

First Lieutenant John Reeves Tiedemann (Class 21-42) KIA

Distinguished Service Cross

Headquarters, U.S. Strategic Forces in Europe General Orders No. 29 (1945)

SYNOPSIS: The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918, takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to First Lieutenant (Air Corps) John Reeves Tiedemann (ASN: 0-1166634), United States Army Air Forces, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy while serving as Navigator of a B-24 Heavy Bomber in the 565th Bombardment Squadron, 389th Bombardment Group (H), Eighth Air Force, while participating in a bombing mission on 25 December 1944, against enemy targets in the European Theater of Operations.

On this date, Lieutenant Tiedemann's aircraft was severely damaged and the bomb bay set on fire following repeated enemy fighter attacks. Two of his aircraft's engines were rendered inoperative, the control surface damaged and the main hydraulic system destroyed. In short time his aircraft became a lone straggler and was attacked by three enemy fighters who inflicted further damage and badly wounded several crew members. Realizing that the aircraft could maintain flight no longer, the Pilot ordered the crew to bail out and decided to attempt a crash in order that wounded crew members might be saved. Shortly thereafter, the aircraft exploded in mid-air and Lieutenant Tiedemann was not seen to leave it before hand. The extraordinary heroism and complete disregard for his personal safety displayed by Lieutenant Tiedemann on this occasion are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the 8th Air Force, and the United States Army Air Forces.

Note: Lieutenant Tiedemann, his Pilot Lieutenant Raymond Price, his Co-Pilot, Lieutenant Edward O'Rourke, all received Distinguished Service Crosses in this action during which 7 members of the crew were killed in action and only two managed to bail out. Those two were held as Prisoners of War until the end of hostilities.