire. Realizing the need of a radio to direct artillery fire against the enemy counterattack, Sergeant Leming led his detail, burdened with their heavy equipment, through the intense fire to the battalion command post

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and notified the liaison officer to direct the fire of the supporting artillery against the enemy and was instrumental in breaking up the counterattack. Entered the Service from Goodland, Indiana.

ALDEN W. WILLIAMS, 20817857, Sergeant, Company B, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion. Entered the Service from Bowie, Texas.

RAYMOND W. JOHNSON, 20817853, Sergeant, Company B, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion. Entered the Service from Montague, Texas.

For exceptionally meritorious conduct on 1 June 1944 in Italy. The above named soldiers volunteered to descend a precipitous mountain and attempt to blow a road block which would delay enemy progress along the road. They made the 1000 yard descent over large rock formations and chasms which rendered their progress extremely hazardous and were constantly harassed by enemy artillery fire. Upon reaching the road, they discovered that there were no suitable culverts with which to prepare the block; but the information which he furnished concerning the terrain provided for the establishment of a mine field on the following day.

JOHN C. MC INTOSH, 33272369, Sergeant (then Private), Company B, 111th Medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Cumberland, Pennsylvania.

ARTHUR C. WENZEL III, 12078285, Sergeant (then Private), Company B, 111th Medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Irvington, New Jersey.

JOSLPH S. VODVARKA, 32367830, Technician Fourth Grade, Company B, 111th Medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Camden, New Jersey.

LEO H. KOVITSKI, 12073091, Private, Company B, 111th Medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Rochester, New York.

For exceptionally meritorious conduct on 5 and 6 December 1943 in Italy. The above named soldiers were members of a litter squad, which worked tirelessly evacuating patients from front line positions on the heights of a mountain to an aid station at the foot. They made four trips in the cold, rainy weather down narrow, muddy mountain trails under constant artillery bombardment. Although the trip required six hours, they repeatedly volunteered to return immediately to the mountain top in order to facilitate the evacuation of the wounded.

EDWARD J. O'NEILL, 32323525, Technician Fourth Grade, Company A, 753d Tank Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 23 to 25 May 1944 in Italy. Although the usual procedure in repairing tanks involved retrieving them and bringing them to a rear assembly area, Tec 4 O'Neill, aware of the shortage of tanks in his unit, voluntarily remained at the front lines during this period. He worked indefatigably, without rest or sleep, under constant artillery and mortar shelling and sweeping machine gun fire. He helped retrieve and repair six disabled tanks and, in spite of the hazardous conditions, had them back in action with a minimum of delay. Entered the Service from Philadelphia, Pa.

GEORGE N. THOMPSON, 38052181, Technician Fifth Grade, Company A, 111th Medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Houston, Texas

DAVID G. LATHAM, 20818441, Private First Class, Company A, 111th medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Fort Worth, Texas.

WILLIAM F. PILANT, 20818860, Private First Class, Company A, 111th medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Fort Worth, Texas.

IRA W. ALEXANDER, 38039468, Private First Class, Company A, 111th Medical Battalion. Entered the Service from Mineola, Texas.

For exceptionally meritorious conduct on 18 December 1943 in Italy. Learning

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that soldiers wounded while fighting for high ground overlooking an important town had been lying for more than fifty hours without attention, the above named soldiers realized the need for speedy evacuation and volunteered to take an ambulance up an improvised tank road and meet the litter bearers. Manuvering the ambulance through intense artillery and mortar fire as far as possible up the road, these men relieved the litter bearers of their load and hurried the injured men to the aid station. On the return trip they were forced to take cover with their ambulance until the artillery barrage had abated enough for them to proceed.

CLARENCE L. SMREKAR, 35061401, Private First Class, Company C, 141st Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Cleveland, Ohio.

ALFRED A. ENZ, 32918282, Private First Class, Company C, 141st Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Cranford, New Jersey.

For exceptionally meritorious conduct on 11 February 1944 in Italy. Although exhausted by the long, hazardous climb through rain and snow to the company's positions, the above named soldiers, members of Company C fought valiantly to repel a strong enemy attack. The terrain was difficult and afforded little protection from the incessant artillery, mortar and small arms fire, but they courageously maintained their position and assisted in the repulse of the attack.

FRED DORSCH, 36292680, Private First Class, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 21 January 1944 in Italy. During the operations on the banks of a strategic river, the 1st Battalion moved into a defensive position about 500 yards from the river in an area subjected to incessant enemy artillery and mortar shelling. Assigned the task of maintaining telephone lines for the battalion, Private First Class Dorsch continually braved the heavy barrages to repair the lines, frequently forced to lie on his back to make the splice. He never faltered in performing his important duties, and he maintained excellent telephone communications in the battalion. Entered the Service from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

ALVIN K. GUTHRIE, 20815153, Private First Class, Headquarters Battery, 133d Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 15 May to 25 June 1944 in Italy. Private First Class Guthrie was driver for his battalion's liaison section with 143d Infantry Regiment during the pursuit of the enemy up the Italian peninsula. As he drove close behind the foremost infantry elements in a rapid advance, he came under heavy fire from enemy mortars and antitank weapons emplaced in high ground dominating the valley. Before seeking personal safety he drove his vehicle to a concealed position and then helped set up the radio and establish communications that made it possible for the observers to call for effective counterbattery fire and preparation for an infantry attack. Entered the Service from Italy, Texas.

WILLIE V. FLEETWOOD, 34352097, Private First Class, Headquarters Battery, 133d Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 4 June 1944 in Italy. When he learned that the artillery liaison officer's radio batteries were dead, Private First Class Fleetwood, driver for the first liaison section, volunteered to locate the officer's command post and deliver live batteries. Although the trail he followed was subjected to artillery and mortar fire, he proceeded over the difficult, mountainous terrain toward the command post. After hours of dodging the enemy snipers who infested the area, he arrived at his destination with the batteries, thus enabling the artillery liaison detail to render close support to the attacking infantry. Entered the Service from Meigs, Georgia.

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WALKER B. SHELTON, 38036717, Private, Headquarters Battery, 133d Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 4 June 1944 in Italy. Private Shelton was a radio operator for an artillery liaison section supporting an infantry unit in the attack. When he spotted a group of enemy infantrymen, he left the half of his radio which he had been carrying with the artillery liaison officer and ran over 400 yards to bring up the other half. Although he was harassed by mortar and small arms fire, he returned with the other half of the radio and put the complete set in operation. He contacted the supporting artillery and transmitted fire commands, assisting in the delivery of effective fire on the enemy force. Entered the Service from Lampasas, Texas.

By command of Major General DAHLQUIST:

STEWART T. VINCENT
Colonel, General Staff Corps
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

John J. Deane
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