

Roddie Edmonds, MSgt

422

IX-A (9-A)

Nominated for Congressional Medal of Honor 2017



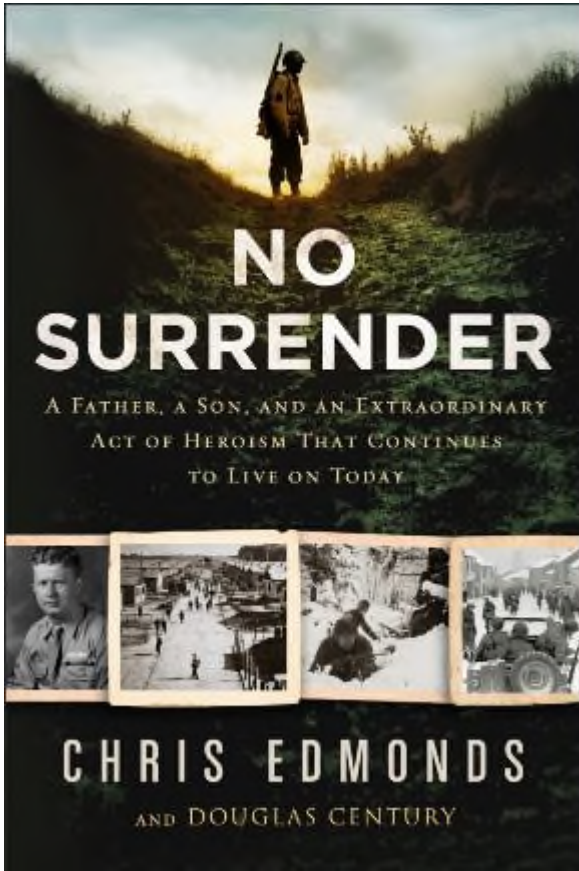
Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds (August 20, 1919 – August 8, 1985) was a master sergeant of the 106th Infantry Division, 422nd Infantry Regiment in the United States Army during World War II, who was captured and became the ranking U.S. non-commissioned officer at the Stalag IX-A prisoner-of-war (POW) Camp in Germany, where – at the risk of his life – he prevented an estimated 200 Jews from being singled out from the camp for Nazi persecution and possible death.

For his defense of Jewish servicemen at the POW camp, Edmonds, a Christian, was awarded the title "**Righteous Among the Nations**", Israel's highest award for

non-Jews who risked their own lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Of 25,000 people to receive the award, Edmonds was the fifth of five Americans, and the only one of the five who was an active serviceman during World War II.



The Story of Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds



The Nazi soldiers made their orders very clear: only Jewish American prisoners of war were to fall out the next morning and be separated from their fellow brothers in arms being sent to an uncertain fate. But Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds would have none of that. As the highest-ranking non-commissioned officer held in the German POW camp, he ordered more than 1,200 American captives to fall out with him and fearlessly pronounced: "We are all Jews here." He would not waver, even with a pistol to his head, and his captors eventually backed down.

Seventy one years later, the Knoxville, Tennessee, native was posthumously recognized as Righteous Among the Nations, Israel's highest honor for non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the holocaust. He's only the fifth American and the first American serviceman to earn the honor. And he is the first person to rescue American Jews.

"Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds seemed like an ordinary American soldier, but he had an extraordinary sense of responsibility and dedication to his fellow human beings," said Avner Shalev, chairman of the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum and memorial. "The choices and actions of Master Sgt. Edmonds set an example for his fellow American soldiers as they stood united against the barbaric evil of the Nazis."

After being released by Associated Press, the story has gone viral appearing in media markets across the world. It was covered by all major news outlets and many regional and local outlets as well. News of Sergeant Edmonds actions have been described as... "Hero!", "amazing", "incredible", "like Spartacus", "awe inspiring", "brave beyond belief", "now that's a real hero", "deserving of the medal of honor", "what a courageous, compassionate man", and thousands more similar comments. Many have said the story has restored their faith in humanity.



James D. West
www.IndianaMilitary.org

Deceased 08/08/1985 Knoxville TN