

National Archives & Records Administration War Department Files

1 LT Stanley J. Rykala
Class 36-42

ID: 01172636

Branch of Service: U.S. Army
Hometown: Manistee County, MI

Status: KIA February 5, 1945



Killed in action serving with the 26th Field Artillery Battalion, 9th Infantry Division



Stanley participated in three major battles in the European theatre of war. He was wounded several times in action: On October 14, 1944 in the Hurtzen Forest area and again in December during the Nazi break-through, on the Western front.

Silver Star



Lt. Rykala was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star, and First Oak Leaf Cluster to the Purple Heart. "It was for his gallant action while on duty at a forward observation post in the vicinity of Eisenborn, Belgium, Dec. 28, 1944, that Lt. Rykala was awarded the Silver Star, posthumously. "The Lieutenant learned that the artillery liaison officer at the battalion command post was killed under an intense enemy artillery barrage. With complete disregard for personal safety, he immediately exposed himself to the heavy enemy fire to travel two miles over the open terrain to the command post. Assuming the duties of liaison officer, he remained at his post despite the fact that enemy artillery scored several direct hits on his building. Although wounded by shrapnel when he left the shelter of the building to go to his radio, he continued to direct effective and accurate artillery fire on the enemy forces until a strong enemy Counter-attack had been repulsed."

Note: (Complete Citation Needed) General Orders: Headquarters, 9th Infantry Division, General Orders No. 27 (1945)

BURIAL: April 1948 -- Lt. Stanley Rykala's body was recently returned to the United States aboard the U.S. Army Transport Robert F. Burns. (Originally, he was interred in an American Soldier's Cemetery in Belgium.)



Temporary American Soldier's cemetery in Belgium



Buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, Manistee, Michigan