

VFW Recognizes Cpl. Freddie Stowers

Stowers was a true patriot and selfless leader who paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom

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Today, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) recognizes Medal of Honor recipient U.S. Army Cpl. Freddie Stowers.

Stowers started his Army career at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where he joined the First Provisional Infantry Regiment on Oct. 4, 1917. The Sandy Springs, South Carolina, native was part of the first military draft of World War I.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org



Portrait of Cpl. Freddie Stowers generated by Army forensics from photos of his mother and sisters. Photo courtesy of the National Park Service.

On Sept. 28, 1918, while serving as squad leader of Company C, 371st Infantry Regiment, 93rd Division, Stowers went above and beyond the call of duty when his company led the attack at Hill 188, Champagne Marne Sector, France.

Shortly after the attack began, the enemy came out of the trenches leading Stowers and his company to believe they were surrendering. However, soon after the American forces came out of their trenches, the enemy resumed fire.

Stowers led his company to the enemy trench line to take out a machine gun post that was causing a majority of the casualties. As Stowers and his men moved forward, he was mortally wounded.

He continued to go on with his company and encouraged his men to go forward without him. The members of Stowers' squad pressed on, motivated by his heroism, they continued the attack leading to the capture of Hill 188.

Stowers' commanding officer recommended him for the Medal of Honor after his death, but

the paperwork had been misplaced. Stowers later earned the Medal of Honor posthumously on April 24, 1991, during a ceremony where President George H. W. Bush presented the award to his two sisters, Georgina Palmer and Mary Bowens.

Stowers was a true patriot and selfless leader who paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom.

This is the first in a series of VFW feature articles to be published throughout February 2020, highlighting African-American veterans who have made outstanding contributions to our military and society.