

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

SECOND LIEUTENANT STANLEY GRAVES BENNER UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE, DECEASED

Stanley Graves Benner was born in Arlington, Massachusetts, on July 5, 1916, son of Mr. and Mrs. Herman C. Benner. He enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve at Boston, Massachusetts, on August 21, 1940, and reported for active duty at Quantico, Virginia, on November 8, the same year. He was promoted to Private, first class, on May 26, 1941; Corporal on October 11, 1941; and Sergeant on April 1, 1942. He was commissioned Second Lieutenant on August 4, 1942.

He served from January to April 1941, at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and during the period April 12, until May 8, 1942, had successive duty at the Marine Corps Bases at Parris Island, South Carolina, and New River, North Carolina. Ordered to the field, he departed for the Pacific in May 1942, and on October 27, 1942, was killed in action against the enemy at Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.

Lieutenant Benner was posthumously awarded the Silver Star Medal with citation that follows:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity while in command of a platoon during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Lunga Area, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, October 24, 1942. Undeterred by terrific enemy fire, Second Lieutenant Benner displaying courageous determination led his platoon and directed its fire against repeated assaults of enemy forces greatly superior in number. The combat achievements of his platoon under his inspiring leadership contributed greatly to the rout and virtual annihilation of a Japanese regiment. He gallantly gave his life in the service of his country."

He was also posthumously awarded the Purple Heart Medal, and was entitled to the Ribbon for the Presidential Unit Citation awarded the First Marine Division, Reinforced, as follows:

"The officers and enlisted men of the First Marine Division, Reinforced, on August 7 to 9, 1942, demonstrated outstanding gallantry and determination in successfully executing forced landing assaults against a number of strongly defended Japanese positions on Tulagi, Gavutu, Tanambogo, Florida and Guadalcanal, British Solomon Islands, completely routing all the enemy forces and seizing a most valuable base and airfield within the enemy zone of operations in the South Pacific Ocean. From the above period until 9 December, 1942, this Reinforced Division not only held the important strategic positions despite determined and repeated Japanese naval, air and land attacks, but by a series of offensive operations against strong enemy resistance drove the

Japanese from the proximity of the airfield and inflicted great losses on them by land and air attacks. The courage and determination displayed in these operations were of an inspiring order."

In addition to the Silver Star Medal, Purple Heart Medal, and Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon, he was also entitled to the American Defense Service Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; and the World War II Victory Medal.

A radar picket destroyer, the USS BENNER (DDR-807) has been named to honor Lieutenant Benner. The vessel was sponsored by his mother,

when launched on November 30, 1944, at the Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine; and was commissioned at the Boston Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts, on February 13, 1945.

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