

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS NINTH UNITED STATES ARMY
Office of the Commanding General

251

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GENERAL ORDERS }
NUMBER 78 }

AFO 339

24 December 1944

I. AWARD OF DISTINGUISHED-SERVICE CROSS.

II. AMENDMENT OF GENERAL ORDERS.

I. AWARD OF DISTINGUISHED-SERVICE CROSS. By direction of the President, under the provisions of AR 600-16, 22 September 1943, as amended, and under authority contained in Circular No 32, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, United States Army, 20 March 1944, as amended, the Distinguished-Service Cross is awarded to:

✓ Staff Sergeant James J. Cormak, 36002542, Infantry, 41st Armored Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Division, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against the enemy. At approximately 0300 hours on 28 July 1944, while in command of an outpost squad near an important road junction in France, Sergeant Cormak began to reconnoiter the road ahead, when he heard a column of troops approaching. In response to his order to halt, he was answered in German and fired upon. Sergeant Cormak returned fire with his rifle while working back to his post. As the enemy action increased, his squad withdrew, leaving him, alone, to face the enemy. He fired over two-hundred rounds of ammunition from an abandoned submachine gun and without assistance, loaded and fired over fifteen rounds from a 57mm gun. By his heroic efforts, Sergeant Cormak forced the enemy to disperse and completely destroyed two enemy half-track personnel carriers and seven motorcycles. At approximately 0430 hours during a second attack, his squad, which had returned, again withdrew. Again Sergeant Cormak faced the enemy alone and opened fire with his submachine gun and without help, loaded and fired approximately ten more rounds from the 57mm gun. This intrepid action by Sergeant Cormak forced the enemy to completely disperse, leaving behind fourteen bicyclists, three machine guns, seven machine pistols, a rocket launcher and several rifles. The extraordinary heroism and courageous actions of Sergeant Cormak reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Entered military service from Illinois.

✓ Technician Fifth Grade Alton B. Messer, 36733394 (then Private First Class) Medical Department, Medical Detachment, 117th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against the enemy. On 4 October 1944, Technician Messer was the only aid man present in his company when they were subjected to a severe enemy counterattack in Germany. Though reports stated that the enemy was infiltrating into the positions held by his company, Technician Messer advanced, alone, to aid a wounded man. After several attempts to evacuate the soldier, he returned to secure a litter. While waiting for the litter, he fearlessly faced withering enemy machine-gun fire to aid another wounded man. Then, in the face of known dangers and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, he returned to the first man and moved him to safety. After performing this courageous act, Technician Messer evacuated five more wounded soldiers without assistance. When a tank destroyed was hit by enemy fire, he rendered aid to an injured man, unmindful of exploding shells within the damaged vehicle. When assistance of other aid men was impossible, Technician Messer carried on alone, administering first aid to all the wounded men in his company. The extraordinary heroism and courageous actions of Technician Messer reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping

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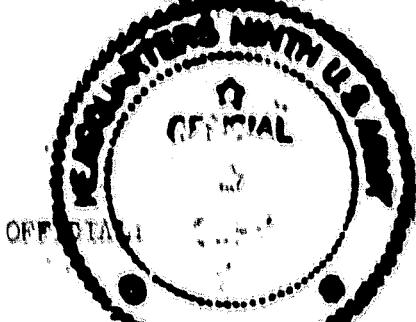
OO 78, Hq Ninth U.S. Army, 24 December 1944, cont'd.

with the highest traditions of the military service. Entered military service from West Virginia.

Technician Fifth Grade Clyde E. Justice, 38768951, (then Private) Medical Department, Medical Detachment 120th Infantry Regiment 30th Infantry Division, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against the enemy. Technician Justice was attached to an infantry platoon as an aid man when it was occupying a defensive position in Germany on 6 October 1944. When a rifleman, who was protecting a machine-gun position, was hit by enemy sniper fire, the platoon sergeant moved to the rifleman's slit trench to aid the wounded man. As he reached the wounded soldier, he, too, was wounded. Technician Justice, knowing the dangers of the situation, courageously crawled thirty yards, completely exposed to enemy snipers and reached the slit trench now occupied by two wounded men. Because there was no room in the slit trench, Technician Justice lay beside the parapet for 35 minutes under deadly enemy fire in assisting his wounded comrades. The platoon sergeant died while aid was being ministered. Technician Justice turned his attention to the wounded rifleman. After doing everything possible for the wounded soldier, Technician Justice returned to his own sheltered position. The extraordinary heroism and courageous actions of Technician Justice reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Entered military service from West Virginia.

~~III. AMENDMENT OF GENERAL ORDERS.~~ So much of Section III, General Orders No 72 this headquarters, 17 December 1944, as pertains to award of Bronze Star Medal to Staff Sergeant Sharp D. Stafford, 38310143, 473rd AAA AW Bn, United States Army, is amended to read Staff Sergeant Sharp D. Stafford, 38310143, 473rd AAA AW Battalion, United States Army.

By command of Lieutenant General SIMPSON:



JOHN W. REEDIN,
Colonel, AD, Adjutant General.

J. E. MOORE,
Brigadier General, GSC, Chief of Staff

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