

Heck, Theodore G.

# Local Army Officer Captures 10 Germans

Cleans Out French Cellar Single-<sup>APR 20 1945</sup>  
Handed — Gets Silver Star, Medal

Qualities that make the American Army what it is today were displayed recently by a young Bethlehem hero.

"His leadership and clear thinking under heavy fire inspired his men to such height that the difficult mission was successfully accomplished with surprisingly light casualties."

So reads the citation awarding the Silver Star to First Lieut.

Theodore G. Heck, son of Mr. and Mrs. William F. Heck, of 1024 Linden Street. And less than six weeks after the first award, made last January, the young man won the Bronze Star Medal.

Assigned with his company to clear the enemy from strong positions in Phillipsburg, France, Lieut. Heck, armed with a light machine gun, courageously led the hazardous attack, pouring concentrated fire into each position, throwing hand grenades and covering resistance points so that his men could move swiftly in for knockout blows.

### CAPTURES 10 NAZIS

Six weeks later in the vicinity of Etzling, France, the young officer learned from a French native that ten of the enemy were hiding in the basement of the Frenchman's home. Displaying outstanding courage in the face of overwhelming odds, he entered the house alone, disarming and taking the enemy prisoners.

A graduate of Liberty High School, Lt. Heck was a senior at Lehigh University when he was called to active Army duty. He was attending Lehigh on a scholarship award, was a football and wrestling star and was on the staff of the Brown and White. At the completion of basic training, he was assigned to Officer's Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga., and in December, 1944, he was shipped overseas. He is now serving with the infantry of the Seventh Army under General Alexander Patch.

### ONLY 23

The young officer spent his 23rd birthday, March 28, in an Army hospital in France recuperating from a wound sustained while leading an attack at Saarbrucken. After directing maneuvers, he was shot as he was returning from a one-man patrol on the Saar River.

Lt. Heck, who expects to be a journalist at the conclusion of the war, writes to his parents:

"My weapon's platoon is now a hardened, cruel bunch of killers. No longer the young, eager boys I brought here with me. Life has become a cheap commodity, even though the many acts of heroism are attributed to the desire to save one's own hide."

Describing recent action as "rough as anything I ever hope to do," Lt. Heck said his men recently "fought like cats and dogs" with no rest for over a week. "I've had some close calls, but so far Lady Luck has been kind to me."

He concludes: "We are definitely fighting an inferior enemy. But he seems far from being finished."

## Cited Twice



LIEUT. THEODORE G. HECK

April 20, 1945