

MEDAL OF HONOR: FOSTER J. SAYERS

Medal of Honor Series

Our "Medal of Honor" series explores the stories behind the courageous Pennsylvania veterans who have been awarded the prestigious Medal of Honor for their exemplary service in the United States military. In this entry, we recognize the achievements of Foster J. Sayers, who received the Medal of Honor on October 19, 1945.



Foster Joseph Sayers (April 27, 1924–November 12, 1944) was a 20-year-old infantryman from Centre County. He joined the Army from Howard, Pennsylvania in March 1943. He received the Medal of Honor for acts of bravery near Thionville, France on November 12, 1944. Foster Joseph Sayers Reservoir at Bald Eagle State Park near his hometown of Howard, Pennsylvania is named in his honor. He is buried in Schenck's Cemetery in Howard, Pennsylvania.

He displayed conspicuous gallantry above and beyond the call of duty in combat on 12 November 1944, near Thionville, France. During an attack on strong hostile forces entrenched on a hill he fearlessly ran up the steep approach toward his objective and set up his machine gun 20 yards from the enemy. Realizing it would be necessary to attract full attention of the dug-in Germans while his company crossed an open area and flanked the enemy, he picked up his gun, charged through withering machine gun and rifle fire to the very edge of the emplacement, and there killed 12 German soldiers with devastating close-range fire. He took up a position behind a log and engaged the hostile infantry from the flank in an heroic attempt to distract their attention while his comrades attained their objective at the crest of the hill. He was killed by the very heavy concentration of return fire; but his fearless assault enabled his company to sweep the hill with minimum of casualties, killing or capturing every enemy soldier on it. Pfc. Sayers' indomitable fighting spirit, aggressiveness, and supreme devotion to duty live on as an example of the highest traditions of the military service.