



QUENTIN MEYER

1939

From the time he first came to St. Paul's, in 1933, Quentin Meyer was respected and liked for certain qualities which continued to develop in him. Quick, agile, bursting with physical vitality, he found study difficult. Naturally, too, being the kind of boy he was, he dearly loved sports, playing them, even when still very small, with the courage, the generosity and the intelligence of the true athlete. His good sense and his ready sympathy made him, in his Sixth Form year, an excellent Supervisor in a younger boys' house. He won his S.P.S. in football, hockey and rowing. At Yale, where he entered in 1940, after a year at Milton Academy, he was a Varsity half-back and hockey captain. The nickname of "Monk," acquired in his First Form days, continued to be given him through life.

He joined the Marines in 1942 and went overseas in May, 1944, with the 4th Joint Assault Signal Company, which was attached to the 1st Regiment of the 1st Marine Division on the Russell Islands, the staging area for Peleliu.

For his gallantry on Peleliu, Meyer was awarded the Silver Star, and cited, in particular, for wading across a reef exposed to enemy beach defenses and for going through an area infested with Japanese snipers, in order to deliver a message to an assault company surrounded by the enemy. On his way back to his own battalion, he swam several hundred yards through mined and mortar-swept water.

After that, every one of the 1,000 men in his battalion knew him by name. One of them wrote:

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"It was an inspiring thing when Monk and his team would be walking along a road and a column or a company or a battalion of troops would pass by, to see how the men he worked so hard for would shout his name and how each would voice some sort of 'Hello.'"

His courage was legendary. The men said that on Peleliu he had had been responsible for 11,000 of the 61,000 rounds fired by our Navy in support of the invading troops and, indeed, his citation states that "he directed naval gunfire with such skill that he was greatly instrumental in the destruction of the enemy and the success of our forces on Peleliu."

On Okinawa, where he landed on D-Day, April 1, 1945, Meyer's unit was engaged for the first month in patrolling the hills in the northern part of the island. On May 1, when the 1st Marine Division was committed to the battle for Shuri, he resumed the work he had done so brilliantly on Peleliu. The Marine already quoted, a Pfc. who had charge of his radios, wrote:

"Monk seemed to be trying to outdo himself. All his energy and daring were being exerted to insure the men in the lines all the help he could give them."

May 11 was the day he was to have been relieved. At six that morning he was in his observation post. A light cruiser was firing at a target he had found. At 6:30 came the cease-firing order and word that his outfit were to be released for a little while. The Pfc. wrote:

"I called Monk on the radio and told him to come back to our C.P. He said he would wait around a while 'to make sure everything was going along all right.'"

"At about 8:45 his scout called us from his O.P. and gave us word that he [Meyer] and his forward radio man had both been hit. They had gone along with a squad of men who were wiping up a last pocket of resistance in that area."

At about nine word came from the Observation Post that the forward radio man's wound was not mortal and a little later the doctor himself called the Command Post to talk to the men and to let them know at least that Meyer's wound had been such that death must have been instantaneous.

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