

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters 101st Airborne Division
APO San Francisco 96383

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 5920

27 May 1969

AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced.

HAY, JOHN F.) FIRST LIEUTENANT INFANTRY Headquarters
and Headquarters Company 1st Battalion (Airborne) 502d Infantry APO San
Francisco 96383

Awarded: The Silver Star

Effective month: NA

Date action: 19 March 1969

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For gallantry in action in the Republic of Vietnam on 19 March 1969. Lieutenant Hay distinguished himself while serving as Reconnaissance Platoon Leader of Company E, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, during a combat operation in Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam. While on a reconnaissance mission on a mountain side, the Reconnaissance Platoon came under heavy automatic weapons, rocket propelled grenade, and small arms fire from well-fortified enemy bunkers located near the mountain top. With the lead element under heavy enemy fire, Lieutenant Hay maneuvered his two remaining squads around the flank of the enemy position, thus enabling his men to place heavy and accurate fire on the enemy bunker, destroying it. Advancing up the mountain side, the platoon came under heavy automatic weapons fire, forcing it to retreat. Lieutenant Hay directed mortar and helicopter gunship fire on the mountain top, allowing the platoon to once again maneuver up the mountain side. While advancing up the mountain for the second time, the platoon again came under heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire. Lieutenant Hay directed the platoon's fire against the enemy, enabling the platoon to advance within one hundred fifty meters of the enemy positions, only to be pinned down by the heavy enemy fire. Unprotected from the enemy fire, he directed his platoon into a hasty defensive perimeter. He then directed aerial rocket artillery and artillery fire on the entrenched enemy. The enemy returned automatic weapons and small arms fire on his positions, forcing the platoon to dig in along the side of the mountain. During the night, the entire platoon, placed on one hundred percent alert by Lieutenant Hay, watched for enemy movement. Several times during the night the enemy probed the perimeter, only to be repelled by the platoon's accurate return fire. During the early morning hours, four enemy soldiers attempted to go around the perimeter. Lieutenant Hay directed his men's fire against the insurgents, mortally wounding one and wounding two others. While still in the defensive position, the platoon came under heavy enemy mortar fire. For a third time, he directed aerial rocket artillery against the suspected enemy mortar position. A search of the hilltop revealed bunkers, trenches, and a mortar pit which was to be used in the near future by the enemy against installations in the area. Lieutenant Hay's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President of the United States under the provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 25 July 1963.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:

M. H. MIRLEY
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff



DALE H. HAYES
LTC, AGC
Adjutant General

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