



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
- AUTHORIZED BY ACT OF CONGRESS JULY 2, 1926
HAS AWARDED

THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

TO

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIAM C. SUTTON

FOR
HEROISM
WHILE PARTICIPATING IN AERIAL FLIGHT

3 September 1966

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON

THIS

25th

DAY OF

November

19 66

William W. Momyer

WILLIAM W. MOMYER, Lieutenant General, USAF
Commander, Seventh Air Force



Harold Brown

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

TO

WILLIAM C. SUTTON

Staff Sergeant William C. Sutton distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as an HU-16B Pararescue Technician over hostile waters in Southeast Asia on 3 September 1966. On that date, with utter disregard for personal safety, while trapped in the center of intense automatic mortar and small arms fire from all sides, he and crew daringly landed the rescue amphibian in the open sea and without benefit of armed fighter protection, rescued a downed pilot in extremely close proximity to hostile land masses. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Sutton reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE (PACAF)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

SPECIAL ORDER
G-1047

22 November 1966

1. DP, each of the following is awarded the Silver Star for gallantry while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force on date indicated:

CAPTAIN ANDREW H BONE, FV3056688 (16th TFW)
1 August 1966

CAPTAIN DUANE A MILLER, FV3041113 (3rd ARRG)
3 September 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT JOHN B OLANSEN, FR72233 (3rd TFW)
24 July 1966

TECHNICAL SERGEANT JAMES R VITALIE, AF13442451 (14th ACW)
4 September 1966

2. DP, each of the following is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism while participating in aerial flight on date indicated:

MAJOR LOWELL W VOSE, FV2225511 (355th TFW)
8 October 1966
(FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

CAPTAIN WALTER C HICKMAN, FR58002 (3rd ARRG)
3 September 1966
(THIRD OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

CAPTAIN HAROLD G KING, FV3110138 (3rd ARRG)
3 September 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT HERBERT W SPECKMAN, FR75457 (AF Advsy Gp)
31 August 1966
(SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

STAFF SERGEANT GERALD L JONES, AF19480283 (3rd ARRG)
3 September 1966
(SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIAM C SUTTON, AF14472745 (3rd ARRG)
3 September 1966

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS ROBERT JOHNSON, AF19776476 (3rd ARRG)
3 September 1966
(SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

3. DP, each of the following is awarded the Airman's Medal for heroism involving voluntary risk of life on 22 October 1966:

G-1047 STAFF SERGEANT ANDREW L SMEDLEY, AF15524021 (505th TCG)

SO G-1047, 22 November 1966, Hq 7th Air Force, APO San Francisco 96307

STAFF SERGEANT JOHN T VAN DRUNEN, AF16655872 (505th TCG)

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS LARRY A HEISHMAN, AF13819342 (505th TCG)

4. By Direction of the Secretary of the Air Force, each of the following is awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for meritorious service during the period indicated:

MAJOR DAVID L MEDLEY, FR45798 (6253rd TASG)

25 March 1966 to 19 November 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT ROGER W CARLSON, FV3134462 (460th TRW)

28 December 1965 to 26 October 1966

(FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

FIRST LIEUTENANT SAMUEL P CARTER JR, FV3157046 (366th TFW)

19 June 1966 to 22 November 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT JOHN E COBEAN, FV3155633 (6499th Spt Gp)

10 January 1966 to 13 November 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT RALPH CRAWFORD, FR75927 (6253rd TASG)

27 June 1966 to 20 October 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT MICHAEL L DZOB, FV3137747 (6499th Spt Gp)

13 January 1966 to 13 November 1966

(FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

FIRST LIEUTENANT RONALD E HOSLER, FV3147324 (505th TCG)

7 March 1966 to 15 November 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT ROBERT S KAMINSKI, FV3145380 (13th RTS)

6 June 1966 to 22 November 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT ROBERT S LABERTEW, FV3107895 (13th RTS)

15 September 1965 to 20 August 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT WILBUR J LATHAM JR, FR3130461 (366th TFW)

25 June 1966 to 22 November 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT JOE L MANEY, FV3122117 (366th CSG)

2 August 1965 to 21 July 1966

FIRST LIEUTENANT JOHN R PLAIN, FV3155755 (366th TFW)

25 June 1966 to 22 November 1966

FOR THE COMMANDER


HARROLD H MILLER, Captain, USAF
Administrative Officer

DISTRIBUTION
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Rescue Teams Applauded

SAIGON (AP)—Aerial rescue teams that back up American fliers drew star billing Saturday under fire of two pilots downed over North Viet Nam.

Saved from death or capture were Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Tucker, Long Prairie, Minn., and Capt. Edward Skowron, Cheshire, Mass.

A veteran Navy pilot, Tucker was rescued from Haiphong harbor by fellow jet fliers and a Navy helicopter crew as Communist vessels closed in after his RF8 Crusader was shot down on a photographic mission last Wednesday.

"It was a great performance," Tucker said.

Skowron was plucked from the Tonkin Gulf Friday by a U.S. Air Force amphibious Albatross that landed with

mortar fire churning the water only 30 or 40 yards away. Crippling shots from ground guns had wrecked his Air Force F105 Thunderchief about 80 miles north of the border.

Cmdr. Robert S. Vermilya, Chula Vista, Calif., commanded the Navy helicopter that lifted Tucker to safety.

Capt. Duane A. Miller, Seymour, Wis., piloted the Albatross. S. Sgt. William C. Sutton, Goldsboro, N. C., the pararescueman of the five-man crew, swam to Skowron and tied a rope around him to draw him to the taxing aircraft as the Red shore batteries whammed away.

"Sutton was so fast he practically walked on the water," said the Albatross navigator, Capt. Harold G. King, Crestview, Fla.

Officers said that, in Tucker's case, North Vietnamese sampans closed in with the evident aim of capturing him after he bailed out into the harbor south-east of Haiphong.

Vermilya said the Communist vessels were within 100 yards of the life raft when they were driven off by fire from Tucker's wingman, Lt. Cmdr. Foster Teague, and other American jet pilots.

The helicopter commander told a Saigon news conference the jets "blew one out of the harbor and set another on fire."

The other sampans began a rapid retreat then, Vermilya said, and the nearest one was 300 yards away when the chopper hovered over Tucker to pluck him from North Viet Nam's most important port.

Daring Rescue Completed Under Heavy Enemy Fire

TAN SON NHUT — "Our pararescueman was so fast he practically walked on water getting to the downed pilot," said Capt. Harold G. King of Crestview, Fla.

Captain King is the navigator of an Air Force HU-16 amphibious Albatross which recently plucked an F-105 Thunderchief pilot from the water off the coast of North Vietnam. Communist mortars and shore batteries made a concerted but futile effort to sink the rescue aircraft.

In an early morning raid Capt. Edward Skowron of Cheshire, Mass., dove his Thunderchief at an enemy truck stalled approximately 40 miles north of Dong Hoi. During his attack, Captain Skowron's plane was crippled by ground fire. He headed for the South China Sea and ejected near the Mui Ron Ma peninsula, landing less than two miles from the beach.

Twenty minutes later an HU-16 scrambled by the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at Da Nang splashed into the narrow bay beside the downed flyer. Immediately, enemy guns and mortars erupted from the shore line which stretched around three sides of the survivor.

"The first burst of mortars blew geysers into the air 30 to 40 yards from our wingtip," said Albatross pilot, Capt. Duane A. Miller of Seymour, Wis. "We could also hear explosions from the shore which meant they were probably throwing more than mortars at us."

Captain King recalls, "As we taxied up to the pilot, I ran back to the hatch to help get him aboard. That's when our pararescueman, SSgt. William C. Sutton of Goldsboro, N.C. showed the speed. Swimming out to the pilot he tied a rope around him, and we pulled him right in. We could see and hear the ground fire the whole time."

Within two minutes the Albatross leaped into the air and headed for Da Nang. On board, a very grateful Captain Skowron mentioned he thought he might have fractured his ankle in the bail out. Sergeant Sutton applied a splint which relieved the pain.

At Da Nang, the pilot was transferred to an Air Force HH-43 Huskie helicopter and flown to a nearby hospital.

Others in the rescue crew included the flight mechanic, AIC Robert Johnson of Compton, Calif., and radio operator SSgt. Gerald L. Jones of Dallas, Ore.