

FILE COPY

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

By direction of the President, under the act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (WD Bul. 43, 1918), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty is awarded posthumously by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to the following-named enlisted man:

Master Sergeant Travis E. Watkins, (Service No. ), Infantry, United States Army, Company H, 9th Infantry Regiment, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action against an enemy near Yongsan, Korea, from 31 August through 3 September 1950. When an overwhelming enemy force broke through and isolated thirty men of his unit he took command, established a perimeter defense and directed action which repelled continuous, fanatical enemy assaults. With his group completely surrounded and cut off, he moved from foxhole to foxhole exposing himself to enemy fire, giving instructions and offering encouragement to his men. Later when the need for ammunition and grenades became critical he shot two enemy soldiers fifty yards outside the perimeter and went out alone for their ammunition and weapons. As he picked up their weapons he was attacked by three others and wounded. Returning their fire he killed all three and gathering up the weapons of the five enemy dead returned to his amazed comrades. During a later assault, six enemy soldiers gained a defiladed spot and began to throw grenades into the perimeter making it untenable. Realizing the desperate situation and disregarding his wound he rose from his foxhole to engage them with rifle fire. Although immediately hit by a burst from an enemy machine gun he continued to fire until he had killed the grenade throwers. With this threat eliminated he collapsed and despite being paralyzed from the waist down, encouraged his men to hold on. He refused all food saying it for his comrades and when it became apparent that help would not arrive in time to hold the position ordered his men to escape to friendly lines. Refusing evacuation as his hopeless condition would burden his comrades he remained in his position and cheerfully wished them luck. Through his aggressive leadership and intrepid actions, this small force destroyed nearly five hundred of the enemy before abandoning their position. Sergeant Watkins' sustained personal bravery and noble self-sacrifice reflect the highest glory upon himself and is in keeping with the esteemed traditions of the Army of the United States.

This general order will be brought to the attention of all personnel by posting conspicuously on bulletin boards in unit areas.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

OFFICIAL:

EDWARD F. WITSELL

Major General, USA

The Adjutant General

J. LAWTON COLLINS

Chief of Staff, United States Army