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

13 May 1944

GENERAL ORDERS

NO. 135

AWARD OF SILVER STAR

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

CHARLES A. MARSAVITCH, 01288100, First Lieutenant, 142 Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 5 January 1944 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Lieutenant Marsavitch was assigned the mission of taking a patrol and seizing and holding a area about 400 yards in front of our lines, deep in enemy territory. In the dead of night, through snow and rain, over rough and rocky terrain, he dauntlessly led his men forward. As they advanced, they came upon enemy machine gun and mortar emplacements. Lieutenant Marsavitch ordered his men to halt and he dauntlessly moved forward attempting to outflank the enemy positions. In the very act of throwing a grenade to destroy the enemy position, intense machine gun fire from hidden enemy gun positions opened up, seriously wounding him. Bleeding from his wounds and unable to walk, he ordered his men to safety, thereby saving them from being ambushed and enabling them to return to their lines. Displaying great gallantry and magnificent courage, although seriously wounded, he dragged himself back to his lines. His great fortitude, outstanding leadership and devotion to duty was an inspiration to all who witnessed his deeds. Entered the Service from Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania.

RAYMOND J. SCHLODER, 01314234, First Lieutenant (then Second Lieutenant), 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 2 February 1944, in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Lieutenant Schloder was company commander of the assault company of a battalion, assigned the difficult task of attacking heavily defended and well fortified enemy positions. He led his men forward, across an open area under intense enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire, and occupied the company's objective. When the battalion became subjected to an intense artillery barrage and machine gun fire, he was ordered to send out two patrols to protect the battalion position. Upon his own initiative, he personally led his men forward to their positions. Although continually exposed to heavy enemy fire, he moved among his men, organizing them and keeping them intact. His great fortitude, vigorous initiative and outstanding leadership was a primary factor in his patrol's minimizing the enemy fire, allowing the battalion to complete its mission. Entered the Service from St. Mary's, Pennsylvania.

PHILIP J. PRICHARD, 01288119, First Lieutenant, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action from 13 September to 21 September 1943, in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Lieutenant Prichard was assigned the mission of supplying ammunition for self-propelled guns in support of the 3d Battalion, during the attack on ***. As the fierce and savage attack progressed, the 3d Battalion was cut off by a numerically superior enemy force, and was in immediate danger of being wiped out. Under intense enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire, and upon his own initiative, Lieutenant Prichard dauntlessly moved among the men, reorganizing scattered

- 1 -

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RESTRICTED

R E S T R I C T E D

elements, setting up defense positions, assisting wounded men to safety and materially assisting in the holding of all lines. During the ensuing days he voluntarily took command of a beachhead sector which was under heavy enemy snelling. His magnificent leadership was a vital factor in repelling the savage enemy attacks and holding the beachhead. Entered the Service from Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

JAMES H. ARNOLD, 20808005, Technical Sergeant, Company D, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 3 October 1943 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Assigned the mission of supporting the attack of an infantry unit with the fire power of his heavy machine gun section, Sergeant Arnold aggressively displaced his guns forward maintaining close contact with the assault troops despite an intense concentration of enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire which was sweeping the area. Alertly discovering a mortar emplacement which was inflicting many casualties on his comrades, Sergeant Arnold moved forward on open terrain under observation of the enemy and directed the fire of one of his guns on the enemy nest, destroying it. By his daring action and aggressive initiative, he enabled the infantry unit to advance and take its objective. Entered the Service from Killeen, Texas.

EDWARD L. FONDAKOWSKI, 36640504, Staff Sergeant, Company B, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 21 January 1944 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Leading his squad during the bitterly contested crossing of the *** river, Sergeant Fondakowski advanced skillfully over the heavily mined terrain through an intense concentration of enemy artillery, mortar, machine gun and small arms fire. Moving forward in a fierce assault against well fortified emplacements until the whole company became pinned down by severe machine gun fire, he daringly left his squad in a covered position and worked his way forward to within hand grenade range of the enemy nest. With cool determination Sergeant Fondakowski assisted in the destruction of the emplacements with grenades only to have further advance stopped by a devastating artillery barrage. Constantly exposing himself while reorganizing and encouraging his men during this holocaust of fire, he was seriously wounded and evacuated. His magnificent daring and aggressive leadership inspired all who witnessed his deeds. Entered the Service from Chicago, Illinois.

GEORGE SHOOPS, JR., 36531286, Staff Sergeant, Company B, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 21 January 1944 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Leading his squad during the bitterly contested crossing of the *** river, Sergeant Shoops constantly exposed himself to the intense concentration of enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire while moving among his men to encourage them and maintain unity. Advancing skillfully over the heavily mined terrain, he instructed his men to follow him in a fierce assault against the company objective. In the fire fight which ensued several casualties were sustained and Sergeant Shoops constantly risked the dangerous fire to carry wounded members of his squad to safety. His sincere loyalty to his men together with his display of magnificent daring and aggressive leadership inspired all who witnessed his deeds and undoubtedly saved the lives of several members of the squad. Entered the Service from Flint, Michigan.

FRANCIS L. DONAVAN, 31234719, Staff Sergeant (then Private), Company L, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 13 and 14 September 1943 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Private Donovan volunteered to locate friendly units believed to be in position some distance from his unit. His route led him through an area swept by heavy and intense mortar, machine gun and sniper fire. Upon arriving

R E S T R I C T E D

near the position he discovered it occupied by enemy troops. By diligent and resourceful scouting, he located and charted many enemy positions, thus obtaining valuable information. On the next day, he again volunteered to help clear out a well defended enemy sniper post. Accomplishing this mission and acting upon his own initiative, he voluntarily went after badly needed ammunition, successfully accomplishing this mission, although all the time under intense mortar, machine gun and rifle fire. The information obtained by his diligent scouting and the ammunition he carried back were of great assistance in the successful completion of the attack. His great fortitude, calmness under fire and devotion to duty were an inspiration to all who witnessed his deeds. Entered the Service from Brookline, Massachusetts.

JACOB M. WITTE, 32231035, Private First Class, Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 8 December 1943 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Private First Class Wittel, wireman, helped lay a wire line over rugged terrain from the command post to attacking troops so that the vital contact could be established. When the intense enemy shelling continuously cut the lines, he moved across the exposed ground repairing the wires. After the battalion communication officer and the communication chief had been wounded and evacuated, Private First Class Wittel assumed command of the remainder of the platoon. The furious enemy artillery and mortar fire so shattered the wire lines to the forward elements that he deemed it essential to lay new lines. He organized supply crews to return to the wire dump for more wire and personally led his men across the shell torn terrain and supervised the laying of the lines. Although he had not rested in more than twelve hours, Private First Class Wittel undfatigably continued repairing and laying the wire so that the battalion commander could maintain contact with, and thus control, the attacking forces. While repairing a wire line in a position exposed to enemy observation, he was wounded by a shrapnel fragment, but he remained to direct the repair work until it was completed. Private First Class Wittel's desire for personal security was dwarfed by his greater determination to support his comrades. Entered the Service from Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania.

BRONT VEENSTRA, 36157251, Private First Class, Headquarters Company, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 20 January 1944 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. During the bitter battle of the *** river, a volunteer guide was requested by the Regimental Commander who from the river bank planned to direct his battalions across the *** river. Having familiarized himself with the terrain and disposition of his units, Private First Class Veenstra volunteered for this hazardous task. Despite the intense, accurate shelling of enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire, he guided his Colonel through the dense defensive smoke laid down by our troops, edging his way along narrow, muddy lanes through the mine infested terrain, to the banks of the treacherous river. Throughout the bitter cold night, constantly harassed by the close range fire of the enemy, Private First Class Veenstra remained at the side of his Colonel refusing to take cover for fear of losing contact with him in the darkness and confusion which prevailed. His display of outstanding courage, fearlessness and devotion to duty materially aided his Colonel's efforts in directing the operations. Entered the Service from Grand Haven, Michigan.

RENE J. LA CASSE, 31244300, Private First Class, Company M, 141st Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 13 February 1944, in the vicinity of ***, Italy. As number one gunner of a heavy machine gun squad, Private First Class

RESTRICTED

La Casse occupied a vital forward defensive position on the flank of the 3d Battalion on Hill *** in the mountains above ***, Italy. Intensive concentrations of enemy mortar and artillery fires fell in the battalion positions along this important terrain feature, giving every indication that an enemy counterattack would ensue in an effort to regain possession of the hill. During this barrage Private First Class La Casse suffered painful wounds in the head from shell fragments. Despite his wounds, he elected to remain at his gun prepared to defend the important position. Only when all threats of a counterattack had ceased did he return to the rear for medical treatment. The determined and magnificent courage and deep devotion to duty displayed by Private First Class La Casse greatly inspired all who witnessed his deeds. Entered the Service from Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

ALBERT A. HAMMERLING, 32840504, Private First Class, Company I, 141st Infantry Regiment for gallantry in action on 11 February 1944 in the vicinity of ***, Italy. Volunteering to guide his company platoons into position through an area swept by deadly machine gun fire which had already inflicted numerous casualties among his comrades, Private First Class Hammerling wisely chose the least exposed route and began leading the platoons to their objective. When the enemy opened up with a second machine gun and delivered withering cross fire, he continued, coolly and courageously, to lead the men through the inferno of small arms fire and bursting shells. Unflinching in the performance of duty, Private First Class Hammerling successfully guided all four platoons into their new positions. By moving speedily and decisively and retaining his calmness under the most harrowing conditions, he allowed the units ample time for fortifying their positions against a forthcoming enemy counterattack. Entered the Service from Springville, New York.

By command of Major General WALKER:



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

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

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