



HERO of the MONTH

Winner of the

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

Pvt. Lloyd G. McCarter

ONE by one the paratroopers climb into the big transport sitting ungracefully on the ground, like a fish out of water. Her motors are idling smoothly, like well-tuned watches. The pilots can be seen in the cockpit. Their faces have a strange expression. It is over-confidence—almost boredom. They know they have a damn good chance of coming back. It is Feb. 16, 1945 in the Philippines. Most of the islands are secure.

But the paratroopers are much less confident of their return. They know they only *might* come back. They know they are headed for "the rock." Corregidor!

The last man climbs in. The door swings shut. A ground crew man hauls the ladder away. The motors cough—then roar, and the big ship begins to roll slowly down the runway.

Second by second the time passes. Then the jumpmaster barks, "Stand up. Hook up." Silently the men rise. The only sound above the dull roar of the motors is the continuous click as their hooks snap onto the static line. The door opens and they tumble out like pebbles. Each bursts into a white bloom.

Minutes later Pvt. Lloyd G. McCarter landed safely in Corregidor. Stripping off his chute harness he looked about him. A bullet pinged past his head. Snipers were sniping from all

directions. He and his pals were in for hot action. It was plenty hot. McCarter hit the dirt. Swiftly his keen eyes spotted the source of the lead. It was spewing from a machine gun nest some 30 yards away. McCarter knew what to do. Deliberately he took a hitch in his pants despite his prone position. Inching his way along, he started the long pull to get to that nest. It was a dirty job. The ground was open. There was no cover. If he made it, it would be pure luck. The Jap machine gunners were peppering the ground around him viciously. Slugs whined, ricocheted. It was hell. After what seemed an eternity, McCarter reached a spot where he figured he could lob a couple of grenades into the nest. For a few moments he lay motionless hoping the Nips would think that they had hit him. He was playing possum, trying one of their own tricks on them. Then slowly he slipped his arm down and unhooked one, then another grenade from his belt. He pulled the pin quietly, trying to show no movement. One pin was out, then the other. He let one fly—then the other. He pressed his face into the dirt. The Jap machine gun nest was silent.

THINGS quieted down after that and McCarter and his unit held on to what they

That afternoon they sweated out the Jap counterattack. Sniper slugs screeched lethally through the air. McCarter kept a sharp eye peeled for the Nips. He picked off six that afternoon while waiting for them to attack.

Finally the counterattack came in all its insane, suicidal fury. But the Yanks were ready. McCarter spotted a large force of Japs moving off to the side. He figured what was up. Using his brains as well as his arms and legs, he made his way to a fairly high spot of ground. It was near the entrance to a tunnel that was used as a storage house for explosives—gasoline, grenades, TNT, powder. One well-placed Jap tracer would send the entire area sky high.

They knew it—McCarter knew it. But McCarter knew also that he had the best spot for defending the tunnel. But for some reason the Japs were not attacking immediately. So they didn't want to fight, eh? Well they wouldn't get away with that. McCarter opened fire. It was dark now and the night hours stretched a long way ahead. Hour after hour his submachine gun spoke repeatedly. It punctuated the night with its staccato bursts. It spoke until it would operate no longer. Then McCarter scrouged a Browning Automatic rifle. It was two o'clock in the morning now. All around men lay dead.

From his high spot he tried every trick he knew to make the Japs show their posi-

tions. But the little brown devils were cagey. They wouldn't fire. McCarter couldn't find them. But he must.

Finally he figured a way. Coolly, deliberately, he stood up so that they could see him perfectly. The Nips fell for it like fish. McCarter hit the dirt—but now he knew where they were. Now he could pour it on. That first time he stood up it took guts—plenty of guts. The second time it was a little easier—but not much. Nonetheless, McCarter kept using the trick, each time with bloody effect.

THEN it happened. A piece of lead ripped into McCarter's body and he went down. He had played his luck too far. When the Medics came he was still conscious and rebelled against being evacuated until he had pointed out the best spot to attack when dawn broke.

They took him back to the aid station then. He lived but 30 soldiers of the Mikado did not. That's what counts. That's why, on Corregidor, they call Pvt. Lloyd G. McCarter, 28, of Tacoma, Washington, the "one man Army." That's why he has been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor from his Commander-in-chief. President Harry Truman.

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