

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS 96TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO #36, U. S. Army

8 May 1944

GENERAL ORDERS

NO. 124

Posthumous Award of Silver Star.....I  
Award of Silver, Missing in Action.....II  
Award of Silver Star.....III

SECTION I - POSTHUMOUS AWARD OF SILVER STAR

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, a Silver Star is posthumously awarded the following named individuals:

THEODORE (NMI) RENZELMANN, 36806977, Private First Class, Company C, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 12 February 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. While his company was strengthening its defenses, Private First Class Renzelmann was assigned outpost guard duty, with instructions to withdraw in the event of an enemy counterattack. When the attack came, Private First Class Renzelmann, considering only the security of his organization, staunchly held his position in the face of furious mortar and small arms fire. To delay the enemy and allow his comrades time to prepare for the attack, he harassed the enemy with effective fire until his ammunition was exhausted. By now the attackers had cut off his route of withdrawal, but his platoon sergeant managed to throw him another rifle and a bandoleer of ammunition. Private First Class Renzelmann continued to hold up the enemy advance until he was fatally wounded by small arms fire. By his magnificent display of courage in the face of overwhelming odds, he successfully delayed the enemy until his organization had strengthened its defenses for the oncoming attack. Next of kin: Mrs. Rose Renzelmann (Mother), 917 Indiana Avenue, Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

FRANK A. SVOBODA, 37428275, Private First Class, Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 15 January 1944 on \*\*\*, Italy. When the road over which supplies and equipment were reaching front line positions became impassable because of shell craters, Private First Class Svoboda volunteered to accompany a detail to repair it. Working tirelessly under the direct observation of the enemy and exposed to its mortar and artillery fire, he assisted in the temporary repair of the road. Realizing the importance of more permanent repairs, Private First Class Svoboda volunteered to attempt to obtain a truck to haul gravel necessary for the job. Fearlessly moving through a concentration of artillery fire, he was killed by a shell fragment during the deadly barrage. Next of kin: Mrs. Frank A. Svoboda (Wife), 727 Fifth Avenue (S.E.), Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

SECTION II - AWARD OF SILVER STAR, MISSING IN ACTION

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, a Silver Star is awarded the following named individuals, missing in action:

- 1 -  
(over)

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

WENDELL E. ROSS, 01290J11, First Lieutenant, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 11 February 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. As leader of a heavy weapons platoon, Lieutenant Ross was ordered to support attacking rifle units and repel all enemy counterattacks. When a strong counter-attack, preceded by a heavy artillery barrage, endangered the rifle company positions, Lieutenant Ross crawled under ceaseless enemy fire to his observation post and necessarily exposed himself to intense machine gun and sniper fire in directing the fire of his guns. His valorous action in the face of intense enemy opposition was instrumental in the repulsion of the counterattack. Immediately after stopping the attack Lieutenant Ross began organizing his platoon under fire and while so doing was seriously wounded by an enemy sniper. His heroic deeds inspired his men to a greater display of bravery and aroused the limitless admiration of all his comrades. He has subsequently been reported missing in action. Next of kin: Unknown.

JAMES A. THOMAS, 38243483, Technical Sergeant, Company D, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 11 February 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. Sergeant Thomas was second in command of a heavy weapons platoon, covering the newly won rifle company positions of his battalion. When his platoon leader was severely wounded during the enemy artillery barrage which preceded a vicious counterattack, Sergeant Thomas assumed command. He unhesitatingly exposed himself to enemy fire in order to quickly reach the observation post where he directed effective fire from his machine guns against the advancing enemy. He remained at his post although severely wounded by a sniper and his courageous efforts were largely responsible for the repulse of the enemy counterattack. From this engagement he has been reported missing in action. The outstanding leadership and magnificent courage of Sergeant Thomas greatly inspired his men. Next of kin: Mrs. Margaret Thomas (Wife), 553 Front Street, Berea, Ohio.

TERRENCE L. SYVERSON, 36736795, Private First Class, Company A, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 11 February 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. In the midst of a strong enemy counterattack Private First Class Syverson, machine gunner, constantly exposed to the inferno of enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire, worked his way forward and occupied a machine gun strong point position. With the assistance of his sergeant, Private First Class Syverson put the gun into action and directed successful fire against the enemy aiding materially in the repulsion of the attack. During a subsequent counter-attack he determinedly held his position and continued firing effectively until he was severely wounded by an enemy mortar shell. Such dogged resolution in the face of terrific enemy fire inspired the admiration and respect of all his comrades. From this engagement he has been reported missing in action. Next of kin: Mrs. Lavina Syverson (Mother), 2155 North Kilburn Street, Chicago, Illinois.

SECTION III - AWARD OF SILVER STAR

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, a Silver Star is awarded each of the following named individuals:

EDWARD S. BEARD, 20802914, Private First Class, Company H, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 15 December 1943 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. Private First Class Beard, a machine gunner, was advancing with his squad in support of a rifle platoon during an intense artillery, mortar and small

R E S T R I C T E D

arms barrage. He was wounded and refused to be evacuated. Continuing forward still carrying the heavy tripod he was again wounded, but steadfastly refused again to be evacuated. Dauntlessly he carried on thinking only of the support and fire power his gun would furnish his comrades. A third time he was wounded and although bleeding profusely he again refused to leave and determinedly went forward and remained with his squad until their mission was completed. His determined performance of duty with contempt of his profuse wounds exemplifies his outstanding courage and magnificent fortitude. Entered the Service from El Paso, Texas.

CORBETT W. DOWNING, 38388548, Private, Company I, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 11-12 February 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. Private Downing, rifleman, had been assigned a sector to defend on Hill \*\*\*. An enemy counterattack was reported moving toward his position. Holding his fire until the attacking forces were within close range, Private Downing let loose with such devastating fire that the attack was repulsed. An enemy grenade landed in his fox hole and badly mangled his foot, but despite his painful wound, he continued to defend his position throughout the night, repelling repeated attempts by the enemy to push past his position. His magnificent courage, great fortitude and devotion to duty aided materially in preventing the enemy from over-running the company positions. Entered the Service from Shreveport, Louisiana.

MONROE W. LATHAM, 35104982, Private, Company I, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 18 January 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. Private Latham volunteered for hazardous patrol duty across the swift flowing and treacherous \*\*\* River. He successfully completed one mission bringing back valuable information about enemy outpost and fortified positions. The following night necessity demanded his patrol again cross the river. The route of the patrol the second night was subjected to an intense barrage of enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire and through a thickly planted mine field. Dauntlessly he made his way to the river only to find their boats riddled by shell fragments and useless. Receiving word that a friendly patrol was trapped across the river, he secured another boat and courageously crossed the river to the trapped men. He assisted with the wounded and aided their safe return to our lines. On the route back to his unit he was severely wounded by an exploding mine. His aggressive vigor, calmness under fire and devotion to duty saved the lives of his comrades and greatly inspired all who witnessed his deeds. Entered the Service from Lewisburg, Kentucky.

MERLE A. MCCOY, 38493479, Private, Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 22 January 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. Ordered to run a forward wire from the battalion switchboard during an attack across the treacherous \*\*\* River, Private McCoy laid the line up to the river despite an intense artillery and mortar barrage. He then followed the battalion commander across a foot bridge over the river through terrific artillery, mortar, nobelwerfer and small arms fire, extending the wire as he advanced. Shell fire broke the line. In an effort to maintain wire communications, he went back and repaired the wire in several places. When the barrage increased in intensity, making further attempts at repair futile, Private McCoy stayed with the battalion commander as a runner until he was ordered back across the river. Because of his dogged determination and courage under extremely hazardous conditions he was of great service to his company. Entered the Service from Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

- 3 -

(over)

R E S T R I C T E D

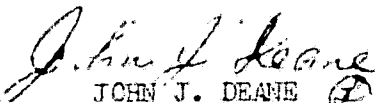
R E S T R I C T E D

JOSEPH J. KLUZA, 37465474, Private First Class, Company B, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 21 January 1944 in the vicinity of \*\*\*, Italy. A rifleman, Private First Class Kluza crossed the \*\*\* River with his company in an attack against strongly held enemy positions. Safely across the stream, he saw two members of his platoon in the water, struggling against the powerful current. Ignoring the hail of enemy small arms fire that fell on the attackers, he jumped into the cold and treacherous river and swam to the men. Catching a drifting boat, he instructed the men to hold to this while he cut off their gear. As he did, one of the drowning men wrapped his arms about Private First Class Kluza's neck, dragging all three men under the water. Although exhausted, Private First Class Kluza fought free of the panic-stricken soldier and held him up until his platoon leader came and helped complete the rescue. Private First Class Kluza's courage and selflessness were well revealed by his brave deed. Entered the Service from Omaha, Nebraska.

By command of Major General WALKER:

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

OFFICIAL:

  
JOHN J. DEANE  
Lt Col, Adjutant General's Department  
Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION "A" PLUS

- 3 - The Adjutant General
- 1 - NATCUSA
- 1 - Pub Sec, G-1, NATCUSA (SOS)
- 1 - AG Awards, Fifth Army
- 1 - Each individual concerned
- 1 - AG Files

R E S T R I C T E D