

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pride in presenting the Medal of Honor posthumously to

First Lieutenant John R. Fox  
United States Army

Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty: First Lieutenant John R. Fox distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism at the risk of his own life on 26 December 1944 in the Serchio River Valley Sector, in vicinity of Sommocolonia, Italy. Lieutenant Fox was a member of Cannon Company, 366th Infantry, 92nd Infantry Division, acting as a forward observer, while attached to the 598th Field Artillery Battalion. Christmas Day in the Serchio Valley was spent in positions which had been occupied for some weeks. During Christmas night, there was a gradual influx of enemy soldiers in civilian clothes and by early morning the town was largely in enemy hands. An organized attack by uniformed German formations was launched around 0400 hours, 26 December 1944. Reports were received that the area was being heavily shelled by everything the Germans had, and although most of the U.S. infantry forces withdrew from the town, Lieutenant Fox and members of his observation party remained behind on the second floor of a house, directing defensive fires. Lieutenant Fox reported at 0800 hours that the Germans were in the streets and attacking in strength, He called for artillery fire increasingly close to his own position. He told his battalion commander, "That was just where I wanted it. Bring it 60 yards! His commander protested that there was a heavy barrage in the area and bombardment would be too close. Lieutenant Fox gave his adjustment, requesting that the barrage be fired. The distance was cut in half. The Germans continued to press forward in large numbers, surrounding the position. Lieutenant Fox again called for artillery fire with the commander protesting again stating, "Fox, that will be on you!" The last communication from Lieutenant Fox was. "Fire it! There's more of them than there are of us. Give them hell!" The bodies of Lieutenant Fox and his party were found in the vicinity of his position when his position was taken. This action, by Lieutenant Fox, at the cost of his own life, inflicted heavy casualties, causing deaths of approximately 100 Germans, thereby delaying the advance of the enemy until infantry and artillery units could be reorganized to meet the attack. Lieutenant Fox's extraordinary valorous actions exemplify the highest traditions of the military service.