WITH THE 37TH INFANTRY DIVISION ON BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND--

A stocky, 27-year-old Infantry first lieutenant, a Columbus-reared native son whose gallantry under fire blazed an avenue of escape for half a dozen Jap-ambushed Yanks, has been decorated here with the second highest award America reserves for her combat heroes, the Distinguished Service Cross.

Quiet, thorough-going and as cool on the battle field as he used to be on the football field, Wilmer Wallace Stover, a former school teacher-coach and now second-in-command of a rifle company in Ohio's combat-seasoned 37th Infantry Division, on the sunlit forenoon of February 13 was presented with the medal by Major General Oscar W. Griswold, Allied army commander in the Northern Solomons.

The award, outranked only by the Medal of Honor among U.S. military decorations, was pinned upon Stover's green-denim blouse as generals and colonels looked on and the men of his battalion paraded in a combat-dress review on a new dust-swept air strip here just a couple of miles back of the front lines.

Not far away from the scene of the ceremony was the cave on a ledge of a steep bluff from which Stover, by 'extraordinary heroism' under the very muzzle of Jap machine guns and snipers' rifles, almost single-handedly rescued a trapped sixman patrol last November and carried a severely wounded soldier - one of the two injured in the ambushed group - to safety.

"Constantly threatened by strong fire which covered the cave and its approaches," read the citation of his D.S.C. Lieutenant Stover crawled on his stomach up a shallow gully of the cliff. Ordering his men to conceal themselves and cover him, he leaped on the ledge and into the cave.
"He shouldered a wounded man and slid back over the ledge of the bluff, (thus) guiding the rest of the patrol to safety."

"Lieutenant Stover's bravery, superior reconnaissance prior to the rescue and complete control over his men," the citation concluded, "made it possible for him to accomplish the hazardous mission without additional casualties. The skill and daring with which he executed the dangerous task was an inspiration to his entire company."

Stover, who undertook the mission after unsuccessful attempts to reach the ambushed patrol had cost three lives, took five men along with him, mainly to provide a cover of fire. He first made a brief reconnaissance of possible approaches to the cave, picked the route up the gully, placed his men and started for the ledge.

He was fired upon several times as he crawled thru dense under-growth up the cliff. At the top he paused, surveyed the distance to the cave and then leaped. A step later he was in the cave. Quickly, he explained his plan of action, shouldered the more severely wounded of the two injured men and leaped back over the ledge. The other wounded, similarly assisted, came next and the rest followed.

Stover's regimental commander, Col. John D. Frederick, of Springfield, Illinois, who had been on the scene at the time of the rescue, paid the mild-mannered Ohioan a soldier's tribute.

"You did more than rescue a patrol," congratulated the Colonel, "You saved the lives of two wounded men, who, but for your skill and, daring, might not have been rescued in time to receive the medical aid they both were in great need of. We who fight with you are proud of you - proud of what you've done, proud that you are one of us."
On hand when Stover was decorated was the lieutenant's famed fellow townsman and division commander, Major General Robert S. Beightler, who is directing the 37th thru it's second offensive operation here. Present, too, were Brig. Gen. Charles F. Craig, the 37th's deputy commander, and Brig. Gen. William H. Arnold, Gen. Griswold's chief-of-staff.

Stover, who received his D.S.C. a week before his 27th birthday, will round out three years of service May 20. A peace-time reserve officer, he was called to active duty as a second lieutenant and assigned to the 37th then stationed in Mississippi. In May, 1942, he accompanied the division overseas to the Fiji Islands.

While in the Fijis, Stover was transferred to his present regiment, a then recent addition to the 37th. His outfit a year ago was ordered to the New Hebrides and thus missed action with the division's main body last summer in New Georgia. A brief stopover at Guadalcanal preceded Stover's coming here (to engage in his first offensive campaign) last November.

The lieutenant is a son and husband of natives of Columbus. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Stover, make their home at 122 E. Dunedin Road, while his wife, the former Virginia Harmon, resides at 833 Euclaire.

Stover, an all-around athlete for over a dozen years, attended Columbus' North High School, later went to Ohio State University and graduated in 1939 with a B.S. and B.A. He played football at State, as well as in high school. He was a school teacher and athletic coach for a year before joing the army.
First Lieutenant (Infantry) W. Wallace Stover, United States Army, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy while serving with the 129th Infantry Regiment, 37th Infantry Division, in action against enemy forces on 29 November 1943, in the vicinity of Bougainville, Solomon Islands. First Lieutenant Stover's intrepid actions, personal bravery and zealous devotion to duty exemplify the highest traditions of the military forces of the United States and reflect great credit upon himself, the 37th Infantry Division, and the United States Army.

*Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, General Orders No. 140 (1944)*

“The act or acts of heroism must have been so notable and have involved risk of life so extraordinary as to set the individual apart from his or her comrade es.”

*National Institute of Heraldry*
Order of Ceremonies

Invocation

Speakers:
Tim & Steve Stover
Sons of Honoree

Jeffery Van Linge
President of The AROTC Alumni Society

LTC Farrell Duncombe
Professor of Military Science and Leadership

Dedication Ceremony

Presentation of Gifts

Benediction

Biography

Born the 20th of February, 1917 in Columbus, Ohio, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) W. Wallace Stover was a great asset to the United States Army, his family, and all who came into contact with him.

After graduating from North High School, where he was an all state football player, LTC Stover enrolled at Ohio State University, where he played football and received B.S., B.A., and M.S. degrees.

Joining the U.S. Army in 1941, LTC Stover was deployed to the Pacific Theatre and fought at Bougainville, where his "extraordinary heroism" earned him the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest award for valor. His actions in the war also earned him two Bronze Stars.

After leaving the active Army, LTC Stover joined the U.S. Army Reserve, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In 1967 he was the National Commander of the Legion of Valor, the national organization for recipients of the nation's highest military awards. From 1950 to 1982, he served as a faculty member at his alma mater, The Ohio State University, as Secretary of the College of Education, where he was the Director of Counseling Services and is remembered for the counsel he provided to hundreds of students. He held a number of positions in Civitan International, including International Vice President, Ohio District Governor, President of Civitan International Foundation, and fellow of the Shropshire Foundation. He served as Commander of the North Columbus Shrine Club, and as a member of University Lodge 631 F&AM and Scottish Rite. He was a 50-year member of the OSU Faculty Club and the DCSC Officers Club and a member of Delta Tau Delta Fraternity, Phi Delta Kappa, and Kappa Phi Kappa.

After living a life full of accomplishments, awards, and prestigious positions, LTC W. Wallace Stover passed on December 29th, 2003.
The Guidon
The Ohio State University Department of Military Science
Autumn 1990
Volume 9, Number 1

Cadets attend fall FTX
by William Giorgini
Editor-in-chief

The Buckeye Battalion's Fall FTX, held on Saturday, Oct. 20, had many surprises for the cadets.

The battalion went to Leveque Boy Scout Reservation in order to qualify its MS III and MS II cadets in land navigation.

To qualify, all cadets had to find four out of six points on the course.

Cadets were allowed to navigate with a compass and a pace count, however, they were encouraged to find their points using terrain association. MS IVs gave instruction on terrain association prior to the start of the test.

The cadets were called back in when some Boy Scouts began firing on a rifle range near the test site.

MS IVs with radios roamed the area urging that all cadets return.

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Stover is entered into Hall of Fame
by Anthony C. Trifletti II
Managing Editor

On 10 May, 1990, Lt. Col. (Ret) W. Wallace Stover became the eighth person to be inducted into The Ohio State University ROTC Hall of Fame.

In 1938, Stover was commissioned into the Army Reserves by OSU and later was called to active duty from June, 1941, to March, 1946. He honored his alma mater and The United States Army with his valiant service and has been decorated with many awards including the Distinguished Service Cross.

Stover, a native of Columbus, attended Columbus' North High School and received a BS and BA from OSU in 1939 and then earned his MA.

From 1950-1982, Stover served as a member of the OSU faculty and as the secretary of the College of Education.

His active participation in Civitan International included key positions: Governor, Ohio District; Vice President, Civitan International; and Chairman of the Civitan Foundation. He was also president of the North Columbus Shrine Club, and an American Legion Commander of OSU Post 310.

Stover was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his "extraordinary heroism" in saving an entire patrol that was pinned down by heavy Japanese fire.

Exposing himself to direct Japanese machine gun and sniper fire, Stover shouldered a severely wounded soldier and guided the rest of the ambushed patrol to safety.

"Lieutenant Stover's bravery, superior reconnaissance prior to the rescue and complete control of his men," reads the citation of his DSC, "made it possible for him to accomplish the hazardous mission without additional casualties. The skill and daring with which he executed the dangerous task was an inspiration to his entire company."

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OSU ARMY ROTC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CEREMONY REMARKS

Thanks to The Ohio State University Army ROTC Buckeye Battallion, Lt Col Ferrell Duncombe (and Lt Gene Nash), and the Army ROTC Alumni Association, especially Bob Joseph, for this singular award for our father, W. Wallace Stover. We are pleased that eight/nine members of the family could be here today to witness this special occasion on behalf of Dad, and our mother Virginia, who was at his side for 62 years.

Wally Stover was a hero to many different people in as many different ways.

Sixty-seven years ago this November 29th, he was a hero to his country, and especially to six soldiers in the jungles of Bougainville Island in the South Pacific. There, by a cave on the ledge of a steep bluff, under heavy enemy fire, he undertook a mission that had already cost three lives, crawling up a gully, leaping on the ledge and onto the cliff, shouldering one of the two wounded men, and guiding the rest of the patrol to safety, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and two Bronze Stars. He would never talk about that day, or his nearly three years at war. But one of the greatest personal honors that he was able to enjoy while he was alive was being named one of the first members of the OSU Army ROTC Hall of Fame.

Dad was also a hero of sorts to hundreds and hundreds of OSU students, serving as Secretary of the OSU College of Education for more than 40 years. It is no exaggeration to say that even today, people recount how Dad helped them find their way, and get through school, adding “I couldn’t have done it without him.” (Nancy Zimpfer, former President of the University of Cincinnati and current Chancellor of the State University of the New York system). He also worked with the athletes of his good friends Woody Hayes, Fred Taylor, and Mike Peppe.

And he was a bit of a football hero as well. He was an All State guard and tackle at Columbus North High School, and played football at Ohio State for two years until the knees gave out. He loved all things Ohio State, especially Ohio State football; he missed only a handful of games in more than 50 years.

Today is a fitting day to honor Wally Stover. Today is about The Ohio State University; it is about Army ROTC; it is about education; it is about football. I just cannot think of a better day to honor Dad.

On behalf of the Stover family and friends, thank you for honoring our hero, our father, grandfather, uncle, and friend, W. Wallace Stover.
W. Wallace Stover, age 86, died December 26. Preceded in death by his parents, Dr. Wilmer G. Stover and Avis Crawford Stover. Survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Virginia H. Stover; sister Margaret White; son Steve, his wife Mary, and children Elizabeth, and Dan; son Tim, his wife Stephanie, and children Tim and his wife Dana, William, and Janet; and numerous nieces and nephews. He graduated from North High School, where he was an all-state football player. He played football at The Ohio State University, where he received B.S, B.A, and M.S. degrees. He served on active duty in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1946, primarily at Bougainville Island in the South Pacific. There he received the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest U.S. military citation, for "extraordinary heroism" in saving an entire patrol pinned down by heavy Japanese fire. He also received two Bronze Stars. He served in the Army Reserve for many years, retiring as Lt Colonel. In 1966 – 67, he was National Commander of the Legion of Valor, the national organization for recipients of the nation’s highest military awards. In 1990, he was inducted into The Ohio State University ROTC Hall of Fame. From 1950 to 1982, he was a faculty member at the The Ohio State University, as Secretary of the College of Education. He was the director of counseling services, and is remembered for the counsel he provided to hundreds of students. He held a number of key positions in Civitan International, including International Vice President, Ohio District Governor, President of the Civitan International Foundation, and fellow of the Shropshire Foundation. He served as Commander of American Legion Post 310, President of the North Columbus Shrine Club, and a member of University Lodge #631 F & AM and Scottish Rite. He was a 50-year member of the OSU Faculty Club and the DCSC Officers Club, and a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity, Phi Delta Kappa, and Kappa Phi Kappa.

Family will receive friends at Schoedinger Northwest Chapel, 1740 Zollinger Road in Upper Arlington on Monday, December 29, from 2 - 4 pm and 6 - 8 pm. Memorial service at 11 am Tuesday, December 30 at First Community Church, 1320 Cambridge Blvd. Internment Arlington National Cemetery. Memorials in Wally’s name may be sent to Central Ohio Parkinson Society, 1380 Dublin Road, PO Box 18313, Columbus, 43218; First Community Foundation; Civitan Foundation; or a charity of your choice.
LTC W. Wallace Stover
Distinguished Service Cross Recipient
The Ohio State University Army ROTC Class of 1938

For meritorious service while deployed to the Solomon Islands archipelago. Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) W. Wallace Stover performed his duties as a Lieutenant with a spirit of such gallantry and selflessness as to reflect distinct credit upon himself, the 129th Infantry Regiment, the 37th Infantry “Buckeye” Division, and the United States Army.

On November 29th, 1943, while participating in the Allied island hopping campaign in the vicinity of Bougainville, Lieutenant Stover took it upon himself to rescue a six man patrol that had been ambushed by the Japanese defenders of the island. Where other attempts to rescue the patrol had failed, causing additional casualties, Lieutenant Stover remained calm in the face of devastating enemy fire and completed the rescue mission, saving the lives of two severely wounded Soldiers.

His use of reconnaissance, cover, and control of his men reflect highly on his steadfast nature and ability to master all he undertook, allowing him to perform under pressure with confidence and bravery.

For his actions on the battlefield, Lieutenant Stover was awarded the nation’s second highest...