

NAVY CROSS



JAMES ARTHUR POPP

Private First Class, U.S. Marine Corps
Company F, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines
Quang Nam Province, Republic of Vietnam, 8 April 1967
Entered service at: Hemlock, Michigan
Born: 1 November 1945

Citation:

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Navy Cross (Posthumously) to James Arthur Popp (2246112), Private First Class, U.S. Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving as a Grenadier with the Second Platoon, Company F, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, THIRD Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in the Republic of Vietnam on 8 April 1967. Private First Class Popp's squad was conducting a squad-size patrol against the Viet Cong forces in Quang Nam Province. While moving along a trail in search of the enemy, the squad was suddenly taken under a murderous volume of small-arms, hand grenade and 40 millimeter grenade fire. The heavy volume of fire rained in from three sides, killing or wounding several of his comrades. Seeing his comrades fall, and realizing that the remaining squad members needed covering fire in order to remove the casualties and select a defensive position, Private First Class Popp valiantly remained on the open trail and provided the necessary fire. Although wounded in the initial moments of the engagement, he completely disregarded his wounds and placed accurate and deadly 40 millimeter grenade fire on the enemy. His devastating fire immediately resulted in three enemy killed, sent many of them scurrying for cover and allowed several of the squad members to gain covered positions. The enemy was intent on annihilating the Marine squad and realized that Private First Class Popp was a deadly threat to the success of the entire enemy mission. The bulk of fire was immediately brought to bear on Private First Class Popp and he was struck a second time. Fearing for the safety of his comrades and critically wounded, he exhibited uncommon courage as he knelt in the withering fire and rained grenade after grenade on the enemy. He personally accounted for at least six Viet Cong killed and inflicted severe injuries on many others. He continued to fight, inspiring the men around him with his dynamic and courageous fighting spirit until he fell mortally wounded when struck for the third time. Private First Class Popp's actions in the face of insurmountable odds were responsible in great measure for saving four other Marines, though wounded, from death at the hands of the enemy and thereby upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.