



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AIR MEDAL**

TO

**LIEUTENANT BRIAN W. MILLS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant MILLS is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the night of 13 March 1977 while serving as pilot and aircraft commander of Coast Guard HH-52A 1377 helicopter engaged in the perilous rescue of nine men from the raging flood waters of the Thames River in London, Ontario, Canada. Upon notification that two men were clinging to tree branches in the flooded river, Lieutenant MILLS was dispatched from Air Station Detroit. While enroute to the area, it was learned that an additional seven men were also trapped in the river current after unsuccessfully attempting to rescue the two men. Arriving on scene, the flood lights were used to locate the first two men. Lieutenant MILLS skillfully maneuvered the aircraft into position and the hoist operator hoisted the men to the aircraft. These two men were flown to a nearby bridge and turned over to waiting medical authorities. Returning to the flood waters, another man was picked up from the trees and two men from a sandbar in the river. They were then transferred to the bridge. With the sandbar rapidly diminishing due to the flooding river, Lieutenant MILLS again returned to rescue the remaining four men. With advisories provided by the co-pilot and hoist operator, Lieutenant MILLS maintained a steady hover while the hoist operator lifted the men to safety in the aircraft. The helicopter was flown to London Airport where the four men were disembarked. Lieutenant MILLS' innovative actions, expert aeronautical skills, and courage throughout this rescue mission resulted in the rescue of the nine men. His initiative, sound judgment and unwavering devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.