

RADIO



Lt. Alexander Nininger, Jr.

John Doe, C.M.H.

On Feb. 10, 1942, Alexander R. Nininger Sr. of Lake Worth, Fla., accepted the Congressional Medal of Honor awarded posthumously to his Army lieutenant son—the first time the nation's highest award was given for heroism in this war.—On Aug. 23, 1945, President Truman hung Congressional Medals on 28 servicemen—and the total rose to 303.

The majority of the winners are men from small towns like Raritan, N. J., or Lepanto, Ark. It has been the fate of most of them either to die in battle (almost 50 per cent of the awards are made posthumously) or to slip into post-war obscurity.

Last week, a radio program designed to correct this anonymity of bitterly won honor got a new lease on life. NBC executives extended into winter a program called simply C.M.H. Originally scheduled to live and die as the eight-week summer replacement for *Cavalcade of America* (NBC, Monday, 8-8:30 p.m., EWT), C.M.H. was allotted a weekly half hour after NBC's nighttime commercial shows—to continue indefinitely beginning Aug. 29 (Wednesday, 11:30-12 p.m., EWT).

The program's format is simple: an expertly underplayed dramatization each week of the life of a Congressional Medal of Honor winner. Its purpose, after entertainment, is direct: to establish in America the recognition and use of the letters C.M.H., and to make the letters a familiar, honorable title.

The show's director, Joseph Mansfield, a sharp-faced young man of 30, and Richard McDonagh, head of the script department enthusiastically report they have enough material for four years of hero programs. "It's a funny thing," Mansfield said. "We usually find that these guys are the simplest of people—no complexes. Most of them say: 'If I'd stopped to think, I probably wouldn't have done it'."

But to drive home the point that they "have done it," each week's show opens and closes with a reading by the narrator of the emphatic plea: "Let's write after their names forever . . . their highest degree of heroism, C.M.H."



The Army's C.M.H.—no higher honor