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

25 October 1944

GENERAL ORDERS-

NO. 416

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.

GAULDEN M. WATKINS, 017292, Lieutenant Colonel, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 15 June 1944 in Italy. During the pursuit of the enemy army to the north of Rome, a large hostile force, supported by artillery, moved into position on high, commanding ground. Lieutenant Colonel Watkins, commanding the 2d Battalion, led his men in an assault against the enemy. He encouraged the assault elements by his example of courage and pressed forward through rain and darkness, driving across rugged terrain in the face of heavy enemy small arms, mortar and artillery fire. As a result of his brilliant leadership the battalion forced the enemy troops from their positions, captured many prisoners, and enabled the regiment to continue its advance to the north. Entered the United States Military Academy from Nevada.

RUFUS J. CLEGHORN, 0411677, Captain, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 16 and 22 September 1944 in France. While making a route reconnaissance to insure the rapid installation of communications, Captain Cleghorn, Headquarters Commandant, was attacked by an enemy force then engaged in an intense fire fight with one of the front line companies. Retaining his calm judgement, he opened fire with his machine gun, delaying the enemy and enabling the assault company to improve its position. Although his driver was wounded, Captain Cleghorn courageously continued firing until his supply of ammunition was exhausted. On another occasion, while operating with the leading assault elements, he threatened a group of enemy soldiers with hand grenades and took six prisoners. Entered the Service from Waco, Texas.

GERALD W. EVANS, 01165012, Captain (then First Lieutenant), 155th Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 18 November 1943 to 17 March 1944 in Italy. When the commander of Headquarters Battery was hospitalized, Lieutenant Evans, battalion survey officer, immediately assumed command. Although continuous artillery shelling, inclement weather, disrupted communications and heavy casualties had lowered morale and efficiency, Lieutenant Evans accepted his new duties with enthusiasm and determination. He personally reconnoitered a new area and moved the battery to it, salvaged damaged equipment and restored and maintained wire communications. He took his turn at wire repair and the switchboard, frequently working for 20 hours a day, and, by his own example of tireless intrepidity, inspired members of his command to redouble their efforts and perform each new task efficiently and uncomplainingly. Entered the Service from Missoula, Montana.

SAMUEL P. ARMITAGE, 01175924, First Lieutenant, 131st Field Artillery Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 9 September 1943 to 30 June 1944 in Italy. During this period Lieutenant Armitage, battalion munitions officer, performed his important duties with calm efficiency and indefatigable

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determination in spite of adverse conditions of weather and terrain and the almost constant threat of enemy fire. Although it was frequently necessary to hand-carry ammunition to the front line troops, he overcame the difficulties of muddy roads, artillery shelling and attacks by enemy aircraft and assured his battalion of a continuous supply of ammunition. Entered the Service from Lynn, Massachusetts.

WALTER A. WACHOWIAK, 01314855, First Lieutenant, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 15 August 1944 in France. While awaiting orders to attack an enemy defense, Lieutenant Wachowiak, on his own initiative, established an observation post on commanding ground overlooking the hostile positions. From this vantage point he located the source of enemy machine gun fire directed from a hill near his company's position. After carefully observing the machine gun bursts, he called for sniper fire and killed two of the enemy. Then, with the aid of a platoon sergeant, he delivered a large volume of mortar fire on the enemy position, disorganizing the hostile force. His aggressive action enabled other elements to surround the enemy and capture 274 prisoners. Entered the Service from Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

FRANK A. STUMB, 01683516, Second Lieutenant, 111th Medical Battalion, (then 143d Infantry Regiment), for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 15 August to 15 September 1944 in France. As medical administrative officer for the 2d battalion aid station, Lieutenant Stumb distinguished himself on D-day in the invasion of Southern France by his ability to organize the litter bearers into a highly coordinated, effective unit. During the rapid pursuit of the enemy army to the north, his problems were increased by the extended communication and supply lines, the uncertainty of moves and the wide deployment of forces, but he consistently displayed keen judgement and superior ability in mastering the unpredictable situations. On one occasion, when casualties were heavy and the evacuation system working smoothly, he offered his services in administering first aid to the wounded and exhibited unusual skill in this respect. Entered the Service from Nashville, Tennessee.

ROBERT L. BARTON, 02055221, Second Lieutenant, 111th Medical Battalion (then 143d Infantry Regiment), for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 9 September 1943 to 15 September 1944 in Italy and France. As supply sergeant for the regimental medical detachment until 9 September 1944 and then as medical administrative officer, Lieutenant Barton consistently distinguished himself by his driving initiative and keen foresight. During the savage fighting in the Italian winter campaign he braved heavy enemy shell fire to organize litter squads when the evacuation of wounded was seriously threatened. He was among the first to rush badly needed combat suits to front line aid men during the cold, wet days of the mountain operations. When, in the advance on Rome and the pursuit of the enemy in France, the extended supply lines added to his problems, Lieutenant Barton, by skillful manipulation, always maintained an ample amount of supplies on hand. Entered the Service from West, Texas.

BOB G. GAHAGAN, W-2109908, Chief Warrant Officer, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 15 August to 17 September 1944 in France. During this period, when the supply problem was increased by the transportation shortage, Warrant Officer Gahagan, assistant regimental S-4, displayed excellent judgement and superior ability in supplying units of the 143d Infantry Regiment. During the rapid pursuit of the enemy army from the beaches of Southern France to the North, he maintained a regimental supply point in the immediate vicinity of the battalions. In spite of adverse weather conditions and the constant threat of enemy fire, he insured the regimental units a maximum of vital supplies.

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although he employed a minimum of vehicles in furnishing them. Entered the Service from Houston, Texas.

**RAYMOND H. ZEPP**, W-2105278, Chief Warrant Officer, Infantry Band, 36th Infantry Division, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 1 January to 5 June 1944 in Italy. When Warrant Officer Zepp assumed command of the 36th Infantry Band, his organization was composed of two 26 piece bands which were inadequate to fill the great demand of the troops for musical entertainment. Employing his extensive knowledge of the techniques of all types of musical organizations, he created, within the original framework of his two bands, a symphonic stringed orchestra, six small orchestras, three large dance orchestras, many church ensembles, a 56 piece concert band, and a special marching band for divisional and regimental reviews. While the Division was in combat he took his bandmen to forward areas near the front lines and entertained the troops. Displaying unusual ingenuity and a boundless enthusiasm, he contributed materially to the high morale of the officers and men by furnishing pleasurable release and relaxation in his musical entertainments. Entered the Service from Hanover, Pa.

**THOMAS O. WOOLDRIDGE**, 38037325, Technical Sergeant, Company L, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 15 to 29 August 1944 in France. On D-day Sergeant Wooldridge, platoon sergeant, landed on the beaches of Southern France and, courageously exposing himself to enemy fire, led his men into battle. On 28 August, when the First Sergeant of Company L was wounded and evacuated, he assumed his duties and distinguished himself by the fearless and efficient manner in which he conducted himself. On one occasion, when Company L met savage enemy resistance, Sergeant Wooldridge advanced to the most forward elements of the company to determine the situation, then had wire communications established between the command post and the advance positions. During the course of the fighting, enemy artillery and tanks shelled the command post almost incessantly, but Sergeant Wooldridge remained to act as liaison between infantry and artillery. Ignoring the heavy shelling, he skillfully directed artillery and mortar fire on the enemy attackers, inflicting numerous casualties and destroying much valuable equipment. Entered the Service from Royce City, Texas.

**PAUL J. LINK**, 38120958, Staff Sergeant, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct from 9 September 1943 to 25 June 1944 in Italy. Sergeant Link landed with the 1st Battalion on D-day in the invasion of Italy and distinguished himself by his calm, efficient performance of duty under constant dangers and difficulties during the trying days that followed. After assuming the duties of operations sergeant for his battalion, he worked tirelessly carrying food and ammunition to the front line troops over precipitous mountain trails frequently blasted by enemy artillery fire. In spite of adverse weather conditions and the almost constant threat of enemy fire, he was of immeasurable assistance to the battalion S-3 and contributed materially to the high morale of the men working with him. Entered the Service from El Paso, Texas.

**WILLIAM J. CHAMBERS**, 37666079, Staff Sergeant, Company I, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 17 August 1944 in France. After an initial attempt to establish a road block north of a recently captured town had failed, Sergeant Chambers led his squad forward in a second attempt. Darkness prevented his seeing for more than a yard to his front, but he heard hostile soldiers on either side of the road near his objective. Moving about cautiously, he found one of the enemy and forced him to surrender. When a second soldier

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challenged him, he fell to the ground and narrowly escaped injury from a hand grenade which exploded at his side. Aware of the necessity for continuing forward to complete his mission, he began searching the ground to his front and flanks to locate the enemy. A thorough investigation of the area showed that the main body of the enemy had withdrawn, and Sergeant Chambers again led his squad toward its objective. Entered the Service from Webster City, Iowa.

ROLAND C. HENRY, 20808973, Technician Fifth Grade, Headquarters Company, 3d Battalion, 143d Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Itasca, Texas.

WILLIAM E. COLLIER, 33471795, Private First Class, Headquarters Company, 3d Battalion, 143d Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Philadelphia, Pa.


For exceptionally meritorious conduct on 28 August 1944 in France. The above named soldiers were members of a small force sent out to block the enemy's route of retreat to the north. When a  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton vehicle became the target for direct enemy small arms and tank fire, the driver was forced to leave it and seek cover. Realizing the importance of the vehicle for the maintenance of supply and evacuation of the wounded, the above named soldiers ran across 50 yards of fire-swept terrain to recover the jeep. When they reached it, they quickly jumped in and drove it to a place of safety, preventing its destruction by the enemy.

CLAUDE R. DAVIS, JR., 37229379, Private First Class, Company I, 143d Infantry Regiment, for exceptionally meritorious conduct on 27 September 1944 in France. Private First Class Davis was a member of a seven-man patrol ordered to investigate houses near a strategic road junction. As the patrol approached its objective, the enemy opened fire with artillery, rifles and machine guns; and Private First Class Davis received a painful leg wound. He succeeded in crawling to a covered position behind one of the houses where his patrol leader administered first aid. Rather than endanger the lives of his comrades, he insisted that the patrol members leave him alone and seek safety for themselves. Later, when an aid man reached him, he refused to take a drug, explaining that he wanted to retain all faculties so that he would not be a burden to the other men of the patrol. Entered the Service from Kansas City, Missouri.

By command of Major General DAHLQUIST:

OFFICIAL:

CHARLES H. OWENS  
Colonel, General Staff Corps  
Chief of Staff

  
HENRY B. KELTON  
Major, Adjutant General's Department  
Adjutant General

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