

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
42D INFANTRY DIVISION

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 64)

APC 411, U. S. ARMY,

13 March 1946,

Award of the Bronze Star Medal I
Award of the First Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal II
Award of the Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal III

I. AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL:--- By direction of the President, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, the Bronze Star Medal is awarded to the following:

Robert R. Besser, 36 920 181, Private First Class, Infantry, Company F, 222d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 27 April 1945, near Donauworth, Germany. During the bitter fighting around Donauworth, Germany, a machine gun held up the advance of our troops. When tank and machine gun fire could not knock out the emplacement, Private Besser, with complete disregard for his own safety, crawled forward through the withering barrage and threw a hand grenade into position, killing the enemy gunners. By his indomitable courage and selfless determination, Private Besser aided materially in the advance of his company. Entered military service from Chicago, Illinois.

John J. Cherpesh, 36 982 326, Private First Class, Medical Department, Medical Detachment, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 19 March 1945, near Ludwigswinkel, Germany. During the bitter fighting around Ludwigswinkel, Germany, Company G suffered heavy casualties from the murderous fire of the vaunted German West Wall. Private Cherpesh, a medical aid man, braved the withering barrage of machine gun, mortar, and small arms fire to administer first aid to the wounded and direct their evacuation to the rear for further medical treatment. Through his indomitable courage and heroic devotion to duty, Private Cherpesh saved his wounded comrades from further injury or possible death. Entered military service from Detroit, Michigan.

Melvin L. Corbett, 33 730 001, Technician Fifth Grade, Medical Department, Medical Detachment, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 16 January 1945, at Runtzenheim, France. When heavy artillery fire at Runtzenheim, France, inflicted heavy casualties upon his company, Corporal Corbett, with utter disregard for his own safety, made his way forward through the withering barrage to administer first aid to the wounded. Despite constant artillery and mortar fire falling all around him, he never faltered in the performance of his duties until all the wounded soldiers had been evacuated to the rear for further medical treatment. Through his indomitable courage and heroic devotion to duty, Corporal Corbett saved his wounded comrades from further injury or possible death. Entered military service from Hancock, Maryland.

Gene J. De La Gorgendiere, 31 467 550, Sergeant, Infantry, Company D, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 14 January 1945, at Runtzenheim, France. When his machine gun squad was isolated in its positions near Runtzenheim, France, Sergeant De La Gorgendiere unhesitatingly volunteered to attempt to establish contact with them from a rifle company in the town. Crossing a heavily mined field under intense artillery and mortar fire, he came upon two enemy mortar observers. Killing the enemy soldiers before they could fire a shot, he continued on his mission, re-establishing contact with his unit. By his outstanding skill and courageous aggressiveness, Sergeant De La Gorgendiere played a major role in the successful conclusion of the day's engagement. Entered military service from Worcester, Massachusetts.

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W. ROBERT OSTERMANN, 02 019 772, Second Lieutenant (then Corporal), Infantry, Company D, 232d Infantry Regiment (then 43d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron), for heroic achievement in action on 17 January 1945, near Mondorf, Germany. During the bitter fighting along the Saar River, Corporal Ostermann led a patrol forward to lay a wire line from his platoon command post to an outpost overlooking three German pillboxes on the opposite bank of the river. Working through the deep snow, the noise of the wire reel attracted the occupants of the foremost pillbox; and, when the members of the patrol were within 100 yards of their objective, they were subjected to murderous machine gun fire. Disregarding the withering barrage concentrated upon him, Corporal Ostermann continued to lay wire until he reached his platoon's outpost position. Through his indomitable courage and heroic devotion to duty, Corporal Ostermann contributed immeasurably to the successful defense of his squadron's positions. Entered military service from La Grange, Illinois.

Martin W. Poe, 33 909 501, Private First Class, Infantry, Company D, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 23 January 1945, at Uhlweiler, France. During the defense of Uhlweiler, France, Private Poe remained at his machine gun position for forty-eight hours without rest under intense enemy artillery, mortar, and rocket fire. Directing a heavy volume of fire at the attacking enemy forces, he repulsed three enemy attempts to break through his position killing eighteen and forcing seven to surrender. Private Poe's courageous aggressiveness played a major role in the successful defense of the sector. Entered military service from St. Georges Island, Maryland.

Keith Schoonover, 38 208 830, Private First Class, Infantry, Anti-Tank Company, 222d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 10 April 1945, near Nordheim, Germany. When an enemy machine gun opened fire on our bridge site near Nordheim, Germany, Private Schoonover, with a comrade, moved forward in an attempt to silence the hostile gun. Crawling through the withering barrage to within grenade distance of the emplacement, Private Schoonover threw a hand grenade and then stormed the machine gun position, thus wounding and capturing three German gunners. Through his indomitable courage and selfless determination, Private Schoonover contributed immeasurably to our rapid advance on Schweinfurt. Entered military service from Little Rock, Arkansas.

Orville Shew, 35 640 194, Sergeant (then Corporal), Infantry, Company D, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 17 January 1945, near Soufflenheim, France. When elements of Corporal Shew's platoon became isolated in a forward pillbox by intense enemy artillery, mortar, and tank fire, he volunteered to carry ammunition and rations to their positions. Making several trips in complete darkness, across heavily mined fields, and under concentrations of enemy artillery and mortar fire, he maintained their supply of rations and other vital items. By his outstanding courage and aggressive determination, Corporal Shew enabled his comrades to hold their position. Entered military service from Anawalt, West Virginia.

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George Sotak, 33 370 322, Private First Class, Infantry, Company A, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 18 January 1945, near Sessenheim, France. During the fierce fighting around Sessenheim, France, Private Sotak was captured by the enemy and then lined up and shot with other American prisoners. Feigning death among his massacred comrades until darkness fell, he painfully crawled throughout most of the night, finally reaching friendly lines where he passed on invaluable information of enemy positions and strength. Private Sotak's heroic action reflects great credit upon himself and upholds the finest traditions of the United States Army. Entered military service from Tomahua, Pennsylvania.

Lloyd T. Soule, 13 135 216, Private First Class, Medical Department, Medical Detachment, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 5 April 1945, at Wurzburg, Germany. When a call was made for litter bearers during the fierce fighting through the fireswept streets of Wurzburg, Germany, Private Soule, with utter disregard for his own safety, made his way forward to the wounded soldiers. Braving heavy machine gun and mortar fire, he administered first aid and then supervised the evacuation of the injured men to the rear for medical treatment. Through his indomitable courage and heroic devotion to duty, Private Soule saved two wounded comrades from further injury or possible death. Entered military service from New Cumberland, Pennsylvania.

Patrick V. Tuccillo, 42 003 535, Technical Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant), Infantry, Company A, 232d Infantry, for heroic achievement in action on 16 January 1945, at Roeschwoog, France. When the enemy attacked his platoon's outpost line near Roeschwoog, France, with great force, Sergeant Tuccillo was severely wounded. Refusing medical aid, he led the fierce fighting until ordered to withdraw. Finding the main route of withdrawal blocked by the enemy, he guided his platoon over a previously reconnoitered auxiliary route, thus enabling his men to reach the safety of friendly lines. Through his aggressive leadership and selfless determination, Sergeant Tuccillo led his platoon in a successful retrograde movement with a minimum of casualties. Entered military service from Hoboken, New Jersey.

II. AWARD OF THE FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL;--
By direction of the President, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, the First Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal is awarded to the following:

James H. Benton, 34 675 148, First Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant), Infantry, Company F, 222d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 9 March 1945, near Wingen, France. During an attack on the enemy main line of resistance near Wingen, France, Sergeant Benton's combat patrol was pinned down by deadly machine gun fire. With utter disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Benton stormed the hostile position and, with hand grenades and rifle fire, killed four enemy soldiers, thus enabling his men to continue their attack. Through his outstanding courage and aggressive leadership, Sergeant Benton played a major role in the successful patrol which was credited with killing twelve, wounding forty-six, and capturing six German soldiers. Entered military service from Goldsboro, North Carolina.

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Tommy D. Heelan, 37 482 408, Sergeant, Infantry, Company D, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 17 January 1945, near Sessenheim, France. During the counterattack by our forces on the town of Sessenheim, France, Sergeant Heelan volunteered to lead a small combat patrol in bypassing the enemy and setting up positions on the opposite side of the town. Upon reaching their objective, the members of the patrol were subjected to intense machine gun and small arms fire coming from a barn to their front. With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Heelan single-handedly stormed the hostile position, killing four enemy soldiers with his submachine gun. Through his indomitable courage and selfless determination, Sergeant Heelan contributed immeasurably to the successful defense of Alsace. Entered military service from Valentine, Nebraska.

Jerome L. Kohn, 36 873 120, Sergeant (then Corporal), Medical Department, Medical Detachment, 232d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 2 March 1945, near Lichtenberg, France. When a call was made for litter bearers, Corporal Kohn made his way forward to evacuate the casualties of a combat patrol. Crossing a heavily mined field, he made contact with the patrol and rendered first aid to the injured soldiers. Despite a constant hail of enemy mortar, machine gun, and small arms fire, he then carried six of the casualties to the comparative safety of friendly lines, from where they were evacuated to the rear for medical treatment. Through his indomitable courage and heroic devotion to duty, Corporal Kohn saved his wounded comrades from further injury or possible death. Entered military service from Chicago, Illinois.

III. AWARD OF THE SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL:
By direction of the President, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1945, as amended, the Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal is awarded to:

WILLIAM G. GASKINS, O 556 796, First Lieutenant (then Second Lieutenant), Infantry, Headquarters Company, Third Battalion, 222d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 16 January 1945, at Birlenbach, France. When his patrol was suddenly fired upon by three enemy machine guns, Lieutenant Gaskins immediately dispersed his men, returned the fire, and proceeded to direct artillery and mortar fire on the enemy positions. Under cover of our barrage, he then ordered a withdrawal, remaining behind with two other men to continue to adjust the supporting fire. Finally withdrawing when one of his men was hit, it was necessary to leave the radio behind. Later in the day Lieutenant Gaskins returned into the same dangerous area under enemy mortar fire to recover the valuable piece of equipment. By his outstanding courage and aggressive leadership, Lieutenant Gaskins played a major role in the successful completion of the patrol's mission. Entered military service from Stillwater, Oklahoma.

By command of Major General COLLINS:

OFFICIAL *James D. Tanner*
JAMES D. TANNER,
Lt. Col., A.G.D.,
Adjutant General.

EWING RUSTERBERG,
Lt. Col., General Staff Corps,
Actg. Chief of Staff.

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