



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

TO

**REX EARL BARTON
AVIATION STRUCTURAL MECHANIC SECOND CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer BARTON is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the night of 4 March 1971 while serving as aircrewman of Coast Guard HH-3F 1470 helicopter engaged in providing assistance to the distressed fishing vessel GANNET located approximately 68 miles southeast of Nantucket Island, Massachusetts. Despite darkness and hurricane force winds gusting to 90 miles per hour, Petty Officer BARTON assisted the pilot in positioning the helicopter over the GANNET which was in grave danger of sinking in the 30-foot seas with her six-man crew as her engine room continued to flood. When repeated attempts to pass a line to the vessel were thwarted by high winds and passing snow showers, Petty Officer BARTON worked diligently in readying two pumps which were so skillfully dropped into the sea near GANNET that they were retrieved by her crew within minutes. While the helicopter remained on scene to ensure proper operation of the pump, Petty Officer BARTON assisted the pilots under the most adverse weather conditions in maintaining position near the stricken vessel. Petty Officer BARTON displayed expert aeronautical ability throughout this perilous mission. His initiative, skill, sound judgment and unwavering devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.