

Navy Cross

Sergeant James E. Mulloy, Jr. United States Marine Corps

HQ, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division

Date of Action: August 18, 1965

Citation:

The Navy Cross is awarded to Sergeant James E. Mulloy, Jr., United States Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving with Headquarters and Service Company, Third Battalion, Third Marines, during Operation Starlite near Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam, on 18 August 1965. While participating in a combat resupply mission in support of assault units of Regimental Landing Team Seven, Sergeant Mulloy was aboard an amphibious tractor when his armored column came under intense mortar, automatic weapons, small arms, and recoilless rifle fire from determined and well fortified insurgent communist (Viet Cong) forces. As he attempted to maneuver through the enemy fire his tractor became bogged down in a rice paddy. Quickly comprehending the gravity of the situation, he immediately responded to the challenge by providing the leadership and personal example of exceptional courage, which helped to rally the Marines present to the defense of the stricken vehicle. He administered first aid to the wounded and inspired them with his calmness. Realizing that the armored tractor was especially vulnerable to attack due to limited observation from within, he left the tractor and assumed a position in the rice paddy. For twenty hours he conducted a virtual one-man defense. On several occasions Viet Cong guerrillas attempted to penetrate his position to get to the vehicle, but he repeatedly drove them back and inflicted extremely heavy casualties. When aid arrived the following morning he insured that all of the wounded were evacuated before seeking relief for himself. His courageous actions, inspiring leadership, and loyal devotion to duty without regard for his personal safety undoubtedly saved the lives of many of his fellow Marines. Sergeant Mulloy's heroic conduct throughout was in keeping with highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.