

Second Lieutenant Mark Stephen Steiner (Class 1B-68) KIA

Distinguished Service Cross

Headquarters, U.S. Army, Vietnam General Orders No. 713 (February 28, 1969)

CITATION: The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to Second Lieutenant (Field Artillery) Mark Stephen Steiner (ASN: O-5433916), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company A, 2d Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division.

Second Lieutenant Steiner distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 24 November 1968 while serving as an artillery forward observer on a reconnaissance-in-force mission near Tan Tru, Long An Province. The point element of Lieutenant Steiner's platoon suddenly came under intense automatic weapons fire from a bunker hidden in a woodline, and several men were wounded by the initial volley. Realizing that artillery support might be needed, Lieutenant Steiner moved forward through the withering enemy barrage and discovered that two casualties and the medic who was treating them were completely unprotected. He immediately secured a grenade launcher and began applying suppressive fire while maneuvering towards the aggressors. Inspired by his courage, a machine gun crew joined him as he advanced to within a few feet of the hostile stronghold. Further exposing himself to the communists' fusillade, Lieutenant Steiner attempted to fire his pistol into the bunker and, when the weapon failed to fire, hurled a grenade into the structure's gun port which killed the enemy within. Fire then erupted from a previously undetected bunker located behind him, killing two men. Realizing that his comrades were in grave danger, Lieutenant Steiner turned and opened fire on the second emplacement to enable the others to reach cover. As he fearlessly engaged the enemy, he was mortally wounded by hostile fire. Second Lieutenant Steiner's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty, at the cost of his life were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.