

The **PALIMPSEST**



*From a drawing in "Medal of Honor 1863-1968," Government Printing Office, 1968
Calvin Pearl Titus Scales Wall at Peking, China, in 1900.*

Iowans and the Medal of Honor

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The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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L. O. CHEEVER

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Illustrations

Five of the pictures used in this issue were furnished by the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*. The remainder came from other newspapers, county historical societies, libraries, relatives and friends, and the recipients themselves.

Author

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THE PALIMPSEST

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Congressional Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor, first presented in 1863, is the highest military award for bravery that can be given to a member of the armed services of the United States. The award is made by the president, in the name of Congress, to an individual who, while serving in the armed forces, "distinguished himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

Each of the armed services has set up regulations which permit no margin of doubt or error in recommending a person for the medal. The deed must be proven by the incontestable evidence of at least two eyewitnesses; it must be so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes his gallantry; it must involve the risk of his life; and it must be the type of a deed which, if he had not done it, he would not be subject to any justified criticism.

In awarding the Army and Air Force Medals, a recommendation must be made within two years of the date of the deed and the award of the medal

must be made within three years. A recommendation for the Navy Medal must be made within three years and the award made within five years.

Aside from the honor which comes with its receipt, certain privileges accompany the award of the Congressional Medal of Honor. Its recipient, under certain conditions, may obtain free military air transportation; he is eligible for a special pension of \$100 a month starting with the date he applies for it; and sons of recipients are entitled to appointment to the military academies provided they are otherwise qualified.

Once hostilities had started in the Civil War, official Washington quarters began to wonder and to talk about recognizing the heroics and deeds of American soldiers, sailors, and marines who were distinguishing themselves in the fighting. Seeking a precedent for honoring servicemen, it was found that a "Certificate of Merit" had been authorized for soldiers in 1847.

However the only previous precedent for honoring servicemen went back to August 7, 1782, when George Washington created the Purple Heart as a decoration for "singular meritorious action." Records show that three men received the medal in 1783. No other awards were reported.

Little thought had been accorded the armed services during the periods of peace following the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. The Indian Wars waged in the west and the War with Mexi-

co were too far removed to worry east coast residents.

Senator James W. Grimes, of Iowa, noting the trend of conversation, decided to do something about it. As Chairman of the Senate Naval Committee, he introduced a bill creating a Naval medal. It was passed by both houses of Congress and approved by President Abraham Lincoln on December 21, 1861. It established a Medal of Honor for enlisted men of the Navy and Marine Corps "...as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action and other seamanlike qualities during the present war. . ."

Action on the Army medal was begun two months later when, on February 17, 1862, Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, introduced a Senate resolution providing for the presentation of "medals of honor" to enlisted men of the Army and Voluntary Forces. With President Lincoln's approval, the resolution became law on July 12, 1862. It was amended on March 3, 1863, when its provisions were extended to include officers as well as enlisted men and made the provisions retroactive to the start of the Civil War.

This legislation stood as the basis on which Army Medals of Honor were awarded until July 9, 1918. It was then superseded by a completely revised statute.

In the beginning, the design of the Army and Navy Medals of Honor was the same, except the

Navy medal was attached to its ribbon by an anchor; the Army medal was attached by means of an American eagle, standing on crossed cannons and cannon balls. In 1904, the Army medal was radically redesigned. The five-pointed star was retained but Minerva, highest symbol of wisdom and righteous war, took over the star's center. The medal was suspended from a blue ribbon carrying 13 stars. The medal could be worn pinned to the left breast or attached to a neck band. The neck band was officially adopted in 1944.

The 1862 Navy medal is still in use today. It is worn suspended from a neck band.

The Air Force used the Army design until 1965. The new medal combines features of both the Army and Navy designs. Suspended by a neck band, the Statue of Liberty is centered in its five-pointed star.

A second Medal of Honor, commonly referred to as the new, was approved by Congress on February 4, 1919. Designed in a cross shape, the medal was to be awarded to persons in Naval service who, while engaged in actual conflict with the enemy "distinguished themselves...without detriment to the mission." The old medal was retained for those in noncombat service. The new medal was made obsolete by an act of Congress approved August 7, 1942.

Interesting tidbits about the Medal of Honor:

The army was the first to present the Medals of

Honor—to the six survivors of “Mitchell’s Raiders” for carrying out a secret mission in April of 1862.

Navy Medals of Honor were first presented on April 3, 1863.

In the Civil War, 864 Medals of Honor were issued to the 27th Maine for defending Washington, D.C., until the outcome of the Battle of Gettysburg had been determined. In 1916-17, an Army Board, reviewing the records of 2,625 Medals of Honor awards, struck 911 names from the Medal of Honor Roll, including the 864 awarded to the 27th.

The only woman to receive the award, Dr. Mary E. Walker, was struck from the Roll at the same time. The Board ruled that she was a contract civilian surgeon.

Buffalo Bill Cody also lost out when the Board ruled that he was serving as a civilian scout.

Iowans and the Medal of Honor

It was the Civil War that witnessed the birth of the Medal of Honor. It was the Civil War that presented Iowans with their introduction to the heartaches of war.

Iowa, in 1861, had been a state only 14 years. It had no forts, no garrisons, no organized military units. Yet when President Abraham Lincoln called on Iowa Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood, in mid-April, to supply a regiment, the state was ready. The 1st Iowa Infantry steamed down the Mississippi in May, 1861, on its way to Wilson's Creek in Southwest Missouri, where it would take part in one of the bloodiest battles of the war; suffered its first fatality; and where one of its members would become Iowa's first recipient of the Medal of Honor.

Two months later the 2nd and 3rd Regiments were enroute south. When 1861 closed Iowa had 19 units in the field. In all 58 regiments and four artillery batteries were organized during the war.

From an 1860 population of 674,000 people, 76,000 men—11 per cent of the total population—went into the Federal armies.

Iowans campaigned from Wilson's Creek to Bentonville, in the Carolinas, in some of the blood-

iest fighting in history. Iowa's first battle fatality, Shelby Norman, came at Wilson's Creek; one out of every four Union soldiers who fell at Shiloh was an Iowan; Iowans spearheaded Grant's drive on Vicksburg and Sherman's march to the sea. In the west Iowans were an integral part of every major battle of the Civil War.

It is no wonder Iowans came away with 29 Medals of Honor. It is no wonder that Iowans serving in the nation's later wars, conflicts, and campaigns have increased that total to 60 medals.

Turning to the number of medals awarded Iowans, some lists may show another name—Paul L. Bolden. Army records show Sergeant Bolden's birthplace as Hobbes Island, Iowa. Bolden, a veteran of World War II, lives in Tennessee and an inquiry as to the location of Hobbes Island brought this reply:

"The information in the 1948 Medal of Honor book stating that I was born in Iowa is a mistake. I was born in Hobbs Island, Alabama, a suburb of Huntsville, Alabama, now."

The birthplace for a Civil War veteran, George W. Welch, has been given as Brown County, Iowa. Iowa has no Brown County. Indiana has such a County, and the abbreviation, Ia., was used for Indiana in that period. So, finding that Welch was not shown on Iowa rosters, it was assumed he came from Indiana.

Seeking information on Lewis Phife of Des

Moines County, relatives were able to correct the records as far as he is concerned. The correct spelling for this Indian fighter is Louis Pfeiff.

The bravery of these Iowans will be recorded in terse government announcements in the pages which follow. Among them you will find:

Nick Bouquet, of Burlington, probably was the first Iowan to be awarded the medal. He served with the 1st Iowa at Wilson's Creek, the first of the big battles west of the Mississippi.

James M. Elson, of Shellsburg, was wounded severely at Vicksburg and Atlanta, yet lived until 1894 when a rebel bullet he had carried for 30 years caused his death.

George W. Healey, captured and sent to the infamous Andersonville prison, had timbers from that prison sent to Dubuque and displayed them in his hardware store for years.

The escape attempts of Commander Edouard V. M. Izac, of Cresco, were fantastic. One of them brought him the Medal of Honor.

War, Conflict, or Campaign

In the pages which follow, Iowa's 60 Congressional Medal of Honor winners are listed. The list is broken down according to wars, conflicts, and campaigns in which the nation's military forces have been involved. The information for each individual is given in this order:

Name;

Rank at the time the medal was earned;

Military unit;

Location and date of action which brought the award of the medal;

Iowa residence (can be birthplace, residence, entered service in, served with an Iowa unit, etc.);

Citation accompanying the award; and

Where available, information on the medal winner after completion of hostilities.

Civil War

Bates, Norman F.

Sergeant, Company E, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Malcom.

Citation: Capture of flag and bearer.

The battle flag captured by Bates was one of seven taken in a single engagement near Colum-

bus, Georgia, by the volunteers of this regiment. After his war service, Bates was a farmer and stock raiser in Poweshiek County.

Bebb, Edward J.

Private, Company D, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Henry County.

Citation: Capture of flag.

Birdsall, Horatio L.

Sergeant, Company B, 3rd Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Keokuk.

Citation: Capture of flag and bearer.

Bouquet, Nicholas S.

Private, Company D, 1st Iowa Infantry; Wilson's Creek, Missouri; August 10, 1861; Iowa residence: Burlington.

Citation: Voluntarily left the line of battle and, exposing himself to imminent danger from a heavy fire of the enemy, assisted in capturing a riderless horse at large between the lines, and hitching him to a disabled gun, saved the gun from capture.

Bouquet was only 19 years old when cited for the Medal of Honor, the first Iowan to be so honored. Born in Bavaria, Bouquet's mother had sent him to the United States to live with his brothers and thus escape service in the German army. However, he volunteered for the 1st Iowa Infantry in 1861. Serving a 90-day enlistment, he was

mustered out on August 21, 1861. He re-enlisted in the 25th Iowa in 1862. After the war the 25th Iowa led the grand review in Washington and when it disbanded at Davenport, Sergeant Bouquet, in recognition of his bravery and heroism, was given the colors of his regiment for safe keeping. These colors he kept until his death, even though Iowa Governor A. B. Cummins requested that they be taken to Des Moines for preservation in the state capital. Bouquet returned to Burlington in 1865. At one time he engaged in the grocery trade, served on the Burlington police force, and was sergeant-at-arms of the House of Representatives at Des Moines. He died December 27, 1912, at 70 years of age, and is buried in Aspen Grove Cemetery.

Bras, Edgar A.

Sergeant, Company K, 8th Iowa Infantry; Spanish Fort, Alabama; April 8, 1865; Iowa residence: Toolesboro.

Citation: Capture of flag.

Cosgriff, Richard H.

Private, Company L, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Wapello.

Citation: Capture of flag in personal encounter with its bearer.

Dunlavy, James

Private, Company D, 3rd Iowa Cavalry; Osage,

Kansas; October 25, 1864; Iowa residence: Davis County.

Citation: At the Battle of Mine Creek, contesting for supremacy at Little Osage Crossing, Dunlavy, single-handed and alone, while suffering from a severe wound in the right arm, captured and secured the surrender of General Marmaduke, C.S.A. officer. He had come on a brigade he assumed his own but which proved to be the enemy dressed in Union uniforms. He noted a Confederate officer exhorting his men to take a stand. Dunlavy shot at the officer but missed because of his injury. However he demanded the officer turn over his revolver and surrender—which he did. Dunlavy then conducted General Marmaduke to the Union lines where he was turned over to General Samuel Ryan Curtis.

After returning to civilian life, Dunlavy entered Keokuk Medical College in 1870. Following his graduation, he spent the next 32 years in the practice of medicine at Stiles in Davis County.

Elson, James M.

Sergeant, Company C, 9th Iowa Infantry; Vicksburg, Mississippi; May 22, 1863; Iowa residence: Shellsburg.

Citation: Carried the colors in advance of his regiment and was shot down while attempting to plant them on the enemy's works.

James Elson returned to Shellsburg, ultimately becoming postmaster, a position he filled for eight years. In 1893 he was elected sheriff of Benton County. He died March 26, 1894, as the result of a rebel bullet he had carried since 1864.

Fanning, Nicholas

Private, Company B, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Selma, Alabama; April 2, 1865; Iowa residence: Independence.

Citation: Capture of silk Confederate States flag and two staff officers.

Godley, Leonidas M.

1st Sergeant, Company E, 22nd Iowa Infantry; Vicksburg, Mississippi; May 22, 1863; Iowa residence: Ashland.

Citation: Led his company in the assault on the enemy's works and gained the parapet, there receiving three very severe wounds. He lay all day in the sun, was taken prisoner, and had his leg amputated without anesthetics.

After losing his left leg at Vicksburg, Godley was discharged on September 4, 1863. He returned to Ashland (Wapello County) and resided there until December of 1874 when he moved to Ottumwa. Godley was elected county clerk in 1874 and reelected to that office seven consecutive terms. He was appointed revenue agent in 1883 and the following year was named a deputy in the same office.

Hays, John H.

Private, Company F, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Mahaska County.

Citation: Capture of flag and bearer, Austin's Battery (C.S.A.).

Healey, George W.

Private, Company E, 5th Iowa Cavalry; Newman, Georgia; July 29, 1864; Iowa residence: Dubuque.

Citation: When nearly surrounded by the enemy, captured a Confederate soldier, and with the aid of a comrade who joined him later, captured four other Confederate soldiers, disarmed the five prisoners, and brought them all into the Union lines.

George Healey clerked in a hardware and feed store following his return to Dubuque. In 1877 he established the pioneer hardware firm of George Washington Healey and Son. He died May 9, 1913. His parents named him George Washington Healey because of their admiration for the nation's first president. Paroled from the Andersonville prison, Healey returned to the regiment in September of 1864. On May 18, 1865, from Atlanta, he wrote his family in part: "...Jeff. Davis, president of the Confederate States of America (or so called), with family and assistants were taken out of the wet by the Yankee cavaliers. It was about the 9th of this month, 75 miles below Macon, by the 4th Mich. Cav. He and his family were brought here and sent to Augusta, Ga., escorted by 100 men of our regiment. I was on the detail; every time I had the opportunity I would look at him; he seemed to take it perfectly easy, for one who was liable to suffer death. His wife is a large woman, fair skin, good features; judging from her

personal appearance one would take her for a very kind lady; she seemed to be very uneasy. When the train arrived at the station at Augusta, thousands of people were there to look at him for the last time . . . At every station on our way down were large numbers of soldiers and citizens to see if it was true that Jeff. Davis was our prisoner. They would ask us what we were going to do with him. The answer they would get was 'Hang him,' and hang he will, no doubt, although he and his family were treated with respect by us."

Herrington, Pitt B.

Private, Company E, 11th Iowa Infantry; near Kenesaw Mountain, Georgia; June 15, 1864; Iowa residence: Tipton.

Citation: With one companion and under a fierce fire from the enemy at close range, went to the rescue of a wounded comrade who had fallen between the lines and carried him to a place of safety.

Herron, Francis J.

Lieutenant Colonel, 9th Iowa Infantry; Pea Ridge, Arkansas; May 7, 1862; Iowa residence: Dubuque.

Citation: Was foremost in leading his men, rallying them to repeated acts of daring, until himself disabled, when his horse was shot from under him, and taken prisoner.

Herron was exchanged for a Confederate officer and served the Union army brilliantly during the balance of the war. He was mustered out of

service in New Orleans in 1865 as a major general. He remained in New Orleans, practicing law, serving as United States marshal for the District of Louisiana, and as Secretary of State in Louisiana. Later he went to New York where he again turned to law. He died January 8, 1902.

Hill, James

1st Lieutenant, Company I, 21st Iowa Infantry; Champion Hill, Mississippi; May 16, 1863; Iowa residence: Cascade.

Citation: By skillful and brave management captured three of the enemy's pickets.

James Hill was a Baptist minister prior to and after the Civil War. He also had farming interests. After his return, Hill served the Cascade Baptist Church as minister and later transferred to the Worthington Church. He continued to make his home in Cascade however. He was elected chaplain of his regiment by the unanimous vote of privates and officers on August 4, 1863, and became known as the "fighting chaplain."

Kaltenbach, Luther P.

Corporal, Company F, 12th Iowa Infantry; Nashville, Tennessee; December 16, 1864; Iowa residence: Delaware County.

Citation: Capture of flag, supposed to be that of the 5th Mississippi Infantry (C.S.A.).

Kephart, James

Private, Company C, 13th United States Infan-

try; Vicksburg, Mississippi; May 19, 1863; Iowa residence: Webster City.

Citation: Voluntarily and at the risk of his life, under a severe fire of the enemy, aided and assisted to the rear an officer who had been severely wounded and left on the field.

Kephart was a Webster City resident for many years. He was grand commander of Winfield Scott Post No. 66, Department of Iowa, G.A.R. He also was a member of the Webster City Board of Education for many years. He died at Gooding, Idaho, in April of 1932, and is buried there.

May, William

Private, Company H, 32nd Iowa Infantry; Nashville, Tennessee; December 16, 1864; Iowa residence: Franklin County.

Citation: Ran ahead of his regiment over the enemy's works and captured from its bearer the flag of Bonanchad's Confederate Battery.

Mayes, William B.

Private, Company K, 11th Iowa Infantry; near Kenesaw Mountain, Georgia; June 15, 1864; Iowa residence: DeWitt.

Citation: With one companion and under a fierce fire from the enemy at short range, went to the rescue of a wounded comrade who had fallen between the lines, and carried him to a place of safety.

Miller, James P.

Private, Company D, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Selma,

Alabama; April 2, 1865; Iowa residence: Henry County.

Citation: Capture of the standard of the 12th Mississippi Cavalry (C.S.A.).

Morgan, Richard H.

Corporal, Company A, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Hawleyville, Page County.

Citation: Capture of flag inside the enemy's works, contesting for its possession with its bearer.

Following discharge from service, Morgan served for a time as a guard at the Fort Madison penitentiary. He then returned to the New Market area in Page County and farmed. Retiring from farming, Morgan moved to New Market, living there until his death in 1916.

Power, Albert

Private, Company A, 3rd Iowa Cavalry; Pea Ridge, Arkansas; March 7, 1862; Iowa residence: Davis County.

Citation: Under a heavy fire and at a great personal risk went to the aid of a dismounted comrade who was surrounded by the enemy, took him up on his own horse, and carried him to a place of safety.

Sloan, Andrew J.

Private, Company H, 12th Iowa Infantry; Nashville, Tennessee; December 16, 1864; Iowa residence: Colesburg.

Citation: Capture of flag.

Smith, Henry I.

1st Lieutenant, Company B, 7th Iowa Infantry; Black River, N.C.; March 15, 1865; Iowa residence: Shell Rock Falls.

Citation: Voluntarily, and under fire, rescued a comrade from death by drowning.

Swan, Charles A.

Private, Company K, 4th Iowa Cavalry; Selma, Alabama; April 2, 1865; Iowa residence: Mount Pleasant.

Citation: Capture of flag (supposed to be the 11th Mississippi, C.S.A.) and bearer.

Tibbets, Andrew W.

Private, Company I, 3rd Iowa Cavalry; Columbus, Georgia; April 16, 1865; Iowa residence: Appanoose County.

Citation: Capture of flag and bearer, Austin's Battery (C.S.A.).

Twombly, Voltaire P.

Corporal, Company F, 2nd Iowa Infantry; Fort Donelson, Tennessee; February 15, 1862; Iowa residence: Pittsburg.

Citation: Took the colors after three members of the color guard had fallen, and although almost instantly knocked down by a spent ball, immediately arose and bore the colors to the end of the engagement.

After taking part in the famous "march to the sea," Twombly was discharged and went to Burlington where he studied at the Burlington Busi-

ness College. Following his marriage, he became in rapid order: a flour merchant in Ottumwa, in the milling business at Pittsburg, a merchant in Keosauqua, Van Buren County treasurer for four years, and Keosauqua mayor for nine months. He served three terms as treasurer of the State of Iowa, helped organize a bank in Des Moines and served as its president from 1891 to 1908. He died February 25, 1918, and is buried at Pittsburg.

Williamson, James A.

Colonel, 4th Iowa Infantry, Chickasaw Bayou, Mississippi; December 29, 1862; Iowa residence: Des Moines.

Citation: Led his regiment against a superior force, strongly entrenched, and held his ground when all support had been withdrawn.

Brigadier General Williamson was one of Iowa's war heroes. He participated in the battles at Pea Ridge, Chickasaw Bayou, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, Cherokee Station, Lookout Mountain, Ringgold, Siege of Atlanta, and was with Sherman on the "march to the sea." Before the war he had practiced law in Keokuk County and Des Moines, moving to that city in 1854. Williamson was instrumental in the removal of the State Capital from Iowa City to Des Moines. After the war, he returned to Des Moines where he practiced law, dealt in real estate, and was active politically. Later he became interested in western land and mining which led him to move to New York.

President U. S. Grant named him Commissioner of the General Land Office in Washington, D.C. He then moved to railroading and was president of a transcontinental railroad for 10 years. Returning to New York and the practice of law, he had built an immense law business before his death at Jamestown, R.I., on September 7, 1902.

Young, Calvary M.

Sergeant, Company L, 3rd Iowa Cavalry; Osage, Kansas; October 25, 1864; Iowa residence: Hopeville, Clarke County.

Citation: Gallantry in capturing General Cabell.

Indian Campaigns

Knox, John W.

Corporal, Company I, 5th United States Infantry; Upper Washita, Texas; September 9, 1874; Iowa residence: Burlington.

Citation: Gallantry in action.

Phife, Lewis (Correct spelling: **Pfeiff, Louis**)

Sergeant, Company B, 8th United States Cavalry; Arizona; August to October, 1868; Iowa residence: Des Moines County.

Citation: Bravery in scouts and actions against the Indians.

At the age of 19, Louis Pfeiff left Burlington, heading for the west. He enlisted for service in the Civil War from that area and then served with the cavalry during the early Indian campaigns.

Stanley, Eben

Private, Company A, 5th United States Cavalry; near Turret Mountain, Arizona; March 25, 27, 1873; Iowa residence: Decatur County.

Citation: Gallantry in action.

War With Spain**Deignan, Osborn**

Coxswain, United States Navy; Santiago de Cuba; June 2, 1898; Iowa residence: Sheart.

Citation: In connection with the sinking of the USS *Merrimac* at the entrance to the harbor of Santiago de Cuba; June 2, 1898. Despite heavy fire from the Spanish batteries, Deignan displayed extraordinary heroism throughout this operation.

Philippine Insurrection**Birkhimer, William E.**

Captain, 3rd United States Artillery; San Miguel de Mayumo, Luzon, Philippine Islands; May 31, 1899; Iowa residence: Iowa.

Citation: With 12 men charged and routed 300 of the enemy.

It was Major William E. Birkhimer who suggested to the military secretary in Washington that "every possible attention should be paid to formality and solemnity of circumstance" whenever the medal was given to its recipients. His suggestion was passed up through channels until, on September 20, 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt signed an executive order directing that the

ceremonies of award "will always be made with formal and impressive ceremonial," and that the recipient "will, when practicable, be ordered to Washington, D.C., and the presentation be made by the President, as Commander in Chief, or by such representative as the president may designate. . ."

Fitz, Joseph

Ordinary Seaman, United States Navy; Mount Dajo Jolo, Philippine Islands; March 8, 1906; Iowa residence: accredited to Iowa.

Citation: On board the USS *Pampanga*, Mount Dajo Jolo, 8 March 1906. Serving in the presence of the enemy on this date, Fitz displayed bravery and extraordinary heroism.

Grove, William R.

Lieutenant Colonel, 36th Infantry, United States Volunteers; near Porac, Luzon, Philippine Islands; September 9, 1899; Iowa residence: Montezuma.

Citation: In advance of his regiment, rushed to the assistance of his colonel, charging, pistol in hand, seven insurgents, and compelling surrender of all not killed or wounded.

Huntsman, John A.

Sergeant, Company E, 36th Infantry, United States Volunteers; Bamban, Luzon, Philippine Islands; November 9, 1899; Iowa residence: Oskaloosa.

Citation: For distinguished bravery and conspicuous gallantry in action against insurgents.

Ray, Charles W.

Sergeant, Company I, 22nd United States Infantry; near San Isidro, Luzon, Philippine Islands; October 19, 1899; Iowa residence: Delta.

Citation: Captured a bridge with the detachment he commanded and held it against a superior force of the enemy, thereby enabling an army to come up and cross.

Straub, Paul F.

Surgeon, 36th Infantry, United States Volunteers; Alos, Zambales, Luzon, Philippine Islands; December 21, 1899; Iowa residence: Iowa.

Citation: Voluntarily exposed himself to a hot fire from the enemy in repelling with pistol fire an insurgent attack and at great risk of his own life went under fire to the rescue of a wounded officer and carried him to . . . safety.

China Relief Expedition - Boxer Rebellion

Lawton, Louis B.

1st Lieutenant, 9th United States Infantry; Tientsin, China; July 13, 1900; Iowa residence: Independence.

Citation: Carried a message and guided reinforcements across a wide and fire-swept space, during which he was thrice wounded.

Titus, Calvin Pearl

Musician, Company E, 14th United States Infantry; Peking, China; April 14, 1900; Iowa residence: Vinton.



United Press International Photo

In ceremonies at the White House on August 21, 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson drapes the blue ribbon, holding the Medal of Honor, around the neck of Sergeant Jimmie Howard. Looking on were Mrs. Howard, the couple's five daughters and one son. Jimmie, now retired from the Marine Corps, was born in Burlington.



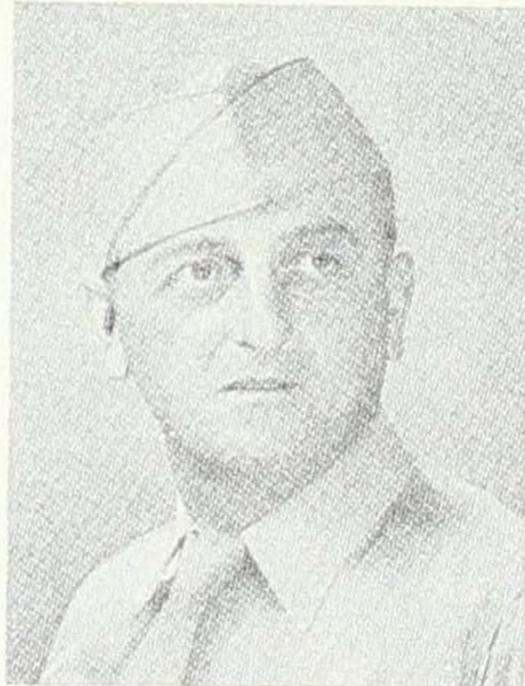
Dubuque Telegraph-Herald Photo

Captain George W. Healey was a familiar figure in Dubuque's Memorial Day parades. He is pictured here, mounted on horseback and just visible under the flag.

For Conspicuous Gallantry



BAKER



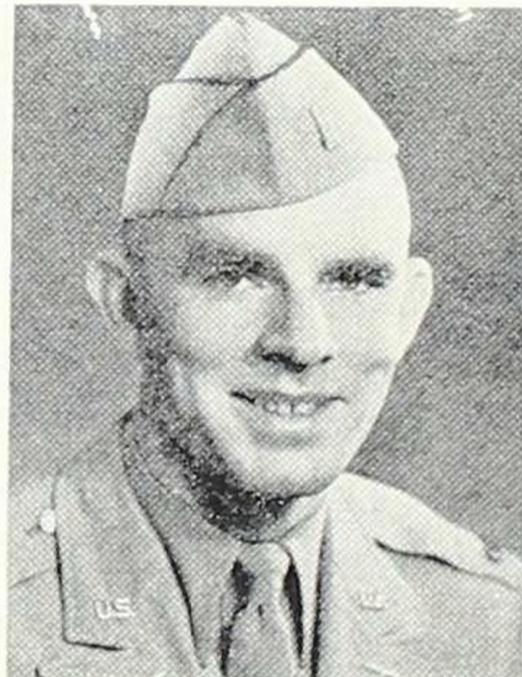
BEYER



BOUQUET



BRILES



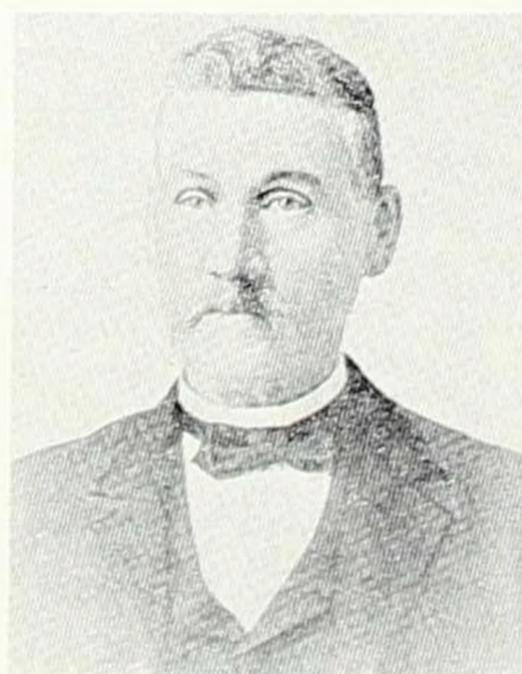
CHRISTENSEN



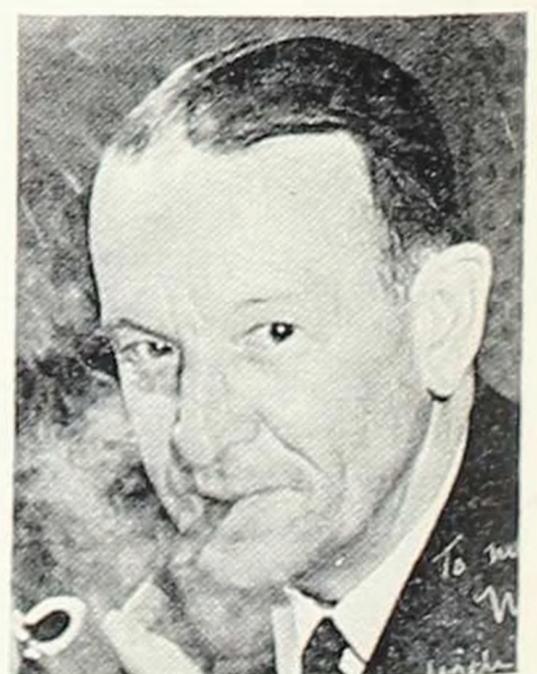
DETHLEFSEN



EDWARDS

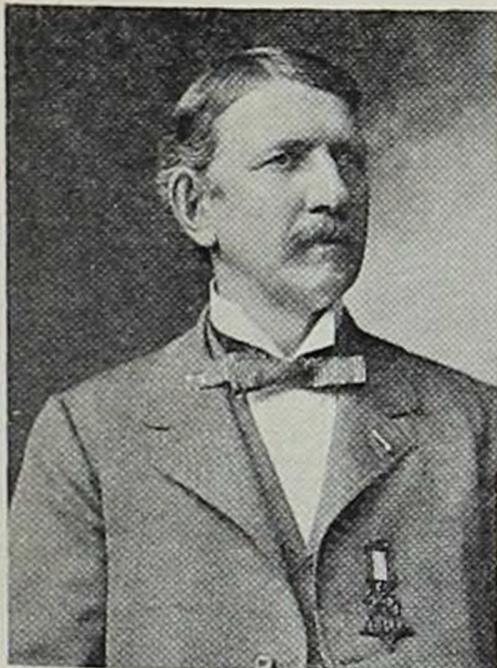


ELSON

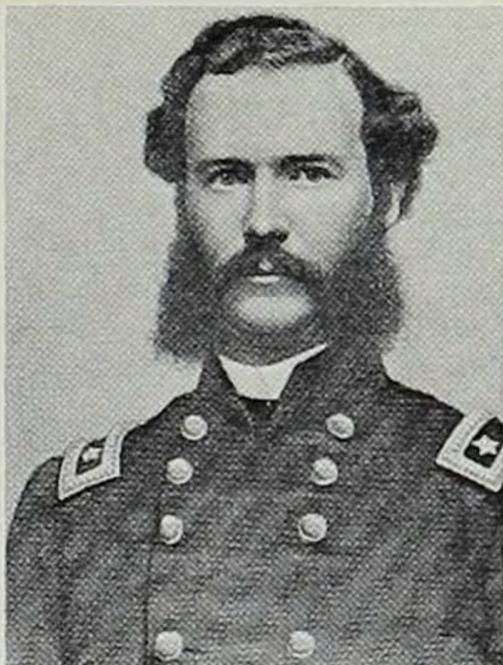


FRANK J. FLETCHER

and Intrepidity at the Risk



HEALEY



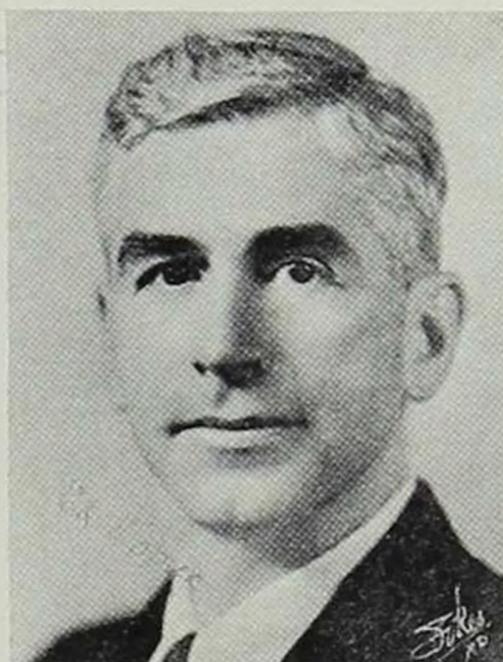
HERRON



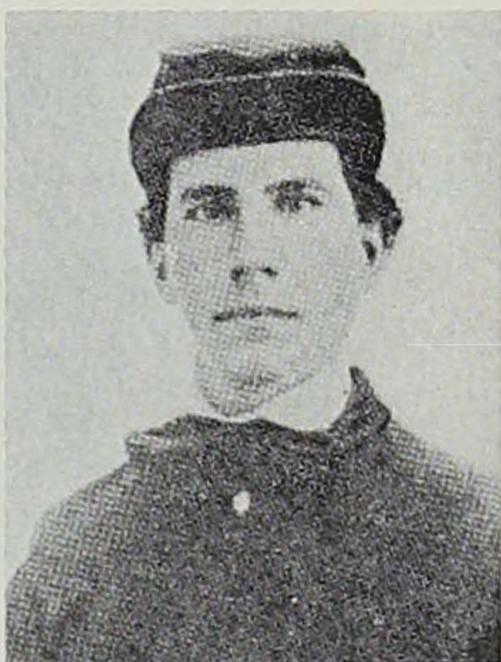
HIBBS



HILL



IZAC



KEPHART



LINDSEY



MORGAN

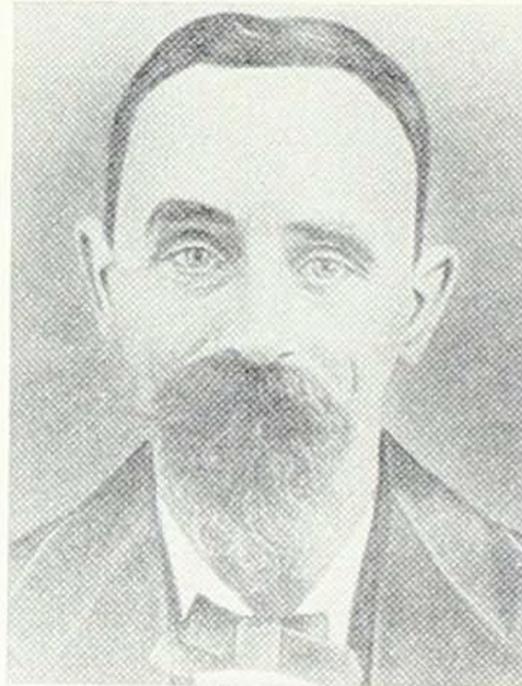


NEPPEL

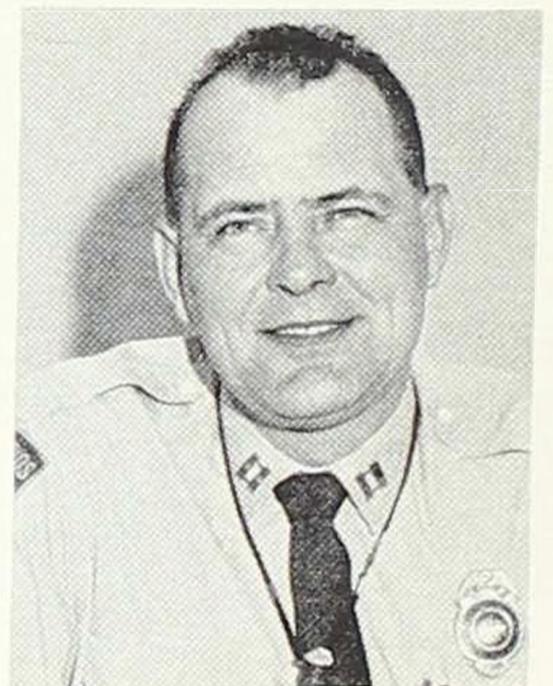
of His Life . . .



OLSON



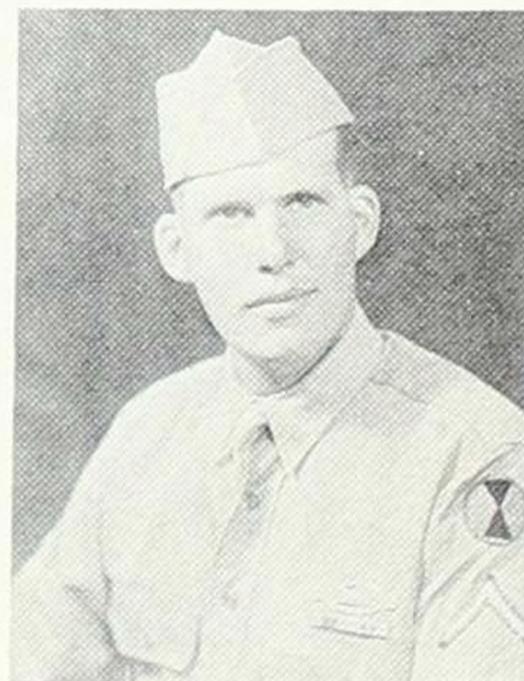
PFEIFF



PIERCE



RIORDAN



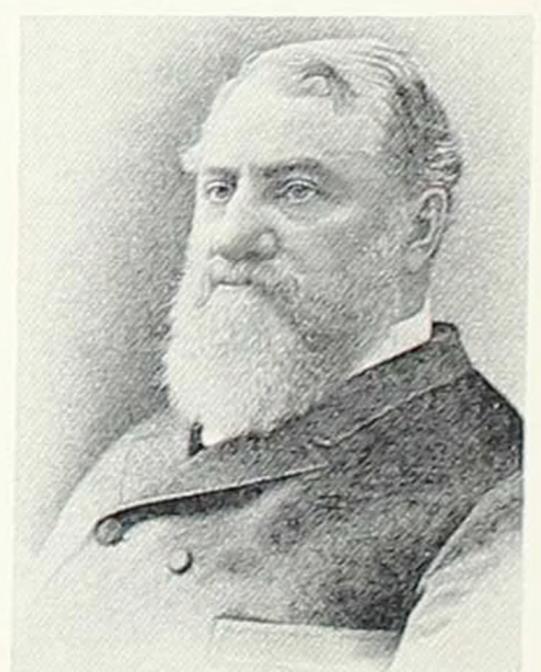
THORSON



TITUS



TWOMBLY



WILLIAMSON

Citation: Gallant and daring conduct in the presence of his colonel and other officers and enlisted men of his regiment; was first to scale the wall of the city.

Musician Titus was the first to scale the 30-foot high walls of the sacred city (Peking) and place the American Flag thereon. At 18, he had enlisted in the National Guard at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. That war ended before his unit could be activated. So he enlisted in the regular army and was sent to Manila and then to China. Because of his bravery he was appointed to West Point in 1901 and graduated 43rd in his class, four years later. He was assigned to his old regiment as a lieutenant. Titus served 32 years in the army, six years of which were spent as commandant of the Coe College (Cedar Rapids) R.O.T.C. program. He wrote on the back of the photo used in this issue of *The Palimpsest* that he "was wearing the coat upon which President Teddy Roosevelt pinned the Medal of Honor." It was presented in 1902, his first year at the academy.

Mexican Campaign (Vera Cruz)

Fletcher, Frank Friday

Rear Admiral, United States Navy; Vera Cruz, Mexico; April 21-22, 1914; Iowa residence: Oskaaloosa.

Citation: Under fire, Rear Admiral Fletcher was eminent and conspicuous in the performance of his duties; was senior officer present at Vera Cruz, and the landing and the operations of the landing force were carried out under

his orders and directions. In connection with these operations, he was at times on shore and under fire.

Uncle of Frank J. Fletcher, Frank Friday Fletcher was born in Oskaloosa according to government records. Another source notes that he was born in Jasper County and entered the Naval Academy from Mahaska County. He eventually rose to the rank of admiral.

Fletcher, Frank J.

Lieutenant, United States Navy; Vera Cruz, Mexico; April 21-22, 1914; Iowa residence: Marshalltown.

Citation: Under fire, Lieutenant Fletcher was eminent and conspicuous in performance of his duties. He was in charge of the *Esperanze* and succeeded in getting on board over 350 refugees, many of them after the conflict had commenced. Although the ship was under fire, being struck more than 30 times, he succeeded in getting all the refugees placed in safety. Lieutenant Fletcher was later placed in charge of the train conveying refugees under a flag of truce. This was hazardous duty, as it was believed that the track was mined, and a small error in dealing with the Mexican guard of soldiers might readily have caused a conflict, such a conflict at one time being narrowly averted. It was greatly due to his efforts in establishing friendly relations with the Mexican soldiers that so many refugees succeeded in reaching Vera Cruz from the interior.

Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher, a career officer in the Navy, is now retired and living in Maryland. His was the highest rank achieved by an Iowa Medal of Honor recipient. He was born in Mar-

shalltown, graduated from Marshalltown High School in 1902, and entered the Naval Academy at Annapolis two years later. He was graduated with the class of 1906 and was commissioned an ensign in the United States Navy. Continuing in service with the navy, he was flag lieutenant and fleet signal officer of the Atlantic fleet in 1914 and 1915. In turn he commanded the USS *Dale*, *Chauncey*, *Margaret*, *Benham*, *Gridley*, *Whipple*, *Sacramento*, and *New Mexico* of the Pacific fleet. In addition to the Medal of Honor, he also received the Navy cross for his services as commander of the USS *Benham*, a destroyer on patrol and convoy duty in World War I. He was graduated from the Naval War College in 1930 and from the United States War College in 1931. As a captain he became assistant chief of the Bureau of Navigation in 1938, succeeding the then Captain Chester W. Nimitz. He was promoted to rear admiral in 1938 and held that rank at the start of World War II. As second in command to Vice Admiral Halsey in the Marshall and Gilbert Island raids in 1942, Admiral Fletcher led the unit which made the attacks against the islands of Jaluit and Makin. He won worldwide attention for his part in the battle of the Coral Sea and for which he won the Distinguished Service Medal and promotion to the rank of vice admiral. On November 21, 1942, he took over command of the 13th Naval District in Seattle, Wash. As the war wound down in

1945, Admiral Fletcher and his North Pacific fleet were most prominent in the shelling of the Japanese homeland. Many of the meetings to arrange terms for the surrender of Japanese naval bases were held aboard his flagship, the USS *Panamint*.

World War I

Izac, Edouard Victor Michael

Lieutenant, United States Navy; aboard German Submarine *U-90* as a prisoner of war; May 21, 1918; Iowa residence: Cresco.

Citation: When the USS *President Lincoln* was attacked and sunk by the German Submarine *U-90*, on May 21, 1918, Lieutenant Izac was captured and held as a prisoner on board the *U-90* until return of the submarine to Germany, when he was confined in the prison camp. During his stay on the *U-90* he obtained information of the movements of German submarines which was so important that he determined to escape, with a view of making this information available to the United States and Allied naval authorities. In attempting to carry out this plan, he jumped through the window of a rapidly moving train at imminent risk of death, not only from the nature of the act itself but from the fire of the armed German soldiers who were guarding him. Having been recaptured and reconfined, Lieutenant Izac made a second and successful attempt to escape, breaking his way through barbed-wire fences and deliberately drawing the fire of the armed guards in the hope of permitting others to escape during the confusion. He made his way through the mountains of southwestern Germany, having only raw vegetables for food, and at the end, swam the River Rhine during the night in the immediate vicinity of German sentries.

Commander Izac, now retired and living in Bethesda, Maryland, wrote of his escapes on March 12, 1972: "I made many attempts to escape. After five months the last attempt was successful. We short-circuited the lights in the prison camp of Villingen in the Black Forest and two of us prisoners made our way to the Rhine River and swam across into Switzerland, from where we were sent back to our own forces. . . During one of my attempts to escape I jumped from a moving train and although badly injured was recaptured by my two armed guards who broke their guns over my head, shoulders, and back. This later necessitated my retirement from active duty in 1921." Izac moved to California and from there was elected to Congress in 1936 and served five terms. In more recent years he has lived in the Washington, D.C., area.

Lemert, Milo

1st Sergeant, Company G, 119th Infantry, 30th Division; near Bellicourt, France; September 29, 1918; Iowa residence: Marshalltown.

Citation: Seeing that the left flank of his company was held up, Sergeant Lemert located the enemy machine-gun emplacement, which had been causing heavy casualties. In the face of heavy fire he rushed it single-handed, killing the entire crew with grenades. Continuing along the enemy trench in advance of the company, he reached another emplacement, which he also charged, silencing the gun with grenades. A third machine-gun emplacement opened

upon him from the left and with similar skill and bravery he destroyed this also. Later, in company with another sergeant, he attacked a fourth machine-gun nest, being killed as he reached the parapet of the emplacement. His courageous action in destroying in turn four enemy machine-gun nests prevented many casualties among his company and very materially aided in achieving the objective.

Pike, Emory J.

Lieutenant Colonel, division machine-gun officer, 82nd Division; near Vandieres, France; September 15, 1918; Iowa residence: Columbus City.

Citation: Having gone forward to reconnoiter new machine-gun positions, Colonel Pike offered his assistance in reorganizing advance infantry units which had become disorganized during a heavy artillery shelling. He succeeded in locating only about 20 men, but with these he advanced and when later joined by several infantry platoons rendered inestimable service in establishing outposts, encouraging all by his cheeriness, in spite of the extreme danger of the situation. When a shell had wounded one of the men in the outpost, Colonel Pike immediately went to his aid and was severely wounded himself when another shell burst in the same place. While waiting to be brought to the rear, Colonel Pike continued in command, still retaining his jovial manner of encouragement, directing the reorganization until the position could be held. The entire operation was carried on under terrific bombardment, and the example of courage and devotion to duty as set by Colonel Pike, established the highest standard of morale and confidence to all under his charge.

World War II

Beyer, Arthur O.

Corporal, Company C, 603rd Tank Destroyer

Battalion; near Arloncourt, Belgium; January 15, 1945; Iowa residence: Mitchell County.

Citation: Corporal Beyer displayed conspicuous gallantry in action. His platoon, in which he was a tank-destroyer gunner, was held up by antitank, machine-gun, and rifle fire from enemy troops dug in along a ridge about 200 yards to the front. Noting a machine-gun position in this defense line, he fired upon it with his 76-mm. gun, killing one man and silencing the weapon. He dismounted from his vehicle and, under direct enemy observation, crossed open ground to capture the two remaining members of the crew. Another machine-gun, about 250 yards to the left, continued to fire on him. Through withering fire, he advanced on the position. Throwing a grenade into the emplacement, he killed one crew member and again captured the two survivors. He was subjected to concentrated small-arms fire but, with great bravery, he worked his way a quarter mile along the ridge, attacking hostile soldiers in their foxholes with his carbine and grenades. When he had completed his self-imposed mission against powerful German forces, he had destroyed two machine-gun positions, killed 8 of the enemy and captured 18 prisoners, including two bazooka teams. Corporal Beyer's intrepid action and unflinching determination to close with and destroy the enemy eliminated the German defense line and enabled his task force to gain its objective.

Arthur O. Beyer was found dead at his farm home near Buffalo, North Dakota, on February 17, 1965. He was 55 years old. In a ceremony at the White House on August 27, 1945, Beyer was one of 28 Army heroes from 18 states and Canada to receive the Medal of Honor from President Harry S. Truman.

Briles, Herschel F.

Staff Sergeant, Company C, 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion; near Scherpenseel, Germany; November 20, 1944; Iowa residence: Colfax.

Citation: Sergeant Briles was leading a platoon of destroyers across an exposed slope near Scherpenseel, Germany, on November 20, 1944, when they came under heavy enemy artillery fire. A direct hit was scored on one of the vehicles, killing one man, seriously wounding two others, and setting the destroyer afire. With a comrade, Sergeant Briles left the cover of his own armor and raced across ground raked by artillery and small-arms fire to the rescue of the men in the shattered destroyer. Without hesitation, he lowered himself into the burning turret, removed the wounded and then extinguished the fire. From a position he assumed the next morning, he observed hostile infantrymen advancing. With his machine-gun, he poured such deadly fire into the enemy ranks that an entire pocket of 55 Germans surrendered, clearing the way for a junction between American units which had been held up for 2 days. Later that day, when another of his destroyers was hit by a concealed enemy tank, he again left protection to give assistance. With the help of another soldier, he evacuated two wounded under heavy fire and, returning to the burning vehicle, braved death from exploding ammunition to put out the flames. By his heroic initiative and complete disregard for personal safety, Sergeant Briles was largely responsible for causing heavy enemy casualties, forcing the surrender of 55 Germans, making possible the salvage of 2 of our vehicles and saving the lives of wounded comrades.

On his return from service, Briles farmed near Ankeny for nine years. In 1954, he bought an in-

terest in the Colfax Sales Company, a livestock auction business. After 13½ years in that business, Briles sold his interest and is now living on and operating his own farm near Colfax.

Christensen, Dale Eldon

2nd Lieutenant, Troop E, 112th Cavalry Regiment; Driniumor River, New Guinea; July 16-19, 1944; Iowa residence: Audubon County.

Citation: Lieutenant Christensen repeatedly distinguished himself . . . in the continuous heavy fighting which occurred. On July 16 his platoon engaged in a savage fire fight in which much damage was caused by one enemy machine-gun effectively placed. Lieutenant Christensen ordered his men to remain under cover, crept forward under fire, and at a range of 15 yards put the gun out of action with hand grenades. Again on July 19, while attacking an enemy position strong in mortars and machine-guns, his platoon was pinned to the ground by intense fire. Ordering his men to remain under cover, he crept forward alone to locate definitely the enemy automatic weapons and the best direction from which to attack. Although his rifle was struck by enemy fire and knocked from his hands he continued his reconnaissance, located five enemy machine-guns, destroyed one with hand grenades, and rejoined his platoon. He then led his men to the point selected for launching the attack and, calling encouragement, led the charge. This assault was successful and the enemy was driven from the positions with a loss of four mortars and ten machine-guns and leaving many dead on the field. On August 4, 1944, near Afua, Dutch New Guinea, Lieutenant Christensen was killed in action about 2 yards from his objective while leading his platoon in an attack on an enemy machine-gun position.

The following letter was written by Lieutenant Christensen, about two months before he was killed, to his mother and father. It was mailed by his commanding officer:

"This is one letter which I hope you never get but I feel as though I must write it.

"In all probability we will go into action early tomorrow and while I cannot imagine that anything will happen to me, I have been in the army too long not to know that anything can happen.

"In case I am killed you will eventually get this and you will know I was thinking of you. As yet I'm not afraid and while I probably will be as nervous as the next person, I wouldn't back out of this if I had the chance. I want you to know that I have appreciated everything you have ever done for me and that I couldn't have had a better mother and father. The ways that you have taught me have always been for the good.

"I couldn't have asked for a better life because I feel like I have lived as I wished. The four years I have been in the army I do not feel have been wasted.

"I have a savings account at. . . . This, in addition to the bonds that you have, some bonds in Washington, D.C., and the six months gratuity which you will get if I am killed, will all go to you according to the will of mine that you have. If you do not need it, I wish you would use it to help Raymond, Doris, Nelson, and Carl [brothers and

sisters] to get a little more education than they can get in high school. I only wish it were more but it will be around \$2,000.

"There is little more that I can say . . ."

Lindsey, Darrell R.

Captain, United States Air Corps; Air Mission; August 9, 1944; Iowa residence: Jefferson.

Citation: On August 9, 1944, Captain Lindsey led a formation of 30 B-26 medium bombers in a hazardous mission to destroy the strategic enemy-held L'Isle Adam railroad bridge over the Seine in occupied France. With most of the bridges over the Seine destroyed, the heavily fortified L'Isle Adam bridge was of inestimable value to the enemy in moving troops, supplies, and equipment to Paris. Captain Lindsey was fully aware of the fierce resistance that would be encountered. Shortly after reaching enemy territory the formation was buffeted with heavy and accurate anti-aircraft fire. By skillful evasive action, Captain Lindsey was able to elude much of the enemy flak, but just before entering the bombing run his B-26 was peppered with holes. During the bombing run the enemy fire was even more intense, and Captain Lindsey's right engine received a direct hit and burst into flames. Despite the fact that his ship was hurled out of formation by the violence of the concussion, Captain Lindsey brilliantly maneuvered back into the lead position without disrupting the flight. Fully aware that the gasoline tanks might explode at any moment, Captain Lindsey gallantly elected to continue the perilous bombing run. With fire streaming from his right engine and his right wing half enveloped in flames, he led his formation over the target upon which the bombs were dropped with telling effect. Immediately after the objective was attacked, Captain Lindsey gave the order for the

crew to parachute from the doomed aircraft. With magnificent coolness and superb pilotage and without regard for his own life, he held the swiftly descending airplane in a steady glide until the members of the crew could jump to safety. With the right wing completely enveloped in flames and an explosion of the gasoline tank imminent, Captain Lindsey still remained unperturbed. The last man to leave the stricken plane was the bombardier, who offered to lower the wheels so that Captain Lindsey might escape from the nose. Realizing that this might throw the aircraft into an uncontrollable spin and jeopardize the bombardier's chances to escape, Captain Lindsey refused the offer. Immediately after the bombardier had bailed out, and before Captain Lindsey was able to follow, the right gasoline tank exploded. The aircraft sheathed in fire, went into a steep dive and was seen to explode as it crashed. All who are living today from this plane owe their lives to the fact that Captain Lindsey remained cool and showed supreme courage in this emergency.

Neppel, Ralph G.

Sergeant, Company M, 329th Infantry, 83rd Infantry Division; Birgel, Germany; December 14, 1944; Iowa residence: Glidden.

Citation: Sergeant Neppel was leader of a machine-gun squad defending an approach to the village of Birgel, Germany, on December 14, 1944, when an enemy tank, supported by 20 infantrymen, counterattacked. He held his fire until the Germans were within 100 yards and then raked the foot soldiers beside the tank, killing several of them. The enemy armor continued to press forward, and, at the point-blank range of 30 yards, fired a high-velocity shell into the American emplacement, wounding the entire squad. Sergeant Neppel, blown 10 yards from his gun, had one leg severed below the knee and suffered other wounds.

Despite his injuries and the danger from the onrushing tank and infantry, he dragged himself back to his position on his elbows, remounted his gun and killed the remaining enemy riflemen. Stripped of its infantry protection, the tank was forced to withdraw. By his superb courage and indomitable fighting spirit, Sergeant Neppel inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and broke a determined counter-attack.

Saul Pett and Jules Loh, Associated Press writers, covered Neppel's postwar years in an article which appeared in *The Cedar Rapids Gazette* of December 4, 1966. They wrote: "...A *Des Moines Register & Tribune* newspaper columnist suggested a 'Ralph Neppel Fund' and fellow Iowans responded generously, built a house in Carroll for Ralph and his bride, Jean. Ralph was grateful for the house but city life had no appeal. He tried selling appliances, then used cars, then decided to go to college. He got his degree and was halfway through his master's work when he discovered the expense of raising two children and decided to accept an offer to go to work for the Veterans Administration in Des Moines. Two more children were born before he was transferred to the VA office in Iowa City where he now lives." Neppel is still connected with the VA in Iowa City.

Olson, Arlo L.

Captain, 15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division; crossing of the Volturno River, Italy; October 13, 1943; Iowa residence: Greenville.

Citation: Captain Olson and his company spearheaded the advance of the regiment through 30 miles of mountainous enemy territory in 13 days. Placing himself at the head of his men, Captain Olson waded into the chest-deep water of the raging Volturno River and despite point-blank machine-gun fire aimed directly at him made his way to the opposite bank and threw two hand grenades into the gun position, killing the crew. When an enemy machine-gun 150 yards distant opened fire on his company, Captain Olson advanced upon the position in a slow deliberate walk. Although five German soldiers threw hand grenades at him from a range of 5 yards, Captain Olson dispatched them all, picked up a machine pistol and continued toward the enemy. Advancing to within 15 yards of the position he shot it out with the foe, killing nine and seizing the post. Throughout the next 13 days Captain Olson led combat patrols, acted as company No. 1 scout and maintained unbroken contact with the enemy. On October 27, 1943, Captain Olson conducted a platoon in attack on a strongpoint, crawling to within 25 yards of the enemy and then charging the position. Despite continuous machine-gun fire which barely missed him, Captain Olson made his way to the gun and killed the crew with his pistol. When the men saw their leader make this desperate attack they followed him and overran the position. Continuing the advance, Captain Olson led his company to the next objective at the summit of Monte San Nicola. Although the company to his right was forced to take cover from the furious automatic and small-arms fire, which was directed upon him and his men with equal intensity, Captain Olson waved his company into a skirmish line and despite the fire of a machine-gun which singled him out as its sole target led the assault which drove the enemy away. While making a reconnaissance for defensive positions, Captain Olson was fatally wounded. Ignoring his severe pain, this

intrepid officer completed his reconnaissance, supervised the location of his men in the best defensive positions, refused medical aid until all his men had been cared for, and died as he was being carried down the mountain.

Pierce, Francis Junior

Pharmacist's Mate First Class, United States Navy; 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines, 4th Marine Division; Iwo Jima, March 15-16, 1945; Iowa residence: Earlville.

Citation: Almost continuously under fire while carrying out the most dangerous volunteer assignments, Pierce gained valuable knowledge of the terrain and disposition of troops. Caught in heavy enemy rifle and machine-gun fire which wounded a corpsman and two of his eight stretcher bearers who were carrying two wounded marines to a forward aid station on March 15, Pierce quickly took charge of the party, carried the newly wounded men to a sheltered position, and rendered first aid. After directing the evacuation of three of the casualties, he stood in the open to draw the enemy's fire and, with his weapon blasting, enabled the litter bearers to reach cover. Turning his attention to the other two casualties, he was attempting to stop the profuse bleeding of one man when a Japanese fired from a cave less than 20 yards away and wounded his patient again. Risking his own life to save his patient, Pierce deliberately exposed himself to draw the attacker from the cave and destroyed him with the last of his ammunition. Then lifting the wounded man to his back, he advanced unarmed through deadly rifle fire across 200 feet of open terrain. Despite exhaustion and in the face of warnings against such a suicidal mission, he again traversed the same fire-swept path to rescue the remaining marine. On the following morning, he led a combat patrol to the

sniper nest and, while aiding a stricken marine, was seriously wounded. Refusing aid for himself, he directed treatment for the casualty, at the same time maintaining protective fire for his comrades. Completely fearless, completely devoted to the care of his patients, Pierce inspired the entire battalion.

Upon his discharge from the Marine Corps after World War II, Francis J. Pierce was accepted as a police officer with the Grand Rapids, Michigan, Police Department. At the present time he holds the rank of inspector, in charge of the Patrol Division. In addition to his regular duties he teaches and lectures on police patrol, riot control, explosives, drugs and drug abuse; is explosive disposal officer for areas of Western Michigan; and does riot control work in training units of the Michigan National Guard and Army Reserves. Since leaving the service he has attended Michigan State College, University of Louisville, Community College at Pontiac, Michigan, and is presently enrolled at Grand Rapids Junior College.

Riordan, Paul F.

2nd Lieutenant, 34th Infantry Division; near Cassino, Italy; February 3-8, 1944; Iowa residence: Charles City.

Citation: In the attack on the approaches to the city of Cassino on February 3, 1944, Lieutenant Riordan led one of the assault platoons. Attacking Hill 175, his command was pinned down by enemy machine-gun fire from the hill and from a pillbox about 45 yards to the right of the hill. In the face of intense fire, Lieutenant Riordan moved out

in full view of the enemy gunners to reach a position from where he could throw a hand grenade into the pillbox. Then, getting to his knees, he hurled the grenade approximately 45 yards, scoring a direct hit. The grenade killed one and wounded the other two Germans in the nest and silenced the gun. Another soldier then cleaned out the enemy pillboxes on the hill itself, and the company took its objective. Continuing the assault into Cassino itself on February 8, 1944, Lieutenant Riordan and his platoon were given the mission of taking the city jailhouse, one of the enemy's several strong points. Again Lieutenant Riordan took the lead and managed to get through the ring of enemy fire covering the approaches and reached the building. His platoon, however, could not get through the intense fire and was cut off. Lieutenant Riordan, aware that his men were unable to follow, determined to carry on single-handed, but the numerically superior enemy force was too much for him to overcome, and he was killed by enemy small-arms fire after disposing of at least two of the defenders. Lieutenant Riordan's bravery and extraordinary heroism in the face of almost certain death were an inspiration to his men and exemplify the highest traditions of the armed forces of the United States.

A street at Fort Benning, Georgia, has been named for Lieutenant Riordan, killed in action in Italy.

Thorson, John F.

Private First Class, Company G, 17th Infantry, 7th Infantry Division; Dagami, Leyte, Philippine Islands; October 28, 1944; Iowa residence: Armstrong.

Citation: Private Thorson was an automatic-rifleman on October 28, 1944, in the attack on Dagami, Leyte, Philip-

pine Islands. A heavily fortified enemy position consisting of pillboxes and supporting trenches held up the advance of his company. His platoon was ordered to outflank and neutralize the strong point. Voluntarily moving well out in front of his group, Private Thorson came upon an enemy fire trench defended by several hostile riflemen and, disregarding the intense fire directed at him, attacked single-handed. He was seriously wounded and fell about 6 yards from the trench. Just as the remaining 20 members of the platoon reached him, one of the enemy threw a grenade into their midst. Shouting a warning and making a final effort, Private Thorson rolled onto the grenade and smothered the explosion with his body. He was instantly killed, but his magnificent courage and supreme self-sacrifice prevented injury and possible death of his comrades.

A Red Cross Club in Korea has been dedicated to John F. Thorson, Jr., and an Army Transport carries his name.

Korean Conflict

Edwards, Junior D.

Sergeant First Class, Company E, 23rd Infantry Regiment; near Changbong-ni, Korea; January 2, 1951; Iowa residence: Indianola.

Citation: Sergeant First Class Junior D. Edwards distinguished himself . . . in action against the enemy near Changbong-ni, Korea. When his platoon, while assisting in the defense of a strategic hill, was forced out of its position and came under vicious raking fire from an enemy machine-gun set up on adjacent high ground, Sergeant Edwards individually charged the hostile emplacement, throwing grenades as he advanced. The enemy withdrew but returned to deliver devastating fire when he had ex-

pended his ammunition. Securing a fresh supply of grenades, he again charged the emplacement, neutralized the weapon and killed the crew, but was forced back by hostile small-arms fire. When the enemy emplaced another machine-gun and resumed fire, Sergeant Edwards again renewed his supply of grenades, rushed a third time through a vicious hail of fire, silenced the second gun and annihilated its crew. In this third daring assault he was mortally wounded but his indomitable courage and successful action enabled his platoon to regain and hold the vital strongpoint.

Edwards Hall at Fort Des Moines was named in his honor as was Camp Edwards, 2nd Supply and Transport Battalion compound, located near Kumchon, Korea.

Vietnam Conflict

Baker, John F., Jr.

Sergeant (then Private First Class), Company A, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division; Republic of Vietnam; November 5, 1966; Iowa residence: Davenport.

Citation: . . . Enroute to assist another unit that was engaged with the enemy, Company A came under intense enemy fire and the lead man was killed instantly. Sergeant Baker immediately moved to the head of the column and together with another soldier knocked out two enemy bunkers. When his comrade was mortally wounded, Sergeant Baker, spotting four Viet Cong snipers, killed all of them, evacuated the fallen soldier and returned to lead repeated assaults against the enemy positions, killing several more Viet Cong. Moving to attack two additional enemy bunkers, he and another soldier drew intense enemy fire

and Sergeant Baker was blown from his feet by an enemy grenade. He quickly recovered and single-handedly destroyed one bunker before the other soldier was wounded. Seizing his fallen comrade's machine-gun, Sergeant Baker charged through the deadly fusillade to silence the other bunker. He evacuated his comrade, replenished his ammunition and returned to the forefront to brave the enemy fire and continue the fight. When the forward element was ordered to withdraw, he carried one wounded man to the rear. As he returned to evacuate another soldier, he was taken under fire by snipers, but raced beyond the friendly troops to attack and kill the snipers. After evacuating the wounded man, he returned to cover the deployment of the unit. His ammunition now exhausted, he dragged two more of his fallen comrades to the rear . . .

Dethlefsen, Merlyn Hans

Major (then Captain), United States Air Force; in the air over North Vietnam; March 10, 1967; Iowa residence: Greenville.

Citation: On March 10, 1967, Major Dethlefsen was one of a flight of F-105 aircraft engaged in a fire suppression mission designed to destroy a key anti-aircraft defensive complex containing surface-to-air-missiles (SAM), an exceptionally heavy concentration of anti-aircraft artillery, and other automatic weapons. The defensive network was situated to dominate the approach and provide protection to an important North Vietnam industrial center that was scheduled to be attacked by fighter bombers immediately after the strike by Major Dethlefsen's flight. In the initial attack on the defensive complex the lead aircraft was crippled, and Major Dethlefsen's aircraft was extensively damaged by the intense enemy fire. Realizing that the success of the impending fighter bomber attack on the

center now depended on his ability to effectively suppress the defensive fire, Major Dethlefsen ignored the enemy's overwhelming firepower and the damage to his aircraft and pressed his attack. Despite a continuing hail of anti-aircraft fire, deadly surface-to-air-missiles, and counterattacks by MIG interceptors, Major Dethlefsen flew repeated close range strikes to silence the enemy defensive positions with bombs and cannon fire. His action in rendering ineffective the defensive SAM and anti-aircraft artillery sites enabled the ensuing fighter bombers to strike successfully the important industrial target without loss or damage to their aircraft . . .

Now a Lieutenant Colonel, Dethlefsen lives in Montgomery, Alabama. He will move soon, however, to become an instructor in a Pennsylvania war college.

Hibbs, Robert John

2nd Lieutenant, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division; Don Dien Lo Khe, Republic of Vietnam; March 5, 1966; Iowa residence: Cedar Falls.

Citation: Lieutenant Hibbs was in command of a 15-man ambush patrol of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry when his unit observed a company of Viet Cong advancing along the road toward the 2nd Battalion's positions. Informing his command post by radio of the impending attack, he prepared his men for the oncoming Viet Cong, emplaced two mines in their path and, when the insurgents were within 20 feet of the patrol's position, he fired the two antipersonnel mines, wounding or killing half of the enemy company. Then, to cover the withdrawal of his patrol, he threw hand grenades, stepped onto the open road, and opened fire on the remainder of the Viet Cong force

of approximately 50 men. Having rejoined his men, he was leading them toward the Battalion perimeter when the patrol encountered the rear elements of another Viet Cong company deployed to attack the Battalion. With the advantage of surprise, he directed a charge against the Viet Cong which carried the patrol through the insurgent force, completely disrupting its attack. Learning that a wounded patrol member was wandering in the area between the two opposing forces, and although moments from safety and wounded in the leg himself, he and a sergeant went back to the battlefield to recover the stricken man. After they maneuvered through the withering fire of two Viet Cong machine-guns, the sergeant grabbed the dazed soldier and dragged him back toward the friendly lines while Lieutenant Hibbs remained behind to provide covering fire. Armed with only an M-16 rifle and pistol, but determined to destroy the enemy positions, he then charged the two machine-gun emplacements and was struck down. Before succumbing to his mortal wounds, he destroyed the Starlight telescopic sight attached to his rifle to prevent its capture and use by the Viet Cong.

Howard, Jimmie E.

Gunnery Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant), Company C, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division; Republic of Vietnam; June 16, 1966; Iowa residence: Burlington.

Citation: Gunnery Sergeant Howard and his 18-man platoon were occupying an observation post deep within enemy-controlled territory. Shortly after midnight on June 16, a Viet Cong force of estimated battalion size approached the Marines' position and launched a vicious attack with small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire. Reacting swiftly and fearlessly in the face of overwhelm-

ing odds, Gunnery Sergeant Howard skillfully organized his small but determined force into a tight perimeter defense and calmly moved from position to position to direct his men's fire. Throughout the night, during assault after assault, his courageous example and firm leadership inspired and motivated his men to withstand the unrelenting fury of the hostile fire in the seemingly hopeless situation. He constantly shouted encouragement to his men and exhibited imagination and resourcefulness in directing their return fire. When fragments of an exploding enemy grenade injured him severely and prevented him from moving his legs, he distributed his ammunition to the remaining members of his platoon and proceeded to maintain radio communications and direct air strikes on the enemy with uncanny accuracy. At dawn, despite the fact that five men were killed and all but one wounded, his beleaguered platoon was still in command of its position. When evacuation helicopters approached his position, Gunnery Sergeant Howard warned them away and called for additional air strikes and directed devastating small-arms fire and air strikes against enemy automatic weapons positions in order to make the landing zone as secure as possible. Through his extraordinary courage and resolute fighting spirit, Gunnery Sergeant Howard was largely responsible for preventing the loss of his entire platoon.

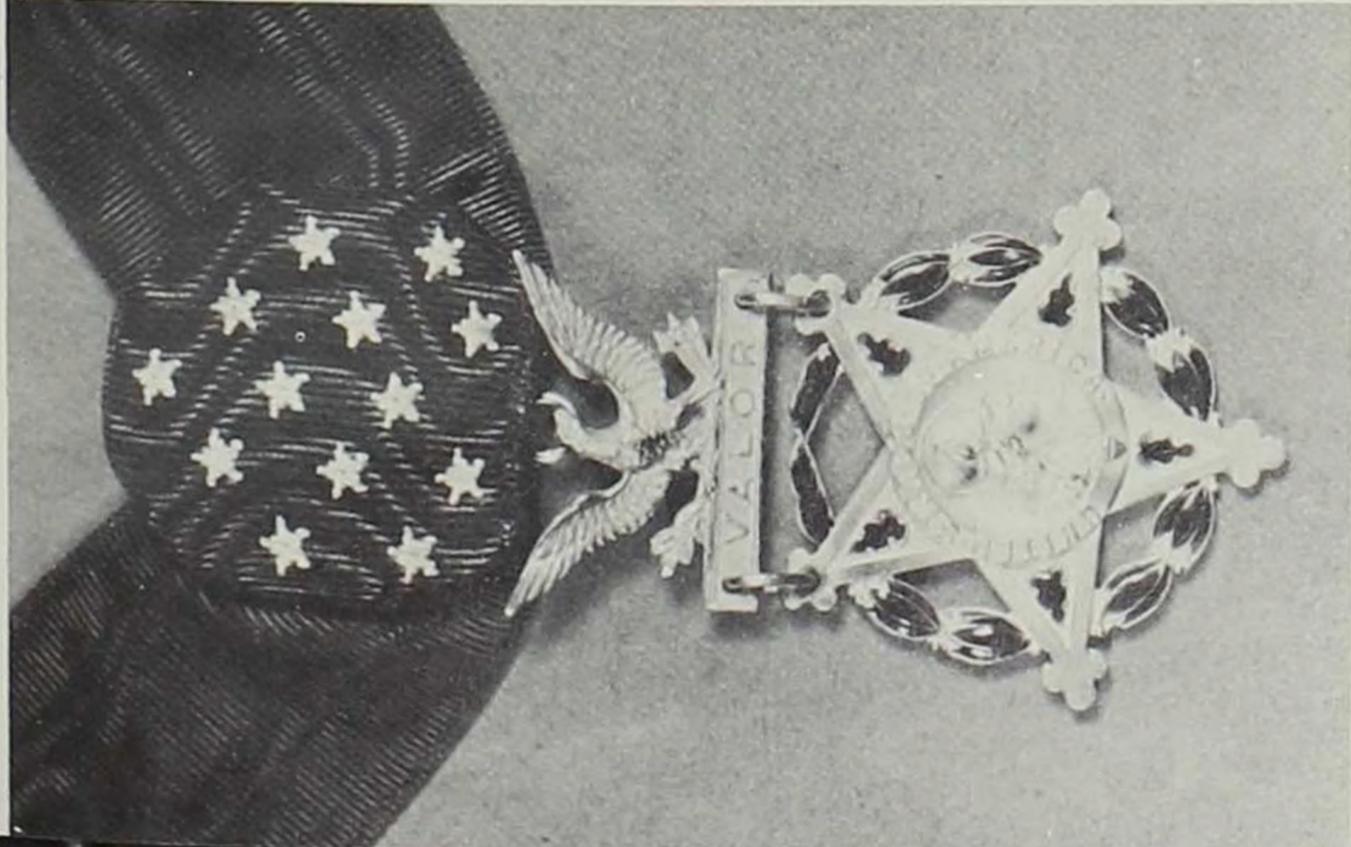
Jimmie Howard retired from the Marine Corps on March 25, 1972. He is now a VA representative and is living in San Diego, California, with his wife and six children. His son will enter the Naval Academy this fall.

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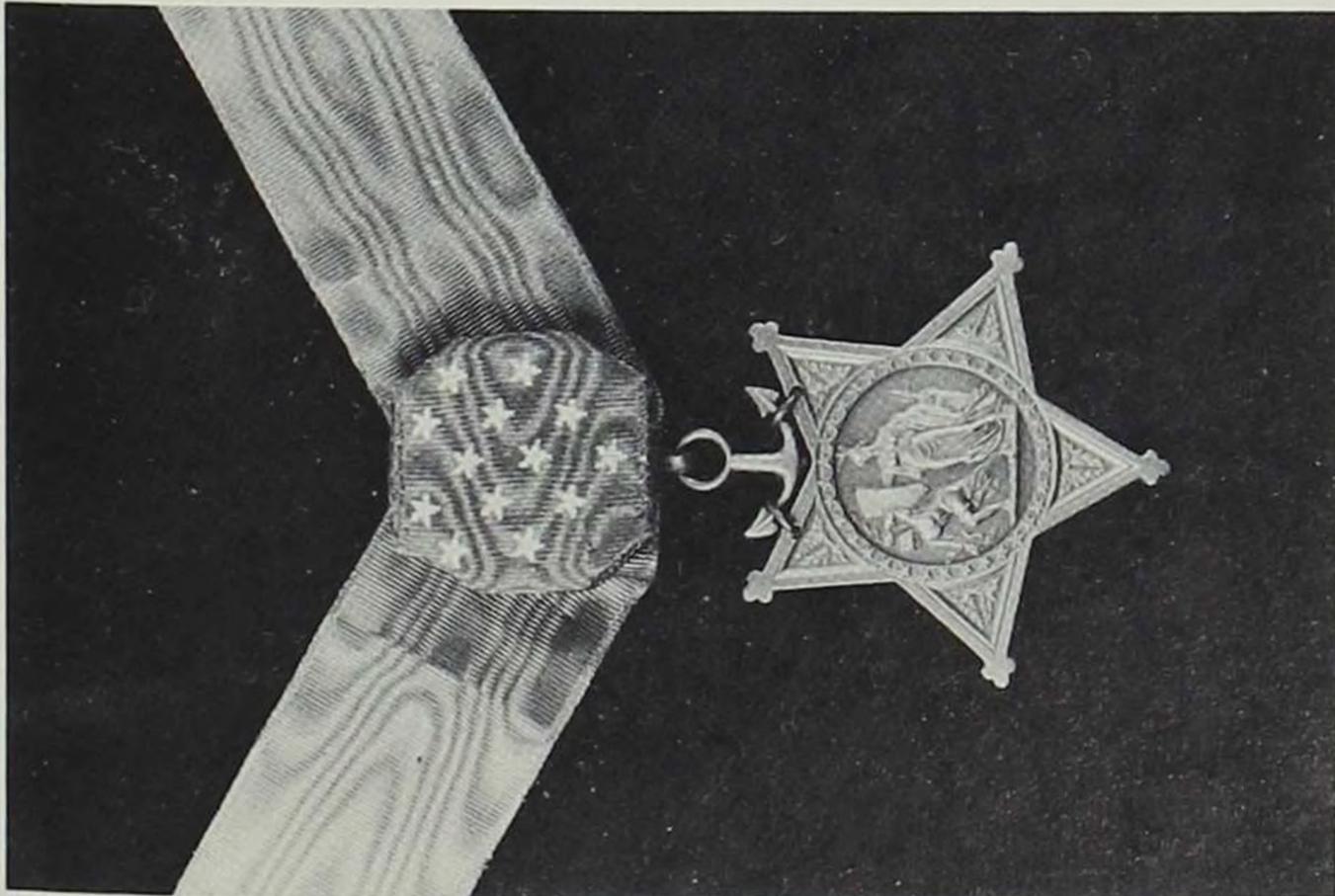
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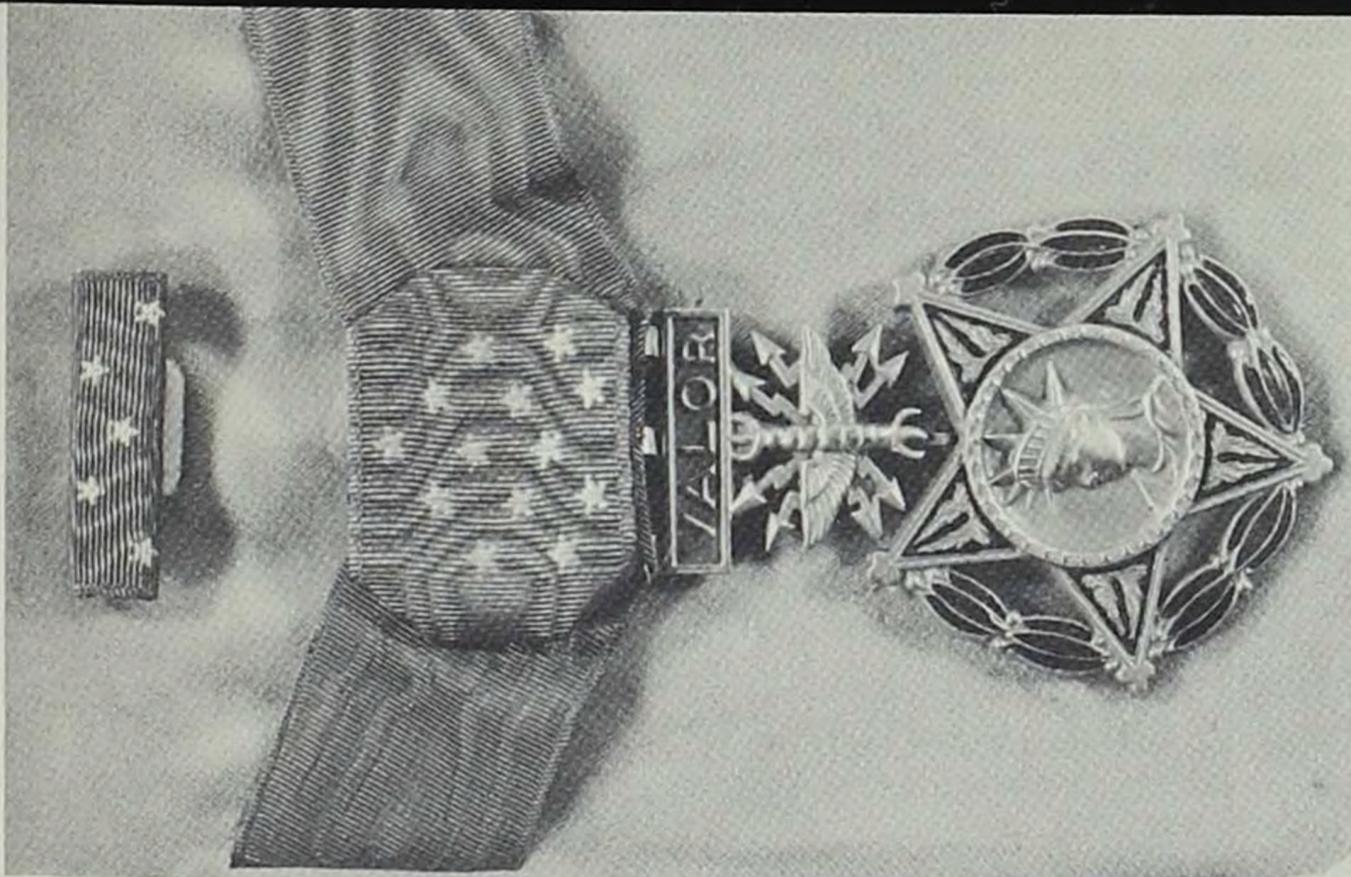
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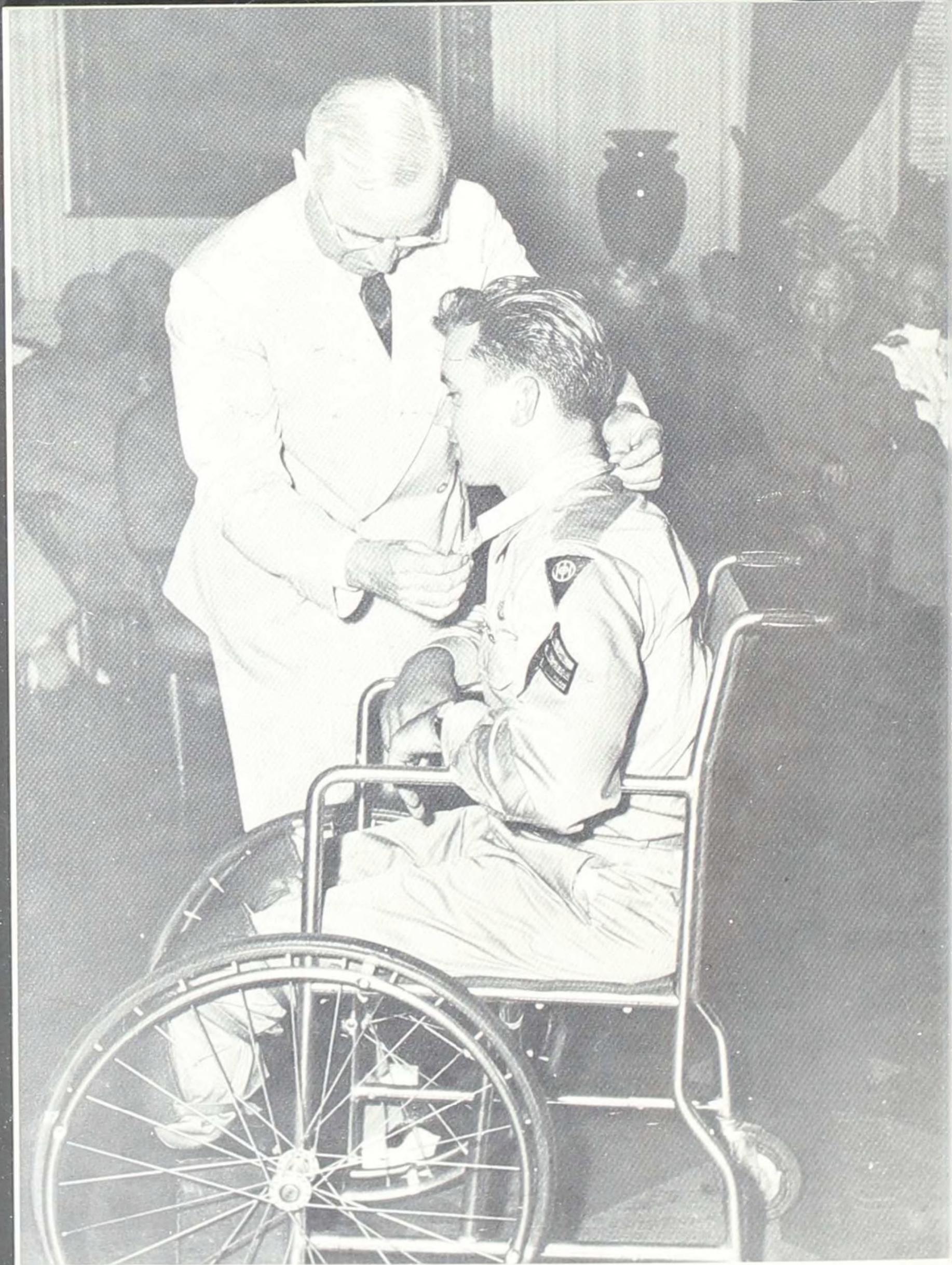
Army



Navy



U.S. Department of Defense
Air Force



Sergeant Ralph G. Neppel, at ceremonies in the White House at Washington, D.C., receives the Medal of Honor from President Harry S. Truman. Also receiving the Medal of Honor at the same time was Herschel Briles of Colfax, Iowa. Ralph, an employee of the Veterans Administration, now makes his home in Iowa City.