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GENERAL ORDERS

No. 2

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 12 January 1997

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

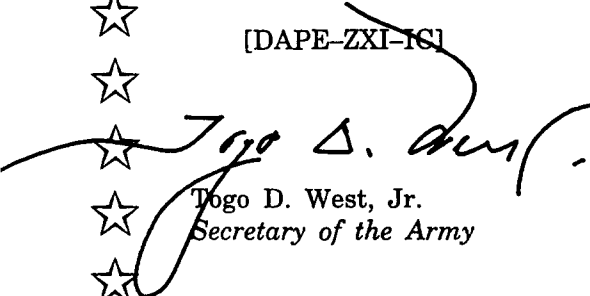
By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918, and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, is awarded by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

First Lieutenant Vernon J. Baker, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in action on 5 and 6 April 1945, while serving with Company C, 370th Infantry Regiment, 92d Infantry Division, near Viareggio, Italy. Then Second Lieutenant Baker demonstrated outstanding courage and leadership in destroying enemy installations, personnel, and equipment during his company's attack against a strongly entrenched enemy in mountainous terrain.

When his company was stopped by the concentrated fire from several machine gun emplacements, he crawled to one position and destroyed it, killing three Germans. Continuing forward, he attacked an enemy observation post and killed its two occupants. With the aid of one of his men, Lieutenant Baker attacked two more machine gun nests, killing or wounding the four enemy soldiers occupying these positions. He then covered the evacuation of the wounded personnel of his company by occupying an exposed position and drawing the enemy's fire.

On the following night Lieutenant Baker voluntarily led a battalion advance through enemy minefields and heavy fire toward the division objective. Second Lieutenant Baker's fighting spirit and daring leadership were an inspiration to his men and exemplify the highest traditions of the Armed Forces.

[DAPE-ZXI-IC]


Togo D. West, Jr.
Secretary of the Army

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