

12  
RESTRICTED

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

*Typed in 11/23/44*  
*Per letter 3-16-45*  
23 November 1944

GENERAL ORDERS

NO 456

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

SECTION 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.

WILLIAM C. ELLISON, 36522787, Staff Sergeant, Company B, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 16 August 1944 in France. The 2d Platoon of Company B was attacking strong enemy defenses. Sergeant Ellison was instructed to deploy his squad and follow behind a tank destroyer which had been attached for the operation. During the intense fire fight which followed the assault, he noticed that a machine gun mounted on the turret of the tank destroyer was not being manned. He immediately crawled onto the vehicle and put the gun into operation against the enemy, still directing his squad from his exposed position on the turret. His effective fire cleared a path for the squad and had almost neutralized resistance to the front when a hostile force suddenly opened fire from the right flank. Sergeant Ellison left his squad behind to take up a defensive position and directed the tank destroyer into the face of the hostile fire. His gun jammed, and, while trying to remedy the stoppage, he was killed by an enemy sniper. Next of kin: Mrs. Alice Lemieux (Mother), 10285 Mortenvue, Dearborn, Michigan.

SECTION 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.

CHARLES L. MC NEILL, 0366111, Major (then Captain), 753d Tank Battalion, for gallantry in action from 22 to 24 July 1943 in Sicily. On 22 July Captain McNeill, commanding Company C of the 753d Tank Battalion, was assigned the mission of supporting an infantry regiment in an attack north along a strategic highway. When heavy machine gun and mortar fire from an enemy pillbox delayed the attackers, Captain McNeill was ordered to reduce the hostile strong point. After making a personal reconnaissance of the area on foot, he boldly led his tanks over difficult, hilly terrain and, outflanking the pillbox, destroyed it with accurate tank fire. He then directed his company in destroying two other pillboxes, deployed his platoons and awaited the arrival of the infantry. When the advance of the infantry troops was delayed by artillery and mortar shelling, Captain McNeill was ordered to seize strategic positions on high ground and hold them until the infantry could join him. Again, under heavy shellfire, he reconnoitered routes of advance, then led his 3d Platoon across a river, skirted the enemy-held hill and attacked the hostile stronghold along a road entering town from the south. In spite of incessant shelling and sniper fire, he forced the enemy to withdraw and, personally leading two tanks, defeated a hostile force on a small knoll south of the town skillfully coordinated the action of three tanks in a house to house search for

- 1 -

(Over)

RESTRICTED

R E S T R I C T E D

snipers and captured approximately 150 prisoners. In spite of harassing fire from artillery and mortars, he maintained his position throughout the night and held the town until the arrival of the infantry on the following morning. Entered the Service from Wichita, Kansas.

FRANCIS CULOTTA, 01320437, First Lieutenant, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 13 September 1944 in France. When the 2d Platoon of the Cannon Company was assigned the mission of spearheading an attack against well-fortified enemy positions, Lieutenant Culotta, platoon leader, rode in the lead gun of his unit. Upon reaching the top of the last rise before the hostile emplacements, the gun was subjected to antitank fire and received four direct hits which injured two of the crew members and set the mount afire. Lieutenant Culotta was hurled from the vehicle by the impact of the shells. In spite of heavy machine gun and cannon fire which raked the area, he located the hostile antitank gun, brought up another of his guns and directed its fire on the enemy weapon, destroying it and killing its crew. He immediately returned to his own damaged mount and, braving enemy fire and exploding ammunition in the gun, swiftly organized the crew, helped remove the wounded from the blazing vehicle and administered first aid. Entered the Service from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

KARL F. MARTIN, JR., 01180599, Second Lieutenant, 155th Field Artillery Battalion, for gallantry in action on 24 September 1944 in France. Lieutenant Martin was in charge of a two-man observation post team attached to the 2d Battalion of the 142d Infantry Regiment. While advancing with the battalion in an attack, he and his companions started to drive their jeep through a road block which they had been told was cleared of the enemy. While passing through the block, they were suddenly subjected to heavy rifle and machine gun fire from an enemy ambush party. Lieutenant Martin stopped the jeep and directed his men to cover. He then worked his way forward, crawling under the hostile fire, to a flank position from which he could observe the enemy. He called for one of his men to throw him a rifle and revealing his position to the hostile soldiers, demanded their surrender. Aware that they were covered from the flank, the entire enemy force, composed of 20 enlisted men and an officer, surrendered to Lieutenant Martin. He and his men marched their prisoners under machine gun fire to the friendly lines. Entered the Service from Tulsa, Oklahoma.

IDUS W. ASHLOCK, 38037445, Staff Sergeant, Cannon Company, 143d Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Paris, Texas.

CLEVELAND L. THOMPSON, 20808672, Technician Fifth Grade, Cannon Company, 143d Infantry Regiment. Entered the Service from Houston, Texas.

for gallantry in action on 13 September 1944 in France. When the 2d Platoon of the Cannon Company spearheaded an attack against well-fortified enemy positions. These men were riding in the lead gun of their unit. Upon reaching the top of the last rise before the hostile emplacements, the gun was subjected to antitank fire and received four direct hits which injured two of the crew members and set the mount afire. In spite of the heavy machine gun crossfire which raked the area, they began removing the men from the interior of the blazing vehicle. After removing one of their injured comrades, they returned for a second. Although they were exposed to incessant enemy fire and to exploding ammunition from their own gun, they extricated the other soldier from the mount and carried him to a place of safety where first aid was administered.

ROBERT H. TALLEY, 20805248, Staff Sergeant, Company E, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 8 October 1944 in France. Sergeant Talley led his rifle squad forward through heavy machine gun, mortar and artillery fire in an

**R E S T R I C T E D**

attack against enemy defenses on a strategically important hill. When his platoon assaulted the base of the hill, the hostile soldiers began to withdraw. As he advanced in pursuit, Sergeant Talley spotted an enemy machine gun emplacement concealed in the woods. He quickly deployed his squad to cover him and began crawling alone toward the hostile position. He worked his way 50 yards forward directly in the face of the machine gun, then veered toward the flank. He suddenly jumped to his feet and demanded the surrender of the surprised enemy. He took two prisoners and disabled the gun, then continued forward with his squad, regaining contact with the remainder of his platoon. Entered the Service from Sweetwater, Texas.

BILL BURGA, 35655326, Sergeant, Company B, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 17 September 1944 in France. Sergeant Burga, squad leader, was assigned the mission of furnishing flank protection for Company B while advancing through a densely wooded area in an attack. He was leading his squad across a clearing in the woods when an enemy soldier suddenly opened fire with a machine pistol. He swiftly dispersed his squad, located the soldier concealed in the underbrush and killed him with his first shot. As the advance continued, the squad was subjected to heavy fire from enemy riflemen and snipers. Sergeant Burga skillfully placed his men in advantageous positions and directed their fire on the hostile force. He killed two of the enemy, and, under his daring leadership, his squad killed nine more, completely routing the hostile group and eliminating a threat to the security of the company's flank. Entered the Service from Hiram, Kentucky.

THOMAS BATALEAS, 32811108, Sergeant, Company E, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 8 October 1944 in France. Sergeant Bataleas led his light machine gun squad in support of the 2d Platoon of Company E in an attack against enemy defenses on a hill. So skillfully did he direct his men up the hill that, in spite of heavy enemy small arms, mortar and artillery fire, the objective was achieved without a single casualty to his squad. When he reached the crest of the hill, he saw that the 2d Platoon had routed the enemy and were advancing in pursuit of the hostile troops. He noticed a slight movement behind a pile of rocks 75 yards to his right. Crawling to a better position, he discovered an enemy machine gun with three soldiers manning it. Aware that the hostile gun emplacement would endanger friendly troops to his rear who would soon travel the same route, he swiftly set up his light machine gun and worked his way alone to the rear of the enemy position. He caught the hostile soldiers unawares and forced them to surrender without firing a single shot. Entered the Service from New York, New York.

CHARLES A. BELINAK, 39616766, Technician Fifth Grade, (then Private First Class), Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 22 January 1944 in Italy. When the 2d Battalion was ordered to cross a strategically important river and attack hostile positions on the opposite bank, Private First Class Belinak was assigned the duties of messenger for the commanding officer of one of the leading companies in the assault. After crossing to the enemy side of the river, he and the company commander crawled toward the hostile positions under an intense barrage of artillery, mortar and machine gun fire. The officer was mortally wounded by a shell explosion. Private First Class Belinak, instead of seeking safety for himself, remained on the hostile bank and braved the incessant enemy fire to guide troops across the river to their units. He continued performing these hazardous duties until an officer ordered him to return to the comparative safety of his command post. While returning to the command post, he discovered two seriously wounded soldiers crawling toward the river. Ignoring the incessant shell fire, he carried the men to the edge of the river and began searching

(Over)

**R E S T R I C T E D**

R E S T R I C T E D

for a means of crossing. When he discovered that the last foot bridge had been broken and partially submerged, he crawled into the river on the remaining pontoons and secured the bridge. He then returned to the injured soldiers and carried first one, then the other, across the river to the battalion aid station on the friendly bank. Entered the Service from Klein, Montana.

CASIMIR GRENDA, 36230220, Private First Class, Headquarters Company, 143d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 16 September 1944 in France. A motorized team of intelligence and reconnaissance personnel was assigned the mission of contacting elements of the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion which were conducting a spearhead reconnaissance in advance of the most forward friendly troops. When the group encountered a road block, half of the team was left at the block for security while Private First Class Grenda, driver of one of the jeeps, and two companions continued forward to contact the 636th reconnaissance party. While the officer in command of the party was reporting on the situation, two enemy machine guns suddenly opened fire from well-concealed positions. Other soldiers sought cover in nearby ditches, but Private First Class Grenda leapt from the driver's seat to the machine gun mounted on his jeep and returned the hostile fire. With bullets whining overhead, he directed rapid bursts of machine gun fire into the hostile position. The intense fire fight attracted an enemy mortar barrage, and the heavy shelling forced the reconnaissance party vehicles to withdraw to a defiladed position beyond the road block. Ignoring the incessant small arms and mortar fire, Private First Class Grenda continued operating his machine gun, thereby covering the withdrawal of the friendly vehicles. When his supply of ammunition was exhausted, he seized his rifle and delivered protective fire to enable those men pinned down by the enemy fire to withdraw to safety. Entered the Service from Chicago, Illinois.

ERNEST E. LIMA, 31386930, Private, Company I, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 15 September 1944 in France. Company I's attack against an enemy-held town was delayed by heavy fire from two pack howitzers strategically placed at a street intersection. Private Lima was ordered to knock out the resistance. He ran across the street in full view of the enemy, then crawled forward to a low stone wall within 50 yards of the guns. He placed his bazooka on the wall, took careful aim, and silenced one of the howitzers with a single well-placed shot. The second gun was destroyed by mortar fire and the assault continued. When the company's advance was again halted by fire from another enemy howitzer, Private Lima boldly worked his way forward to within 30 yards of the gun position and, ignoring the hostile fire which swept the street, knocked it out with two well-aimed shots. Entered the Service from Kent, Rhode Island.

By command of Major General DAHLQUIST:

ROBERT I. STACK  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army  
Acting Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

*Vincent M. Lockhart*  
VINCENT M. LOCKHART  
Captain, Adjutant General's Department  
Assistant Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION "A" PLUS

- 3 - The Adjutant General
- 5 - ETOUSA
- 1 - AG Awards, Seventh Army
- 1 - Central MRU
- 1 - Each individual concerned

- 4 -  
R E S T R I C T E D