

Dewey R. Connor Jr. Saves Marine Pilot and Gunner

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Newton Machinist's Mate Plunged Into the Water, Swam to Raft and Towed It to His Flying Boat

Dewey Connor Jr., aviation machinist's mate first class, a member of the crew of a Navy patrol bomber in the South Pacific, recently rescued a Marine pilot and his gunner, who had been forced down at sea, when he swam to their rubber raft and towed it back to the patrol bomber.

It was on March 30 that the Navy patrol bomber Black Cat was on its way to Green island when the pilot and crew received orders to search for a Marine pilot and his gunner reported down at sea off the enemy stronghold of Buka. After searching the area a short time, the pilot spotted the trail left by the green dye marker on their life jackets, approached and landed on the rough sea.

Taxiing as close as was safe to the life raft, he hove to, and Connor plunged into the sea, swam to the rubber raft and towed it back to the plane. Willing hands immediately pulled the Marine pilot and gunner aboard and gave them first aid. Then a take-off was made in the rough swells and the patrol plane returned them safely to an American base.

Bombing Buka

Enroute to the base on Bougainville island, the crew learned that the Marine airmen had been on a bombing mission over installations on Buka. They were flying a Douglas dive bomber and made a crash landing at sea after their plane had been badly shot up. The two Marine airmen had been drifting in their life raft for several hours before being rescued by Connor and his mates.

Dewey is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Dewey R. Connor of Effingham, formerly of Newton, and a grand-son of S. A. Connor of Newton. His wife and baby son, Michael Ross, are making their home with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Kinsel while he is in the service. His squadron is under command of Admiral William F. Halsey Jr., South Pacific commander.

Awarded Decoration

Mr. and Mrs. R. T. Mineo have received word from their son, Lieutenant William L. Mineo, that he has been promoted to first lieutenant and also been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He had received the Air Award and Three Oak Leaf clusters at an earlier date. Bill is a bombardier.