

E X T R A C T C O P Y

GENERAL ORDERS)
 :
NO. 1789)

HEADQUARTERS,
FAR EAST AIR FORCES,
APO 925 - 8 August 1945.

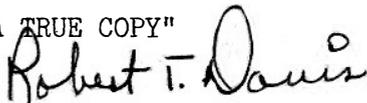
1. SILVER STAR. By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (Bulletin 43, WD, 1918), a Silver Star is awarded by the Commanding General, Far East Air Forces, to the following named officers and enlisted men:

Captain WILLIS L. HELMANTOLER, (0665020), Air Corps, United States Army. Co-Pilot.
Home address: Petosi, Mo.

For gallantry in action off Zamboanga, Mindanao, Philippine Islands, on 4 March 1945. These officers and enlisted men were members of the crew of a Catalina aircraft which landed near the enemy's gun-lined shore to pick up the crew of a bomber which had been forced down at sea. Sighting the survivors on a raft in the vicinity of 5 enemy barges armed with 20-millimeter and 50-caliber guns, this crew calmly carried out the rescue while strafing bombers held off the hostile vessels. Then, learning that another bomber had crashed 500 yards off shore, they taxied to the position and, under intense fire, took the crew aboard. Although their plane was being flooded through leaks caused by enemy hits, they taxied toward a third crew which had been forced down and rescued them. By this time the after hatches were flooded with 2 feet of water and it became necessary to jettison all of the ammunition and over 400 gallons of gasoline. After 3 attempts, they succeeded in taking off and brought their damaged and overloaded plane safely back to base. The exceptional bravery and outstanding devotion to duty displayed by these officers and enlisted men during this flight exemplify the highest traditions of the United States Army Air Forces.

Signed GEORGE C. KENNEY,
GEORGE C. KENNEY,
General, United States Army,
Commanding.

"A TRUE COPY"



ROBERT T. DAVIS,
1st Lt., Air Corps.