

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 5

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 25 January 1972

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 posthumously by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:

Sergeant *Donald S. Skidgel*, United States Army, who distinguished himself on 14 September 1969 while serving as a reconnaissance section leader in Troop D, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. On a road near Song Be in Binh Long Province, Sergeant *Skidgel* and his section with other elements of his troop were acting as a convoy security and screening force when contact occurred with an estimated enemy battalion concealed in tall grass and in bunkers bordering the road. Sergeant *Skidgel* maneuvered off the road and began placing effective machinegun fire on the enemy automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenade positions. After silencing at least one position, he ran with his machinegun across 60 meters of bullet-swept ground to another location from which he continued to rake the enemy positions. Running low on ammunition, he returned to his vehicle over the same terrain. Moments later he was alerted that the command element was receiving intense automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenade and mortar fire. Although he knew the road was saturated with enemy fire, Sergeant *Skidgel* calmly mounted his vehicle and with his driver advanced toward the command group in an effort to draw the enemy fire onto himself. Despite the hostile fire concentrated on him, he succeeded in silencing several enemy positions with his machinegun. Moments later Sergeant *Skidgel* was knocked down onto the rear fender by the explosion of an enemy rocket-propelled grenade. Ignoring his extremely painful wounds, he staggered back to his feet and placed effective fire on several other enemy positions until he was mortally wounded by hostile small arms fire. His selfless actions enabled the command group to withdraw to better positions without casualties and inspired the rest of his fellow soldiers to gain fire superiority and defeat the enemy. Sergeant *Skidgel's* conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the cost of his life were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit and the United States Army.

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

Official:

VERNE L. BOWERS,
*Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.*

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

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