

Unit History
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UNIT HISTORY
of

899TH TANK DESTRUCTOR BATTALION

for the period

January 1, 1943 --- December 31, 1943.

January	1	0	0
February	1	0	0
March	1	0	0
April	1	0	0
May	1	0	0
June	1	0	0
July	1	0	0
August	1	0	0
September	1	0	0
October	1	0	0
November	1	0	0
December	1	0	0

Unit History, 899th TD Bn
Period: Jan. 1 to Dec 31, 1943.

A. ORIGINAL UNIT.

1. The unit was activated on July 1, 1940 at Fort Lewis, Washington and designated 99th Infantry Battalion (AT) by Fourth Army.

2. The unit was redesignated 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion, effective December 15, 1941, and reorganized under a new Table of Organization.

3. For the period reported: NO CHANGE.

B. CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION.

1. The unit was ordered, per General Order Number 66, Hq., Fifth Army, dated September 9, 1943, to reorganize under Table of Organization 18-25, dated January 27, 1943. This conversion from the Table of Organization 18-25, dated June 8, 1942, made a reduction in the authorized strength from 38 officers and 860 enlisted men to 36 officers and 636 enlisted men.

C. STRENGTH, COMMISSIONED AND ENLISTED.

Date	Officers			Enlisted Men		
	Asgd	Gain	Loss	Asgd	Gain	Loss
January 1, 1943	38			871		
January 31, 1943	38	0	0	861	0	10
February 28, 1943	38	0	0	892	31	0
March 31, 1943	32	0	6	838	0	54
April 30, 1943	35	3	0	847	9	0
May 31, 1943	37	2	0	881	34	0
June 30, 1943	41	4	0	887	6	0
July 31, 1943	39	0	2	993	106	0
August 31, 1943	44	5	0	978	0	15
September 30, 1943	44	0	0	733	0	245
October 31, 1943	40	0	4	708	0	25
November 30, 1943	41	1	0	706	0	2
December 31, 1943	41	0	0	705	0	1

Unit History, 899th TD Bn
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D. STATIONS (permanent or temporary) OF UNIT.

1. January 1, 1943 found the 899th TD Bn stationed at Fort Dix, New Jersey, its permanent station.

2. Changes in station were made during the period January 1, 1943 to December 31, 1943 as follows:

Departed from Fort Dix, N. J. : January 13, 1943.
Arrived Casablanca, French Morocco: January 26, 1943

Departed Casablanca, French Morocco: March 1, 1943.
Arrived Kroub, Algeria: March 8, 1943.

Departed Kroub, Algeria: March 14, 1943.
Arrived Bou Chebka, Tunisia: March 15, 1943.

Departed Bou Chebka, Tunisia: March 15, 1943.
Arrived Gafsa-El Guettar Sector: March 16, 1943.
Departed Gafsa-El Guettar Sector: April 11, 1943.
Arrived Bou Chebka, Tunisia: April 11, 1943.

Departed Bou Chebka, Tunisia: April 23, 1943
Arrived Mersott, Algeria: April 23, 1943.

Departed Mersott, Algeria: May 6, 1943.
Arrived Roumes Souk, Algeria: May 6, 1943.

Departed Roumes Souk, Algeria: May 21, 1943.
Arrived Sebdou, Algeria: May 27, 1943.

Departed Sebdou, Algeria: October 5, 1943.
Arrived Fleurus, Algeria: October 5, 1943.

Departed Fleurus, Algeria: November 1, 1943.
Arrived Magnoli, Italy: November 10, 1943.

Departed Magnoli, Italy: November 18, 1943.
Arrived Glasgow, Scotland: December 10, 1943.

Departed Glasgow, Scotland: December 11, 1943.
Arrived Danebury Stables, Hampshire, England: December 12, 1943.

E. MARCHES.

1. Motorized marches were made by the battalion to complete the changes of stations made in North Africa.

2. Only two of these, the Casablanca-Kroub and the Roumes Souk-Sebdou changes, were of sufficient distances to require overnight bivouacs enroute.

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E. MARCHES. (cont'd).

3. The battalion left Casablanca the morning of March 1, 1943 and made overnight bivouacs in the following order: Meknes, French Morocco; Taza, French Morocco; Oujda, French Morocco; St. Bel Abbes, Algeria; Orleansville, Algeria; L'Arba, Algeria; Ain M'Lila, Algeria; and arrived, during the afternoon of the eighth day, March 8, 1943, at a bivouac area near Kroub, Algeria. To complete the second movement mentioned in paragraph 2 above, the battalion left Roumes Souk, Algeria on May 21, 1943 and made overnight bivouacs in the following order: Chardimaou, Tunisia; Ain M'Lila, Algeria; Mansoura des Bibans, Algeria; L'Arba, Algeria; Orleansville, Algeria; St. Bel Abbes, Algeria; and arrived on the seventh day at a bivouac area about ten miles south of Sebdeu, Algeria. For data pertaining to other changes of station involving short marches, reference is made to par. D2 above.

4. Other pertinent data pertaining to marches listed in the foregoing paragraph as well as to the shipment by water movements made will be found in the narrative report attached herewith.

F. CAMPAIGNS.

1. The 899th TD Bn took part in the Tunisian Campaign.

2. The battalion entered the forward combat zone on March 16, 1943 and withdrew to II Corps reserve on April 11, 1943.

3. A detailed account of the action of the battalion is attached in a narrative report.

G. BATTLES.

1. The battalion participated in the battle for the Gafsa-El Guettar sector in the Tunisian campaign.

2. For detailed account reference is made to narrative report.

H. COMMANDING OFFICERS IN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS.

1. Lieutenant Colonel MAXWELL A. TINCER was the commanding officer of the 899th TD Bn during its participation in the Tunisian campaign. Major HOYT K. LORANCE was the Battalion Executive Officer.

2. Companies and Detachments, while in the Gafsa-El Guettar sector of the Tunisian campaign, were commanded as follows:

Headquarters Company, Captain JAMES W. ARNOLD.
Company "A", Captain THOMAS W. HAWKSWORTH.
Company "B", Captain KIRK E. ADAMS.
Company "C", Captain CLARENCE A. HECKETHORN.
Reconnaissance Company, Captain ROBERT B. CARTER.
Medical Detachment, Captain CLYDE J. RADEMACHER.

Unit History, 899th TD BN
Period: Jan 1 to Dec 31, 1943.

I. LOSSES IN ACTION; OFFICERS AND MEN.

1. Engagement: Gafsa-El Guettar Sector, Tunisian Campaign.

<u>NAMES</u>	<u>DATE</u>
<u>KILLED IN ACTION</u>	
2nd Lieut. ALVIN F. KOCH, O-405430, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Tec 5 Corby M. Ellington, 17066944, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Tec 5 John F. Heiberger, 37039861, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Tec 5 Clarence W. Johnson, 37170098, Hq. Co.	March 23, 1943.
Private Charles W. Weisner, 7032866, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Private Edward V. Skiba, 37019119, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Private Alfred A. Wolff, 32384864, Hq. Co.	March 29, 1943.
2nd Lieut. ROBERT C. HENDERSON, O1030479, Co. "A"	March 30, 1943.
Pvt 1st Joseph E. Reeder, 19015320, Med. Det.	March 31, 1943.
Sergeant Olaf H. Johnson, 37019143, Co. "A"	April 1, 1943.
Pvt 1st Walter F. Walter, 36177883, Ren. Co.	April 1, 1943.
Private Thomas J. Friend, 35332001, Ren. Co.	April 1, 1943.
Private Fred L. Furgeson, 37170207, Ren. Co.	April 1, 1943.

DIED OF WOUNDS

Tec 5 Frederick H. Robinson, 37019242, Co. "C".	March 26, 1943.
(wounded March 23, 1943.)	
Sergeant Arnold (NMI) Rhoades, 6918390, Co. "B".	March 30, 1943.
(wounded March 29, 1943.)	

WOUNDED IN ACTION

Tec 5 Donald L. Anderson, 37019266, Hq. Co.	March 20, 1943.
Private Fred C. Barracough, 37149913, Ren. Co.	March 20, 1943.
1st Sgt Gordon C. Page, 16015029, Co. "C"	March 23, 1943.
T/Sgt William J. Wheeler, 16020006, Hq. Co.	March 23, 1943.
Sergeant Joseph J. Jochick, 35153627, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Sergeant Clarence C. Johnson, 37039928, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Corporal Edward G. Lewis, Jr., 35153588, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Tec 5 Gean E. Givans, 35100959, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Tec 5 Albert Timmer, Jr., 37039758, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Pvt 1st George (NMI) Kallenmyn, 37078106, Co. "C"	March 23, 1943.
Pvt 1st Benjamin Newman, 32349282, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Pvt 1st Kenneth H. Johnson, 37169969, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.

I. LOSSES IN ACTION, OFFICERS AND MEN. (Cont'd)

WOUNDED IN ACTION (cont'd)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Private Francis P. Donahue, 37145142, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Private Lester M. Lee, 37170085, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
Private B. H. (I.C.) Robinson, 38002542, Co. "B"	March 23, 1943.
1st Lieut. HERMAN J. GARRETTSON, JR., 0419391, Bn. Hq.	March 24, 1943.
Private William E. Johns, 6974709, Co. "A"	March 26, 1943.
Private Walter (NMI) Fox, 39300796, Co. "B"	March 29, 1943.
1st Sgt Barney P. Ruffatto, 6520124, Co. "A"	March 30, 1943.
S/Sgt Paul A. Franks, 6220501, Co. "A"	March 30, 1943.
S/Sgt Robert L. Smith, 16015102, Co. "C"	March 30, 1943.
Corporal Adam E. Flath, 35153879, Co. "A"	March 30, 1943.
Tec 5 Frank L. Disanza, 32354602, Co. "C"	March 30, 1943.
Tec 5 Stephen (NMI) Kurowski, 32114130, Co. "C"	March 30, 1943.
Pvt 1st Swante J. Nakomaki, 37019141, Co. "A"	March 30, 1943.
Private Michael A. Basile, 32307580, Co. "C"	March 30, 1943.
Private Louis (NMI) Branca, 32270408, Co. "A"	March 30, 1943.
Private Permanius W. Nifong, Jr., 14123563, Co. "C"	March 30, 1943.
2nd Lieut. GLENN C. WALSH, 0465121, Co. "A"	March 31, 1943.
Corporal Henry O. Dootson, 35010949, Co. "C"	March 31, 1943.
Corporal Howard A. Heiberger, 37039936, Co. "A"	March 31, 1943.
Pvt 1st Thomas D. Grimm, 19038339, Med. Det.	March 31, 1943.
Pvt 1st Edward J. Pickett, 35010566, Co. "A"	March 31, 1943.
Private Wilbert L. Oistad, 37170111, Co. "A"	March 31, 1943.
Tec 5 Joseph P. Gleason, 37019108, Co. "C"	April 1, 1943.
Pvt 1st Leonard M. Cochran, 17050053, Ren. Co.	April 1, 1943.
Pvt 1st Oail M. Johnson, 37039756, Co. "C"	April 1, 1943.
Pvt 1st Daniel M. Henry, 33319445, Co. "A"	April 1, 1943.
Private Charlie E. Bradshaw, 34009990, Co. "C"	April 1, 1943.
Private Edward W. Gretzer, 36246302, Co. "A"	April 1, 1943.
Private Herman J. Nesseth, 37168356, Ren. Co.	April 1, 1943.
Private John W. Quisby, 39178604, Ren. Co.	April 1, 1943.
Private Leonard A. Rodstol, 39181178, Co. "A"	April 1, 1943.
2nd Lieut. ROBERT A. MAGNETT, 01030476, Ren. Co.	April 5, 1943.
Pvt 1st Lester R. Heidebrink, 37148767, Ren. Co.	April 5, 1943.

UNIT HISTORY, 899th TD Bn
Period: Jan 1 to Dec 31, 1943.

J. FORMER AND PRESENT MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES
IN ACTION.

1. Fifteen (15) members of this unit have been awarded the SILVER STAR for GALLANTRY IN ACTION during engagement with the enemy in the El Guettar Sector in the Tunisian Campaign.

2. There are extracts of pertinent orders herewith:

HEADQUARTERS II CORPS
APO 302 U. S. Army

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER

43)

E-X-T-R-A-C-T

In the Field
27 June 1943

SECTION II---AWARDS OF SILVER STAR.

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, as amended, a Silver Star is awarded to the following named officers and enlisted men:

* * *
GERALD G. COADY, 01030458, Second Lieutenant, Company "B", * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action. On * * March, 1943, five miles east of * * * Lieutenant Coady, upon losing two destroyers in his platoon and seeing an officer of an adjacent platoon killed, re-organized the remaining elements of the two platoons while under heavy artillery, tank, anti-tank, and small arms fire. In doing this he left his armored vehicle and walked to vehicles of the adjacent platoon, pointing out positions and targets. Lieutenant Coady then continued the attack with the remaining weapons and destroyed six Mark IV tanks. During intervals in the fighting Lieutenant Coady, while still under heavy fire, supervised the evacuation of casualties. He caused his own armored vehicle to be used in the evacuation while he himself remained with his platoon. The action of Lieutenant Coady is an inspiring example of courage, initiative and leadership. Home address: 3122 Snyder, Cheyenne, Wyoming. (Medal No. 17272).

Charles D. Lum, 6872568, Sergeant, Company "B", * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action. On * * March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * sector, Sergeant Lum, whose section was in battalion reserve, volunteered to bring a small unarmored vehicle to replace his Company Commander's half-track which had been disabled by enemy artillery fire. His mission having been accomplished, Sergeant Lum walked to a nearby disabled destroyer and, while under heavy enemy fire, removed wounded men from this vehicle and supervised their evacuation. The action of Sergeant Lum was an example of bravery in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Home address: 221 Oxford Street, Rochester, New York. (Medal No. 16409).

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Marvin L. Bowlin, 35153450, Technician Fourth Grade, Company "B",
* * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action during mid-day on * * March
1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Southern Tunisia. Technician Fourth
Grade Bowlin, working as driver of a tank recovery vehicle and realiz-
ing the importance of preventing our new type of tank destroyer vehicle
from falling into enemy hands, went forward in the face of enemy gun
fire and did retrieve a disabled vehicle put out of action in an enemy
mine field. The courage and devotion to duty displayed by Technician
Fourth Grade Bowlin reflects credit upon himself and his command, and
is deserving of the highest praise. Home address: Gary, Indiana.
(Medal No. 16523).

Thomas V. Wilson, 37039935, Corporal, * * * *, Battalion, for
gallantry in action. On the afternoon of * * March 1943 in the vicinity
of * * * *, Tunisia, while in charge of a new M10 destroyer, he directed
his weapon across open terrain against heavy enemy artillery and anti-
aircraft fire. When his destroyer received two direct hits, and was
burning from two different fires, Corporal Wilson assisted in ex-
tinguishing the fires and at the same time pressed the attack on the
enemy, destroying two enemy gun emplacements, one artillery piece and
several machine guns. Finally, when the enemy fire had disabled his
piece, ruptured the fuel tank and started new fires inside the destroyer,
Corporal Wilson, realizing that the M10 destroyer was a new weapon and
that it must not fall into enemy hands, directed its return to friendly
territory. The unusual courage and leadership displayed by Corporal
Wilson on this occasion is in keeping with the highest traditions of the
military service. Home address: Delhi, Iowa. (Medal No. 16616).

Stephen Kurowski, 32114130, Technician Fifth Grade, * * * *,
Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the afternoon of * * March
1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Tunisia, although wounded in both
legs, Technician Fifth Grade Kurowski, gunner of a new M10 destroyer,
exchanged fire with enemy artillery and anti-aircraft guns while other
members of his crew extinguished fires within the destroyer. Technician
Fifth Grade Kurowski destroyed two enemy gun emplacements, one artillery
piece and several machine gun nests and continued to press the attack
until his gun was disabled, fuel tank hit and another fire started
within the destroyer. Realizing that the M10 destroyer was a new
weapon and that it must not fall into enemy hands, Technician Fifth
Grade Kurowski stood by his piece until the weapon was withdrawn to
territory where it could be recovered by our forces. The unusual
courage and initiative displayed by Technician Fifth Grade Kurowski on
this occasion is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military
service. Home address: Long Island City, New York. (Medal No. 17177).

Carmel E. Mouser, 37082264, Technician Fifth Grade, Company "B",
* * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action. During mid-day on * * * *
March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Tunisia, Technician Fifth Grade
Mouser, working with a tank recovery crew and realizing the importance
of preventing our new type tank destroyer vehicle from falling into
enemy hands, went forward in the face of enemy gun fire and did retrieve
a disabled vehicle put out of action in an enemy mine field. The

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courage and devotion to duty displayed by Technician Fifth Grade Mouser reflects credit upon himself and his command, and is deserving of the highest praise. Home address: Lutesville, Missouri. (Medal No. 16425).

Michael J. Pallotta, 35010674, Technician Fifth Grade, * * * *
Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the afternoon of * * March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Tunisia, Technician Fifth Grade Pallotta, while under heavy artillery and anti-aircraft fire, maneuvered his new M10 destroyer across open ground. Although two direct hits had started fires within the destroyer, Technician Fifth Grade Pallotta continued to press the attack while other members of the crew extinguished the fire. He destroyed two gun emplacements, one artillery piece and several machine gun nests before being forced to withdraw to friendly territory when his gun was put out of action by a direct hit. The unusual courage and attention to duty displayed by Technician Fifth Grade Pallotta on this occasion are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Home address: Canton, Ohio. (Medal No. 17186).

Raymond H. Pelts, 37039894, Technician Fifth Grade, Company "B", * * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action. During mid-day on * * March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Southern Tunisia, Technician Fifth Grade Pelts, working with a tank recovery crew and realizing the importance of preventing our new type tank destroyer vehicle from falling into enemy hands, went forward in the face of enemy fire and did retrieve a disabled vehicle put out of action in an enemy mine field. The courage and devotion to duty displayed by Technician Fifth Grade Pelts reflects credit upon himself and his command, and is deserving of the highest praise. Home address: Clare, Iowa. (Medal No. 45902).

Carl E. Smith, 39676145, Technician Fifth Grade, Company "A", * * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action. On * * March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Southern Tunisia, during an intense artillery bombardment Technician Fifth Grade Smith on his own initiative left cover to render first aid to two injured men. Without regard for the shrapnel falling throughout the vicinity he dressed their wounds and helped to save their lives. By his bravery in the performance of this deed Technician Fifth Grade Smith exemplified the highest traditions of the military service. Home address: Heber City, Utah. (Medal No. 16549).

Fred M. Foster, R-334141, Private First Class, Company "B", * * * * Battalion, for gallantry in action. On * * March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * *, Tunisia, a member of a reserve section, Private First Class Foster in an unarmored vehicle voluntarily accompanied armored elements of his company which were engaging enemy armored units. Upon seeing an M10 destroyer hit by shell fire, Private First Class Foster at the risk of his life went forward on foot to this damaged vehicle during heavy enemy artillery, tank, anti-tank and small arms fire. He constructed a stretcher from equipment lashed on the damaged destroyer while three additional shells hit the vehicle. With the help of his driver he removed injured men from the destroyer and carried them from the vicinity. He then returned and stayed on the field of battle assisting wherever he could and by his coolness in action exemplified a high standard of com-

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duet. His action demonstrated the highest devotion to duty and his outstanding bravery and gallantry reflect credit on the military service. Home address: Buffalo, Wyoming. (Medal No. 17274).

Thomas L. O'Connor, 39602964, Private First Class, Company "G", * * * * , Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the afternoon of ** March 1943 in the vicinity of * * * * , Tunisia, Private First Class O'Connor, while under heavy enemy artillery and anti-aircraft fire, assisted in extinguishing two fires within the M10 destroyer in which he was riding. At the same time, he performed the duties of assistant gunner and was instrumental in the destruction of two enemy gun emplacements, one artillery piece and several machine gun nests. Realizing that the M10 destroyer was a new weapon and that it must not fall into enemy hands, Private First Class O'Connor stood by his piece until it had been withdrawn to friendly territory. By his unusual courage and attention to duty on this occasion, Private First Class O'Connor upheld the highest traditions of the military service. Home address: Butte, Montana. (Medal No. 17173).

Roscoe C. Stout, 35010651, Company "C", * * * * , Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the afternoon of * * March 1943 in the vicinity of * * * * , Tunisia, while performing duties as radio operator, Private First Class Stout assisted in extinguishing two fires within the M10 destroyer in which he was riding. At the time, he maintained communication with other vehicles of his unit and enabled his commander to locate and destroy two enemy gun emplacements, one artillery piece and several machine gun nests. Later, when the destroyer's gun had been knocked out and new fires had started, Private First Class Stout remained with his weapon until it had been withdrawn to friendly territory. The unusual courage and attention to duty displayed by Private First Class Stout on this occasion is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Home address: Sandusky, Ohio. (Medal No. 16635).

Earl F. Desbien, 37009614, Private, * * * * , Battalion, for gallantry in action. On * * March 1943, in the vicinity of * * * * , Private Desbien drove an unarmored vehicle to the battlefield in the face of an enemy tank counter-attack. Upon seeing a destroyer hit and set on fire, Private Desbien went forward on foot and while under heavy enemy artillery, anti-tank and rifle fire, helped his vehicle commander construct a stretcher from camouflage poles that were fastened to the side of the destroyer. After helping remove the injured occupants he aided in evacuating them to a place of safety. His action exemplifies the highest devotion to duty and his outstanding bravery and gallantry reflect the highest credit upon the military service. Home address: Rouge, Kansas. (Medal No. 17281).

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Private G. Cymer, 37190702, Private, Company "B", * * * *, Battalion, for gallantry in action. On * * March 1943, five miles east of * * * *, Private Cymer, whose section was in battalion reserve, volunteered to drive his small unarmored vehicle to replace his company commander's half-track which had been disabled by enemy artillery fire. By the time Private Cymer appeared on the battlefield, one destroyer had been set on fire by enemy tank fire and three of the crew badly wounded. Private Cymer assisted in the removal of those wounded from the destroyer and in their evacuation while under heavy enemy fire. His action demonstrated a high example of devotion to duty and of bravery and gallantry in the face of enemy fire. Home address: Farlin, Iowa. (Medal No. 16634).

By command of Lieutenant General BRADLEY:

W. B. KEAN,
Brigadier General, G.S.C.,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

P. W. ZIFF
Lt Col, A.G.D.,
Actg. Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY
APO 9758 U.S. Army

18 August 1943

GENERAL ORDER)

NUMBER 16) E-X-T-R-A-C-T

II - AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR:

Under the provisions of AR 600-45, as amended, a Silver Star is awarded to each of the following named individuals:

James T. Donahue, 32269087, Private First Class, Company***, **** Tank Destroyer Battalion. For gallantry in action on March***, 1943, near ***, Tunisia. During an intense artillery bombardment, Private First Class Donahue on his own initiative left cover to render first aid to two enlisted men who were injured when an American ambulance was disabled by artillery fire. By his courage Private First Class Donahue helped save the lives of these two men. His conduct on this occasion is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Entered military service from Bordentown, New Jersey.

By command of Lieutenant General PATTON:

ROBERT R. GAY,
Brigadier General, GSC
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

W. G. CALDWELL,
Lt Col, AGD,
Adjutant General