

///The Third Division/// **FRONT LINE**

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Murphy Equals Britt's Record of Every Medal

Second Man So Honored In US Army



1st Lt. Audie L. Murphy ranks with Capt. Maurice Britt as the most bemedaled men in the U.S. Army. Both are Third Division officers.

A 21 year old Texan who rose from buck private to company commander in 30 months of combat with the veteran Third Division has been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and has thus become the second man of his division and the second man in the U.S. army to win the nation's every existing individual medal for valor.

He is boyish 1st Lt. Audie L. Murphy, Farmersville, Tex., who added the Medal of Honor to his Bronze Star, Silver Star and Distinguished Service Cross to join the legendary Capt. Maurice L. Britt as the army's most decorated men. Murphy is the 29th member of the Third Division to win the CMH, which gives the famous "Marne" Division more than one-fourth of all Medals of Honor won by the ground forces.

Murphy's Medal of Honor was won for action in the bitter Colmar pocket campaign, when, as a second lieutenant company

commander in the 15th Infantry "B" Company, he almost single-handedly beat off a fierce enemy counterattack of 250 infantry supported by six tanks.

Jumps on TD

Situated in a foxhole well to the front of his company, Murphy held his position and directed artillery fire against the advancing enemy. When a tank destroyer ten yards to his rear was hit, set afire and abandoned, Murphy left his foxhole to jump onto the smoking tank.

There, silhouetted against the skyline, he manned the TD's 50 caliber machine gun. With smoke trailing from the open TD hatch and enemy small arms and tank fire aimed at him, Murphy sprayed both German tanks and infantry with 50 caliber slugs. An enemy group of 12 infantrymen tried to outflank his position but the lieutenant shifted his machine gun and killed the entire group. He fired at the tanks, forcing them to button up and cut down on their maneuverability. He forced Kraut infantry to withdraw, and when the tanks saw their infantry protection disappear they stopped their advance.

Enemy tank fire hit Murphy's TD twice, wounding the Texan, but he continued his hail of lead at the enemy. Friendly artillery finally forced the German tanks to retreat, and immediately, refusing medical aid, Lieutenant Murphy organized his company and pursued the enemy. When the fight died down, after an hour, Murphy's score of dead and wounded Germans was close to 100.

Field Commission

Shortly after the Third Division landed in southern France, Murphy, then a staff sergeant, won the DSC for knocking out an enemy strongpoint, including two machine guns. The Silver Star came as a second lieutenant for directing artillery fire on an enemy position while himself drawing considerable Kraut fire. The Bronze Star was

awarded for action more than a year ago on the Anzio Beachhead.

Murphy landed with the Third Division on November 8, 1942, on the beaches of French Morocco near Casablanca as a buck private, and received a battlefield commission as a second lieutenant during the Vosges mountain campaign last winter.

He wasn't on hand at the division when word came that his Medal of Honor had been approved, but was sunning himself on the beaches of the Riviera.