

**FIRST LIEUTENANT GEORGE K. SISLER**  
**U.S. Army (Deceased)**  
**Medal of Honor Recipient**



George Kenton Sisler joined the military as an enlisted man first with the Army National Guard and then the US Army Reserves from 1956 until 1958. He served on active duty with the Air Force from 1958 to 1962. He graduated from Arkansas State College with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1964 and enlisted in the Regular Army on 21 August of the same year. He served almost a full year before receiving his commission from Officer Candidate School as a Second Lieutenant on 22 June 1965. 1LT Sisler volunteered for extremely hazardous missions and his courage became legendary among those who knew him. His aggressiveness and tenacity were instrumental in the success of several such missions.

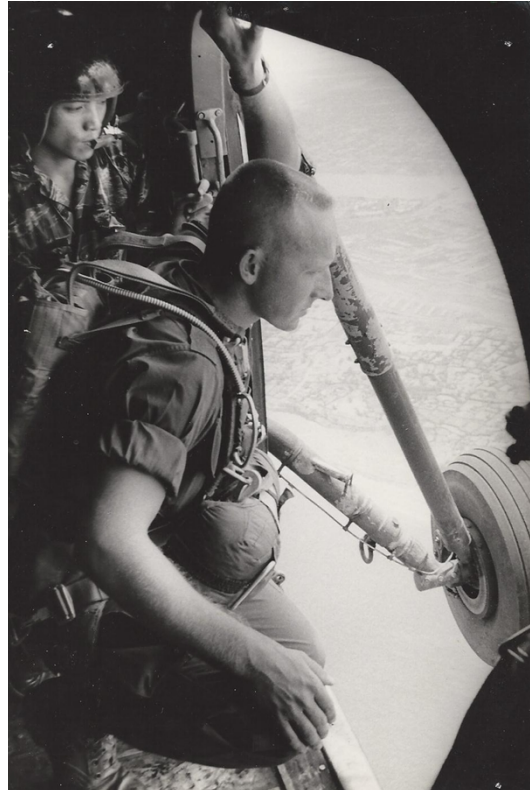
On 7 February 1967, in the Republic of Vietnam, 1LT Sisler was involved in a combat action which ended his life and earned him a Medal of Honor, which was awarded to him posthumously. His actions in this instance were directly responsible for saving his unit from annihilation.

1LT Sisler's Medal of Honor citation reads as follows:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life and above and beyond the call of duty. 1LT Sisler was the platoon leader/advisor to a Special United States/Vietnam exploitation force. While on patrol deep within enemy dominated territory, 1LT Sisler's platoon was attacked from three sides by a company sized enemy force. 1LT Sisler quickly rallied his men, deployed them to a better defensive position, called for air strikes, and moved among his men to encourage and direct their efforts. Learning that two men had been wounded and were unable to pull back to the perimeter, 1LT Sisler charged from the position through intense enemy fire to assist them. He reached the men and began carrying one of them back to the perimeter, when he was taken under more intense weapons fire by the enemy. Laying down his wounded comrade, he killed three onrushing enemy soldiers by firing his rifle and silenced the enemy machine gun with a grenade. As he returned the wounded man to the perimeter the left flank of the position came under extremely heavy attack by the superior enemy force, and several additional men of his platoon were quickly wounded. Realizing the need for instant action to prevent his position

from being overrun, 1LT Sisler picked up some grenades and charged single-handedly into the enemy onslaught, firing his weapon and throwing grenades. This singularly heroic action broke up the vicious assault and forced the enemy to begin withdrawing. Despite continuing enemy fire, 1LT Sisler was moving about the battlefield directing force and several additional men of his platoon were quickly wounded. His extraordinary leadership, infinite courage, and selfless concern for his men saved the lives of a number of his comrades. His actions reflect great credit upon himself and uphold the highest traditions of the military service.”

At the time of this action, and for many years thereafter, 1LT Sisler was generally listed as serving as an Assistant Intelligence Officer for Headquarters Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne). This was a cover assignment, as he was actually serving with a recently declassified organization known as the Studies and Observation Group (SOG), an innocuous name for a covert, CIA-backed mission known as Operations Plan (OPLAN)-34A, issued by Defense Secretary Robert McNamara in order to make a series of covert attacks on North Vietnam. The SOG was not subordinate to the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), but to the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, with White House input. SOG’s charter authorized operations from South Vietnam and Thailand into Laos, Cambodia, and North Vietnam, with contingency planning for Burma and China’s Kwangsi, Kwangtung and Yunnan Provinces, plus Hainan Island.<sup>1</sup>



1LT Sisler’s awards and decorations include the Medal of Honor, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart, all awarded posthumously. In addition, he was authorized the Good Conduct Medal from the Air Force, the Air Force Longevity Service Award, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal (2 bronze service stars), the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Ranger Tab, the Expert Badge with Rifle Bar, Marksman Badge with Machine Gun Bar (second class), the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device (1960), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, National Order of Vietnam (fifth class), Vietnam Halo Wings and Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm (unit citation).

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<sup>1</sup> Information about the SOG was taken from John L. Plaster’s SOG: The Secret Wars of America’s Commandos in Vietnam, published in 1997 by Simon and Schuster.

1LT Sisler was inducted into the Military Intelligence Corps Hall of Fame in 1988, and the same year, Sisler Hall at Fort Huachuca was dedicated in his honor. On 28 February 1998, a US Navy Large Medium Rollon-Rolloff Ship was named the USNS Sisler in his honor.



**Photos Courtesy of 1LT Sisler's son, LTC James B. Sisler, US Air Force, Retired**

