

FANTASTIC AND SCARCE WWII US BRONZE STAR AND TRIPLE PURPLE HEART GROUP TO PRIVATE OF THE 180TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, 45TH 'THUNDERBIRD' DIVISION WHO WAS KILLED IN ACTION ON 17TH MARCH 1945 DURING ATTACKS ON THE SIEGFRIED LINE 1945



36875188 Private First Class Joseph A Mendryga from Detroit, Michigan, served with 180th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry 'Thunderbird' Division in Italy, France and Rhineland. He was first wounded on 22nd September 1944 probably around the Epinal in North Eastern France where the city was being assaulted by the regiment. On this day they were reported to have been a great deal of patrol and house to house fighting. Mendryga was wounded again on 1st December during the attacks on the Maginot defences. On this day, the regiment was involved in fighting around Bitschhoffen and the town of Mietesheim. Mendryga was killed in action on 17th March 1945 during the Regiments heavy fighting around Nieder Wurzbach and Biesingen on the Siegfried line. He was posthumously Awarded the Bronze Star for outstanding courage;

BRONZE STAR CITATION:

'For meritorious service from June 1944 to 17th March 1945 in France and Germany. Serving as an infantryman during this period, private Mendryga consistently demonstrated outstanding courage, loyalty and sincere devotion to duty in the accomplishment of assigned tasks, responding to any call for his services regardless of the circumstances. The initiative and resourcefulness exhibited by Mendryga reflect credit upon himself and his organisation.'
 (Authority: CO 371, 45th Inf Div, 21 Nov 45. Pvt, Inf)

Private Mendryga is buried in Lorraine American Cemetery



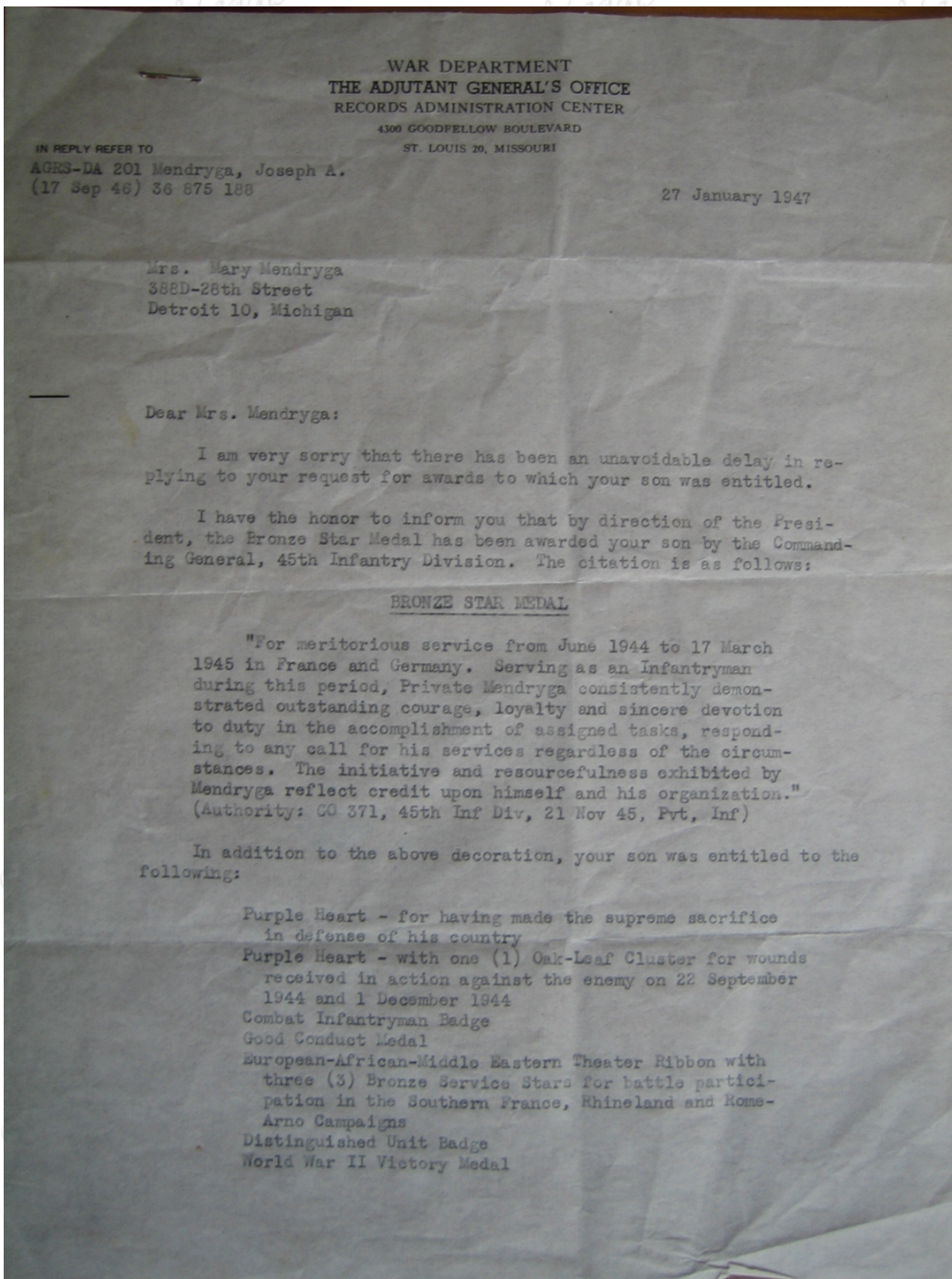
Group consists of:

- 1) Bronze Star, with corresponding ribbon bar – named 'Joseph A Mendryga'
- 2) Purple Heart, with corresponding ribbon bar and button hole - named 'Joseph A Mendryga'
- 3) Purple Heart with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster, with corresponding ribbon bar - named 'Joseph A Mendryga'
- 4) Combat Infantry Badge
- 5) EAME Theatre ribbon bar with three bronze Stars
- 6) Distinguished Unit badge
- 7) WWII Victory Medal
- 8) A two page letter from the War Department from 27th January 1947 to Mendryga's Mother detailing the Awards of the above. The letter giving the citation for the Bronze Star, details of dated when wounded and killed. Also explaining these would be sent to her and that only ribbon would be sent for the EAME medal as the said medal was not yet available for issue.
- 9) Two War Department medal forwarding cards



Really fantastic group and very scarce to have not only three Purple Heart awards, one of which is a KIA one and both being officially engraved, but to have the original transmittal letter that details the wound dates, a full Bronze Star Citation, and discusses the actual issue

of the campaign ribbons and medals ; all this in one document! Everything in near mint condition as issued. Sold with copy of 1947 book; 'The Story of the 180th Infantry Regiment' on CD, which gives a pretty much day by day account of the Regiments service during WW2.



AGRS-DA 201 Mendryga, Joseph A.
(17 Sep 46) 36 875 188

I have requested the Commanding Officer, Philadelphia Quarter-
master Depot, to forward the above decorations and awards to you.

Although the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign and World
War II Victory Medals have been authorized, only the ribbons repre-
senting these medals are now available for issuance by the War Depart-
ment. When the medals become available, wide publicity will undoubtedly
be given the announcement, so that you may renew your request at that
time.

I hope that these mementos of your son's faithful service to his
country will be a source of comfort to you in your great loss.

Sincerely yours,

Charles D. Carle

CHARLES D. CARLE
Colonel, AGD
Commanding

2 Incls
1-Purple Heart
2-Accolade

WAR DEPARTMENT  WASHINGTON, D. C.

It is an honor for me to forward

WAR DEPARTMENT  WASHINGTON, D. C.

*It is an honor for me to forward
this decoration*

RHP
ROBERT P. PATTERSON
SECRETARY OF WAR



PFC Joseph A. Mendryga
36875188

Detroit, MI

180th Infantry Regiment,
45th Infantry Division

WOUNDED TWICE IN FRANCE
AND ITALY. KILLED IN
ACTION IN GERMANY ON
MARCH 17, 1945.

Awards

Bronze Star,
Purple Heart with
2 Oak Leaf Clusters