GENERAL ORDERS
No. 49

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D.C., *30 November 1967*

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:

First Lieutenant *James A. Gardner*, O5321930, United States Army. On 7 February 1966 Lieutenant *Gardner's* platoon was advancing to relieve a company of the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry, that had been pinned down for several hours by a numerically superior enemy force in the village of My Canh, Vietnam. The enemy occupied a series of strongly fortified bunker positions which were mutually supporting and expertly concealed. Approaches to the position were well covered by an integrated pattern of fires including automatic weapons, machineguns and mortars. Air strikes and artillery placed on the fortifications had little effect. Lieutenant *Gardner's* platoon was to relieve the friendly company by encircling and destroying the enemy force. Even as it moved to begin the attack, the platoon was under heavy enemy fire. During the attack, the enemy fire intensified. Leading the assault and disregarding his own safety, Lieutenant *Gardner* charged through a withering hail of fire across an open rice paddy. On reaching the first bunker he destroyed it with a grenade and without hesitation dashed to the second bunker and eliminated it by tossing a grenade inside. Then, crawling swiftly along the dike of a rice paddy, he reached the third bunker. Before he could arm a grenade, the enemy gunner leaped forth, firing at him. Lieutenant *Gardner* instantly returned the fire and killed the enemy gunner at a distance of six feet. Following the seizure of the main enemy position, he reorganized the platoon to continue the attack. Advancing to the new assault position, the platoon was pinned down by an enemy machinegun emplaced in a fortified bunker. Lieutenant *Gardner* immediately collected several grenades and charged the enemy position, firing his rifle as he advanced to neutralize the defenders. He dropped a grenade into the bunker and vaulted beyond. As the bunker blew up, he came under fire again. Rolling into a ditch to gain cover, he moved toward the new source of fire. Nearing the position, he leaped from the ditch and advanced with a grenade in one hand and firing his rifle with the other. He was gravely wounded just before he reached the bunker, but with a last valiant effort he staggered forward and destroyed the bunker and its defenders with a grenade. Although he fell dead on the rim of the bunker, his extraordinary actions so inspired the men of his platoon that they resumed the attack and completely routed the enemy. Lieutenant *Gardner's* conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity, above and beyond the call of duty, were in the highest traditions of the United States Army.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

HAROLD K. JOHNSON,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

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

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