



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON 20593

15 July, 1944

To: Commander David O. Reed, USCG

Via: 1. DCGO, 13th Naval District
2. Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Air Station,
Port Angeles, Washington

Subject: Commendation

1. Flight Operations Report No. 40, dated 6 July, 1942, discloses that plane PH-2, No. 166, of which you were the pilot, proceeded to and assisted survivors of a torpedoed vessel. The report reveals that upon arrival at the position given in the directive, a diligent search was first made to locate survivors clinging to wreckage and finding none, you then made a surface landing near lifeboats containing twenty-one survivors, some of whom were suffering from injuries and burns, and took them aboard your plane. A difficult take-off was successfully made and the survivors were subsequently transferred to Coast Guard units for further care.
2. I am indeed pleased to commend you for the initiative, high degree of expert skill in the maneuverability of your plane, and the unwavering devotion to duty exhibited throughout the task, all of which were in keeping with the highest traditions of the service,
3. A copy of this letter will be made a part of your official record.

<signed>
R. R. Waesche
Commandant

Letter of Commendation (explanation for lower-level award inclusion in Roll of Valor):

TODAY IN COAST GUARD AVIATION HISTORY – 06 JULY 1942 (1 OF 2): a Hall PH-2 (callsign V-166) assigned to Air Station Biloxi, MS and crewed by LT David O. Reed (AC); ENS Vernon S. Tully (also Tulley in a few references)(CP); ACMM J. E. Horwath; ACMM D. C. Danford : RM1c B. A. Lynn and GM2c J. H. Rogers were on a routine anti-submarine patrol when the crew spotted wreckage from what turned out to be the torpedoed Norwegian motorship BAYARD in position ten miles northeast of North Pass (Mississippi River) whistle buoy.

On arrival at the scene the vessel had sunk and only a large amount of wreckage and two lifeboats were visible. Later information from the captain of the BAYARD indicated that the vessel had gone down in ten minutes after being hit and that no one in the crew had seen the torpedo or submarine, The pilot searched the wreckage for survivors but none was sighted. Inspection of the lifeboats revealed several injured men.

The plane landed near the lifeboats and took aboard 21 survivors. One man was suffering from a possible broken back and severe head injury and eight had burns of various degrees of seriousness about the hands, arms and feet. The captain stated that there was no possible chance of there being other survivors as the torpedo hit in the compartment where the others were.

The plane proceeded to New Orleans and landed in Lake Pontchartrain off the Yacht Basin and transferred the survivors to Coast Guard vessels at that place. The plane then returned to base. The plane sighted two CG planes and one Army bomber searching the area of the sinking for the submarine.

[Excerpt from "First Fleet: The Story of the U. S. Coast Guard at War" by Reg Ingraham. page 297-298]

Another Coast Guard flier who won high honor for a rescue at sea was Lieutenant David O. Reed of Winchester, Kentucky. On patrol duty in the Gulf of Mexico, Reed spotted two lifeboats containing twenty-one Norwegian seamen whose motor ship had been torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat. The men were badly sunburned and one of them had a broken back. Reed set his twin-engined seaplane down close to the boats and began taking the survivors aboard. His plane ordinarily could carry only eight or nine persons but Reed, undaunted, got all twenty-one Norwegians aboard. In addition to the passengers, he was carrying 600 gallons of fuel. "Plane was extremely tail heavy/" the pilot said in his report, "and pilot and copilot, Ensign V. C. Tully, USCG, of Biloxi, Mississippi, both applied full weight to push yoke forward. In spite of their combined efforts the plane took to the air at forty knots indicated air speed, in an extremely nose-high attitude. Before clearing finally into the air the plane came back on the water once. "Once in the air no difficulty was experienced in picking up speed and in getting the plane in a level attitude. In level flight and stabilizer set full nose down it was still necessary to apply forward yoke pressure." Reed landed his overloaded craft on Lake Ponchartrain, New Orleans, without mishap and got all his passengers ashore. Subsequently he was awarded the Navy Cross for the feat (NOTE: false), one of the few Coast Guardsmen to be so honored up to that time.

Copy of recommended Distinguished Flying Cross verbiage (not approved by the Coast Guard):

"For heroism and extraordinary achievement while participating in an amphibious flight on 6 July, 1942, while attached to Coast Guard Air Station, Biloxi, Mississippi. Upon being notified of the torpedoing of Norwegian Motor Ship BAYARD, Lieutenant D. O. Reed and crew of the PH-2, No. 166, proceeded to the assistance of the merchant men. Arriving at the scene, a position approximately ten miles northeast of North Pass whistle buoy, they searched the area diligently for survivors clinging to wreckage and finding none made a surface landing near lifeboats containing twenty-one survivors, one of whom was suffering from possible broken back and severe head injuries, and eight other seriously burned on arms, hands and feet. After loading all persons aboard plane, Lieutenant Reed exhibited a high degree of expert skill in the maneuverability of his plane in a successful take-off and ultimate transfer to Coast Guard vessels in Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana. His cool Courage and unswerving (yes, I double checked - not unwavering) devotion to duty were an inspiration to his crew and to those who had so miraculously escaped death."