

Silver Star to Capt. Fenlon Durand

Admiral Nimitz Pins Medal on
Junction Citation for Gallantry
in Action at Tarawa.

Capt. Fenlon A. Durand, U. S. Marine Corps, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Durand, 335 West Chestnut street, has been awarded the Silver Star medal for gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy in the bitter fighting at Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands, according to word received by his parents.

The award was presented to him by Admiral Nimitz at an undisclosed point in the Pacific on March 1. Many other awards for the action at Tarawa were presented at the same time.

The citation accompanying the award stated:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity during action against enemy Japanese forces in Tarawa, Gilbert Islands, November 20, 1943, while serving with the Second Amphibian Tractor Battalion, Second Marine Division. While leading his company of amphibian tractors during the initial assault on this island, Captain Durand's command tractor was unmobilized and set afire one hundred yards from the beach by enemy shell fire.

"Taking command of the infantry troops in his tractors, he caused them to abandon the tractor and disperse in the shallow water shortly before two more enemy shells completely demolished the tractor. In the water he found his crew chief who had been blown out of the tractor and was suffering from numerous shrapnel wounds and the loss of both legs.

"Although subjected to concentrated enemy sniper and machine gun fire, Captain Durand improvised tourniquets and rendered first aid to his crew chief. Then, with utter disregard for his own personal safety, he supported the wounded marine in the water and swam with him for more than an hour in an effort to save his crew chief's life. His gallant courage and heroic conduct were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps."
