

Captain Darrell Robbins Lindsey was killed in action over France on Aug. 9, 1944.

He was part of the 9th USAF, which on D-Day attacked positions in Cherbourg, then continued to support Allied ground units in Normandy, attacking German communication. On Aug. 7, the group began a three-day campaign against rail and bridge targets in northern France. The unit received a Distinguished Unit Citation for the campaign. Lindsey was killed on one of those missions; his body was not recovered.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously on May 30, 1945. It was presented to his widow Evalyn on Aug. 9, 1945, at a ceremony in Fort Dodge. The citation reads as follows:

“On August 9, 1944, Capt Darrell R. Lindsey led a formation of 30 B-26 medium bombers in a hazardous mission to destroy the strategic enemy held L’Isle Adam railroad bridge over the Siene in occupied France. With most of the bridges over the Seine destroyed, the heavily fortified L’Isle Adam bridge was of inestimable value to the enemy in moving troops, supplies, and equipment to Paris.

“Capt. Lindsey was fully aware of the fierce resistance that would be encountered. Shortly after reaching enemy territory the formation was buffeted with heavy and accurate antiaircraft fire. By skillful evasive action, Capt. Lindsey was able to elude much of the enemy flak, but just before entering the bombing run his B-26 was peppered with holes.

“During the bombing run the enemy fire was even more intense, and Capt. Lindsey’s right engine received a direct hit and burst into flames. Despite the fact that his ship was hurled out of formation by the violence of the concussion, Capt. Lindsey brilliantly maneuvered back into the lead position without disrupting the flight.

“Fully aware that the gasoline tanks might explode at any moment, Capt. Lindsey gallantly elected to continue the perilous bombing run. With fire streaming from his right engine and his right wing half enveloped in flames, he led his formation over the target upon which the bombs were dropped with telling effect. Immediately after the objective was attacked, Capt. Lindsey gave the order for the crew to parachute from the doomed aircraft. With magnificent coolness and superb piloting, and without regard for his own life, he held the swiftly descending airplane in a steady glide until the members of the crew could jump to safety. With the right wing completely enveloped in flames and an explosion of the gasoline tank imminent, Capt. Lindsey still remained unperturbed. The last man to leave the plane was the bombardier, who offered to lower the wheels so that Capt. Lindsey might escape from the nose. Realizing that this might throw the aircraft into an uncontrollable spin and jeopardize the bombardier’s chances to escape, Capt. Lindsey refused the offer. Immediately after the bombardier had bailed out, and before Capt. Lindsey was able to follow, the right gasoline tank exploded. The aircraft sheathed in fire, went into a steep dive and was seen to explode as it crashed. All who are living today from this plane owe their lives to the fact that Capt. Lindsey remained cool and sowed supreme courage in this emergency.”

Signed: Harry S. Truman

Dated: May, 1945

Source: *The Heritage of Greene County, Iowa, 2011*