

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 19

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 24 March 1971

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR



By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918, and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty is awarded by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:



Platoon Sergeant *Finnis D. McCleery*, , United States Army, who distinguished himself on 14 May 1968, while serving as Platoon Leader of the First Platoon of Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th United States Infantry. On that date a combined force was assigned the mission of assaulting a reinforced company of North Vietnamese Army regulars, well entrenched on Hill 352, 17 miles west of Tam Ky, Quang Tin Province. As Sergeant *McCleery* led his men up the hill and across an open area to close with the enemy, his platoon and other friendly elements were pinned down by tremendously heavy fire coming from the fortified enemy positions. Realizing the severe damage that the enemy could inflict on the combined force in the event that their attack was completely halted, Sergeant *McCleery* rose from his sheltered position and began a one-man assault on the bunker complex. With extraordinary courage, he moved across 60 meters of open ground as bullets struck all around him and rockets and grenades literally exploded at his feet. As he came within 30 meters of the key enemy bunker, Sergeant *McCleery* began firing furiously from the hip and throwing hand grenades. At this point in his assault, he was painfully wounded by shrapnel, but, with complete disregard for his wound, he continued his advance on the key bunker and killed all of its occupants. Having successfully and singlehandedly breached the enemy perimeter, he climbed to the top of the bunker he had just captured and, in full view of the enemy, shouted encouragement to his men to follow his assault. As the friendly forces moved forward, Sergeant *McCleery* began a lateral assault on the enemy bunker line. He continued to expose himself to the intense enemy fire as he moved from bunker to bunker, destroying each in turn. He was wounded a second time by shrapnel as he destroyed a bunker from which two enemy soldiers were firing rockets and hurling grenades, but Sergeant *McCleery* valiantly continued his attack until the friendly forces had successfully destroyed and routed the enemy from the hill. Sergeant *McCleery* is personally credited with eliminating several key enemy positions and inspiring the assault that resulted in gaining control of Hill 352. His extraordinary heroism at the risk of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, was in keeping with the highest standards of the military service, and reflects great credit on him, the American Division, and the United States Army.



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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
*Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.*

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
*General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.*

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