

MUNRO

MUNRO, Douglas Albert

SMlc, USCG

212-739

(Dec)

Solomon Is.

Recommended for MEDAL OF HONOR by Comdr. S. Pac. Force
And Area--(Wilkinson--Deputy Comdr.)--CONFIDENTIAL--Ltr. P15/(02) Serial 0176

Awarded: MEDAL OF HONOR--(POST)---March 18, 1943 Bd.Awds.Mtg.

Approved Apr 7, 1943.

For extraordinary heroism over and above the line of duty as officer in charge of a group of Higgins boats that were engaged in an operation at Guadalcanal on 27 Sept. 1942. You and your volunteer crew did so place yourselves so as to force the enemy machine guns to return your fire and to make your boat their target in order that other boats that were heavily loaded with Marines would be spared. over

By your acts and planning, even though you lost your life, the maneuver was so successfully carried out that the loss of life was remarkably small.

ACTION

At about 1530, Sept. 27, 1942, word was received from 1st Marine Div. Hdqtrs. that a rapid evacuation of 1st Battalion 7th Regiment, 1st Marine Div., previously landed on the beach at Pt. Cruz, Guadalcanal, was necessary, and so at 1605 all available Higgins Boats, 24 boats with volunteer crews, under MUNRO, D.A. SMLc, USCG, were dispatched to the specified beach.

Upon arrival in the vicinity of the beach, MUNRO directed that all boats wait about 1 mile off shore and he proceeded into the beach to contact the Marines at that point and make the necessary arrangements for the withdrawal. As he was proceeding in to the beach where the landing

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had been made earlier that day, an airplane from CACTUS, that had been sent to assist, flew low and directed him to another point some 250 yds. to the west. Upon close examination he found the Marines were on the beach at that point. As he turned his boat to where the Marines were, 2 Japanese machine guns that had been set up at the beach to which he had been going opened fire, and raked his boat. He proceeded to the beach, contacted the Marines, made arrangements for the boat operations and examined the beach and found it good but narrow so that only 3 boats could land at 1 time.

He loaded about 30 men in his boat and withdrew to where the other boats were waiting. He transferred his cargo into one of the slower boats, told the others of the situation, and called for volunteer crews for 5 boats plus his own. He then directed all other boats to remain off shore and to take excess passengers out of the boats as they came over

back out.

He then gave the directions to the 5 boats that were to hit the beach and preceded them towards shore. As he closed the beach he signalled the other boats to land and he with EVANS, Raymond J. SMLc, USCG; BENNETT, W. J., Cox. USN; ROBERTS, Samuel B. Cox: USN; as crew, placed their boat between the beachhead and the enemies machine guns so as to draw the enemy fire and try to protect the boats while they were being loaded. This boat was armed with only 2 Lewis Automatic machine guns.

Seeing their maneuver, LESLIE, Dale M. 2nd Lt. USMC, the pilot of the plane flew very low, strafing the guns, and also drawing their fire so as to assist and protect both MUNRO's boat and the boats being loaded at the beachhead. Also during this maneuver, Leslie spotted a man in the water, and dropped a flare near him so that he was noticed and rescued. He also directed a salvage boat to the assistance of 1 of the boats that had just left the

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beach loaded with about 70 Marines and had had engine trouble.

Without question, the heroic action of Munro, his crew, the excellent performance of Leslie and the repeated and unhesitating return to the beach of the boats in order to pick up men were the reason that every Marine that had been able to reach the beach was successfully evacuated by boat. A total of about 470 of the 488 landed earlier in the day were rescued.

The total time of evacuation from the beach was approximately 30 min. yet in this time the enemy set up and were using 4 machine guns, 1 mortar, and 2 anti-tank guns. Near the last of the evacuation, Munro was instantly killed and even though Roberts and Bennett were both wounded, Evans remained in his position attempting to hold the wheel in 1 hand and resting a machine gun on the gunwhale while he continued to fire and draw fire until the last boats had

Loaded and cleared the beach.

Basic Corresp. was given to Cit. Unit 4/8/43
sent to Miss Nugent 5/4/43