

NOVEMBER 3, 1942

HEROIC COAST GUARDSMAN GIVES LIFE TO EVACUATE
TROOPS FROM BEACH IN SOLOMONS

Rescue of United States troops from a beleaguered beach in the Solomon Islands was attributed today to a heroic 22-year-old Coast Guardsman who, wounded in the evacuation, died with a smile on his face when he learned his dangerous mission had been accomplished.

He was Douglas A. Munro, Signalman 1st Class, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Munro, Box 653, South Cle Elum, Washington.

Munro, who previously had risked his life in an effort to save the two-man crew of a Navy dive bomber forced down off Savo Island, recently volunteered to evacuate an expedition caught at a point being raked by Japanese gunfire.

He was placed in charge of 10 boats assigned to rescue the troops. A majority of the troops were taken off the beach, and then Munro and his little fleet returned to get the others.

Realizing that the last group to leave faced the greatest danger because enemy gunfire was increasing steadily, Munro ordered several of his boats, including the one in which he was stationed, to provide cover for the craft taking out the troops.

The job was almost finished when Munro was wounded.

Regaining consciousness behind the United States lines sometime later, he asked only one question:

"Did they get off?"

Assured that the troops were safe, the brave Coast Guardsman died, a smile lighting his face.

A story written by Sergeant James W. Hurlbutt, U.S. Marine Corps Combat Correspondent, and released by the Navy Department on October 14, 1942, told of Munro's first heroic act in the Solomons.

On September 20, Munro, Hurlbutt and three others set out in a small boat in search of an officer and an enlisted man whose dive bomber was forced down off Savo Island. The aviators, it developed later, were picked up by a flying boat, but Munro and his companions, unaware of this, braved intense machine gun fire from a Japanese landing party in an effort to find the airmen.

Munro was born October 11, 1919, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He attended Cle Elum (Washington) High School, and later studied for one year at Central Washington College of Education. He enlisted in the Coast Guard on September 18, 1939. In April, 1942, he was ordered to

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special duty with the staff of the Commander of a Transport Division in the Pacific.

(Photographs of Munro are available at the Public Relations Office, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters.)

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