

PATCHER, ROBERT R.

Pfc. 432835

USMCR 1st Battalion

BOARD OF DECORATIONS & MEDALS: IWO JIMA

AWARDED: Bronze Star Medal by ComGen5thMarDiv file1740 WRC/ogw

Serial 26908 dtd 23Oct1945; Received B4 IM 20Nov1945

For heroic achievement in connection with operations against the enemy while serving with a Marine infantry battalion on IWO JIMA, VOLCANO ISLANDS on 13 March 1945. The company, of which Private First Class PATCHER was a member, moved several hundred yards in a final push to break the last enemy lines of organized resistance. Private First Class PATCHER, a gunner, had taken over his mortar squad when his squad leader became a casualty and for several days had led his squad in the support of the attack. On the afternoon of 13 March 1945, the company was suddenly pinned down in front of a deep gorge from which heavy mortar and grenade fire was delivered by the enemy. It was imperative that all supporting fire be concentrated on the resistance immediately to prevent heavy casualties. Before mortar fire could be directed into the gorge, communications were disrupted by the heavy enemy fire. Private First Class PATCHER, at the gun position, perceived the seriousness of the situation and without orders and on his own volition, displaced his squad forward to the front line exposing himself to the deadly fire, which had halted his company. With utter disregard for his own safety and with cool courage, he emplaced his mortar in direct view of the enemy, and

brought down heavy fire into the gorge from close range. With the fire of this and another mortar, the enemy suffered severe casualties and was forced to withdraw, thus permitting the company to reorganize and continue the attack.

Private First Class PATCHER's heroism and personal bravery were an inspiration to the men of his unit and his unusual ability, initiative, and tireless energy were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.